

Captain Larkin and the Turks: The Strategic Impact of the Operations of *HMS Doris* in Early 1915

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As the Ottoman Empire entered the First World War in November 1914 there were a number of troubling events involving Armenians that served to convince the Turks of impending Armenian insurgency. It is well known that in the Caucasus, numbers of Armenian men fled to join the Czar's armies against the Ottoman Empire and guerrilla warfare between Armenian bands and the Turks broke out on the frontier near the Black Sea. It is less well known that the Ottomans were also extremely concerned about Armenian activities in the area of Alexandretta (the modern Turkish port of Iskenderun) particularly around Dörtyol, a tiny railway stop and village close by the Mediterranean Sea. This concern was mainly the result of the operations of the *HMS Doris* in December 1914 and January 1915. This article uses British, German, and Turkish archival sources to focus on the ship's operations in the vicinity of Dörtyol and on the strategic affect these had on Ottoman perceptions of threats to the empire and on actual Ottoman responses. The *Doris* figures prominently in two critical strategic outcomes – the relocation of the Armenians in 1915 and in the activation of three Ottoman army divisions for coastal defence and internal security.

HMS Doris was an Eclipse class second class cruiser built at Barrow and was completed for service in November 1897.¹ The ship weighed 5,600 tons and generated 9,600 horse-power which drove it at 18.5 knots speed. *HMS Doris* carried a crew of 450 behind 3-inch armour and, after 1905 it carried 11 6-inch guns, three 12-pounders, and three 18-inch torpedo tubes. The ship was operational almost immediately in the Anglo-Boer War and contributed men to the Naval Brigade. On 19 November 1899, *Doris*' sailors and marines participated in the battle at Graspan, where several were killed. A cannon seized from the Boers (known as the *Doris Gun*) is today on display in Plymouth, England. In November 1914, *HMS Doris* was detached from the 11th Cruiser Squadron and sent to the Mediterranean. The ship was commanded by Captain Frank Larkin RN (later Rear Admiral Sir Frank Larkin, 1875–1953), who proved to be a remarkably active officer with the high levels of initiative required for independent operations.

Captain Larkin received orders from Vice-Admiral R.H. Peirse (commander-in-chief East Indies on board *HMS Swiftsure*) on 13 December 1914, which charged him to patrol off Alexandretta as well as interdict supplies on the Hedjaz railway for

Figure 1. *HMS Doris* as she appeared off the Levent in 1914. An Eclipse class cruiser, *Doris* weighed 5,600 tons and carried a crew of 450 officers and men. Completed in 1897, *Doris* carried 11 6-inch guns, three 12-pounders and three 18-inch torpedo tubes. Photo from *Jane's Fighting Ships*, 1914.



a period of about ten days.² Performing similar operations at the same time in the same area were the Russian cruiser *Askold* and the French cruiser *Requin*. Of note is that Peirse sent an intelligence officer from his staff, Lieutenant H. Pirie Gordon, RNVR, to accompany the *Doris*.³ As will become apparent, Pirie Gordon's job was to investigate landing sites for large-scale operations near Alexandretta. Larkin sailed from Port Said at 6 am the next day with a seaplane embarked for aerial reconnaissance.⁴ The following day, *HMS Doris* lay off Gaza, where the seaplane flew off for an extended flight that reached Beersheba. Larkin then sailed north, lobbed ten 6-inch shells into Askelon and sent a landing party ashore to capture some earthworks. On 16 December, Larkin stopped at Jaffa and again conducted an aerial reconnaissance, during which Turkish riflemen fired at the aircraft without hitting it. Larkin then requested and received permission to destroy Turkish communications lines. On 18 December, he sent a landing party ashore, destroying over two miles of telegraph line (wire, insulators and posts). Later that day, at 4 pm, Larkin sent an officer to the United States ship *North Carolina*, a neutral vessel then anchored off the coast, and was informed by its officers that the Turks were 'in a mortal funk waiting for your landing'.⁵ Cheered by his success, Larkin received permission to expand his operations and anchored six miles north of Alexandretta, where he sent another landing party ashore at 11.05 pm. The party pulled up sleepers and then pulled the railway tracks a bit out of true. At 2.30 am a train pulling about 35 cars approached and dawn revealed that the engine and five or six cars had derailed. Larkin noted that the cars held camels, some of which were loose and others trapped and injured.⁶

At 6 am on 19 December, the *Doris* bombarded the railway bridge at Payas with 6-inch lyddite and common shells, making the bridge impassable. Larkin then sent a wireless message to Peirse asking permission to attempt to deliver an ultimatum to the local Ottoman authorities to 'deliver up all war material in the town under threat of bombardment'.⁷ Gordon prepared the ultimatum in French (the Ottoman diplomatic language of choice), which then was sent ashore on the morning of 21

December under a white flag of truce. Harry Pirie Gordon was a journalist who had widely travelled the Near East and was regarded as something of an Ottoman specialist (he later served in the Arab Bureau). The Turks received the document and, the British also requested they dispatch men to release the distressed camels that remained trapped in the overturned railway cars. Evidently Larkin was something of an early animal rights enthusiast! During the day, Larkin also made contact with the United States counsel, who relayed messages from British and French subjects being detained in Damascus. In the meantime, he received a note from the civilian Ottoman governor threatening physical harm to the British detainees. Now alert to the plight of those held by the Turks, Larkin had no choice but to withdraw his ultimatum when the Turks threatened to retaliate against the hostages.⁸ The *Doris* sailed off the next day to find a large steel girder railway bridge close by the railway station at 'Duert Yol' (modern Dörtyol). Larkin decided to blow up the bridge with gun cotton (nitrocellulose, which was a nineteenth century military explosive made by soaking cotton residue in nitric acid) and landed a large party under Commander K. Bronger RN at 2.40 pm. The landing was opposed by rifle fire which was suppressed by 6-inch shells from the *Doris*. Nevertheless, by 4.30 pm the bridge was destroyed at the cost of one man wounded. The landing party then occupied the railway station to destroy the telegraph lines; whereupon they cut the wires while 'the Armenian railway officials themselves smashing the electric batteries on the lines with particular satisfaction'.⁹ The three officials then asked for protection and were taken onboard *Doris* to be questioned by Pirie Gordon, who obtained 'useful information' for his intelligence report.¹⁰

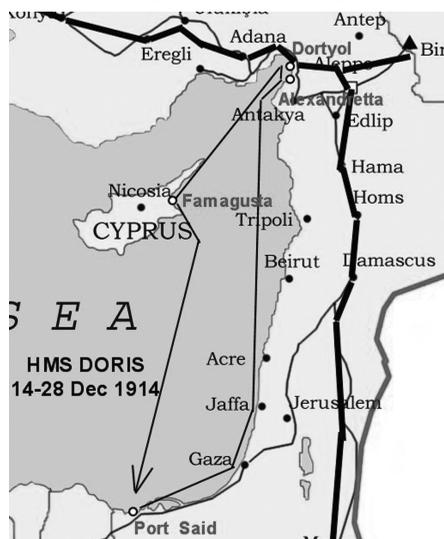
On 22 December, Pirie Gordon went ashore for direct talks with the United States consul, who acted as a sort of intermediary between Larkin and the Turks. This time Larkin reduced his demands to the destruction of railway locomotives. After the passing of notes, the Turks agreed to allow Larkin to demolish some locomotives, which had been trapped in the city by the downed bridge. Finally, at day's end, the British blew up two locomotives with charges of wet gun cotton and *Doris* moved at 10.10 pm. The following day the ship exchanged 6-inch salvos with a Turkish field gun with no apparent effect. The next several days saw *Doris* patrolling the coast and the ship pulled into Famagusta, Cyprus on 26 December so that Pirie Gordon might secure the services of one Mr. Lukach, who was to be taken aboard as an Ottoman translator. Unfortunately, Mr. Lukach could not be located and *Doris* departed for a final pass around the Beirut coast, where Pirie Gordon secured further intelligence from some French Dominican friars before the ship returned to Egypt.¹¹

After coaling, *HMS Doris* again left Port Said early on New Year's Day 1915, with the seaplane embarked. The ship repeated its previous aerial reconnaissance operations over Gaza and Beersheba (which again received ineffective rifle fire) before returning to Port Said to disembark the seaplane on 3 January. Sailing back to Famagusta, the errant Mr. H.C. Lukach was embarked on 5 January, from whence *Doris* sailed to Mersina (the modern port of Mersin, Turkey) to destroy an important railway bridge. As intelligence reported the bridge several miles inland and there were Turkish troops about, Larkin decided on a 'strong landing party'.¹² Despite wind and rain, Larkin stoked his men with an issue of cocoa and sent them ashore in his pinnace and two cutters. Unfortunately, the hoped for surprise failed and the boats were immediately taken under fire as they came toward shore. Larkin

withdrew them with no casualties. Determined to fulfil the mission, *Doris* closed on the shore and bombarded the bridge with 72 rounds of 6-inch shells. Larkin was unsure if he had damaged the bridge but *Doris* left for Alexandretta, anchoring off the Jonah's Pillars.¹³ Observing the previously blown up engine, Larkin saw a supply of timber adjacent to the bridge he had destroyed on his previous voyage. Two landing parties were sent ashore on 7 January 1915, which destroyed the railway embankment, timber, as well as cutting the telegraph lines. One party was attacked by Turkish infantry but suffered no casualties. Mr. Lukach accompanied the parties and questioned an Armenian man on the road. *Doris* then sailed to nearby Dörtiyol to inspect the destroyed bridge there.

Larkin received wireless orders on 7 January to prevent the Turks from sending troops and supplies to Alexandretta and thence to Aleppo by way of Beilan Pass. At Dörtiyol Larkin saw that the Turks were bypassing the destroyed bridge using a temporary road and he once again decided to land his marines and sailors to attend to the problem. A demolition party under Lieutenant J.R. Edwards RN was sent ashore with a Royal Marine Light Infantry escort of one officer and nine men. The party encountered effective and persistent sniping by the Turks, which forced it to withdraw. RMLI Corporal G.A.S. Warburton was shot dead through the heart but was brought back to the *Doris*.¹⁴ Larkin then bombarded the bridge successfully but found it 'a matter of no satisfaction in view of the regrettable death of Corporal Warburton'.¹⁵ Plans to bury the corporal were interrupted by the arrival of the French armoured cruiser *Dentrescasteaux* and Larkin persuaded the French captain to 'land the Egyptian spy at Sheik Jabar near Tripoli, this he readily agreed to undertake, accordingly the spy with his three native boatmen in their boat were

Figure 2. *HMS Doris*' first voyage. Captain Frank Larkin took *HMS Doris* to the Dörtiyol and Alexandretta coast on her 14–28 December 1914 operational voyage. Larkin conducted two subsequent voyages before being diverted to the Dardanelles campaign in February 1915. Map courtesy of Dr. Mesut Uyar.



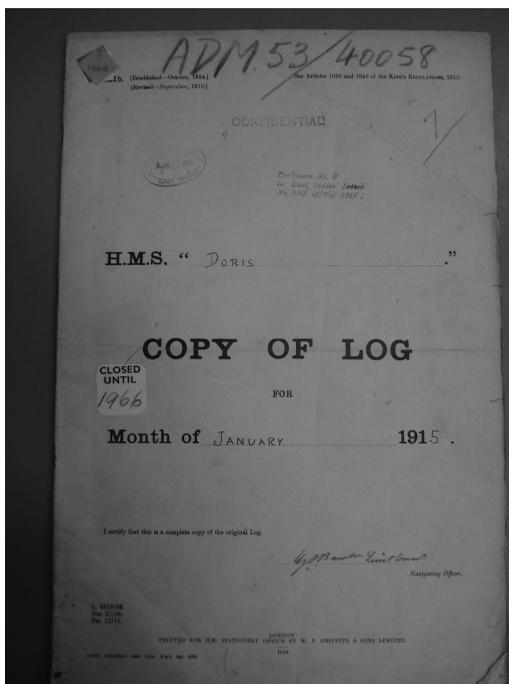
transferred to the “Dentrescasteaux” as also was Doctor Scrymgeour to act as interpreter in Arabic.¹⁶ After the French ship departed, poor Warburton was finally committed to the deep in 30 fathoms of water. Over the next two days *Doris* closed on the coast and shelled a number of vehicles and freight wagons on the roadway and destroyed a hitherto unseen bridge (making it Larkin’s fifth destroyed bridge).

On 10 January 1915, *Doris* rendezvoused again off Jonah’s Pillars with the *Dentrescasteaux*, whose captain paid Larkin a visit to explain why he had been unable to persuade the spy to land. In fact, the spy himself was willing to land but the three boatmen refused to take him ashore because of unfavourable weather and fear of being caught by the Turks. Whereupon Larkin re-embarked the spy as well as Doctor Scrymgeour onboard *Doris*.¹⁷ Later that day, *Doris* shelled a mule train on shore, hitting a village by mistake – an event much regretted by Larkin. *Doris* bombarded some trenches on 11 January and a camel caravan the next day. By 13 January, *Doris* was again cruising off Mersina and shelled a small blockhouse. The next day *Doris* met the French ship *Requin* and Larkin wrote in a later report to Vice-Admiral Peirse that at 11 am *Doris* ‘proceeded to sea with the intention in the first place of endeavouring to land and re-embark the Egyptian spy at Sheik Jabor near Tripoli and afterwards of preceding along the coast with a view to distributing the proclamation received from you by the *Requin*’.¹⁸

However, bad weather, high seas and low coal bunkers forced Larkin to return to Port Said without landing the spy. Larkin set off again on 20 January, joined by Lukach, the doctor, and a ‘Mr. Dupuis’, for Alexandretta.¹⁹ The next day he captured and freed two Arab fishermen. For the next several days Larkin cruised off Beirut, making contact with the Ottoman governor there. Then, on 24 January, *Doris* sent a landing party ashore and discharged Lukach and the doctor.²⁰ Another landing party went ashore the next day, followed by a day of cruising on 26 January. The following morning yet another landing party went ashore near Alexandretta. Then two more days of cruising, but then on 30 January, Larkin’s landing parties seized five Ottoman soldiers defending a trench as prisoners of war.²¹ The next day landing parties took three more POWs before returning the lot to Port Said. Three Armenians were among the eight prisoners. Although the facts remain unclear, the Ottoman Fourth Army reported on 3 February 1915, that 60 enemy soldiers landed near Adana and captured an additional two Armenians, who abandoned their weapons and voluntarily fled to join the allied force.²² It is unclear from the logs and the reports whether the spy was ever actually landed or what the content of the proclamation carried to Larkin by the *Requin* involved. However, it is likely that the proclamation involved an appeal to either Arabs or Armenians inciting them to insurrection and promising them British assistance and arms.²³

In February, the massing of the fleet for the attempts to force the Dardanelles and the subsequent Gallipoli invasion took Larkin and the *Doris* away from the Alexandretta coast. What could be said about the ship’s operations? While *HMS Doris* certainly performed missions of importance interdicting Ottoman troops and equipment destined for the impending Ottoman invasion of Egypt,²⁴ there were obviously other missions of great importance attached to the voyages as well. A report prepared by Pirie Gordon and Lukach (who is actually identified in the report

Figure 3. Log of the *HMS Doris*. The January 1915 log book of *HMS Doris* was classified 'confidential' and remained closed until 1966. This copy is found in the ADM 153 files of the British National Archives.



as 'Lieut HC Lukach late Westminster Dragoons'), with sketches prepared by Midshipman Hooper RN on 7 January 1915, detailed 'possible sites for a large-scale landing at Alexandretta'.²⁵ In the report Pirie Gordon and Lukach provided detailed measurements and assessments of the beaches, obstacles and enemy fortifications that could only have been obtained through actual reconnaissance on the ground. The presence of interpreters additionally reveals an active search for useful intelligence and a letter reveals Mr. Dupuis of the 'Soudan Civil Service' to have been lent to *Doris* as an interpreter of Arabic.²⁶ In the same letter Larkin also detailed gathering intelligence from three refugees who were dragomen to the consuls at Aleppo, who he then collected and passed on to the Military Intelligence Department in Cairo. In truth, the interdiction missions were of limited value as the Turks rapidly restored the railway and telegraph lines. The intelligence missions, however, were of potentially significant value to the British war effort and were most likely the actual reason for the *Doris*' operations along the coast in late 1914 and early 1915.

The story of the British plans and efforts to seize the Dardanelles in 1915, which resulted in the failed Gallipoli campaign, are widely known. However, other British plans for an amphibious invasion of the Ottoman Empire near Alexandretta are less well known. By January 1915, it was evident to the British War Council that Britain's navy might exercise significant strategic effect using its amphibious capability to break the growing deadlock on the western front. Many ideas were

considered including Admiral Jackie Fisher's schemes to land on the Baltic coast and Winston Churchill's plan for seizing the island of Borkum as a prelude to landing in Schleswig-Holstein. Fresh from an assignment in India, Field Marshal Lord Horatio Kitchener emerged as an advocate of staging a landing in the Alexandretta area with a view toward severing Anatolian Turkey from Syria, Palestine and Egypt.²⁷ Strategically, Kitchener's plan would end the Ottoman threat to the Suez Canal and exploratory planning had already begun under the hand of Lieutenant-General Sir John Maxwell in Egypt. In fact, Boghos Nubar, a prominent Armenian nationalist leader, presented this idea to the British in the autumn of 1914.²⁸ The intelligence operations involving the maritime insertion of agents (spies) conducted by *HMS Doris*, as well as other allied ships such as the *Requin* and the *Philomel*, were designed to support these efforts with fresh tactical and geographic information.²⁹ As late as March 1915, Kitchener continued to advocate for the occupation of Alexandretta.³⁰

The Ottoman general staff and army were particularly sensitive to their railway lines of communications leading east from Constantinople. Sometimes called the Berlin to Baghdad Railway because of German investments, the railway split at Dörtyol with the pilgrimage route leading south to Mecca and an uncompleted spur leading east for about 30 miles. In truth, the railway system was the empire's military 'Achilles Heel' which serviced almost the entire logistics needs of the three Ottoman field armies in the Caucasian, Mesopotamian, and Palestinian theatres of operations (the Third, Sixth, and Fourth Armies respectively).³¹ None of these theatres were self-supporting logistically and Caucasia and Palestine even lacked the food crops and fodder to sustain large numbers of men and animals.³² A tight allied naval blockade that began in November 1914 forced almost all logistics traffic onto the fragile single track railway leading from Constantinople to Alexandretta and Aleppo. Making things worse for the Turks there was also an acute shortage of engines and rolling stock and, moreover, the line was incomplete leading through the rugged Toros and Amanus mountains.³³ Of particular concern were the tracks and bridges near Dörtyol that lay close by the Mediterranean Sea, making them tempting targets for allied interdiction. Unfortunately for the Turks, the mobilization and concentration plans of 1914 stripped the Levantine coast of all regular forces and from mid-October 1914 through mid-April 1915 there were no Ottoman army combat units of battalion size or larger in either northern Syria or near Alexandretta.³⁴ With few forces available other than depot battalions and the local gendarmerie, the Ottoman Fourth Army, under Cemal Pasha, was poorly prepared to deal with any threat north of the staging areas near Gaza of the Egyptian invasion force.³⁵

The activities of Captain Larkin and *HMS Doris*, as well as those of the French and Russian navies, alerted the Ottomans to the profound operational weaknesses in their Levantine coast strategic posture. Ottoman reactions were both predictable (reinforcement) and unpredictable (relocation) and had profound outcomes for the local Armenian population in particular. As a result of the escalating allied activities in the Alexandretta area, Ottoman authorities elevated the watchfulness of their scant security forces along the coast, especially around Dörtyol, and soon intelligence reports began to arrive in Constantinople.³⁶ A report from the Governor of Adana to the national police directorate in the Constantinople Ministry of the Interior on 26 February 1915 noted that three Armenians were caught on 12

February as they attempted to take refuge on an 'enemy battleship' off Dörtyol.³⁷ The same report identified a man named Agop hiding in the reeds on shore, who was also caught and who testified that the three Armenians were conveying information about Ottoman army positions. Continuing the report, the governor noted that a 'heliostata device' (a signalling machine that used mirrors) was discovered in the reeds near Payas (along the railway 34 kilometres from Alexandretta). This information was forwarded to the headquarters of the Fourth Army in Damascus on 5 March; however, the army staff was already aware of the situation and had previously on 26 February begun to reinforce the region with a detachment of troops from the Eighth Infantry Division.³⁸ As if this were not enough, the flow of information upwards to the Ministry of the Interior from the Adana region now came back downwards from the Ministry of War.³⁹ A security alert bulletin was issued from the operations division of the Ottoman general staff warning all army commands and army areas that Armenians were a serious threat.⁴⁰ In this alert the problems in Dörtyol and Aleppo took priority in the first paragraph. Worried about the security situation in Dörtyol and short of available troops to adequately secure the area, the Ottomans began in early March to relocate the local Armenian population from there to prevent further incidents.⁴¹ A cable from Interior Minister Talat Pasha to Fourth Army commander Cemal Pasha on 11 April identified Dörtyol again as well as Alexandretta and Adana as locations from which Armenians must be relocated.⁴²

German consular officials also began to report activities around Dörtyol, noting on 7 March that Armenian gendarmes had surrendered without resistance to the landing parties of the cruiser *HMS Doris* and also that anti-government activities were increasing there as well.⁴³ Another consular report the following week entitled 'The unrest in Dörtyol' outlined more problems in the village and that 'several times after the bombardment of the Turkish harbors by the English warships, the British came on land without any difficulty and went to the Armenians in Dörtyol to do their shopping'.⁴⁴ Moreover, the report identified an Armenian deserter named Saldschian, who was recruiting locals 'for foreign service' and that he had returned to an 'English war-ship' before the police could arrest him.⁴⁵ The report continued with the information that another Armenian named Koschkerian had come ashore from the English warship carrying money to organize a conspiracy or revolution. In turn the German ambassador forwarded these reports, along with many others documenting dissident Armenian activities in the empire, to the Foreign Ministry in Berlin.

The sensitivity of the Ottomans to threats to their railway lines of communications as spring arrived in 1915 is illustrated by further message traffic from Constantinople. In a ciphered message to the Fourth Army (which had operational control over the Alexandretta and Dörtyol area), Talat Pasha specifically requested that relocated Armenians from the towns and villages of the Alexandretta and Bilan districts, within which lay Dörtyol, be managed in a particular manner. Talat proposed guidelines for the resettlement of displaced Armenians in temporary villages, but directed that the relocated Armenians from these areas 'be definitely resettled at least 25 kilometres away from the Baghdad railway lines running to the frontier as well as away from other railway lines'.⁴⁶ The message contained no rationale for the specified distance, but the author believes that a standoff distance of

25 kilometres from a railway line made it all but impossible for a terrorist (in the era before motorization) to travel to and from a target safely under the cover of darkness. In any case, this proviso indicates the high priority that the Ottomans placed on their railways.

It is evident that allied naval activities plagued the Turks and, in particular, *HMS Doris* was mentioned by name in both Ottoman and German message traffic. Dörtyol also continued to be mentioned by name in numerous Ottoman messages outlining the growing problem with the Armenian revolutionary committees through the late winter of 1915.⁴⁷ Soon afterward a successful Armenian rebellion at Van in April 1915, which was regarded by the Ottomans as a template for future insurrections, caused the Turks to decide to remove the Armenians from the six easternmost Anatolian provinces. Small-scale relocations, such as had occurred at Dörtyol in early March, now moved from localized provincial policies to a generalized regional policy coordinated by the Ministry of the Interior. On 30 May 1915, the Ottoman Ministry of the Interior issued the now infamous relocation order to remove the Armenians from the six provinces to camps in the Euphrates River valley in Syria.⁴⁸ Certainly the events that happened in tiny Dörtyol and in the nearby hinterlands of Alexandretta were not the only reason for the relocations, they were merely some of dozens of incidents involving Armenians (and there were many other hotspots of actual insurgency, notably near Karahisar, Erzurum, Kayseri, Sivas, Urfa, Van and Zeytun). Nevertheless, because of its strategic location on the railway lines, Dörtyol seemed to assume an importance that belied the insignificance of its size.⁴⁹ And what put Dörtyol 'on the map' of the Ministry of the Interior were Captain Larkin's aggressive bombardments, landings and bridge busting.

The scale of the Armenian relocations in 1915 are well documented and involved perhaps as many as half a million people, all of whom had to be fed, clothed, housed, and guarded. It was a huge drain on the already strained Ottoman resource base. Unfortunately, there are no easily accessible numbers, either of the financial cost or the number of Ottoman gendarmes and local security men needed to secure such a large number of people, but it is reasonable to conclude that the Ottomans expended a large amount of human and material resources that might have been used more productively elsewhere.

There were additional strategic effects from the allied naval raids and landings in the Gulf of Alexandretta that are significant. Concerned about their vulnerable coastlines the Ottoman general staff ordered the activation of an infantry division on 9 April 1915 and assigned it an operational area centred on Alexandretta. The new division was flagged as the 41st Infantry Division and raised three new regiments (the 131st–133rd Infantry Regiments) built around a nucleus of the 72nd, 76th, and 78th Infantry Regiments' depot battalions and older reservists.⁵⁰ The new division was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Hüseyin, who began training his troops for combat in the spring and summer of 1915. The division also received a smaller than usual complement of artillery, engineers and cavalry. That summer, Lieutenant Colonel Hüseyin assigned his 133rd Infantry regiment to coastal defence duties covering Dörtyol and Alexandretta.⁵¹ The other regiments were used to suppress Armenian insurrections at Urfa and Zeytun in the autumn. At the same time, the Ottoman high command activated two additional divisions for coastal defence, the

44th Infantry Division to defend the Mersin and Adana area and the 23rd Infantry Division to defend the Syrian coast. Altogether the Ottomans activated three infantry divisions as garrisons for their north-eastern Mediterranean coastal region, which amounted to around 7 per cent of their operational divisional force pool.⁵² These divisions remained in place and on guard throughout the remainder of the war. Thus they became for all practical purposes, with the exception of a couple of months of counter-insurgency operations against the Armenians, operationally useless since after Gallipoli the British never again seriously considered another large-scale amphibious invasion in the First World War.

Arguably, in the end, Larkin's missions were a failure as the Ottoman lines of communication were never seriously disrupted nor did the prospective British amphibious invasion at Alexandretta ever take place. Nevertheless, Captain Frank Larkin's voyages in command of *HMS Doris* in the winter of 1914–15 had an effect out of all proportion to their duration and scale. Larkin's activities were so actively consistent and aggressive that the Ottomans came to believe that a British amphibious invasion was being coordinated with and supported by an imminent Armenian insurrection in the vicinity of Dörtyol. Unintentionally, Larkin played a key role in driving the Turks to some very poor decisions. It is problematic to imagine that had Larkin actually been tasked to conduct deception operations or diversionary activities that his raiding would have been nearly as convincing as what he actually accomplished. In any case, there is no question that Larkin and *HMS Doris* helped convince the Turks to make strategic decisions that diverted substantial valuable and scarce resources away from the war effort.

Notes

1. E.H.H. Archibald, *The Fighting Ship in the Royal Navy AD 897–1984* (Poole, Dorset: Blandford Press, 1984), p.194.
2. Sailing Orders 'Doris' from RH Peirse to CO, *HMS Doris*, 13 Dec. 1914, The National Archives, Kew, London, UK (TNA), CAB 137/1091.
3. *Ibid.*, see para. 5.
4. Report from Larkin to Peirse, 27 Dec. 1914, p.1, TNA, CAB 37/124. For some unexplained reason the seaplane had a French pilot named Lieutenant Vaisseau Marcel Destrem and an English observer named T.R. Herbert!
5. *Ibid.*, p.3. It is clear from North Carolina's officers that the local Turks were very apprehensive over the presence of the *Doris*.
6. For a very readable account of the *HMS Doris* voyages see Vice-Admiral C.V. Osborne, *Smoke on the Horizon: Mediterranean Fighting 1914–1918* (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1933), pp.20–40.
7. Report from Larkin to Peirse, 27 Dec. 1914, p.4.
8. This episode was source of great discomfort to Larkin, who was very disturbed at the thought his actions might result in harm to hostages and he enclosed all of these messages in his report to Peirse. Larkin apparently had a heightened sense of honour in observing contemporary rules of war. See Enclosures 2 and 3 to Larkin's report.
9. Report from Larkin to Peirse, 27 Dec. 1914, p.6.
10. *Ibid.*, p.8.
11. *Ibid.*, p.9.
12. Report from Larkin to Peirse, 17 Jan. 1915, p.3, TNA, CAB 37/124.
13. *Ibid.*, p.5.

14. *HMS Doris*, Copy of Log, For January 1915, entry for 7 Jan. 1915, TNA, ADM 153/40058 (hereafter *HMS Doris*, log entry for).
15. Report from Larkin to Peirse, 17 Jan. 1915, p.9, TNA, CAB 37/124.
16. *Ibid.*, p.9.
17. *Ibid.*, p.11.
18. *Ibid.*, p.16.
19. *HMS Doris*, log entry for 20 Jan. 1915, TNA, ADM 153/40058.
20. *HMS Doris*, log entry for 24 Jan. 1915, TNA, ADM 153/40058.
21. *HMS Doris*, log entry for 30 Jan. 1915, TNA, ADM 153/40058. See Larkin's enclosure to Report of Proceedings 8 Feb. 1915 for a list of prisoners by name, race, birthplace and religion, TNA, CAB 37/124/13.
22. A.F. Erden, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Suriye Haturaları* [Memoirs of Syria in the First World War] (Istanbul: Kültür Yayınları, 2003), p.115. These are the memoirs of Ali Fuad, who was a Fourth Army staff officer in Damascus.
23. From the very beginning of the war British Intelligence in Cairo (and what would become the Arab Bureau) were actively engaged in a propaganda and subversion campaign in an effort to incite rebellion among the Ottoman Empire's restive minorities. See S. Shaw, *The Ottoman Empire in World War I* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2008), Vol.2, pp.1228–64 and 1612–743.
24. See Sailing Orders *HMS Doris*, 13 Dec. 1914 and ciphered telegram from C. in C. East Indies, Port Said to Admiralty, 8 Jan. 1915, TNA, ADM 137/1091, which reaffirmed the interdiction mission.
25. Report on Landing Facilities near Alexandretta, 7 Jan. 1915, TNA, CAB 37/124/13.
26. Letter from Larkin to Peirse, 6 Feb. 1915, TNA, CAB 37/124/13.
27. G.H. Cassar, *Kitchener's War, British Strategy from 1914 to 1916* (Washington, DC: Brassey's Inc, 2004), see pp.120–24 for a particularly readable discussion of the War Council's deliberations and decisions regarding these events.
28. Memorandum Cheetham to Edward Grey, 14 Oct. 1914, TNA, FO 438/4, 70404. Nubar continued to press the allies for an invasion of the Levantine coast (Cilicia) throughout the spring of 1915 and promised that they would be supported by a 'unified rebellion of Armenians against Turkish authorities wherever possible'. See Boghos Nubar to Sahag Catholicos of Cilicia, Heliopolis, Egypt, 17 April 1915, document 5 in V. Ghazarian (ed.), *Boghos Nubar's Papers and the Armenian Question, 1915–1918* (Waltham MA: Mayreni Publishing, 1996), p 203. Nubar later led the Armenian delegation at Versailles in 1919.
29. Y. Sheffy, *British Military Intelligence in the Palestine Campaign 1914–1918* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), pp.48–83. Sheffy noted that the activities of January 1915 were among the most successful and that in 1915, 13 agents were successfully landed on the Levantine coast but that at least three were intercepted by the Turks.
30. Memorandum by Lord Kitchener to Committee of Imperial Defence, 'Alexandretta and Mesopotamia', 16 March 1915, CAB 37/124/12.
31. ATASE (T.C. Genelkurmay Başkanlığı, Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Arşivi) [Turkish Military Archives, Ankara, Turkey], *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, IVncü Cilt İnci Kısım, Sina-Filistin Cephesi, Harbin Başlangıcından İkinci Gazze Muharbeleri Sonuna Kadar* [Sinai-Palestine Campaign, From the Beginning of the War to the Battle of Second Gaza] (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1979), pp.698–704.
32. ATASE, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Türk Harbi, Vıncı Cilt, Hicaz, Asir, Yemen Cephesi ve Libya Harekatı 1914–1918* [The Hicaz, Asir, Yemen Campaigns and Libyan Operations] (Ankara: Genelkurmay Basımevi, 1978), pp.740–45.
33. See E.J. Erickson, *Ordered to Die, A History of the Ottoman Army in the First World War* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2000) for a comprehensive summary of the geography and weaknesses of the Ottoman railway system.
34. ATASE, 41nci Piyade Tümen Tarihçesi [History of the 41st Infantry Division], (unpublished staff study by Sıtkı Atamer, 1969), p.3, ATASE Archive Folder 26–344.
35. ATASE, *Sina-Filistin Cephesi*, pp.335–40. Additionally, the Fourth Army staff was also very concerned about the possibility of an Arab uprising in their rear centered on Aleppo and Damascus.
36. Instructions from the Minister of the Interior to the Governor of Adana, 16 Feb. 1915, BOA DH, File 50/141 reproduced in TCBD, *Osmanlı Belgelerinde Ermeniler* (1915–20) [Armenians in Ottoman Documents 1915–20] (Ankara: Osmanlı Arşivi Daire, 1995), p.20.

37. Report from Governor of Adana to Ministry of Internal Affairs, National Police Directorate, ATASE BDH (Birinci Dünya Savaş Koleksiyon) [First World War Collection], File 13, Folder 63, Index 2 (1–3).
38. Report from Ministry of Internal Affairs to Fourth Army, 4 March 1915 and Headquarters Fourth Army Cipher Number 2247, 28 Feb. 1915. ATASE BDH, File 13, Folder 63, Index 2 (1–3).
39. The level of coordination between the Ottoman ministries in Constantinople was surprisingly effective and, in some cases throughout the war, put the Turks in possession of superior spatial and situational awareness compared to their enemies.
40. Message No.8682, from First Division, General Staff to all armies, army areas, and general staff divisions, 25 Feb. 1915 (coded for release 27 Feb. 1915). ATASE BDH, File 2287, Folder 12, Index 9.
41. Orders from Ministry of the Interior, General Secretariat of Security to the Governor of Adana, 2 March 1915. BOA DH (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi – Dahiliye Nezareti Arşivi) [Prime Minister’s Ottoman Archives – Ministry of the Interior Archives], File 50/141, reproduced in H. Ozdemir and Y. Sarinay (eds.), *Türk-Ermeni İhtilafı Belegeler* [Turkish–Armenian Conflict Documents] (Ankara: Egemenlik, undated).
42. Ciphred telegram from Talat, Minister of the Interior to Fourth Army Commander Cemal Pasha, 11 April 1915. BOA DH, File 52/93, reproduced in Ozdemir and Sarinay (eds.), *Türk-Ermeni İhtilafı Belegeler*.
43. Report No.226 from Vice Consul Alexandretta (Hoffman) to Ambassador Wangenheim, Constantinople, 7 March 1915. AP-AA (Politisches Archiv des Auswartigen Amts) [German Foreign Ministry], Embassy Constantinople/Vol.168, translated and reprinted at <http://www.armenocide.de>.
44. Report No.2234 from Consul Adana (Brüge) to Ambassador Wangenheim Constantinople, 13 March 1915. AP-AA, Embassy Constantinople/Vol.168, translated and reprinted at <http://www.armenocide.de>.
45. Ibid.
46. Message from the Directorate of Security, Ministry of the Interior to the Fourth Army Command, 23 May 1915. BOA DH, File 53/94, reproduced in Ozdemir and Sarinay (eds.), *Türk-Ermeni İhtilafı Belegeler*.
47. See Erden, *Birinci Dünya Harbinde Suriye Hatıraları*. In his memoirs, Ali Fuad, who was a Fourth Army staff officer, noted that 50 kilos of dynamite were found hidden in a house nest to the Ceyhan–Dortyol railway bridge on 17 April 1915.
48. Ministry of the Interior Regulation from the Department of Tribes and Immigrants, 30 May 1915, ATASE BDH, File 361, Folder 1445, Index 1.
49. For a comprehensive analysis of the Armenian insurrection of 1915 and its effect on the Ottoman strategic posture in 1915 see E.J. Erickson, ‘The Armenians and Ottoman Military Policy, 1915’, *War in History*, Vol.15, No.2 (2008), pp.141–67.
50. ATASE, 41nci Piyade Tümen Tarihçesi, p.4.
51. The story of the Ottoman 41st Infantry Division and its subsequent battles against the Armenian insurgency may be found in E.J. Erickson, ‘Bayonets on Musa Dagh: Ottoman Counter Insurgency Operations – 1915’, *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol.28, No.3 (June 2005), pp.529–48.
52. The Ottomans mobilized 61 infantry divisions in the First World War, of which about 45 were active at any particular time. See Erickson, *Ordered to Die*, for a complete listing of Ottoman force pools by year from 1914–18.