

smashed the German tank advance, the infantry beating off heavy attacks made through woods under cover of mist. The success of the German thrust against the Greeks on the left threatened the rear of the Olympus position, and a withdrawal to the Thermopylæ Line was ordered for the 16th and 17th April, Brigadier Barrowclough's 6th Brigade Group moving to a covering position south of Elasson. After fighting with great determination and repulsing heavy attacks the 4th and 5th Brigade Groups and the Australians retired again under the cover of mists to the south of the 6th Brigade Group. Meanwhile the 21st Battalion had been forced back from the tunnel by tremendous odds, including a large armoured force. Later, with Brigadier Allen's Australian Brigade Group, they held the Peneios Gorge position. The 21st Battalion suffered heavy casualties. The stands at Peneios and Elasson, where British, Australian, and New Zealand artillery took toll of enemy tanks, breaking attacks, were vital.

WITHDRAWAL FROM GREECE.

The force was finally disengaged on the night of 13th April, and the Division withdrew 100 miles to the Thermopylæ Line. The remarkable success of this withdrawal surprised both the enemy and ourselves. The Division now prepared a line at the historic Thermopylæ Pass, while the Australians barred the other Athens road. This was destined to be only a temporary position, as the collapse of the gallant Greek Army made the continuation of the fight impossible. Brigadier Barrowclough's force, with Divisional Artillery and British batteries, held the Pass. At dusk on Anzac Eve they beat off a strong German attack, 25-pounders destroying a large number of tanks. Disengaging by dark the 6th Brigade Group withdrew through the 4th Brigade Group which included Australian Artillery holding a covering position south of Thebes. That night the 5th Brigade Group successfully embarked for Crete. The artillery and other divisional troops, totalling 3,600, embarked on the night of 26th/27th April. On the 27th the 4th Brigade Group, after being cut off by parachute attacks on the Corinth Canal, fought a determined rearguard action almost on the beach at Porto Rafti, near Marathon, keeping the enemy at bay and embarking safely. Meanwhile the Divisional Headquarters and the 6th Brigade Group moved to Peloponessus, crossing the Corinth Canal just ahead of a parachute attack on the morning of the 26th. The 26th Battalion attacked and held the air-borne troops, and subsequently, with the remainder of the 6th Brigade Group and attached British and Australian troops, continued the withdrawal through Tripolis and Sparta to Monemvasia. Final evacuation took place on the night of 28th.

I very much regret the loss of so many of our first-line reinforcements and details headquarters left at Athens. The party reached Kalamata, but, owing to the temporary occupation of the town by Germans and the subsequent loss of contact between ships and the land, it was only possible to embark a small party. All branches of the service reached a high standard. The achievements of the infantry, and the artillery under Brigadier Miles have already been mentioned. The demolition of roads and bridges by the engineers, by delaying the enemy continually, was a great contribution to successful withdrawal. Signals maintained communications during most difficult operations. The Army Service Corps, including the Reserve Motor Transport Company, played a great part in supplying the forces throughout the whole of the operations and in carrying troops. The medical services carried out their duties with great efficiency. Almost all the wounded who could be moved were evacuated. The 6th Brigade Group and 6th Field Regiment were ordered to Egypt, the remainder disembarking at Crete.

CRETE.

In Crete the New Zealand Division, commanded by Brigadier Puttick, comprised the 4th Brigade Group (Brigadier Inglis), 5th Brigade Group (Brigadier Hargest), and 10th Composite Brigade Group (Colonel Kippenberger), the last including an improvised New Zealand Battalion of Artillery and A.S.C. personnel and two Greek battalions. Living-conditions were hard owing to the shortage of blankets, clothing, cooking-utensils, knives, forks, spoons, &c. The first twenty-days period