

Unfortunately, the letter is not dated or signed. It is believed the account, which gives an excellent insight into a WW1 patrol, was written by Leonard Charles Sheppard, who later achieved the rank of Commander.

My thanks to Jane Dobner for supplying me with this information.

Copy of an undated letter

from

H. M. Submarine E7.

We returned yesterday after 24 days up the Dardanelles in the sea of Marmora. It is hopeless to try and give a detailed acc in a letter, but you take it from me, it was a fine show. We broke all previous records. Cokerane was absolutely splendid. The tale of our doings is the sort of thing one reads of in the old days. We went round the sea of Marmora leaving a trail of sunk and burning ships. We fairly shook things to the core. We are the first submarine in history to bombard a place on shore under fire. I think we were under fire about 3 times a day on an average, & penetrated into all sorts of places & destroyed shipping. We even shelled a railway & destroyed 2 troop trains. We shelled the embankment and blocked the line, & then caught the trains as they came along. It was the funniest thing you can imagine to see the trains try to hide behind trees, but we caught her and smashed her all to blazes. Three ammunition blows up with a tremendous explosion. The soldiers of course got out, & took cover & fired tons of ammunition at us, but we were out of range. Altogether we sunk one gun boat, 5 steamers, 1 of 3000 tons, & 17 large sailing ships,

us got it in the neck for doing so. We also dived up to Constantinople & fired a torpedo at the wharf at the arsenal, where there were a lot of ammunition lighters, & there was a most terrific explosion, which shook the boat altho' we were $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles away. What happened I don't know but something must have got it in the neck judging by the bang. We had a duel with a small gunboat one day on the surface but I drove her off altho' she fired 200 rounds from her 2 guns. After that we were left alone & everything ran like blazes directly we got anywhere near. The only drawback was that we all had dysentery & Halifax the 2nd officer & a seaman got badly burnt setting fire to a steamer, so Cochrane & I had to keep watch all the time, & by the time the 24 days were gone, we were absolutely done up. What Halifax had no trouble diving in the sea of Maronora, but when we came down we had an awful time, as the Turks rigged up all sorts of nets & things to catch us & we got mined up in them, & also fouled the mines 3 times. The reception we got in harbour was great. The whole fleet & everything manned the rails & cheered us madly. Just imagine us, all dirty & unshaved & the flag with bullet holes all over it & the conning tower all dented from bullets & rusty & steaming through the line & thousands of men cheering like mad, battleships, cruisers, torpedo boats, transports & the Captains leading the cheers. It was great, I have heard cheers before, but this was the real thing. Poor old Cochrane's eyes were full of tears as he saluted to "Are we downhearted?" & "Well done E!" At present I am resting on land & basking in the light of popular favour. It is very nice to be a hero among one's own cloth, you know because they really mean it and understand!"