

## CHAPTER V

At grips with the Turks—Battalion experiences heavy shelling—Death of Colonel Braund—Changes in the allotment of officers.

**T**HE first day of May found the battalion still recuperating on the beach with reorganisation completed, but a summons of the staff to brigade indicated an early move, and this took place at 8 a.m. on the following day, when the Second moved up Victoria Gully to a position in support of the R.M.L.I. Late that evening further orders sent A Coy. under Dignam and B Coy. under Pain into the line at the head of the gully, with three casualties during the move.

The Turks shelled heavily on May 3, and Morshead with C Coy. swept the ridge on the right of the position for snipers, three men being hit during the operation. Lieut. G. W. Brown was detailed with a party from C and D companies to collect equipment from, and bring in the Australian dead lying in the battalion sector.

Brigade summoned all machine guns to headquarters so that they might be posted to the best advantage and their work co-ordinated. The line at this time was far from being consolidated, and enemy snipers were most active, quite a number of them presumably being behind our own line.

Just after midnight on May 3-4 Braund received orders to send up part of the battalion to reinforce the 3rd Battalion in the line, and he despatched Morshead with C Coy. Braund himself was constantly and fearlessly on the move, exercising supervision down to the smallest detail. To save time he frequently took short cuts, and was as a rule deeply engrossed in thought. After despatching C Coy. to the line, Braund set out for Brigade Headquarters, saying that he would be back

**Death of  
Lt.-Col.  
Braund**

in about twenty minutes. A sentry on duty at Second H.Q. heard a challenge from a piquet, followed by a shot—a common enough occurrence—and took no further notice.

At 2 a.m. on May 4 Morshead reported to battalion that Braund's body had been found near a track leading to Brigade Headquarters. Stevens immediately notified the Brigadier, and instituted inquiries on which he submitted a report. It showed that Braund had not used the track to brigade, but had jumped over the trenches and gone through the scrub. A sentry of a piquet reported to his sergeant, who visited him at 1 a.m., that he had challenged a man in the scrub and had then fired as the man kept on his way without response. A search of the bushes revealed the body of Braund. The sentry was relieved from duty, but, after a most searching enquiry, was entirely freed from all blame.

The country was rough and broken, Turks were suspected of being everywhere, the Australian position was still far from being secure, and sentries had been specially warned to be prompt both in challenging and firing. Braund was slightly deaf, a defect which was probably accentuated by the incessant din of a week's battle, and doubtless he failed to hear the challenge. An examination revealed that he had been shot in the head at close range, a victim to the quality of alertness which he had so ably instilled into his men. So passed the first commander of the Second, the birth of which he had witnessed and the training of which had been his passion until it had reached a pitch of efficiency which measured up even to his high standards.

Of Braund's courage and leadership much can be said. The account of those first three days after the landing bears sufficient testimony to his qualities as a soldier and a man, and no epitaph could be more fitting to a man than the words: "He was a trainer of Anzacs."