



Sailor in the Desert: The Adventures of Phillip Gunn, DSM, RN in the Mesopotamia Campaign, 1915

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Sailor in the Desert is the personal account of a Royal Navy sailor's experiences during the Mesopotamian campaign of 1915. As an able seaman on an armed sloop supporting the British expedition up the River Tigris, Philip Gunn's recollections give a rare perspective of this ill-fated campaign.

At the outbreak of war, Phillip Gunn was serving on HMS Clio, a naval sloop fitted with sails and guns stationed in China and immediately tasked with hunting the soon-to-be-famous German cruiser Emden, but failed to prevent her escape. Gunn and Clio were next in action defending the Suez Canal against an attempted Turkish invasion before joining the expedition to invade Turkish-held Mesopotamia (Iraq).

When the River Tigris became too shallow for Clio, Gunn took over a Calcutta River Police launch. He towed improvised gunboats to bombard the enemy in close support of the advancing land forces, whose assaults on enemy positions he witnessed. Though he repeatedly came under fire, it was malaria which finally struck him down during the pivotal Battle of Ctesiphon. He was fortunate to survive the journey back down river.

Sailor in the Desert is an authentic account drawn from Phillip Gunn's unpublished memoirs as well as conversations with the author, his son David. It is illustrated with archive photographs and color paintings by Philip Gunn himself.

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