

As part of 86th Brigade, 29th Division - 2/3 London Regiment arrived in Mudros Harbour, Lemnos, on September 18th, and landed at Suvla Bay on the 24th. The battalion lost some 20 men from Turkish artillery as they constructed winter quarters.

After a period of moving in and out of the line, on November 27th the battalion was in the front line when Suvla Bay was subjected to horrendous weather conditions. Rain had fallen all day, leaving several inches of water at the bottom of the trenches and conditions difficult for the troops. But the situation rapidly deteriorated when water cascaded from the hills and travelled along the trenches like a tidal wave, drowning men and filling the trenches to the parapet. Lt.Col. Bendell, the CO of 2/3 London Regiment, described the situation as he experienced it: 'As I listened in the flickering light there was a curious slapping noise in the slit outside, and a great snake of water came around the curve - breast high - and washed me backwards into the dugout. I was off my feet for a moment, and then, sodden and gasping, I was in the doorway again. Another moment and I was in the open air, and the horror of drowning under the dugout roof was gone.'

Those who survived the flooding found themselves soaked through and in the open, without weapons or rations. The evening turned bitterly cold and Gallipoli turned into a frozen quagmire. Many who lived through the flooding succumbed to exposure that night or the following day. Bendall described the battalion's plight in the aftermath of the flooding: 'No Man's Land was a lake. No attack would come over that for some time. North and south the front trench was full of sullen brown water, and behind it was no sign of life... On our way back to headquarters we saw a number of bodies of men who had obviously died of cold and exhaustion... In this hole we existed for another forty-eight hours. No rations came up in all that time... We had nothing dry of any kind, no matches, tobacco, paper, clothes. That evening it began to freeze and the night was bitter. The M.O. died in his sleep, and two other men also... Moving about carefully on the top we found a number of bodies. None was wounded, all had died of exposure. Two brothers of 'C' Company had died together. The arm of one was around the other's neck, the fingers held a piece of biscuit to the frozen mouth. It seemed a strange and inexplicable thing that these men who had come here to fight, and had fought bravely, had been killed by the elements.'

2/3 London Regiment lost over 50 men from drowning and exposure during the storm, with another 300+ evacuated with frostbite. The army as a whole lost 600 men, with another 6,000 becoming casualties of the conditions.