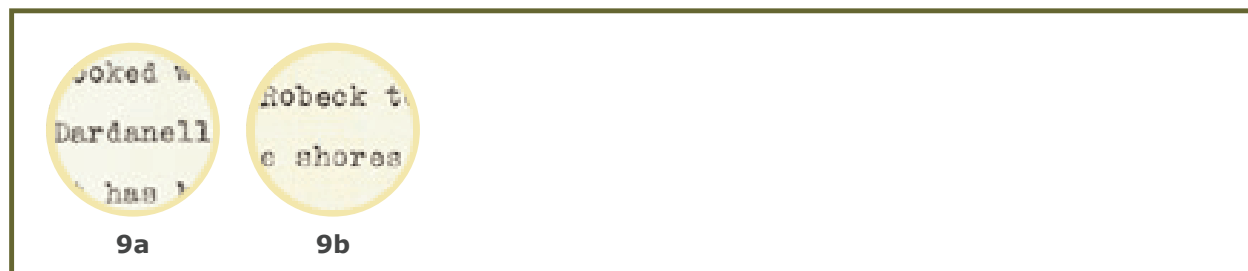




Source 9

Extracts from a letter by Admiral Sir John Fisher to Winston Churchill, May 1915
(Catalogue ref: CAB 63/4)



How to use this source:

Study this source carefully. It contains information that could be useful in your presentation. As you study the source, ask yourself:

- What is Admiral Fisher's attitude towards the Gallipoli campaign?
- What does Fisher base his views on?
- What connections can you find between this source and source 2?
- Does this source suggest that the military commanders supported the Gallipoli campaign?
- Will you use this source in your presentation?



Source 9a

The time has come when I must place on record my conviction that an attack by the Fleet on the Dardanelles Ports, or any attempt to rush the Straits without assistance from the Army, is doomed to failure, and is fraught with possibilities of disaster out of all proportion to any advantage to be expected therefrom.

I have always insisted that the North Sea is the proper theatre of operations of our Fleet, since there alone is it possible for the enemy to cause us irreparable disaster. For this reason I have looked with misgiving on the drain of naval force to the Dardanelles, which has been carried out so gradually, that it has been difficult for me to decide at what point danger was occasioned in the North Sea.

In my opinion we cannot afford to expose any more ships to the risk of loss in the Dardanelles, since the ships there, though not consisting in the main of first line units, are the reserve on which we depend for supremacy in the event of any unforeseen disaster.



Source 9b

For the above reasons I cannot, under any circumstances, be a party to any order to Admiral de Robeck to make an attempt to pass the Dardanelles until the shores have been occupied. I consider that naval action unsupported by the Army, would merely lead to heavy loss of ships and invaluable men, without any reasonable prospect of a success in any way proportionate to the losses, or the possible consequences of those losses. I wish it to be clearly understood that I dissociate myself from any such project.