

The Gallipolian

The Journal of the Gallipoli Association

No. 154 - Winter 2020



THE GALLIPOLIAN

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The Journal of the Gallipoli Association
founded by Major E H W Banner in 1969 on the Campaign of 1915

The Gallipoli Association

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ARTICLES FOR THE GALLIPLIAN

Articles and items of interest about any aspect of the Gallipoli campaign are always welcome. These should be submitted direct to the editor, preferably as an e-mail attachment, at the email address shown opposite. Because there is sometimes a significant amount of material awaiting publication, it is not always possible to feature articles in the issue following submission, though if topical, the editor will try to accommodate them or refer them to colleagues for the Association website. For those considering the submission of articles the editor can provide a copy of ‘Notes for the Guidance of Contributors’ on request.

This edition’s cover

Gunners of either the 21st or 26th Indian Mountain Artillery at Anzac, 1915.
 Photographer T P Bennett; hand-coloured glass lantern slide, 8.5 x 8.5 cm.
 State Library of Victoria H83.103/311.

ANZAC / GALLIPOLI DAY — 25TH APRIL 2021

Expression of Interest in Attending the Commemorative Events

At this stage and trying to be optimistic, we are asking members who wish to participate in the Parade and Cenotaph ceremony **or** wish to view it from the west side of Whitehall (tickets being required in each case) **and/or** would wish to be considered for a ticket to attend the service at Westminster Abbey, to indicate on the enclosed flyer and send back to the Hon. Secretary – Sarah Kellam - by post or email (secretary@gallipoli-association.org)

Please note: an expression of interest is sought for administrative purposes only if life has returned to normal by then.

It would also be helpful to indicate whether you wish to attend an Anzac / Gallipoli Day lunch if a suitable venue can be arranged.

Please return the enclosed form (or send an email with **all** the information requested) by **25th January 2021**. You will be contacted when details are available.

Many thanks for your forbearance.

GALLIPOLI BATTLEFIELD TOUR — 9–14 MAY, 2021

Please note the Association is planning to run two tours in May; our popular ‘Walking Gallipoli’ tour for those who have not been to the battlefield before, and a ‘Hidden Gallipoli’ tour for those who have, and would like to return to explore different parts of the battlefield. For details visit the website at <https://gallipoli-association.org/events/> or email tours@gallipoli-association.org.

ASSOCIATION’S MIDLAND REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The follow up to last year’s highly successful regional conference will be held at the Warwick Arms Hotel, Warwick on Saturday 20th March 2021, from 10.00 to 4.00.

We have an exciting range of speakers lined up – Steven Chambers, Peter Hart, Mike Crane and Martin Purdy.

Topics will include the Lancashire Fusiliers, the story of the Gallipoli oak and the 29th Division at Krithia.

On the following day there will be a commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the dedication of the 29th Division memorial. This will be led by the Lord Bishop of Coventry at All Saints Church, Stretton upon Dunsmore.

The cost will be £15 and, with a limit of 70 places, booking is essential. Obviously no-one knows what the situation will be regarding Covid-19. We are expecting a fully live experience. If, however, restrictions dictate, the conference will be held via *Zoom*.

Details of how to book will be circulated in the new year. To register an interest now and guarantee a ticket, contact Ian Binnie GA Education coordinator, education@gallipoli-association.org. At this stage the lineup is subject to change.

ARMISTICE DAY, 2020

Michael D. Robson

The disappointment at the cancellation of the regular ceremony marking 25th April was again felt in November, when the British embassy in Israel decided to mark Remembrance Sunday with a service at Haifa.

Alas, numbers there had to be restricted in accordance with Covid-19 regulations, however this did help to protect the few attending veterans. See photos page 32-33.

The regulations allowed groups to gather in a public space, provided no more than 20 people attended, and fortunately this permitted the committee of the *WWI Heritage Society of Israel* to quickly organise an event.

The society's tour of Ramleh CWGC Cemetery was guided by the chairman, Mr Eran Tearosh, who carefully planned the morning so that at 11 o'clock we were able to include an *Act of Remembrance*.

A recording of the *Last Post* was played, a minute's silence was observed and Binyon's lines were recited. Floral tributes were then laid, including one from the Gallipoli Association. This *Act of Remembrance*, though brief and uncluttered by grand ceremony, was nevertheless heartfelt and respectful.

I feel it was also highly appropriate to acknowledge the Gallipoli veterans who, after their gruelling service on the peninsula, went on for three more years, marching and fighting across the Sinai, through Palestine and Syria, up to the gates of Anatolia: the Anzacs, the 10th, 52nd, 53rd and 54th Divisions, and the Yeomanry.

We Will Remember Them.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE, WESTMINSTER ABBEY

November 2020

This important occasion was able to go ahead despite a second lockdown in the UK. In a difficult year, the Gallipoli Association was able to fill a plot, thanks to all the kind contributors who have not forgotten their loved ones involved in the Gallipoli campaign.

We will remember them.

Many thanks to Clive Summerson who arranged the plot so expertly again this year. See photo on page 29, courtesy of Clive Summerson.

SANDRINGHAM & CHISWICK WAR MEMORIALS

The laying of the Gallipoli Association wreath at Sandringham War Memorial this year went ahead thanks, again, to Tom Williamson. See photo page 29.

Due to Covid restrictions we were unable to lay wreaths at the Cenotaph, but Simon Kleinig laid the Gallipoli Association's wreath at Chiswick War Memorial, London. See photo page 29.

A FEW WORDS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Gallipoli Association having its first virtual AGM pretty much sums up this extraordinary year. But as many of you were not able to tune into the AGM, I thought a quick update may be of interest.

Despite the many deprivations we have all had to endure I am pleased the Association has continued to thrive. Covid-19 drove a horse and coaches through our plans for this year but we have still had some successes including the Northern Regional Conference on 14 March.

We have focused on planning for life beyond Covid and this has included writing a GA Plan 2020–2025 which reiterates our commitment to our objectives and how we aim to achieve them. It finishes with listing 4 main areas for future development.

- a. Enhancing communications
- b. Increasing memberships
- c. Improving funding
- d. Measuring impact

With improved communications I believe membership will increase and funding will follow, especially when combined with measurement of the impact we have.

Financially we are in a reasonable position, particularly with a generous grant from the Rothschild Eranda Foundation earlier this year to cover school trips for the next three years. This, combined with the generous support to our education appeal, means we can continue to make a difference for the immediate future. And if the pandemic curtails overseas travel into 2021 then we will look to do more in the UK to deliver against our *Remember, Honour and Study* objectives.

We have also been fortunate to receive some generous bequests recently. These have allowed us to do more and I hope that the ambitious plan to digitally map the peninsula will now be achieved before time erases the history from it.

The recent call to arms has resulted in volunteers coming forward. I am grateful to Bernard de Broglio for becoming the newsletter and web editor, Robert Rathbone the Comms officer, and Hester Huttenbach for helping with events. A strong team which will enable us to deliver our plan. I am still looking for a Treasurer to take over late in 2021 so please do think of volunteering, or volunteer a friend!

We hope 2021 will see us return to something more akin to normality. The Midlands Regional Conference is planned for 20 March 2021 in Warwick, followed by a small ceremony at the memorial of the 29th Division near Rugby to mark its centenary. Plans exist for the wreath-laying service at St Paul's on 25 April, at a later time to allow you to run the London Marathon should you wish to. We also have every hope to deliver both a school trip and an Annual Conference later in the year.

There is lots to do and I know we are all keen to move on from this fallow year. So, let's look forward to 2021 and, as ever, we would welcome your suggestions, encouragement and support to raise our game to honour those who served in 1915.

There is a link to the plan at: <https://www.gallipoli-association.org/the-association/>

REQUEST FOR BACK ISSUES OF THE GALLIPOLIAN

Richard Smith, MVO, wrote asking for assistance:

Although access to old copies of our journal is available both via the website and on disk, some of us still prefer to work from the original paper copy! I am looking for the following back numbers to aid my research:

Numbers 1 through to 45, 47 to 49, 51, 55 to 63, 93 and 95.

If anyone can help, I will be most grateful and offer to pay the cost of postage and packing, and to make a donation to the Association.

Please contact Richard Smith by e-mail at richard.smith@suffolk.gov.uk or by telephone on 01728 602714.

‘SMACK INTO THE ENEMY’

How The 4th Welsh Charged The Turks

A vivid narrative concerning the doings of the 4th Welsh [1/4th Bn, Welch Regiment] at the Dardanelles was given by Private Charles Maurice, of Llanelly, who is now lying in Splott Hospital, Cardiff, suffering from shrapnel wounds.

Private Maurice said the battalion, in command of Lieutenant-colonel Bramwell Jones, landed at the Dardanelles on August 14th. The battalion was divided into two sections, one-half being ordered to advance and the other to rest for a while.

“The first half,” Private Maurice continued, came smack into the enemy, and there were enough Turks there to eat us up. We had orders to fix bayonets and charge. That charge caused a number of casualties in my company (D. Company), in command of Major De Rees, Carmarthen, supported by Lieutenant White, Carmarthen, and owing to the heavy crush and ditches we found it difficult to advance.

My platoon tried to get through a small gap, and I noticed that some of them were killed there, so I went to a lower gap, where I got at close grips with two Turks. I popped the first one off, but the second nearly popped me off, but failed to find the vital spot.

Sergeant A. Morris, Llanelly, temporarily attended to my wounds, and on the way to the dressing station I passed Captain Howard [*Alfred Heywood. Howard, KIA, Suvla, 10 August 1915 – ed.*], son of Mr. Joseph Howard, J.P., of Penarth, who had been wounded. At the time I met him he was being attended by the medical staff.

At the dressing station I came across a number of my half of the battalion who had been hit, and their wounds were being dressed by doctors. My impression of the situation is that once we get out of our present position the Turks will have no chance, as there is a twelve mile stretch of country behind them in which they can’t possibly live when we start them on the run.

(*South Wales Weekly Post* 11 September 1915 p2).

RICHARD BOWEN WOOSNAM: THE MAN WHO DIED TWICE

1880-1915

J M Brown

This article originally appeared in *The Gallipolitan* no 103 of Winter 2003.

David Saunders MBE, previously editor of *The Gallipolitan*, alerted me to the fact that Lieut Woosnam, subject of the newspaper extract in No 153 ('African Explorer Killed') had previously been the subject of this full article. It's likely that many of our members do not have editions from 2003, so I have included the article here once more. - *Editor*

Tumbling down from the Cambrian Mountains - the very backbone of Wales - the tiny River Severn wanders eastwards along the course which rambles into neighbouring England; then southwards and out into the Bristol Channel, skirted on its north bank by Wales, the country of its birth. Barely ten miles from its source in the nearby mountain range lies the little town of Llanidloes, an ancient site of human occupation, sitting almost exactly in the centre of Wales. The Severn flows right through this old town, whose history reaches back to the seventh century when a Celtic ecclesiastic, St Idloes, made a start on a church overlooking the stream. The classic medieval town possesses a rich history based initially on the industries of wool and flannel. Later, in the nineteenth century, the lead mining which the Romans had pioneered centuries before, was revived and the town prospered, with even a railway serving its needs and connecting its valley lair with the outside world. And during all these times the venerable church of St Idloes quietly watched over the little town's progress.

Inside St Idloes church will be found the usual complement of memorial plaques, and one of them is of particular relevance to this tale. In white marble, it holds the names of several members of the Woosnam family, a name common enough in that part of Britain. The final inscription, at the very bottom of the plaque, gives the name of a man who in his short life subscribed much to the honour of his country: as a soldier in two of the British Empire's wars, and as a naturalist of considerable stature in international circles. Willingly he gave his all to these services, and died in battle at Gallipoli in 1915. He has no known grave, and even the place of his death was a mystery, until careful research verified what the St Idloes church plaque clearly indicated - Gallipoli.

On 17 November 1880, Kate Woosnam gave birth to her only son, Richard Bowen Woosnam. He was the third of her four children, the others all girls. There was confusion as to the place of his birth. His birth certificate is clear in its declaration that he was born at 41 Warwick Gardens, Kensington, London. According to this document his father, Bowen Pottinger Woosnam, was at the time a barrister-at-law, and gave the above as his home address. Another source - his obituary in *The Ibis* - states emphatically that young Richard had been born at Tyn-y-Graig, Builth, Brecknockshire. One can only conclude that the officially-signed birth certificate gave the true location. The boy at some stage earned the nickname 'Boysie', and when he was old enough joined his father regularly on shooting excursions in the country, the family Game Book recording that on nearly every occasion he was 'out



2nd Lieutenant Richard Bowen Woosnam - *The Ibis* October 1915, facing p781

all day'. Those happy days fell when he was aged between 9 and 12 years, and surely must have instilled in him an enthusiasm for the pleasures of the outdoors and the interest of nature.

Nothing is known of his early schooling, but he went on to attend Wellington College in Berkshire for the final three years of his education from 1895 to 1898. A lean, athletic youth, he played in the three-quarter line of his house rugby team, but of his scholastic achievements nothing was recorded. Certainly his interest in the outdoors must have stimulated an enthusiasm for nature in its many guises, and provided the impetus which served such useful purposes in the years ahead. One can only guess at the heights to which he would have risen in the world of natural history had he been allowed a full lifespan, but in the few years he was given his accomplishments were impressive.

On leaving school Woosnam was thrust into troubled times. It was the year of Kitchener's famous victory at the Battle of Omdurman, but another war was looming in the southernmost part of the continent. Ominous war clouds were building up in 1899 between Britain and the South African Republic. The diehard Afrikaners in the Transvaal and the Orange Free State were being hard pressed by the pressures created by their new-found wealth in the form of gold and diamonds, and particularly by the consequent arrival of hordes of foreigners intent on finding riches. In the lead of these was a small band of tough, materialistic men, amongst whom were Cecil Rhodes, Alfred Beit and Julius Wemher.

The friction between these tycoons, backed by British scheming, and the aged President Paul Kruger, a seasoned old-world Boer leader, rose to an insoluble pitch and culminated in war. Into this disturbance young Woosnam was sucked, and on 4 December 1899, barely two months after war was declared, he was embodied into the militia. Three months later, on 6 March 1900, he was commissioned into the 3rd Bn Welsh Regiment as a 2nd Lieutenant, and on his way to South Africa. For two years he served in that war-torn country, being appointed to the 2nd Bn of the Worcestershire Regiment on 27 July 1901. His record of service briefly mentions that he 'took part in operations in South Africa 1900-1902; first as Railway Staff Officer; subsequently in the O.R.C.' His service in the field ended on 28 April 1902, when he sailed from Cape Town for England. On 2 October 1903 he resigned from the army, to follow a new path in life.

From his obituary in *Nature* comes this reference to the direction he later followed:

It was during this period [the Boer War] that he first became known to the Natural History Museum by sending to that institution a number of small mammal and bird skins, prepared so well that it was at once noticed that they were the work of a skilled collector and true naturalist.'

Woosnam had made his contribution as a soldier of Britain, but his heart was really in the sphere of nature and its mysteries. With this in mind he offered his services to the Museum soon after resigning from the army. The famous institution immediately seized its opportunity and put him to work.

At the beginning of the twentieth century Africa was a paradise for naturalists and hunters. Woosnam had already discovered its possibilities when on his occasional collecting forays during the Boer War. His desire to return and resume collecting in

southern Africa received encouragement from the Museum, and in early 1904 he was back in the Cape Colony in the company of a retired brother officer, R. E. Dent. There they made a collection of zoological specimens, continuing into Bechuanaland and the Kalahari in their searches.

In February 1904 the two men were busy at their work, as a letter to the museum tells, with mice, rats, bats, birds and small animals being carefully prepared and shipped regularly to London. From one letter it is evident his work was at his own expense, and time was therefore his to use as he felt fit. This was expressed in a letter he wrote to the museum in April 1904, which stated: 'I have no ambition to make a fortune out of the specimens I send and I know it is impossible, but some £.s.d. is necessary to exist and as long as I can pay my expenses I am satisfied. I do it because I like it ... I can manage till August or September when I hope to be home.' With optimism he added: 'next time I will start properly equipped with traps etc.'

On his return to England he was occupied with tidying up his field notes on the birds he had collected, and it was at that time a friend, who later wrote his obituary for *The Ibis*, recollected:

Good to look at, tall, rather slight, and cleanly built, full of life and energy; add to these physical attractions the finest character imaginable, strong, delightfully modest and simple, transparently honest. Altogether a man on whom one could absolutely rely on all occasions. As a skilled field-naturalist and taxidermist he had few equals, and few could handle a gun or rifle better, while in all sports requiring field-craft or skill he was proficient.

Woosnam's success on the South Africa trip must have impressed the Museum officials, who were at the time planning an expedition to the Ruwenzori range. His appointment as the leader of this important trip was significant, for it was the first serious attempt by white men to explore the massif's natural history. But before this extended journey came about Woosnam made a short diversion to the Middle East. Accompanying a Colonel Bailward on an expedition in western Persia and Armenia, he amassed a fine collection of birds and mammals for the Museum. With that behind him he was ready to tackle the onerous task of organising and leading the Ruwenzori expedition, one which lasted for thirteen months. The chief arranger of this long trip, with its staff of four Europeans, later wrote: 'In Woosnam I found the ideal leader.'

This mammoth undertaking, in a country still primitive in communications and conditions turned out a success story. Woosnam and his party arrived in Mombasa on 6 November 1905. It took over three weeks of travel to reach the foothills of the mountains they were to work in, and as was usual with this elusive range on only one occasion did it expose itself in full view. But the promise of an interesting collection was great, as he wrote to the Museum in late December: 'I think we shall get you some queer animals from here it is an extraordinary place.'

For months the party laboured in wet dripping conditions, reaching an altitude of 16,794 feet. This was only a matter of 20 feet below the summit point, which was reached by the huge expedition led by the Duke of Abruzzi in 1906. Collecting of every plant or creature they could find went on in all conditions of weather and altitude, and the rewards were high. By the end of the trip the inventory of specimens sent to the museum was described by a senior member of staff as: 'The

collections formed are among the finest that have ever been sent to the British Museum ... A large number of the species were new to science.' The expedition completed its journey in the mountains and returned home travelling westwards through the Congo, arriving in England late in 1906. The trip had been immensely rewarding, earning these words of praise from the Zoological Society of London:

To Mr R. B. Woosnam, the leader of the expedition, special praise is due for the admirable manner in which he conducted the exploration of Ruwenzori and brought it to a most successful termination in the face of many serious difficulties. The Zoological Society of London, in recognition of the signal services he has rendered to science on this and other similar occasions, has awarded him a silver medal; certainly no reward was ever more justly merited.

One year on, in December 1907, Woosnam read a paper to a meeting at the Royal Geographical Society in London, titled 'Ruwenzori and its Life Zones.' Some time later, another privilege was given him when he was elected a member of the British Ornithologists' Union in 1909. All in all he was proving his worth in the field of natural history, especially as a leader of collecting expeditions to far places.

Not long after his return from the Ruwenzori Woosnam was off again with Colonel Bailward, this time to the Caspian Sea and the nearby Elburz mountains, where an excellent collection was made for the British Museum. A spell in England followed, when he busily wrote up the reports of his various travels; articles appearing in the Zoological Society's 500 page account of the Ruwenzori trip, and *The Ibis*. In 1909, having cleared his desk, he returned to Africa, with the principal aim an investigation of the rapidly-drying Lake Ngami. A collection of the resident fishes, so soon to disappear, was the main objective, and this was accomplished, together with a useful assemblage of birds. All these were dutifully donated to the Museum and described by him in *The Ibis* in 1912.

It was at this point Woosnam decided on a major change of course in his life, one that provided him with a new and challenging profession, while at the same time keeping him involved in wildlife matters. It had not been an easy decision for him, deciding which of the two enticing offers he had been given was the correct one to take. In 1910 the British Museum offered him the opportunity of full-time employment at the Museum. In the same year The Secretary of State for the Colonies presented him with the chance to be the Game Warden of British East Africa. Such tempting posts put him in a quandary, and after much deliberation he finally decided. Africa it was to be.

His letter to Dr Oldfield Thomas in the Museum explained all:

I ought to have written to you long ago, but it has been difficult to make up my mind. I have given your kind offer my most serious consideration, but I am afraid I have decided against it. You will I know call me a fool and rightly so for throwing away so great a chance and one which ten years ago was what I most desired but since then many days have passed ... if I came into the Museum I should soon feel my lack of real scientific education a very serious handicap and there is nothing more wretched than trying to live above your capacity either intellectual or pecuniary. I believe I have a good chance of getting this E. African post and shall take it if I do get the chance and believe

I can really do some useful work there, you know as well or better than I do, how all the larger fauna is disappearing off the face of the earth. I know it can't be prevented ultimately but we can try and retard the process.

Woosnam arrived in East Africa towards the end of 1910. He plunged himself wholeheartedly into his new task as head of the country's Game Department, exhibiting enthusiasm and a mature wisdom in his responsible position. Just on 30 years old, he displayed the assurance and ability of an older and more experienced man, and was soon earning commendations of a high order for his achievements. His obituary in *The Ibis* gave these well-earned words:

As game warden in British East Africa he was a great success, and brought his department into a high state of efficiency. He did his duty without fear or favour, but was nevertheless one of the most popular and highly esteemed men in the Protectorate. He has been justly described by one of his colleagues as "the whitest man he ever met."

Up to that stage in its short history British East Africa had experienced a succession of game wardens, and all had struggled to establish a modicum of discipline and system in the embryonic department. It was Woosnam who finally pieced everything together, and before he left in 1915 he could well claim to have constructed a sound base for future officers of the department. His name is almost unknown today, but it deserves recognition as one of the ablest men ever to lead East Africa's Game Department.

In August 1914 war erupted with Germany. With a German colony – Deutsch Ost-Afrika – immediately next door, mobilisation of forces from local sources commenced, and Woosnam was no exception. With the advantages of previous war experience and a good general knowledge of the whole country, he was in an excellent position to assist. The Intelligence Department quickly availed itself of his expertise, giving him the rank of captain, and full charge of organising bands of local men, black and white, to act as eyes along the border zone. But the call for more active service was strong, so after five months he left for Britain to rejoin his regiment, the Worcesters.

He wrote to Thomas in the Museum from the South Raglan Barracks in Devonport on 30 April 1915: 'I have been allowed by the Colonial Office to rejoin my Regt. for the period of the war and am expecting to go to France to the 2nd Worcesters in about a week to see if I can't bag a few square heads. Then I shall go back to my Rhinos!!' This was proof enough that his heart was truly in his job in East Africa, and it is a matter of great regret that he was not destined to continue with the excellent work he was doing in that fabled country.

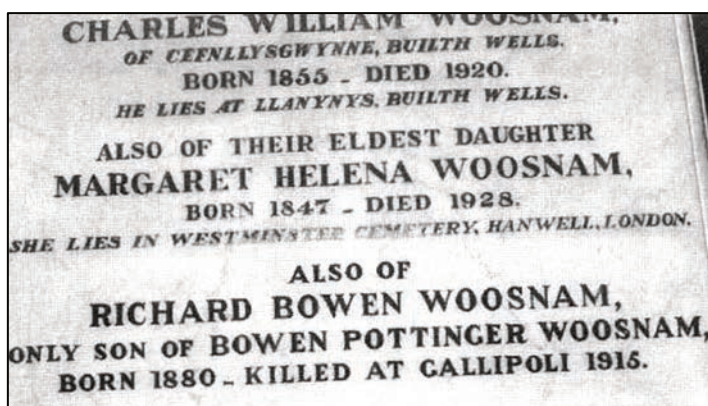
On retirement from full-time service with his regiment in 1903, Woosnam did not completely sever links. He remained on their reserve of officers with the rank of 2nd lieutenant, so it was a simple matter to report for duty in early 1915. While his expectations were for a short step to the Western Front, this didn't happen, and he was last found fighting on the battlefields of Gallipoli. The battles for the village of Krithia are well-known to the student of that ill-conceived campaign. They were known as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battles of Krithia, and the Worcesters fought with vigour in all of them, before finally the attempt to capture the village was

abandoned. Woosnam in the 4th Battalion acquitted himself well throughout, and is given mention in the regiment's history by Captain H. Stacke, MC.

The 3rd Battle of Krithia opened at 9.30 am on 4 June 1915 with two heavy artillery bombardments of the Turkish lines. After the second the infantry advanced. The regimental history states simply that:

Under a storm of fire the Worcester's platoons rushed forward across the open and into the enemy trenches. Three successive lines of trenches were cleared.

Then came stalemate and consolidation, when wounds were licked and losses counted. It turned out a sombre roll-call with five officers killed and three missing. Among the missing was Woosnam, who was never found. So ended a splendid life at the beginning of its fulfilment, with only a name on a white marble plaque in a quiet little Welsh town church to bear visible witness to its former existence.



COWBRIDGE OFFICERS, 1/5TH BN. THE WELCH REGIMENT

Second-Lieut. J.R.C. [John Robert Collard] Dunn joined the 5th Welsh in August, 1914, as a private, and received his commission in May last.

His brother, Second-Lieut. F. R. (sic) [Francis William Morgan] Dunn, enlisted at the same time, also in the 5th Welsh, and was gazetted about the same time. His name appeared in the list of missing a few days ago, and other information goes to show that both gentlemen have perished while serving their country in Gallipoli.

They were sons of the late Mr. F. W. Dunn, The Cross, Cowbridge. Both officers were well-known in local cricket and football circles, Lieut. J. R. C. Dunn having played the latter game for Cardiff Reserves, Old Monktonians, and London Welsh. (*The Glamorgan Gazette* 17 September 1915 p5).

2nd Lieut Francis William Morgan Dunn, killed in action 10 August 1915 aged 29.

2nd Lieut John Robert Collard Dunn, killed in action 20 August 1915 aged 30.

Neither brother has a known grave; both names appear on the Helles Memorial.

SOLDIERS OF HAWICK

Alastair Redpath

Gallipoli (Pairt yin): Territorials and Turkish resistance

The name Gallipoli evokes a mournful echo in the memories of many nations – not least in Scotland, for thousands of young men's lives were ended there in appalling conditions. At no other time in history has Hawick lost as many sons as at Achi Baba Nullah on the 'bloody twelfth' of July, 1915. Not since the Battles of Flodden and Hornshole had a single day had such a lasting impact on our community.

Almost a decade prior, Robert Haldane had been appointed Secretary of State for War in the Campbell-Bannerman government, and instigated a series of sweeping reforms of the British Army in light of lessons learned from the Second Boer War. Among them was the introduction of a Territorial Force (the forerunner of today's Territorial Army) which replaced the many civilian volunteer forces in towns and villages across the country, in the hope of augmenting land forces without resorting to conscription. Territorials would be trained to form a 'home service' to defend the country while the regular army would fight abroad in time of war and police what was then the British Empire.

These territorial battalions were formed on a regional and county basis, and attached to the various army regiments. Men joined because their friends, family, neighbours and workmates joined, and a true spirit of comradeship and fellowship was rapidly established in and between the ranks. Hawick and the Border towns were keen to play their part in serving king and country – thus was born the 4th (Border) Battalion of the King's Own Scottish Borderers [4th KOSB], organised under the Lowland Division.

On August 3, 1914, the day before war was declared, Prime Minister Asquith quickly appointed Lord Kitchener as Secretary of State for War; he declined to use the Territorial Force as many of its members had volunteered for 'home service' only, and because he was suspicious of the poor performance of French territorials in the Franco-Prussian War. The territorials also lacked modern equipment, particularly artillery. Kitchener's solution was to raise an all-volunteer New Army of 500,000 men to be put into action by mid-1916.

However, casualties suffered by the British Expeditionary Force during the initial months of the war soon altered these plans. Numbers were severely depleted and replacements had to be found at short notice. The territorials, alongside the famous Pals' Battalions, would be the answer.

Being voluntary, there was no obligation on these men to serve abroad, but when asked, few, if any, refused. On August 7, around 220 Hawick recruits from the 4th KOSB were mobilised from their base at Galashiels where they'd spent the past week preparing for their annual summer camp in the hills. The men were paraded through Hawick to a waiting train for Stirling, and families gathered in their hundreds to say goodbye – with every expectation that the war would be over in a matter of months, and that they'd see their loved ones again soon.

What followed was an eight-month slog of relentless training and preparation for

full-time soldiery, at Cambusbarron, where the men were billeted at Hayford Mills. Even at that stage, the 4th KOSB were tasked with protecting the Forth Valley from a possible German invasion. There was no talk of setting foot on foreign soil. By the end of the cold winter of 1914, the harsh reality of what lay ahead was becoming apparent; some 30 Hawick men, all members of the regular army, had already perished in the line of duty.

Faces around camp changed regularly due to sickness, accidents and transfers, and sport played a key role in attracting new recruits and keeping up morale. In October 1914 a team of officers from the 4th KOSB played at Hawick against a South of Scotland select. This proved popular and a sequel was held in January 1915 with the South taking on the local yeomanry, the Lothian and Border Horse – the latter featuring mercurial rugby talents like R H Lindsay Watson, W E Kyle, and ‘Bottler’ Wilson. The Border men were able to keep one another’s spirits up at camp by singing traditional songs; one account says that the Hawick men knew the words to *Braw, Braw Lads* better than Galashiels Town Council!

In January 1915 a successful recruitment drive was held in Hawick on the day of a cattle auction. The men were drawn to a large detachment of soldiers, supported by two pipe bands, from the reserve battalion at Galashiels. Recruitment posters played to unique Border slogans like “Sons of Heroes slain at Flodden”. Determined recruiters even visited the hinterlands of Hawick with the promise of the king’s shilling, visiting Denholm, Minto, and Hassendean.

On 11 May, in preparation for full-time war service, the division was renumbered the 52nd Lowland Division and the brigade the 155th (1/1st South Scottish) Brigade, while the battalion received the 1/4th prefix to separate them from second line units. From here on these particular territorials would be known as the 1/4th KOSB.

On 21 May the men were mobilised by train along the Caledonian Railway to Liverpool, and not, as hoped, by the Waverley Line – to much disappointment. Just a few hours after they passed through Gretna, a train carrying troops of the 1/7th Royal Scots from Larbert to Liverpool (territorials recruited from the Leith area, the adjoining 156th Brigade) collided with a stationary local service at Quintinshill, just north of the station. A minute later, the wreckage was struck by a northbound sleeper express travelling from London Euston to Glasgow Central. Gas from the lighting of the old wooden carriages ignited, starting a fire which soon engulfed the scene. It was a disaster of unimaginable proportions, claiming at least 231 lives, including half of the territorials who had yet to set foot on a battlefield.

Mrs Dunbar, caretaker of the Old Blacksmith’s Shop at Gretna Green, stated that when she heard the crash, she initially thought the Germans had invaded. Three men with Hawick connections lost their lives at Quintinshill. A mass funeral and burial was held at Rosebank Cemetery in Leith, yet such was the nature of war that just two days later a recruitment meeting was held at the Usher Hall in Edinburgh to raise a new battalion. Surviving troops were sent straight down to Liverpool to be put on the same boat as the Hawick volunteers.

On 23 May, the *Empress of Britain* set sail for the Ottoman Empire. Very few had been abroad before, let alone heard of Gallipoli. Many of the Hawick men were booked, rather poignantly in hindsight, on single tickets.

The first allied ground troops landed at the beaches of Cape Helles on 25 April under the command of Major-General Aylmer Hunter-Weston, a Royal Engineer. His 'Incomparable' Division was considered to be one of the best trained in the regular army and contained Scottish infantry battalions such as the 1st KOSB (including dozens of Hawick men), the 1/5th Royal Scots (territorials from Edinburgh), together with the IV (Highland) Mountain Brigade, Royal Field Artillery. A landing of this order could only be made by well-seasoned troops.

Before they could fight though, they had to be taken ashore. That proved to be no easy task. In addition to a specially adapted Clyde-built collier which was run ashore at V Beach carrying two thousand men, the main force was landed in cutters pulled by a variety of tug boats. Supporting them was No.3 Squadron of the Royal Naval Air Service, with 18 aircraft. The intention was to secure the beaches and then to advance on the ridge between Krithia and Achi Baba which would be the key to taking control of the peninsula.

There were heavy losses at V and W beaches as men were immediately pinned down under a barrage of shells and machine gun fire, a situation compounded by poor communication and inexperienced leadership in the middle ranks. The landing battalions were very nearly decimated. Those who landed at the more isolated S, X and Y beaches went unopposed for almost eleven hours before, at Y Beach, the Turks took advantage of the British decision not to entrench themselves properly.

Brigadier-General W R Marshall required assistance and would call upon the 1st KOSB to attack the beach-heads.

**Gallipoli (pairt twae): Helles on Earth
from cliff-face annihilation
to the killing fields of Achi Baba Nullah**

The 1st Battalion King's Own Scottish Borderers (regular army) was serving in Lucknow, India, when war was declared, and sailed to England in early 1915 to consolidate near Rugby with other battalions from India, Burma, and China. Together this 'Union Brigade' sailed from Avonmouth to Egypt, via Malta, on 16–18 March, and to Lemnos, in preparation for the landing at Cape Helles.

On 25 April the Borderers successfully landed at Y beach, supported by the South Wales Borderers and the Plymouth Battalion, Royal Marines – only to find this was no beach at all, but a 200-foot-high cliff with a narrow defile allowing an approach to the top. It took until mid-afternoon for the men to reach the clifftop 'beach head', with some soldiers managing to stroll through the village of Krithia and on to the hill, Achi Baba, which dominates the southern end of the peninsula. Unexpectedly there was little opposition, and as the officers argued over what to do next, confusion and hubris reigning, the defending Turks gathered in strength.

At dusk the Turks attacked, and although the first wave was repelled, a deadly bombardment and some inopportune rainfall followed. There were some brief moments of black humour amid the worsening conditions. A German officer walked up to a trench and proclaimed, "you English surrender, we ten to one!" which prompted a Scottish soldier to knock him out with a spade! In another bizarre episode, some of the Turkish gunners hauled a machine gun onto a pony. The fighting was fierce and at close quarters. Around midnight the Turks grew

desperate and sent charge after charge of men into the 1st KOSB positions. All seemed lost, and Private John Lavelle, machine-gunner, wrote: "... it looked as if we had to be driven into the sea and drown or die fighting to the last."

But these were Borderers – a little rain and cliff-top peril wasn't going to stop them. The battalion battled on and kept the Turks at bay whilst the men were evacuated onto ships below. At 11:30 am the next day, the last of the survivors had been removed from Y Beach at a cost of 296 lives. Jack Churchill, Winston's brother, serving on Sir Ian Hamilton's staff, summed up the experience in a poem:

*"Y Beach! The Scottish Borderer cried,
While panting up the steep hillside,
Y Beach!
To call this thing a beach is stiff,
It's nothing but a bloody cliff,
Why Beach?"*

One of the casualties was Company QMS James Brown, of Gladstone Street, Hawick, a professional soldier of twelve years and secretary of the Army Temperance Association. He was killed on 26 April whilst urging his men to charge forward with bayonets and rifles. By the end of the month the invading British force had lost over 400 officers and 8,500 other ranks, or roughly a third of its strength. The landings at Ari Burnu (later known as Anzac Cove), on the Mediterranean side of the peninsula, were equally as costly, with around 5,000 casualties.

On 4 June seven Hawick soldiers were sacrificed during a suicidal daytime attack down the right flank of Gully Ravine, along Fir Tree Spur, during the Third Battle of Krithia. Among them was James Jackson, of Teviot Row, whose younger brother Thomas would arrive at Gallipoli with the Territorials just weeks later, unaware of his brother's fate. Due to the nature of the terrain and hills that surrounded the allied trenches, Turkish snipers and machine gun positions picked off the attackers with ease. Trench warfare resumed, with objectives being measured in yards.

The calamitous start to the Gallipoli land campaign meant that the allies' already limited resources were stretched even further than expected. Reinforcements were badly needed. Battalions from the 52nd Lowland Division began to arrive at the peninsula on 6 June and, after passing ships filled with casualties and corpses, the 1/4th KOSB arrived safely via Alexandria, Egypt, on 14 June, and were posted to V Beach. Allied hospital ships were lit up like Christmas trees in the bay to deter hostile fire, and the men were brought ashore to the sound of shelling and machine guns, the front line being just a few hundred yards away.

The Territorials were given 14 days to acclimatise. This was no Western Front. Trenches were more often than not a series of interconnected holes in the ground, severely cramped, and there were fewer obstacles in No Man's Land, allowing lightning attacks and counter-attacks. Within four days of arriving at V Beach, 17 men of the 1/4th KOSB had been wounded without reaching the front line.

Conditions at Gallipoli were some of the worst of the war. Swarms of flies blanketed the putrefied and unburied corpses left in the blazing sun, and covered food and water, making it impossible to eat or drink anything without swallowing them.

During the blistering summer months, clean water became a limited resource brought in by sea and had to be strictly rationed; the heat of the cans would often evaporate the water before it reached the front. Equipment was heavy and unwieldy, and personal hygiene was a luxury – men would often go without a wash or a shave for weeks on end. Lice were abundant. Whatever water could be found in the terrain was highly unsanitary and on occasion filled with dead frogs and mules. At least five Hawick men died of dysentery or enteric fever (typhoid) at Gallipoli, the youngest of whom was Richard Turnbull, aged 17 (and therefore underage), who perished aboard HMS *Delta* and was buried at sea.

Ten days after arriving, Cpl Tom Stevenson, aged 19, of Yarrow Terrace – a former boy scout turned soldier – became the first Hawick territorial victim.

By late June the battalion was no more than three to five miles inland, so a major assault was planned at Gully Ravine to clear a series of trenches and redoubts barring the road to Krithia and Achi Baba. The division hoped to push on through Fir Tree Spur and link up with the Anzacs to the north.

The entire 156th Brigade was loaned by Hamilton to the attack, yet only four artillery batteries could be spared to support them. They were ordered to take the Turkish trench 'H12' at all costs. A bloodbath ensued as inexperienced soldiers and NCOs were mown down in their hundreds by machine gun fire, and line after line of troops was ordered to press the attack, leading to 850 dead and 500 wounded.

Lieutenant General Aylmer Hunter-Weston, who commanded the attack, joyfully referred to the Battle of Gully Ravine as "bleeding the pups", and became known as the Butcher of Helles for his wilful incompetence and utter disregard for human life; he frequently stated that he cared nothing about casualties. The Edinburgh battalions lost particularly heavily. When the rest of the 52nd Lowland Division landed, its commander, Major-General Granville Egerton, was enraged at the manner in which his men – a large number of them Territorials – had been sacrificed. He was temporarily relieved of his position for protesting their treatment.

Between 1 and 5 July, the Turks counter-attacked along the British line several times but failed to regain lost ground, bringing the battle to a close. Ottoman casualties for the period were estimated at 16,000 men; they asked Hamilton for a truce to bury their dead, which was refused. Corpses littered No Man's Land.

The importance of having the support of artillery was now clear, and as it would not be ready until 12 July, this was the date adopted for one final attempt at breaking through the Turkish front lines at Achi Baba Nullah – a dry river bed leading to the slopes of Achi Baba. Meanwhile, it had belatedly dawned on Hunter-Weston that the three original British divisions were now only suited to passive line-holding duties until they had rested and been reinforced. Therefore the task inevitably fell to the newly arrived, but already blooded, 52nd Division. The 29th 'Incomparable' Division and the Anzacs would provide diversionary attacks the same day to prevent reserves from filling the Turkish lines. This planned delay, however, gave the Turks vital breathing space to recover and re-organise defences.

The battle was planned to take place in two halves. In the morning, the 155th Brigade, comprising 1/4th (Border) and 1/5th (Dumfries & Galloway) KOSB and the 1/4th Royal Scots Fusiliers, on the extreme right of the British line, were to advance in conjunction with an assault by the French on the Kereveş Dere,

essentially the front line leading down to the Dardanelles. To their left, the 157th (Highland Light Infantry) Brigade was to remain in its trenches while the guns were to swing round and bombard objectives on either side of Achi Baba Nullah. Unless a real opportunity presented itself, the Highlanders were ordered not to advance until late afternoon. The already battered 156th Brigade waited in reserve.

The 1/4th and 1/5th KOSB, in particular, were given a very clear objective to overwhelm the first two Turkish trenches along the nullah, regroup, and then advance to the third. The 1st Division of the French Corps would support them with an artillery bombardment. Lieutenant-Colonel John C McNeile, of Kippilaw, Bowden, had a heated discussion with Hunter-Weston about these objectives, but was ready to command the charge.

On 11 July the men moved into position, and at 4:30am on 12 July the French artillery caused devastation in the front line Turkish trenches, showering them with 500 howitzer shells and 4,000 high explosives. Some shells went off course and found their way into the British trenches, causing casualties. Largely unscathed, the Borderers checked equipment and filled water bottles. At 6:55 am the navy lengthened the range of the bombardment and Turkish forces responded by shelling the allied trenches, where the men huddled together, under heavy fire, bayonets at the ready. At 7:35 am the British gunners put a ring of crossfire around the area to fend off Turkish reinforcements which were rushing to the scene.

A slight pause followed, the men cheered, and four leading waves of troops set off across No Man's Land and charged simultaneously, while the Highlanders tried to keep the Turks' heads down with some small-arms fire. The first two waves had to negotiate rocky terrain and scrub. "Brigadier-General Pollock-McCall snatched up a rifle and bayonet, shouted to the Borderers to follow him, and dashed out into the open," noted one contemporary account. "Here, there and everywhere, the Borderers, shouting and cheering, jumped out, and there ensued a wild but steady advance in lines across the open for the gardens of Mughar. The Brigade Commander led his men all the way, a bullet piercing his helmet."

The Borderers quickly captured, consolidated and held the first line of trenches (Ero) with relatively few losses, and most men jumped over and charged on to the second (E11), which was reached and taken at bayonet point – the defenders either killed or captured, though the Turks fought to the last man and inflicted casualties.

It was at this point in the melee that a well-known Hawick officer, Lieutenant James B Innes, had his arm shattered by a bursting shell. He summoned his cousin, Lieut Walter K Innes, to cut it off with a dirk, asked for a cigarette, and continued to cheer the Borderers on until he died from loss of blood. During the battle, Walter was shot through the neck and seriously wounded. Incredibly, he survived the war, and many decades later that same dagger found its way to local historian Ian W Landles.

The final moments of another KOSB officer was captured. "Come away, Borderers! Don't be beaten!" was the cry of Captain A Wallace as he continued to advance, although badly wounded and with blood streaming down his face, until he was hit again, this time fatally. Major J Herbertson, gravely wounded and lying on his side, waved his revolver and urged the men on. Bolstered by their initial success, and still in good discipline under McNeile, the second wave of around 300 Borderers were led up the slope into a maze of half trenches, waterways, obliterated communication

lines, and shelled hollows, to the third and final trench (E12).

Tragically, there was no third trench. Instead, they found what may have been a dummy trench or dried-up water-course, one foot deep, which had to be quickly set to and filled with sandbags. Some men continued to press on and search fruitlessly; others went too far ahead and began to scale Achi Baba. A slight pause in proceedings allowed the Turks to regroup, and there were no reserves to back the over-enthusiastic Borderers. The officers had also suffered a high number of casualties due to their distinctive and reflective belt buckles and shining service revolvers attracting the attention of the Turkish gunners. McNeile quickly gathered his officers and ordered a retreat back to the second trench.

Spotters for the French and British artillery on either flank, however, mistook the retreating Borderers for a Turkish counter-attack and they were soon bogged down in a labyrinth of shell-holes and smashed trenches, against a 'perfect hail of shrapnel and machine gun and rifle fire' and constant shelling. Helles truly lived up to its name. Metal ID discs and biscuit tins were tied to the Borderers' backs to let allied artillery know where they were positioned. Instead this had the opposite effect, glinting in the sun and attracting both 'friendly fire' and withering attacks from the Turks. Nearly half the Territorials were slaughtered in the hell that was No Man's Land, and most were never seen again – including McNeile and his officers.

During the battle, the 1/5th KOSB had veered 150 yards off target and were similarly confused by battered trenches and oblique communication lines running at diagonals. Eventually, they occupied trench E10 and consolidated by deepening it, clearing the dead and dying, and blocking off parts to halt any counter attacks – but were not immune to the deadly artillery bombardment.

Major D Yuille, of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, which attacked to the right of the 1/4th KOSB, later wrote:

Unless one has seen it there is no imagination that can picture a belt of land some 400 yards wide converted into a seething hell of destruction. Rifle and machine gun bullets rip up the earth, ping past the ear, or whing off the loose stones; shrapnel bursts overhead and the leaden bullets strike the ground with a vicious thud; the earth is rent into yawning chasms, while planks, sandbags, clods of earth, and rugged great chunks of steel hurtle through the air. The noise is an indescribable, nerve-racking, continuous, deafening roar, while drifting clouds of smoke only allow an intermittent view of the damnable inferno.

Such had been the devastation that word failed to reach Hunter-Weston before the second bombardment commenced at 4:50 pm. The Highlanders of the 157th Brigade charged forward to a repeat performance. The outcome of the battle was in the balance until morning, although the second line of Turkish trenches was successfully held by the depleted Borderers.

Overnight the troops faced the hard graft of consolidation. Trenches had to be turned round, old communication trenches barricaded off, new trenches dug back to the old allied front line, and the wounded had to be evacuated and supplies brought up; all of this against a backdrop of chattering machine gun fire, flares, and occasional shrapnel bursts.

Depending how casualties are defined; place of birth/residence or when a soldier

died of wounds, 86-90 local men perished at Achi Baba Nullah on 12 July 1915; very few bodies were recovered. Of around 700 Borderers who crossed the parapet that morning, the 1/4th KOSB suffered 535 casualties and 350 deaths, losing all but two officers. The 1/5th KOSB recorded at least 270 casualties and 82 deaths.

Hamilton, in the battalion war diary for 12 July, reflected:

Nothing could live under such cruel crossfire from friend or foe, and the returning troops were almost wiped out. Not a man faltered, and it has been well and truly said that no finer charge was ever made on any field of battle.

The 'bloody twelfth' arguably remains the blackest day in Hawick's long and illustrious history. And as at Flodden all those centuries before, "the Flooers o' the Forest are a' wede away" and Hawick's callants lay "cauld in the clay".

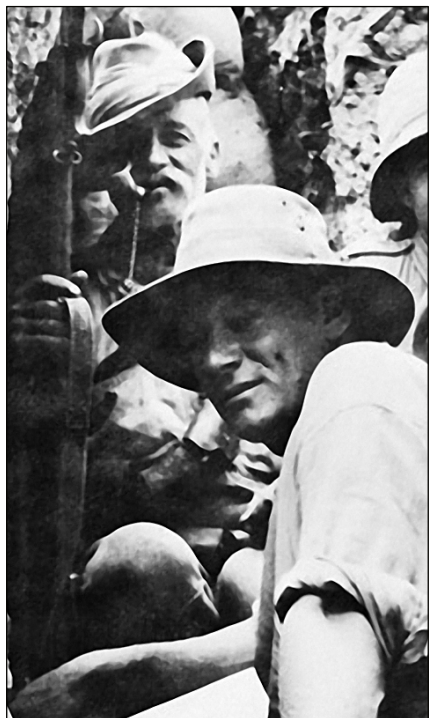
Credits:

Hawick & District and the Great War 1914-1918 (2018), D Robertson, *Sons of Heroes*; Neil J Robertson, *Braw Laddies Amidst The Clash of The Empires* (2015); Trevor Royle, Stuart Delves and Sir Hew Strachan; Hawick Callants' Club; Gallipoli Association; IWM; Dr Ross Cameron, Alan G Brydon, Ian W Landles BEM.

Editor's note

Parts 3 and 4 of 'Soldiers of Hawick' will appear in the next edition of *The Gallipolian*.

TROOPER ANDREW POWELL YEATES (JP), 9TH LIGHT HORSE



Walker's Ridge, Anzac. The soldier smoking a pipe in the background is 211 Trooper Andrew Powell Yeates, born 23 Jun 1859; in the foreground is his son, Private James August Yeates, 4th Field Ambulance, AIF.

'Andy' Yeates was a lieutenant in the Flinders Light Horse and a Justice of the Peace. He tried to enlist in the AIF but was rejected in his home town of Orroroo because of his age. He shaved, travelled to Petersburg, dropped his age by ten years, claimed to be single, did not mention he was a militia officer, and was enlisted. His son enlisted three days later, on 14 September, 1914.

Andy was wounded at Hill 60, Anzac, on 29 August, and died of gunshot wounds to the jaw and face, aboard HS *Devanha* the following day. He was buried at sea 10 miles from Lemnos.

His son, Staff-Sergeant James Yeates, survived the war and was discharged in Adelaide in March 1919. He died there in 1951, aged 59. Photo AWM Coo667.

ASHTON MEN'S CHARGE AT SUVLA BAY

Many Men Killed in the Boats 'All Bayonet Work'

A vivid account of the landing of the 11th Battalion, Manchester Regiment, at Suvla Bay, in the middle of August, has been sent to Ashton-under-Lyne by a sergeant-major of the battalion. The 11th Battalion was the first of Kitchener's Army to be raised at the Ashton-under-Lyne barracks, the depot of the Manchester Regiment. The Sergeant-major writes :

Our division made a new landing. We came in the night, and as soon as we ran the lighters into the shore they gave us hell, many men being killed and wounded on the boats. We stuck on a sandbank, and the bullets rained upon us from all around. The Colonel said, "Tallest men first." I dashed down the slope and dropped into the sea, overhead, and half waded and half swam ashore, about 200 yards, with the Adjutant and Major Sillery.

I was first man ashore with a rifle. We laid down on the beach and then started to collect the men together as they straggled ashore, and formed them up. After a bit, under a heavy fire, we started to get some formation and fixed bayonets. We moved off, and still the bullets whizzed and the shells boomed and burst all around us. Slowly we advanced, wondering how long we could last.

After about a mile we got to work, and then the boys proceeded to get their own back, clearing the trenches of Turks with the bayonet. Orders had been given that no shots were to be fired, all bayonet work, and very grim and grizzly it was, too. We fought on all next day, and until night things looked very black, our officers and men fought like heroes.

Poor Major Bates (brother of the Chief Constable of Stalybridge) was wounded in two places, and still fought on until killed at last. He worked like a horse. The colonel was shot through the arm, but still held on for two days until compelled to go into hospital. At last we were relieved by the other regiments, and retired sadly depleted in numbers, with mouths swollen with thirst, and thoroughly exhausted and hungry, but unable to eat.

For three days and nights we lived in absolute hell, men going down in all directions. But we held on and the men were splendid. The corn was fired, but we fought fire and Turks at the same time until other brigades were reorganised. At last we were relieved and went back to the reserve trenches, about three hundred yards back. We are having a day's rest in trenches near the beach, but the Turks obliged with a few shells before we were settled, and knocked six over. Now we are like a lot of rabbits in holes, and the warships are shelling over our heads. As soon as the sun goes down we are going to bathe in the sea and never mind the shells and the Turks.

I hope and pray that I may get through this lot, as it is terrible. If the men at home could only realise what it is like every one would enlist in ten minutes, so that they could help their comrades. (*Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 7 September 1915 p5).

DIDGERIDOO AT ANZAC COVE

Sarah Dolan

Doomadgee is a remote Indigenous community of about 1,500 people on the Queensland side of the Gulf of Carpentaria, close to the Northern Territory border. Doomadgee State School caters to students from pre-prep (4 years) up to Year 10 (15–16 years). I worked there, in various roles and with primary and high school students, for three years. In 2012 Elijah Douglas was a Year 10 student who had returned home to Doomadgee after deciding that being away at boarding school was not for him. He had attended school in Doomadgee all his life up until leaving for the boarding facilities in Mount Isa. Four hundred kilometres away, ‘the Isa’ was the nearest large town; but now Elijah was back.

I had always believed Elijah to be a gifted student, but on his return to the community it was clear that he had effectively disengaged from learning. He was frequently absent for extended periods. After discussing with school staff possible ways of re-engaging him, we decided to address his interest in Gallipoli, and I determined to work with him on a submission for the *Premier’s Anzac Prize* with the potential of a trip to Gallipoli (for Anzac Day the following year) and to the Western Front afterwards. The competition rules stipulated that the entry had to be in the form of a two-minute video presentation.

I approached Elijah and explained to him and his parents what had to be done and pointed out the challenges involved (including obtaining a passport if he was to win), as well as the life-changing potential of winning the prize. Elijah was keenly interested, so we discussed how best to approach writing a narrative addressing the focus of the competition, which was ‘the Anzac tradition.’ We wanted Elijah’s entry to have an Indigenous perspective – an issue close to his heart, and one that, at that time, had not been investigated or acknowledged to any great degree. I helped him locate and examine documents and he worked on the text to be used for his voiceover in the video presentation. Together we ensured that the text remained tightly focused and was addressing the three main points in the competition outlines. We came up with a few ideas on possible approaches to persuading the judges that the Anzac tradition could be passed on to future Indigenous generations through traditional Indigenous methods, and that Indigenous soldiers who fought in the world wars not be overlooked, after which he began work on the video.

We worked together, mainly at lunch times and after school, on developing his skills in video-making; these included basic editing and more advanced techniques such as chromakey technology, voice-overs and insertion of captions.

The video was finished and submitted the day before the competition deadline. Elijah was one of five students from all over Queensland to win and go to Gallipoli and the Western Front. He played the didgeridoo – he had made it himself while working on his competition entry – at Anzac Cove and then at the Menin Gate. His prize-winning video may be viewed at anzacs.org/elijah.html

Since those days, Elijah has had many successes, including *Indigenous Youth of the Year*, and he is now a councillor in his home town. *See photos, page 36.*

‘A VERY FINE FELLOW AT THAT’

The Letters of Captain Beverly Ussher

Clive Harris

Captain Beverly Ussher of the Leinster Regiment served as Staff Captain, sometimes acting Brigade Major, to the 88th Brigade, 29th Division, during the early months of the Gallipoli Campaign.

On 18 June 1915, propped high up on the cliff tops of Gully Ravine, using a small field typewriter, he began a descriptive, detailed and historically-fascinating letter home.

Addressed to his wife Ethel, who he affectionately knew as ‘Nell,’ he rather unromantically began:

Darling Nell, I am going to try to write to you both (Nell and Westbury) the same letter by means of carbon paper, I hope it will be a success! There is so little time to write letters, in fact so little anything for oneself that I am forced to do such a thing of this kind.

The pages he wrote offer a glimpse back onto the campaign seldom found, describing the horrors of the fighting alongside the outstanding natural beauty of the surroundings. Through his words Ussher offers an intriguing ‘eye-witness’ view and insightful analysis, making his letter historically significant to students of the Gallipoli Campaign.

Beverly Ussher was born in Burton on Trent, the son of a vicar, and was educated at St Edwards school in Oxford before entering Wadham College and then Sandhurst. A notable sportsman, he captained both football and rugby sides at school, and was a talented cricketer, twice scoring a century before ending ‘with the perfectly played 120 in the Jubilee Match.’¹ His military career with the Leinsters saw service in Jamaica, St Lucia, India, Ireland and South Africa, and he was a permanent staff instructor at Sandhurst just prior to the war. Married with three children, he lost a brother, Stephen, killed with the 129th Duke of Connaught’s Own Baluchis at Givenchy in 1914.

He describes the fighting of 4 June when his brigade was pushing towards Krithia astride the West Krithia Road. Their start line was 12 Tree Copse, with the first objective Trench H11 and second H14. They had the Indian Brigade on their left flank and the 42nd (East Lancashire) Division to their right, with the Turkish 9th Division opposing them.

We had four days hard fighting starting on the 3rd and won a good deal of ground from the Turks but at sacrifice of many lives, when I stopped my last letter – June 4th – The bombardment had just begun: It was truly terrific, the whole place occupied by Turks was blotted out by smoke and the noise was terrible. How anyone could have lived through it I don’t know, but, unfortunately, a good many did, and we lost a lot going on to the first line of trenches. All the rest of the fighting was to hold on and consolidate what we had got, and we were very heavily counter-attacked two nights afterwards. We



Captain Beverly Ussher

held them up but again suffered badly. So many officers who came out on the same ship as I did were either killed and others missing and wounded. All did gallantly however and died magnificently for their country.

In his role as staff captain Ussher had witnessed the attack from an observation post around 1,000 yards behind the start line alongside Brigadier-General Douglas Edward Cayley. Cayley, a respected commander and soldier, had seen service in India, Aden and South Africa with the Worcestershire Regiment before commanding its 4th Battalion during the Helles Landings, notably during the daylight bayonet advance to the Helles Lighthouse from W Beach. When Brigadier-General Hare was badly wounded, Cayley took command of 88th Brigade and would lead it through the remainder of the campaign. He was later promoted to command the 29th Division on the Western Front,

surviving the war yet sadly lost his son, a submariner with three DSOs, in the 1939–45 War.

I had hard work but very comparatively safe, little danger except for the a few shells and bullets coming over. I am thankful to say I made no mistakes and did alright. I spent most of the day writing and receiving messages and I am glad to say I had a cool head and gave no wrong decisions to anyone. It was a big business taking on Brigade Major's work at a moments notice just before a battle with a big brigade of 6 Battalions. Another fellow, called Captain Boyle,² Seaforth Highlanders, has taken over Brigade Major and I do my proper job as staff captain. During the Turk's counter-attack I had to go up to the trenches to find out what was happening and get things together: It was rather a bad moment, but luckily I found everything was alright and after to talking to everyone and trying to encourage them I came back with my report.

His mention of visiting the trench lines only hints at the drama he had encountered. In truth he arrived in the aftermath of, and perhaps even preventing, a controversial moment in the campaign's history from worsening:

The men were tired out after incessant fighting for 3 days and nights but were

wonderfully brave and dogged. A poor young 2LT: called Moor was commanding, the poor boy had been most gallant all that night leading his own and other men, but by the time I saw him, he was just about beat and rambling. I was only just in time to stop him going off his head. I think he will probably get something for his gallant conduct.

Students of Gallipoli will recognise this as the VC action of George Raymond Dallas Moor, just 17 at the time of the landings with the 2nd Hampshires in April, yet by June one of their most experienced surviving officers. Ussher, who adds, 'Only today I have been sending in the lists of the Regiments men in the Brigade who did gallant things and so on and they were long lists too,' had in fact intervened at a critical time. The Victoria Cross official citation reads:

For most conspicuous bravery and resource on the 5th June 1915, during operations South of Krithia, Dardanelles. When a detachment of a battalion on his left, which had lost all its officers, was rapidly retiring before a heavy Turkish attack, 2nd Lieutenant Moor immediately grasping the danger to the remainder of the line, dashed back some two hundred yards, stemmed the retirement, led back the men, and recaptured the lost trench. This young officer who only joined the Army in October 1914, by his personal bravery and presence of mind saved a dangerous situation.³

Moor allegedly 'stemmed the retirement' by shooting four of his own men. His Divisional commander, General Henry de Lisle, stated that, 'he shot the leading four men and the remainder came to their senses.'⁴ After Gallipoli he would remain on Beauvoir De Lisle's staff adding a Military Cross & Bar to his name in 1918. He died from the flu pandemic in October 1918 and is buried in the Bois Grenier CWGC Cemetery.

Ussher continued describing the battlefield post action both practically and graphically:

We now occupy the trenches that the Turks were in and of course have changed them round so as to face the other way, we are one step further on and I suppose before long we should go forward again. Their trenches were very good and clean, but it was not a pleasant sight to see them and the ground between ours and theirs afterwards. I took my medicine case with me and was able to help several poor fellows with the opium etc.

After the battle, the brigade made the short move to the rest area and he recalled the more peaceful scene:

The Brigade has actually been resting for 3 days – or rather what is left of the Brigade – and we have been living along the seashore perched up in the cliffs like a lot of sea birds. A road winds along the beach which is only about 10 feet wide and covered with rocks, and the cliffs rise at once to about 100 feet. They are not very steep however and the men are all perched in sort of rows or terraces up them and perfectly happy. They have been bathing and enjoying the rest thoroughly, and now we are preparing to go back into the trenches tonight. The only drawback has been the dust which is like a continuous sandstorm in S. Africa. However, it is now nearly 7p.m. and I am writing this perched up in one of the terraces where we have our mess looking out over the

Aegean Sea at the Island of Imbros which one can easily see. The water is beautifully blue and green in patches and all the surroundings are beautiful. However, I can hear the old guns booming away just over our heads and the occasional burst of musketry fire, just to remind us that we really are at war. The climate is perfect, nice and warm which suits me admirably, but the dust and flies are awful, and the hot weather has not really begun yet.

Visitors to Gully Ravine today, especially when the Turkish navy are exercising live firing just offshore, can picture this scene perfectly. Ussher references the sandstorms in South Africa; he had served in the Second Boer War with his regiment as a lieutenant in 1902, notably in the Orange River Colony and Transvaal. Through his writing Beverly Ussher demonstrates not only the skills of a competent staff officer but also that he has a grasp on modern warfare. Referring to the lack of news he gets he states:

I never have time to read a paper or anything of that sort, in fact I never see a paper to read. I regret I haven't read Uncle Bob's 'Land and Water'⁵ yet and know nothing about the war, except that things seem to have gone badly with the Russians again. However, they will no doubt recover again before long. This is, or will be no short business here either, in fact war nowadays seems almost not possible except in huge countries where you can move about.

A century on military strategists would concur with Ussher's conclusion that the lack of battle space at Gallipoli greatly hampered the campaign, there being insufficient ground to generate the force required to break the Ottoman trench lines. Operations in the Helles and Anzac sectors were limited by the nature of the ground, up till the withdrawal from the Peninsula, to break-in attacks as opposed to the required break-outs.

The final part of Ussher's letter again returns to the tranquillity of Gully Ravine, including a delightful reference to 'a celebration.' Here he is referring to 18 June 1915, the centenary of the Battle of Waterloo, in which a number of regiments in his brigade, including his own, had taken part:

The sunset just opposite to me now is beautiful over Imbros. We had a celebration for the Brigade here this morning just where our bivouacs are: I and a lot of other officers went: my little camp table was used for an altar and it was a most impressive service with the waves beating just alongside us all the time. I like our Brigade Padre very much, although he rejoices in the name of F. Komlosy, I don't know where he got his name from, but he is an Englishman and a very fine fellow at that. Colonel Cayley of the 4th Worcesters is now commanding the brigade temporarily, he is a very fine LITTLE soldier and very nice indeed. He did awfully well the other day. Sinclair Thompson has gone to another Brigade, and Captain Neave is left as Brigade Machine Gun Officer. He and I get on well together and we are quite a happy family. I am sorry that most of the wild-flowers have gone now and I am too late to send you any THIS year – perhaps next. I ...

And with that, Ussher's wonderful letter ends abruptly.

The next correspondence that 'Nell' received, dated 22 June 1915, was from Chaplain F Komlosy, who wrote:

Dear Mrs Ussher, On Sunday June 13th your husband came to me after Communion Service and asked me to write to you in case of his death. I came out from England with him and been attached to the 88th Brigade as Chaplain. It was a great blow to me to hear what happened last Saturday, and I know the whole of the officer staff of the Brigade are feeling your husband's loss intensely. Your Husband and the Orderly left Brigade HQ as was their custom at daybreak on Saturday morning, June 19th . They arrived in the firing line at the Worcesters' HQ and then went on to the Royal Scots. There your husband heard that the 9th Manchesters had lost a trench and were unable to regain it. Your husband, with a company of Worcesters, proceeded at once to the Manchesters' trenches to rally these men and retake the lost trench. In order to get the Worcesters into position, Captain Ussher had himself to stay in a most dangerous spot, at the angle of two trenches. It was here that he met his death, but not, I believe, before the Worcesters had been got into position from which they were able, directly after, to re-take what the Manchesters had lost. Death was quite instantaneous.

The following day, Komlosy along with Sergeant E T Peacock of the 4th Worcesters and Private T S McKillop of the 5th Royal Scots went out and recovered Beverly Ussher's body. The padre then

... buried him in a little cemetery behind the reserve trenches established by the Worcesters in a position about 100 yards south of the ruined White House near the West Krithia Road, a cross has been placed over his grave.

Padre Komlosy added the addresses of the men who helped him stating that Sergeant Peacock was splendid in carrying down the body on Sunday and to him all credit is due. He signed off very thoughtfully and complementarily about Beverly by saying:

If I can do anything whatever for you, please let me know. I knew your husband long enough to appreciate and almost love him – I sorrow with you. He had always been kindness itself to me, yours sincerely F. F. Komlosy, Chaplain.

I have to date found mention of Captain Beverly Ussher in a couple of Gallipoli memoirs. The first, by Kenneth Best, briefly mentions:

Sunday June 20 – I wasted much time finding 88th Brigade HQ to tell them where the body of Staff Captain Ussher was and trying to identify whom I had buried. Chatted to men but could hold no proper service. In the evening went to try to find some more bodies but was lost and got into some very hot places.⁶

This chaotic entry in a contemporary diary certainly describes the confusing nature of the front at the time of Ussher's death.

The second, by Major John Gillam, hints at Ussher's competency and charming personality:

Captain Usher (sic), my Staff Captain, was killed this early morning in the trenches by shrapnel, and I feel his loss awfully. He was always so charming to me. It's the 'good-uns' that go, as Wilkie Bard says.⁷

Today, Beverly Ussher lies in the perfectly-kept and tranquil Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery. Not a visit to the Peninsula passes without me visiting him, reflecting on his life, his deeds and his wonderful letter, for which I am eternally grateful to my old Hertfordshire Constabulary pal Richard Biggs, who discovered the letters in an antiques fair some 20 years ago and kindly passed them on. *See photos page 30.*

Endnotes

1. L A Clutterbuck, *The Bond of Sacrifice* Vol II, California: Anglo-African Publications, 1916
2. Captain Godfrey Henry Patrick Boyle, Seaforth Highlanders
3. *The London Gazette* (supplement), No29240, p7282, 24 July 1915
4. General Sir Beauvoir De Lisle, *Reminiscences of Sport & War*, London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1939
5. Hilaire Belloc, *Land and Water – The County Gentleman* periodical, London 1914–1916
6. Kenneth Best (edited by Gavin Roynon), *War Diaries, A Chaplain at Gallipoli*, London, Simon & Schuster, pp152–3
7. John Gillam, *Gallipoli Diary*, London, Unwin Hymann Ltd, 1918, p136



Memorial plaque to Captain Ussher
St Edward's School chapel, Oxford. Photo B Dolan, 2015.



Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey, November 2020. *With many thanks to Clive Summerson for the photo and for arranging the plot so expertly again this year. See page 3.*



Laying of the Gallipoli Association wreath, Sandringham War Memorial. See page 3.
Photo courtesy Tom Williamson.



The Gallipoli Association wreath laid at Chiswick War Memorial, London. See page 3.
Photo courtesy Simon Kleinig.



Clive Harris at the grave of Captain Beverley Ussher during a Gallipoli Association / Battle Honours tour of the battlefields. See page 23. Photos B Dolan



David Whittaker, a regular visitor to Gallipoli, entering Gully Ravine, Helles. See page 23. Photo Clive Harris.



Deb Stewart (left) descendant of Staff Nurse Evelyn Hutt, and commemorative tourists at the water fountain in Mudros where the Anzacs drank in 1915-16. Photo Jim Claven 2018. See page 63.





Descendants of Matron Grace Wilson of the 3rd Australian General Hospital on their tour of the hospital site on Lemnos. Photo Jim Claven 2015. See page 63.



The WWI Heritage Society of Israel observing a minute's silence prior to the wreath-laying, *Act of Remembrance*, Ramleh CWGC Cemetery, Israel. Photos M D Robson. See page 3.



Association member Michael D Robson laying the Gallipoli Association wreath, Ramleh CWGC Cemetery, Israel. Photos this page M D Robson.



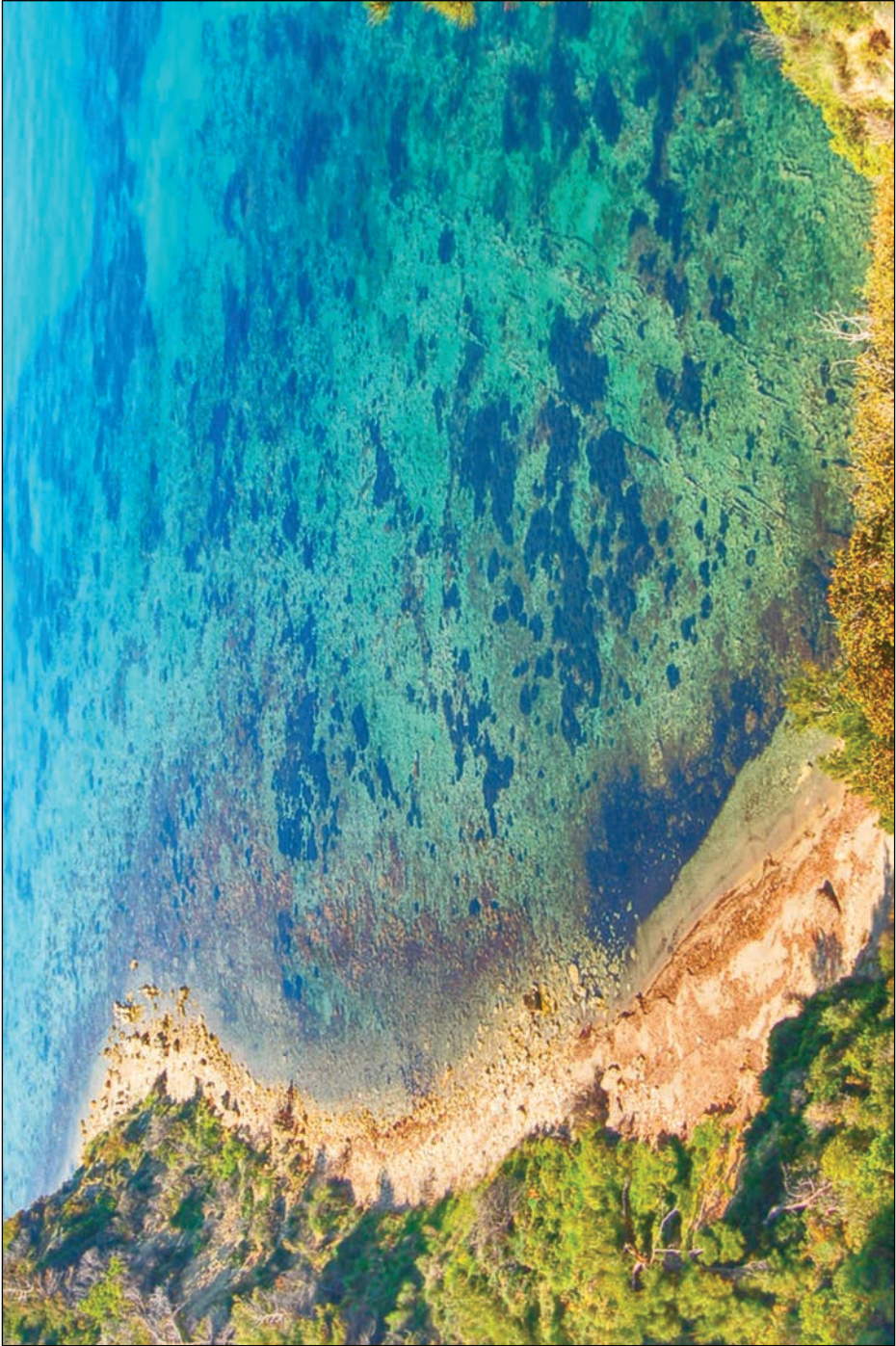
Wreaths laid during the Act of Remembrance, Ramleh CWGC Cemetery, Israel. See page 3.



Members of the Greek Red Cross pay their annual tribute at the graves of the two Canadian nurses who died on Lemnos during the Gallipoli campaign. Portianos Military Cemetery, Lemnos. Photo Jim Claven 2013. See page 49 (this and photo below).



Jim Claven at the Nursing Memorial, Portianos Military Cemetery, with the then Canadian Ambassador to Greece, His Excellency Robert Peck (second from right), the ambassador's wife, Maria Pantazi-Peck, and Canadian military attaché, Colonel Spike Hazleton. Photo J Claven 2015.



‘Y’ Beach, Gallipoli. See page 53.



Elijah Douglas, winner of the 2013 Queensland *Premier's Anzac Prize* at the war memorial in Doomadgee, remote Queensland. Photos courtesy Sarah Dolan. See page 22.



THE GALLIPOLI DIARY OF CAPTAIN H E KENYON RA

Dr John R Kenyon

Continued from Part 1 in the previous edition of *The Gallipolian* (No 153)

AUGUST

Saturday 1st Heard last night's effort was most satisfactory. We captured and are holding the trench. 70 Turkish dead have been counted, so report says, and our casualties are 10 killed, and 50 to 60 wounded. The G.S.O.2 of the N.Z. Division Staff sent for me and asked, "If you get orders to send a section or 2 sections out, how much road space – or, rather, sap space, do you take up?" Furious because I said I must know if Firing Battery was to go, or all Relief Mules, Extra Ammunt., Rations for Men and Mules, Picketing gear etc. If he meant full strength he should have heard of the Fd Service Pocket Book which gives road space for all units! He said "I will send for someone who knows more about their job." I replied "I think you'd better", and there it ended. The Colonel's catch word now is "How many mules go to a sap?"! I am sorry for the New Zealanders if that is the type of Staff Officer they have to work with.

Monday 2nd We now have got 92 guns ashore, so what with these and the Navy and Monitors, if we don't hammer the Turks we damned well ought to.

Friday 6th 9.50 a.m. We are now committed to the action for better or for worse. About 3.30 the Colonel and I watched ships firing down at Helles, their object being to prevent the Turks sending troops up here. About 6.30 p.m. the Colonel and I left what has been our old Home for nearly three months, and walked by a communication trench to No. 3 post which is at present the extreme left of our position. The Australians launched their attack of two brigades on Lonesome Pine at 5.30 p.m. after an hour's bombardment by our guns. They advanced three lines. The first line on approaching the Turk's trench found it full of Turks and lay down to fire; consequently the 2nd and 3rd lines came up to them and they were bunched there. The enemy then opened a heavy fire on them and they had "heavy" casualties. At 9.30 the force here moved off and there is a considerable amount of fire, a certain number of shell bursting just over or beyond us. The Australians have apparently made good Lonesome Pine, which is a good start. Somewhere about 11 p.m. we got news that one of the minor assaulting parties, which were to become covering parties, had captured No. 3 post together with a machine gun. Another man, a Major, came in and said he had withdrawn his party as he could not capture a trench. He was told pretty straight to go back at once and obey orders. The main assaulting columns were moving along very slowly; I don't know why but the two covering parties got their positions alright.

Saturday 7th At 3.45 the general sent word to say that both assaulting columns had only made very slow progress and he wanted someone to go out and find the Batteries with orders that, if they were in the pen still, they were to leave their place

in the Column and get under cover by daylight. I left here about 4 and it was exciting going out into the enemy's country like that. I soon found 26's track, who were with the Right assaulting column, and I got to a deep nullah, and there was informed that the Battery had gone up the nullah, so I was satisfied about them being under cover. I then went off to find 21 who were with the Left column. En route I passed several corpses of both sides and also fell over two separate wire entanglements! I found them alright and they also had just gone under cover. On the way back I was sniped at from pretty close, but the bullet hit the branch of a tree I was passing. During the morning several batches of prisoners came in, including one of about 50 and one of 200. I believe we captured something over 500 altogether. I fancy the Australians casualties have been pretty heavy. We did not get 971 Hill at all but some are way up it. A large force – a division – landed during the night at Nebrunessi [Nibrunesi] Point on our left and is making progress slowly.

Sunday 8th I am now writing on Wednesday afternoon. On Sunday morning we started a heavy bombardment of Chanak [Chunuk] Bair at 4.30 p.m. At 5.15 the bombardment of the objective ceased and our infantry advanced. The 6th Gurkas [sic] got the extreme left, the highest on that flank, and we held the position captured on the right. Then the Turks attacked all along the ridge and we had tremendous heavy casualties. The [10th] Gurkas on the left hand had entrenched their position when the Navy [HMS *Bacchante*, having mistaken the soldiers for Turks] put three heavy shell consecutively into them and they had to vacate, leaving half the battalion and nearly all their officers killed and wounded behind. Our troops fell back to their original position, still keeping the high point on the right of Chanak Bair but a few feet below. During the afternoon I went out and visited 21 M.B. and had an uncomfortable 10 to 15 minutes crossing open fields under fairly heavy rifle fire. There were several dead and wounded men and mules lying about, and any wounded who could hobble along at all using their rifles as crutches had to come in themselves as there was a bad shortage of stretchers and stretcher bearers. Water for the mules had to be given up for the day too as it was wanted for the men. It was not a pleasant day at all and the Turks can certainly congratulate themselves on having defended their position and driven off our attack with very heavy loss.

Tuesday 10th The Colonel went up to the observing station at 5.30. About then I heard heavy fire and I got up at once and went up the hill. It was a heavy attack by the Turks. Our troops were caught napping and some regiments had heavy losses. The Colonel was the first to give the alarm. The guns were just getting going when I got up to him and the Turks were coming on in their hundreds. All the guns got the line of their advance perfectly and it was almost cruel seeing the big shell bursting all amongst them and literally blowing bunches of them to pieces, whilst occasionally whole Turks went about 50 foot into the air. We gave them hell and just about made up for our losses before but we had to fall back in the original attack as we were surprised and could not counter attack as our troops were too shaken. It was a bad business and at one time looked serious. We have lost a good piece of ground and will have to do the attack on Chanak Bair all over again. In the

evening our guns did much damage again to large parties bringing water over to the men who had first rushed our position before our guns opened.

Wednesday 11th Our men busy digging in their new positions this morning. The 13th Division have had their Battalion average strength of 800 men reduced to 350. They want a few days rest to get their nerves settled again. After the Colonel took me to show him the way to 21. At one place in the nullah we found three dead men and two dead mules and, just beyond, 6 Gurkas sitting up the bank out of the nullah. They said the nullah was being shelled; we had heard nothing. After standing in the nullah questioning them, as we could not quite understand, we walked up to them – 5 yards out of the path. Within ½ minute a shell landed and burst where we had been standing and about 12 yards from us. No damage done to us, but a man who passed as we got out was just caught and badly wounded. The loss amongst officers is very heavy – only the doctor left in 6th Gurkas I believe. This war is all too ghastly and I can not believe anyone will ever fight again – it is too awful to see the hundreds and hundreds of killed and maimed, and knowing that on some occasions many are left out to die.

Thursday 12th Three machine guns have been giving much trouble on the beach all this morning, and communication with Anzac was cut off. Water also ran out. Thank goodness all the wounded at last got away from here last night. I could not stand their pitiful groans round my dug out, and unable to do anything. There has been little fighting to-day, and I hope the men have had a bit of their badly needed rest. I feel I could sleep for a week.

Saturday 14th Got up at 5 to have a bathe in the sea as [Lt G. B. B., KMB] Trenchard was stopping the machine gun fire on the beach. Got down there alright and then stood still to choose a spot to unrobe in and four bullets at once fell round me within 10 yards, - evidently a sniper had let off his magazine at me, so I came back unwashed much to my disappointment and had a wash in a tin of sea water. This last effort was a series of errors. A very big effort entailing a long night march over difficult and unknown country with raw troops was bound to end, as it did, in their losing their way and not being up for the assault. The old, trained troops gained their objective only to be shelled out and decimated by our ships thanks to lack of organisation of control of ships fire. If only we had a fighting general this whole show, I feel convinced, would have been over by now with half the casualties, whereas now it gets daily more complicated.

Monday 16th Carey Evans [sic; Capt T. J. Carey-Evans], 137 Combined Field Ambulance] told me to-day that the whole brigade is in a rotten state and ought to be sent away for a rest. We have been hard at it with no relief for nearly four months, always within rifle fire, and the strain is beginning to tell.

Thursday 19th We took a trench last night with 2 officers and 20 men. The Turks counter attacked and eventually we had to evacuate, having 1 officer and 8 men wounded. Same old game. The infantry on the left made a big advance this morning and came under artillery fire. Kirby reported it to me, said it was playing Hell with

the infantry and that none of our guns were attempting to reply. I reported it at once to the C.R.A. [*Commander, Royal Artillery*] and they got a gun firing effectively, but it was too late. It's perfectly damnable this lack of co-operation and, but for Kirby reporting it, I presume none of the New Zealanders would have said or done anything. I'm fed to the world with this show where men's lives are chucked away by the hundred. This affair ought to have been over months ago if the situation had been properly appreciated, and I believe we shall continue to blunder on till we get a General.

Friday 20th The Division on our left is to make a big push to-morrow and try to get the W. hills. It will be a grand thing if they succeed – I only hope it is better run than our show here.

Saturday 21st 3.30 p.m. The attack has been in progress for an hour now and I have been watching it. Our men were advancing splendidly through a zone swept with shrapnel. The Turks appear to have only a few guns, and have to concentrate them all in one place. If what I saw is all the 9th. Corps should attain its object. Our artillery again is terrific – if only it is hitting, the Turks must be having hell, and as our shells are falling everywhere, I think they must have heavy losses. But heavy losses do not necessarily lose a fight and I pray this venture goes well. A bad omen was that within 2 hours of the fight our times had to be postponed ½ hour as the artillery combination had not been perfected! We have had fairly heavy casualties and our advance is not getting on as fast as it was hoped, but I fancy we are progressing steadily. I only hope we shall hold the inevitable counter attack.

Sunday 22nd We have held our line alright and are pushing on again to-day. It looks more hopeful, but whether the Turks are likely to break I doubt, but things are, I fancy, looking better everywhere for us. Our own particular force has done its work well, but the 11th Division had apparently not advanced at all, so now there is a big gap, about 800 yards, between our left and their right which we are endeavouring to fill as otherwise all our efforts may be wasted. Fired a Common shell at an observer this evening, and he hastily vacated his spot. It struck the landslide, on the edge of which he was observing, about 4 yards below him.

Monday 23rd Got up at 4.30 and visited my gun. Later a m.g. opened fire. I got on to the place – 1st. round about 10 yds. to the right, 2nd. 3 yds. to the right, and two large pieces of something went into the air, which I hope was a portion of the m.g., which had been removed under cover. 3rd round destroyed embrasure and I came down again. I only hope the 11th [Northern] Division is not a sample of K's army. They have failed to make any advance, and only 800 Turks and 2 batteries against them. They have left our left in the air, and are 1000 yards back. They have been sent to the Reserve and replaced by the 10th [Irish] Division. We ought to have got the W hills two days ago.

Tuesday 24th No m.g. shooting to-day, but I have my eye on two places I think they are preparing. Nothing happening on either side except each strengthening the line we now hold. The 10th Div. have not come into line yet, and we are making a

Officers of the 7th Indian Mountain Artillery Brigade, 1914-1915



Lieut P C Chapman (DOW), Lieut C D Rawson (W), Capt H A Kirby (W), Capt H E Kenyon (Adjutant), Lieut J H Thom (W),
Capt E L G Whitting, Lieut G B B Trenchard (W).

Capt J A D Langhorne, Major J E L Bruce (KIA), Lieut Col J L Parker CO, Major A C Fergusson, Capt K G Campbell.

trench to connect back to their right from our left – about 800 yards.

Wednesday 25th Heard a regiment of the 9th A.C. during the evening dug a trench after dark immediately behind the Gurkas, mistaking, as it turned out, the Gurkas for Turks, and flattering themselves they had completed the trench without being fired on. In the morning the Turks attacked the Gurkas and K's gallant army fired into the backs of the Gurkas. The latter drove off the Turks and told the Tommies what they were doing. I had some fun with machine guns, and, at one time, took a man's head clean off and sent it about 15 yards up in the air, and in the evening I missed the spot I was firing at and the shell struck among some low scrub behind, and to my surprise and delight a complete Turk went up in the air and fell about 20 yards! The cute fellow must for safety have left the trench and been sniping from the bushes behind.

Thursday 26th Anzac total casualties – Killed, Wounded, and Missing, and Sick, - since we landed, to date 75,000.

Friday 27th At 4.00 p.m. we are trying to capture an important hill at Kaiajik Aghala [Hill 60]. General Godly [sic] has got the fire of all the ships and all the guns from 4 p.m. till dark, as the advance is only about 200 yards, although it is over Turkish trenches, if we do not succeed we shall never get anything. The Colonel is sending me to the firing line to watch and report to him afterwards. Hope I shall escape safely! Got up to the firing line at 3.58 p.m. and the bombardment started at 4 p.m. It was onto a small hill commanding a long valley running up to Anafarta and shell plastered the hill. Not a Turk was visible except when occasionally one was blown up into the air. At 4.30 there was 5 minutes pause, and then on again till 5 p.m. when all guns raised their elevations and our infantry rushed forward. The Connaughts went splendidly, almost immediately after them on their right went the New Zealanders and then on their right, a little later, the Australians. The two former gained the first trenches with a few casualties from enemy shrapnel which opened up at once. I watched it all from a higher hill about 800 yards away. Unfortunately the guns had not got properly on to a Turkish trench which enfiladed the line of advance, and as the Australians came up round the corner a m.g. opened on them and the lading 10 or 20 men went down like nine-pins, and the rest ran back and worked round to the left where the N.Z.s had been. All guns were then turned on to this trench, and 18 pndrs, 5" and 4.5" howitzers put shell in and all round it, also 10 pndrs, but no direct hit was obtained till dark and the gun never ceased firing. I've never seen such brave men as the Turks – not a man had gone during the bombardment and during the assault they very frequently stood right up to see where our men were, and one or two sauntered forward to other trenches. Their trenches are all made like a chess board and we always find the front trench empty and I am certain that their plan is to have all guns and m.g.'s trained to enfilade the first trench, as our men always stop in it when they have taken it and are at once enfiladed with m.g.'s and shrapnel. We gained some high ground but had not got the hill when I left at 7.30 and did not look as though we could hold what we had got. Our losses were certainly heavy. I am now satisfied that all we have

been perpetually about the Turks being short of ammunition, badly armed in the majority, and not wanting to fight, is absolutely wrong. Finer fighting men there do not exist, and ammunition is apparently in abundance. We shall only defeat them by going right into them – no firing of any description will ever make them break or even withdraw. They fight till they are killed. They are magnificent. In attacking however I fancy they are not so good. Where I was, we were all covered with sand knocked over us by bullets raining on top of our trench.

Saturday 28th This evening it was noticed the Turks had made a strong gun emplacement apparently to fire on my gun which has stopped their m.g.'s. I went up and fired 19 rounds. The laying was ideal and I was given corrections of one minute. Loophole – sandbags and timber all smashed up. An hour later men began collecting them again, so I gave them 7 more rounds and the whole work was in ruin. It was ripping, but I guess they will have a whack at me before long as this gun has done them no end of harm.

Sunday 29th I reported a big work being made by the Turks to the C.R.A., and suggested the Navy should shell it. Later I was asked to put some shell on to it so as to indicate the line to the Navy. I did so, but the navy got nowhere near it though they saw my shell. The emplacement I destroyed yesterday had been built up during the night, so I knocked it down again. Also fired on a party of snipers and made them disappear. I can not but be surprised that the Turks have not got their guns onto us yet. The beach is a large target and they must do damage if they shell it. Heard that 200 New Zealanders had taken Hill 60 which the Connaughts (K's Army) failed to take, and have established themselves there. So much for this crowd of K's Army anyhow.

Monday 30th Fired at a place the Turks had been busy at during the night. From 5 to 7 the Turks have been shelling the beach here, and apparently no effort has been made to silence them. They have put in fully 50 shell and, considering the target, have done remarkably little damage. About 5 men wounded, 1 killed, and about 10 mules. Heaven only knows why none of the ships are put on to it. Two destroyers and a ship have been lying silent off here all the time.

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 1st Inspected new gun tunnel I am having made here to fire on Chunuk Bair if necessary. Fired 15 shell to stop Turks digging and managed to stop all work on the Hill. The Turks evidently have a great respect for this gun which proves it must have caused them considerable damage.

Thursday 2nd In the evening I had some good shooting. Later I got another group of men and I actually saw two corpses thrown on to the trench, so I hope I got several more in the trench killed and wounded.

Friday 3rd A party of snipers got busy in a trench, so let off a round. It fell 1½ yards to the left of where I meant it to go but was plum in the trench and as luck would have it I saw it hit a man straight in the chest! Result – no more sniping from the trench or anywhere till dark.

Extract from ANZAC H.Q. News Bulletin

“Machine guns no longer attempt to fire from the North West slopes of Battleship Hill, and the work-parties also seem demoralised by the fire of the Mountain Gun in No 2 Post.”

Saturday 4th A very heavy gun is now being fired by one of the monitors and it brings down part of my dug out each round, covering the whole place with dust. I wonder if she is doing more than “hitting the Peninsular” or “missing the Peninsular” as we say when the Navy fire on shipping etc. in the Dardanelles. It will be an unfortunate moment if any of the Navy ever start bucking about their accurate shooting when any of this force is around. We are not likely to forget them in a hurry. Watched the Endymion shelling Turkish trenches on “my hill”. She put some beauties into their front trench, but I think they were empty, and in any case the infantry made no attempt to benefit by it.

Sunday 5th Shortly after lunch I got a message that the Turks were busy digging opposite my gun. Fired 12 rounds, 8 of which fell in the trench and demolished all the place they had been working on.

Extract from ANZAC H.Q. News Bulletin

“The Turkish observation station on Battleship Hill which had been built up during the night was again demolished by the Mountain Gun on No 2 Post.”

Tuesday 21st Colonel Parker appointed Brigadier-General R.A. 11th Div.

Sunday 26th Up at 6.15. Daily report to N.Z. and A.D. at 7.15. Strength report by wire to D.A.A. and Q.M.G., Anzac at 7.45. Ammunition expended report to A.Q.M.G. at 8.00 a.m. War diary written up and daily report forwarded to B.G.R.A., Anzac. Battery returns checked and noted in office book. Column expenditure noted. This is all done every Sunday and it is now 8.15. So starts every “Day of Rest”.

OCTOBER

Tuesday 5th The beastly 75 mm. has got on to our vicinity now. I don't mind the other guns as their shell come so leisurely and one hears them. To me they seem to offer a sporting chance and say “Look out, we're after you, get into your holes” but the 75mm sounds like death and death only – they come at a terrific pace, whizz-bang, before you know anything.

Saturday 9th Put some top hole H.E. shell on to the trenches and entanglements on Hill 60. One unfortunate Turk went I daren't say how high, but he certainly landed at least 300 yards from the starting post. I thought he was a large piece of wood till he started falling with his legs and arms spread out.

Sunday 10th Nothing doing anywhere, though it is getting more confusing to make out which are our trenches and which are the Turks'. The Allies' Ministers left Bulgaria yesterday. I do wonder if they will send an army here.

Monday 11th Went through practically all the trenches on Hill 60. The nearest to the Turkish is about 20 yards away. A mine gallery had been determined on to one

of the Turkish trenches. Last evening about 4 p.m. the Turks exploded a large mine, and when it had settled down we discovered that they had blown up practically the spot we meant to! One of our men had his leg broken by some debris but that was all. The Turks blew up a portion of one of their own trenches and a large area of their wire entanglements! Got the first news re Bulgaria's initial operations in the War, which appears to have commenced with 3,000 Bulgarians deserting.

Monday 18th To-day has been a Red Letter Day; four important events – (1) Intimation received that Ian Hamilton has handed over command to Monro, (2) The Brigade has been informed that Draper is to leave it, (3) Rumour that the Russian and Italian Ambassadors are leaving Greece, and (4) Fresh potatoes for dinner, the first for three months.

[Re Draper. One of the pages in the diary, not reproduced, is the list of officers the brigade left India, with notes on casualties. Under 'Other Officers' is a Lieut Draper of 21 KMB, with the comment 'Disposed of!']

Wednesday 20th A 7" shell fell in our line this afternoon. It fell practically perpendicularly! It missed one of our men by a fraction of an inch, buried itself at his feet, knocked him over, and he fell with his face on top of the spot where the shell went into the ground. The shell did not explode, and the man is only suffering from face scratches from trying to go after the shell! A miraculous escape.

Thursday 21st Move to Imbros is sanctioned, and we leave on Saturday.

Saturday 23rd About 7.45 I started for the pier. Our orders had been to be there by 8.45. We were booked for H.M.S. Partridge. She was late in arriving. The men eventually formed up at 11p.m. and were embarked on a "beetle", the name given to a special light pattern lighter driven by a motor and capable of carrying 150 to 200 fully equipped men below. The deck is closed over, so they are immune from shrapnel when landing. Another 150 can sit on deck on favourable occasions. This we did, and our party of about 320 went off in one boat. It was exactly midnight by the time we were all settled on the Partridge.

Sunday 24th The Partridge sailed at 7 a.m. and we arrived here (Lemnos) at about 1.00 p.m.

NOVEMBER

Tuesday 9th Kitchener arrives tomorrow, also Sir John Maxwell, Monro, Birdwood, etc. Heard that 22nd and 28th Divisions were ordered to Salonica from France, also that 36,000 men are to be withdrawn from the Peninsular – if true, here ends the first lesson. We must hold a shorter line. Doesn't look at all pleasant.

Wednesday 10th During the morning a Colonel (?) came to call – he is commanding a Territorial Battalion. He says they are the most dreadful crowd of men and officers. Half of them should never have been passed fit (and lots of them were ploughed but sent out in spite of this). A very large proportion have shocking teeth – some are nearly deaf, and many are nearly blind. Brave enough in a fight and callous, but not to be trusted on look out and that sort of thing.

Sunday 14th Saw to the cleaning up of the camp, but could do little as a vile dust storm was blowing. The transport was half an hour late coming. When we were half way to the Pier our embarkation was cancelled, and all that was on the lighter had to be unloaded again, and men and kits etc. are back in camp once more. They might just as well have cancelled the move earlier as it was obvious from the wind that we could not go.

Tuesday 16th At last we have embarked on the *El Kehina*. Sailed at 4.10, all ranks wearing life belts. Hear a ship was torpedoed near Lemnos coming from Alex. Yesterday, and she is reported to have had the greater part of the material for building winter huts on board! Arrived off here about 9.30 but the lighter did not come off till nearly 11, and then it took ages to load, everything having to be carried down a single gangway fixed at a very awkward angle.

Thursday 18th Went up to my old position to examine Hill 60. We exploded 3 mines on Tuesday night but made no attempt to attack or occupy the trenches and the general opinion is that we have made it much worse, having raised all the Turkish trenches about 6 feet and allowed them to be reoccupied by the Turks.

Saturday 20th Fired 13 rounds after lunch at enemy trenches on Hill 100. Good shooting from both guns.

Tuesday 23rd Had a good old cuss all round this morning. The men are slack and want waking up. Was informed by a Sapper that Godley seriously made enquiries re blowing up Chunuk Bair! He was told in reply that the galleries might be ready in two years. He really is the limit. However, I understand Birdwood appreciates his worth, so there is no need to worry.

Wednesday 24th Our camp fires smoking very badly, enabling the Turks to locate and range accurately. Spotted smoke from a Turkish camp fire, and put 10 shell in and around the spot, and hope it spoilt their bacon. I was pointing out a place to the Havildar when a shrapnel burst in front of us. The bullets were literally all round us and neither of us were touched! A lucky escape. Message received from C.R.A. N.Z & A.D. that "no Artillery will fire for 48 hours from 18.45 today except in case of an attack from the enemy or a very advantageous target presents itself."

Thursday 25th Fergie came up here about 10 a.m. and explained that the reason of the "stop firing" order was that the Turks are under the impression we are going to evacuate, and it is hoped this may strengthen their belief and lead them to attack. Am wearing thick woollen vest, Viyella Shirt, Cardigan waistcoat, warm padded waistcoat, and woolly sweater over all, and am none too warm!

Saturday 27th At 13.50 we did a fairly heavy bombardment of some of the enemy trenches in the vicinity of the Farm and the Apex as information was received that both lines were fully manned. There was a pretty fair noise and quite exciting. My position had a good many rounds of 75mm put round it but I am certain they do not know where it is and it was only searching fire.

Sunday 28th Was called at 7 to find the whole country white with snow and still

snowing! So end all arguments as to whether it was cold enough in January for the snow to come far down the hills. There is snow on the beach today! One can not see more than 500 yds. most of the time. Freezing hard again tonight. If deserters reports are true that the majority of Turks have only one blanket and many have no boots, they must be nearly frozen to death.

Monday 29th A sort of impression ... going round that we are going to withdraw as many troops as possible ... and leave the rest to hang on or be sacrificed. I shall be fed up if I am amongst the latter, having been here from the very beginning. I don't think we ought to be sacrificed.

DECEMBER

Saturday 4th Feeling weak and was sick whilst dressing. A doctor man (Capt. Hill) came to see me and said I was suffering from Jaundice and Debility, and that I should be evacuated for a long rest. Just as he had finished Fergie rolled up and says I should go to the Med. Ambulance. He is going to see them about me and is going to try to persuade them not to evacuate me. I will be angry if they don't after a doctor's recommendation. Whitting relieved me about 4 p.m. and I walked down to the 108 C.F.A. where I turned into bed – my bed being a stretcher on two boxes.

Sunday 5th They do not intend evacuating me from here unless I fail to get better or, in other words, worse I suppose! The Turks firing 8.2" H.E. on to No 3 post near N.Z. and A.D.H.Q. By far the best ammunition they have had, every round detonated perfectly and it is obviously a new lot – presumably from Germany.

Monday 6th Hear that 500 Gurkas have been evacuated for frost bite to date. It is scandalous the way Indian troops have been given no relief and England has been full of Australians and New Zealanders perfectly fit and enjoying themselves. Some say there are 60,000 of them. There is no doubt the Indians here will collapse in winter and then the weather will not permit of them being evacuated. None of the low ground will be tenable and it strikes me this will be a holocaust under present conditions.

Friday 10th It really sounded as though we had suddenly realised we were at War about 11 o'clock today. I heard firing start so got out of bed to see what it was, and behold the Bacchanti [*Bacchante*], Grafton, Endymion, one ordinary monitor and one large monitor (14" Gun) strung out in a line and in the devil of a temper. I don't know what had annoyed them but they were fairly letting it go and it was top hole watching the incessant stream of flashes, especially from the Bacchanti. Two planes were also up spotting. I wonder if they hit anything beyond the fields and hill sides! Smoked my first cigarette since 3rd Dec!

Saturday 11th This evening this ambulance has received orders to evacuate all their sick and not send any back to their regiments. It really looks as though at last all Indian troops are going to be withdrawn to Egypt. It all seems too lovely to be true.

Sunday 12th All the sick were evacuated from this ambulance last night and now there are only three wounded in hospital who came in early this morning. Carey

Evans got orders to evacuate all his sick too, so now, as I am not to go on a hospital ship, I have been discharged to duty so that I can go to my old Hd. Qrs. I am only weak now and hope to soon be quite fit again. It certainly looks as though the brigade is to embark. We are getting all our spare stuff down to the beach so as to have it as handy as possible in case we get sudden orders to embark.

Monday 13th Got a message that no more private letters would be accepted at the post, so I have now come to the conclusion that they mean to evacuate Anzac altogether. If true it's too awful for words to think of the lives lost and bodies wrecked and crippled for nothing – not to mention the terrible expense it has all been. It's perfectly heart-breaking. A failure – and it might, could and should, in my opinion, have been a success. It's dreadful. Stores of all sorts being given away – rubber boots, thigh waders, anything. Colonel Austin says "If not given away they will be dumped in the sea." Now what part is this little Brigade that did so well on the day of the landing to play in the final act?

Tuesday 14th Busy burning office papers, maps, etc. We expect to embark on the night of the 16/17 but already orders have been issued that nothing is being allowed to be embarked except a bag that can be slung over one's back. As there is every chance therefore that this diary may never get away with me, I am sending it with an officer leaving to-night, and I wonder if I shall ever see it again. Tragic if it is my first and last diary! I expect to get off, but – and it is a very big but. Au revoir!

Acknowledgements

John Kenyon is grateful to his cousin, Andrew Kenyon, for the image of the officers of the 7th Indian Mountain Artillery Brigade on page 41.

Editor's notes:

This is Part 2 of Dr Kenyon's article. The third and final part will appear in the next (Spring) issue of *The Gallipolian*.

References to the Indian Mountain artillery batteries are occasionally found in the diaries and other accounts of soldiers who served beside them at Gallipoli. Private S. Reilly, of the 2nd Battalion AIF, wounded and returned to Australia, was quoted in a newspaper article:

Private Reilly speaks of the happy relations which have been maintained from the first between the Australians and native Indian troops. The coolest thing he observed in the landing was the action of the British officers of the 21st Indian Mountain Battery, as they directed the native gunners and muleteers in the placing of their guns. One officer standing on a knoll directed the fire of the guns with his hand, raising it up or down as the elevation of the gun was to be changed. Part of the hand was shot away, but the officer coolly bound it up with his handkerchief and gave directions with the other hand.

(*Border Morning Mail and Riverina Times* (Albury, NSW) 23 Nov 1915 p2).

THE BRITISH NURSES ON LEMNOS

A Call for Further Study

Jim Claven

Recent years have seen a long overdue interest in the role of nurses in the Gallipoli campaign, as well as the broader medical aspects of the campaign.

The presence of Australian nurses on Lemnos, serving with the two Australian field hospitals located on the island's Turks Head Peninsula from August until the end of the campaign, is well known. There have been many publications on Australian nurses and some will have seen the TV drama series *Anzac Girls*.¹ Australian archival records confirm that at least 130 Australian nurses served here.² There is some interesting literature on the role of Canadian nurses at Lemnos,³ centring on the presence of these nurses at the two Canadian field hospitals there and the fact that the only two nurses to die during the campaign were Canadians serving on Lemnos (Matron Jaggard and Sister Munro). This all led to the Canadian Embassy in Greece (led by Ambassador His Excellency Robert Peck, supported by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission) successfully promoting the erection of a new memorial to all nurses who served in the Gallipoli campaign which was unveiled at Portianos Military Cemetery in 2015.



British nurses in a street at East Mudros, Lemnos, talking with Royal Navy officers. IWM Q13635.

Other nurses served on the hospital ships and converted transports that transferred the sick and wounded from the Peninsula to Lemnos, Egypt and beyond. These included Australian, New Zealand and French nurses. The latter are also referred to

as having landed briefly near Mudros by the British military governor of the island, Rear Admiral Wester-Wemyss in his account of the campaign, *The Navy in the Dardanelles Campaign*.⁴ Two New Zealand nurses are also recorded as having landed on Lemnos during the campaign. Nurse Fanny Speedy was one of the eleven New Zealand nurses who served on the New Zealand Hospital Ship *Maheno* transporting wounded from Gallipoli. In December she visited another New Zealand nurse, Ada Mitchell, who was recovering at one of the hospitals on Lemnos, having been brought there after surviving the torpedoing of her ship in the Mediterranean.⁵

One of the intriguing historical aspects of the presence of nurses on Lemnos is that of British nurses. Neither the British nor Australian official medical histories of the campaign make any mention of British nurses on Lemnos, with the latter alternatively noting that Australian nurses were often temporarily transferred to the 16th and 18th British General Hospitals to replace male staff.⁶



A British nurse in a street at East Mudros talking with French Navy sailors 'at a hospital' during their convalescence. Photographer, Lieutenant Ernest Brookes, 1915. IWM Q13636.

British nurses were indeed present on the hospital ships servicing the Gallipoli battlefields. Five of these nurses have left accounts of their service on these ships – Sister Anna Cameron (serving on HMHS *Delta*), Sister Hilda Chibnall, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, Sister Evelyn Campbell, Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Reserve, Sister M E Webster (HMHS *Gloucester Castle*) and Mary Ann Brown (HMHS *Devanha*).⁷ Historian Phylomena Badsey states that 81 nurses served with the QAIMNS and 200 with the QARNNR on nine hospital ships and 15 naval transports during the war. A number of these would have served in the Gallipoli campaign, with some coming into Mudros Bay.

However this author has discovered evidence that female British nurses were also

present at the Allied medical facilities based at West Mudros on Lemnos.

Within two weeks of its arrival there, the 2nd Australian Stationary Hospital's medical officer Captain John Deakin wrote that some 20 British Royal Army Medical Corps nurses (as well as doctors) along with 12 Canadian nurses and 12 Australian nurses from the 3rd Australian General Hospital – were assisting the 2nd Australian Stationary Hospital, noting that the 'nurses returned every evening to their own hospital, so all the night-nursing was done by our men.'⁸

In addition two Australian nurses made specific mention of British nurses on Lemnos. Matron Grace Wilson wrote in her private diary on 25 September 1915 of "some English Sisters" serving at the 18th British Stationary Hospital on Turks Head Peninsula and Sister Olive Haynes of the 2nd ASH records the death on Lemnos of 'an English Sister' in late September in her diary entry for 27 September.⁹ One of the former has been identified as Nurse Winifred Lea.¹⁰

There are also two photographs in the Imperial War Museum taken by British war photographer Ernest Brookes of what appear to be British nurses ashore at East Mudros.¹¹ There is no evidence as to whether these are the same nurses referred to by Matron Grace Wilson or others who may have come ashore from their service on a hospital ship or converted transport.

Historians Christine Hallett¹² and Yvonne McEwen¹³ have begun the study of British nurses in the war. But as Phylomena Badsey writes, the topic of British nursing in the Gallipoli campaign (and even the whole war) is under-researched. It is likely that the nurses who served on Lemnos – or who came there aboard hospital ships – would have left accounts of their experiences, whether in letters home or in personal diaries or memoirs. There may also be photographs of their service – similar to those kept by Australian nurses – yet to be discovered. I look forward to more research into this aspect of the Gallipoli campaign. *See photos page 34.*

Endnotes

1. There have been many publications dealing with role of Australian nurses in the First World War, including on Lemnos. Stretching back to the official medical history (Col. Arthur G Butler's *Official History of the Australian Army Medical Services in the War of 1914-1918*, Volumes 1 and 3, published in 1938 and 1943 respectively), these include for example - Rupert Goodman's *Our War Nurses: The History of the Royal Australian Army Nursing Corps 1902-1988* (1988), Marianne Barker's *Nightingales in the mud* (1989), Jan Bassett's *Guns and Brooches: Australian Army Nursing from the Boer War to the Gulf War* (1992); Katrina Hedditch's *Lemnos 1915 – A Nursing Odyssey to Gallipoli* (2011); Catherine McCullagh's *Willingly into the Fray: One Hundred Years of Australian Army Nursing* (2010); and Kristy Harris' excellent *More than Bombs and Bandages: Australian Army Nurses at work in World War 1* (2011). Added to this are a number of individual nursing biographies such as Janet Butler's *Kitty's War: The remarkable wartime experiences of Kit McNaughton* (2013), as well as Peter Rees' *The Other Anzacs: Nurses at War, 1914-18* (2008) – and one can see that the Australian literature on the subject is extensive. My own book published in 2019 – *Lemnos & Gallipoli Revealed: A Pictorial History of the Anzacs in the Aegean 1915-16* – also addresses the role of nurses on Lemnos during the Gallipoli campaign in text and photographs.
2. Butler states that by the end of October 'some 130 Australian nurses now on the island.' This author has been able to confirm from the evidence contained in each nurses' individual Service File the

- presence of 130 Australian nurses serving across the two Australian hospitals during the Gallipoli campaign. 105 Australian nurses served at the 3rd AGH exclusively. 25 Australian nurses served at the 2nd ASH. While additional nurses may be identified as serving with the hospitals on Lemnos in 1915, this will need to be supported by archival records. A G Butler, *Official history of the Australian Army Medical Services in the War of 1914-1918, Volume 1: Gallipoli, Palestine and New Guinea*, Melbourne, AWM 1938 p388.
3. See for example Sir Andrew Macphail's *Official History of the Canadian Forces in the Great War 1914-19 – The Medical Services* (1925), Dr Andrea McKenzie's 'Our common colonial voice: Nation and Canadian Nurses on Lemnos, 1915' 2011, p4, 7, at firstworldwarstudies.org; and Cynthia Toman's *Sister Soldiers of the Great War: The Nurses of the Canadian Army Medical Corps* (2016).
 4. Allied Governor Wemyss refers to this visit of these French nurses in mid-August – 'such nice nurses. They are so exactly what they should be – calm and business like, they are universally lightly grey-haired that I am almost inclined to think that they use powder.' Rear Admiral Wester Wemyss, *The Navy in the Dardanelles Campaign*, Naval and Military Press 2010, pp179-180.
 5. Nurse Mitchell's ship is incorrectly named as the *Royal George*. This ship was not torpedoed or sunk during the Gallipoli campaign. Anna Rogers, *While You're Away: New Zealand Nurse at War 1899-1948*, Auckland University Press 2003 pp165-166.
 6. A G Butler, *Official history of the Australian Army Medical Services in the War of 1914-1918, Volume 3: Special Problems and Services*, Melbourne, AWM 1943, Note 18, p537; Maj-Gen Sir W G Macpherson & Mjr T J Mitchell (RAMC), *History of the Great War Based on Official Documents – Medical Services General History Vol IV*, London, HMSO, 1924 pp1-61.
 7. Phylomena Badsey, "Care-giving and Naval Nurses at Gallipoli", Rhys Crawley and Michael Locicero, (eds) *Gallipoli: New Perspectives on the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, 1915-16*, (Helion & Co., 2018), pp568-584; Eric Bush, *Gallipoli*, (St Martins, 1975), p279; and Christine Hallett *Veiled Warriors: Allied Nurses in the First World War* (Oxford UP, 2014) pp139-140.
 8. "Some experiences with the No. 2 Australian Stationary Hospital" – By J E F Deakin, MB, ChM (Syd), Honorary Assistant Surgeon, Mater Misericordiae Hospital, North Sydney in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, 27 Jan 1917, p79.
 9. Entry for 27th September [1915], Margaret Young (ed.), 'We are here, too': Diaries and Letters of Sister Olive L C Haynes No.2 AGH – November 1914 to February 1918, Australian Down Syndrome Association Inc, 1999, p78.
 10. Christine Hallett, *op. cit.*, p139.
 11. Photographs held in the Imperial War Museum Collection show British nurses ashore at East Mudros in 1915. That with IWM reference no. Q13635 depicts British nurses in a street at East Mudros talking with Royal Navy officers. That with IWM reference Q13636 and taken by British war photographer Lieut Ernest Brookes in 1915 depicts a British nurse in a street at East Mudros talking with French Navy sailors 'at a hospital' during their convalescence.
 12. Christine Hallett, *Veiled Warriors: Allied Nurses in the First World War* (Oxford UP, 2014).
 13. Yvonne McEwen, *In the Company of Nurses : The History of the British Army Nursing Service in the Great War*, (Edinburgh UP, 2015).

LAST POST

It is with regret that the Association learned of the death of the following members:

Richard Hoare (Membership number 1610).

James Brown (Membership number 7464).

THE DECISION TO EVACUATE 'Y' BEACH

Account by Adrian Keyes DSO, Senior Naval Officer at 'Y' Beach, 25 April 1915.

**Letter to Lieut-Col E Y Daniel, Secretary,
Historical Section, Committee of Imperial Defence.**

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL.
H.M.S. 'ONYX,' TORQUAY.

9th April, 1918.

Dear Daniel,

I remember you very well. I am sorry I have not answered your letter' before, but I have been away for a few days, and only got back on Sunday and found a lot of urgent correspondence waiting for me.

I think I have a very good idea of what went on at 'Y' Beach, and in fact have some of the originals of the signals which were made. I have never seen the despatches or the signal logs of the ships — and so don't know what is on record — but I kept my records for some time and have my notes, as I fully expected that there would be an enquiry.

In my opinion we could and ought to have held that position, and the reason why we failed was that the majority of the Plymouth Battalion of the R.N.D. ran. I made a signal to *Sapphire* or *Goliath*, asking them to collect boats in case we had to re-embark, this was done at the request of Colonel Mathews, and was made about 6.30 am. I only allowed boats to approach to embark wounded, and as more boats came in they got out of hand, and approached the beach. There were about 400 R.M.L.I. on the beach, mostly without rifles, and very few officers. These men rushed the boats. I managed to stop the rush and tried to organise them and drive them up the cliff to fight, but they were quite hopeless.

I got the boats away from the beach, and got some sort of order and went up the cliff to find Colonel Mathews. I found him and could get nothing out of him, but after talking to Major MacAlister of the K.O.S.B's., I went back to Colonel Mathews and told him that half his battalion were on the beach and would not come up, and that MacAlister had told me that he couldn't hold his line much longer — so I proposed to clear his --- off the beach so that the K.O.S.B's., should have a chance to get away if they were driven over. Colonel Mathews then wrote out and gave me a signal which I made and which I have:—

G.O.C. 29th Div.

No. 4. Situation critical A.A.A. Urgent need reinforcements and ammunition without which cannot maintain ridge at "Y" A.A.A. Alternative is to retire on the beach under cover ships guns. 7.45 a.m.

I pointed out to him that we could not assemble on the beach, and at that moment a very strong attack was delivered and we were driven right on to the top of the cliff.

The K.O.S.B's. delivered a very fine counter attack and Palmer, commanding the S.W.B., was killed alongside me. Both MacAlister and Palmer were very bitter about the Marines and begged me to go back to the beach and clear them out of it, as they would not fight and would only hamper them if they got driven over the top. As a matter of fact when I got back to the beach I found the Marines had waded out to the boats, and there was a very horrible exhibition.

However, most of the boats got away full of Marines, and when they came back we got some sort of order, and the boats all lay off. Detachments then started to come down under their officers in good order and fell in on the beach, and obeyed all orders. I went up again to find Mathews and on my way was given the following, which I have still got: —

To Commander Keyes or Adjt R.M.L.I.

The only orders received by me to retire reached me at 10.0 a.m. verbally from Commander Keyes. Can you get volunteers from ships to come and help with wounded? I shall hold on to the top of gully till wounded removed.

G.E. Mathews.

10.5. 26.4.15.

I found Mathews and could get no sense out of him. I told him the position and begged him to hang on — there were about two companies on the beach in good order — and that I could get the ship's guns on to the top of the cliff, and we could come over the top and hang on. I closed the ships in and it was a very re-assuring sight to see them with their guns covering us.

However, he decided to re-embark. I felt very bitter about it, and after seeing them off to the *Sapphire* I went back and went up the cliff. I could only find a single Turk, who fired once and ran, so I punctured the water tins and spilt that, and with three volunteers from the boat, I salvaged as many of the ammunition boxes as the steam boat would hold, and left as many more on shore, and stacked them up so they could be destroyed by gunfire. I was recalled by the *Sapphire*, and very nearly remained ashore I was so sick with them, only I was very done and rather lame from a fall, and very wet and cold - but I believe I could have walked to 'X' Beach without seeing a Turk.-

This is my account, and I have told my brother and a few others, but now poor Mathews is dead,² I feel very diffident about saying anything about it. In my opinion he never was fit to command it — he never gave a decision — I take the full responsibility for allowing the Marines who got into the boats to get away on board, as I thought them better out of it, and the boats were out of hand. I never sent a message to Colonel Mathews to retire, and cannot believe he ever received one, or if he did why he did not tell me to go to hell and mind my own business.

The 7.25 signal you mention was absolutely unauthorised and is the first I have heard of it, but it explains the way the boats came in. The boat's crews were very bad. It was a very bad show.

I cannot speak too highly of the K.O.S.B's. and the S.W.B's. who were magnificent. Before the landing General Hunter Weston asked me if I had anything to suggest and I asked him to land the K.O.S.B's. first, and keep the Marines in reserve, to which he agreed and made the change.

I told him then they were no good, after I had been training them in the boats. If they had not been there, we could have held on quite well.

I hope you will use discretion in showing this to even Sir Julian Corbett; as there doesn't seem much object in raking it all up.

The two Majors of the Marines, Bewes and Palmer, were both hit. Tetley was splendid and brought his fellows down to the beach in fine style, at the end.

Will you let me know if you think the above will be of use, or if it had better be burnt straight away,

I had some fine fighting a few days later with the 29th Division which I feel proud to have seen, and was very disgusted when I got commended for 'Y' Beach of which I was not proud.³

I have very strong views on the failure of the Naval gun support at the beginning — and later on when supporting the left flank in the *Wolverine* I saw a great deal of it, and we were approaching some organisation when we evacuated — But in my opinion a few professionals at the beginning would have turned the scale.

Yours sincerely
Arthur Keyes

Editor's note:

Transcribed from CAB 45/216: The National Archives, Kew.

Endnotes

1. Letter from Colonel Edward Yorke Daniel CBE, to which Commander Keyes responded.
2. Brigadier General Godfrey Estcourt Matthews (1866-1917), commanding 198th Infantry Brigade, was mortally wounded near La Bassee, 12th April 1917, and died next day, aged 50.
3. General Sir Ian Hamilton reports as follows :
Lieutenant-Commander Keyes showed great coolness, gallantry, and ability. The success of the landing on "Y" beach was largely due to his good services. When circumstances compelled the force landed there to re-embark, this officer showed exceptional resource and leadership in successfully conducting that difficult operation.

THE FLOOD AT SUVLA BAY

F W D Bendall

Extract from Purdom, C B (ed), *Everyman at War*. Dent & Sons London 1930 pp 290-297

If you broke a wash-basin in half, the line of the break would give you a good idea of the trench lines at Suvla. High, almost mountain-high, to the north, they ran down the stony slopes, where nothing grew but prickly Turkish holm-oak in dense, scrubby patches, down to the cultivated flat land at the bottom of the basin. Over grassy hillocks they ran, and away southwards to the Anzac position, which we saw dimly, but did not know, and up the distant cliffs to the precarious foot-hold we had on the summit there. From 70 to 400 yards apart they ran, our trench and the Turkish line.

Standing in the middle of the basin, we saw a curved line of hills some miles away. To the left these hills went on behind us to the northern end of the blue bay, where the battleships rode snugly at anchor inside protecting nets. The ground here was like a rough farm at home. There were hedges and ditches, trees, some poor olive-groves, and here and there a vineyard.

All the ravines and water-courses on the distant hills led the winter rainfall into the middle of the basin, and in August we found in the clayey soil hoof-marks and foot-marks inches deep, made in the previous winter, when the farms were a puddle, and the farmers were at peace, and now baked and set till the rains should come again.

Our division held the middle of the basin. My battalion was on the left flank of the divisional sector, and my left-hand company was on rising ground, where the slope of the northern hills began. The battalion trenches were shaped like a bent bow with an arrow on it. The front trench was the string, about three-quarters of a mile long. From each end a communication trench led back. These curved towards each other and met some 300 yards behind the firing-line. They formed the bow. The arrow was a third trench, which was really a field ditch dug out and widened, and which ran from the middle of the front line to the junction of the two communication trenches. Battalion headquarters were just off this straight trench on the south side. A trench with a fire-step led to them and from this ran several narrow slits in the ground 2 feet wide and 6 feet deep. Each of these opened out into a small room, about 6 feet by 7, in which an officer or some men lived. One room was a good deal larger than the others. This was the mess-room. These rooms were covered with corrugated iron and a few inches of earth, and in them lived four or five officers and about twenty men, runners, signallers, and the like.

It was a Friday in the last week of November 1915. I had been out for some hours with the Brigadier and the other C.O.'s, walking over the line of the trench which was being dug close to the beach to cover the evacuation, which we knew was coming. Heavy rain had fallen all day, and I was very wet. When I got back to my little room in the earth I changed, putting on dry 'slacks' and shoes, a British warm overcoat, and a Balaclava helmet, for it was cold. The time was now about six o'clock, and it was quite dark.

So I walked down my private slit and turned into the mess-room, where we had a

lamp. Here the second-in command, the M.O., and the adjutant were sitting on seats made of filled sand-bags, at a rough table made of rum cases. The adjutant told me nothing had happened, and we all cursed the weather, for the floor was muddy and the roof was dripping. There was an hour before dinner, and we began to discuss the evacuation, some details of which I had learnt during the afternoon.

As we sat talking there were noises of splashing in the slit outside, and the figure of an orderly was dimly seen, saluting with difficulty in the restricted space.

‘Front line all correct, sir,’ he said.

‘Very good,’ said the adjutant, and looked at me.

‘All right, Jones, no messages,’ I said, and the splashing sound faded away up the slit. This was the usual procedure during the hours of darkness. Each company reported to battalion headquarters every hour, and we reported to the brigade.

The rain sounded more heavily than ever, and there were by now some 3 inches of water on the floor. To keep our feet dry we took the top row of sand-bags from the seats, and used them as foot-stools. Hopes of a meal seemed rather dim.

The cook-house was not likely to be drier than the mess-room, and it would be no joke carrying things along the slit. Even as the M.O. gave voice to this thought there was more splashing, and the adjutant's servant appeared, a waterproof sheet over his head.

“Sorry, dinner will be a bit late, sir. Cook's doing ‘is best, but it's raining something awful, and keeps a-puttin’ the Primus out.” “All right, Smith,” said the MO, who was Mess President on the grounds that he had less to do than anyone else. “Tell him not to worry. We'd sooner have it late and dry,” and Smith paddled away.

Another unpleasant quarter of an hour went by, and the water on the floor rose slowly but steadily. Then, almost suddenly, the heavy drumming noise became less heavy, died down to a mere patter, and ceased. The M.O., who had on gum-boots, splashed outside and sniffed. “It's stopped, sir”, he said; “I can see a star or two.”

“Thank heaven!” I replied. “If that's so I'll just wade round to my dug-out and see how much of my kit is dry. I'm afraid I didn't cover up my valise.”

It was very unpleasant in the slit. The water was over my shoes, and it was pitch dark. Gradually I began to see a little, and by the time I reached my dug-out had picked out several stars to the north.

My dug-out was furnished simply. There was a stretcher resting on filled sand-bags, and a packing-case in the corner. My valise went on the stretcher, and my kit on or under this. I lit a candle and began to pile things on the valise. The cover was turned over, after all, so my flea bag was dry. As I fished about underneath for gum-boots I heard a strange sound. I could have sworn it was the sea, washing on the beach! But the sea and the beach were four miles away. I stood in the doorway and listened. And as I listened in the flickering light there was a curious slapping noise in the slit outside, and a great snake of water came round the curve - breast high - and washed me backwards into the dug-out.

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 dug-out roof was gone. What was left was bad enough! The water was at my throat, waves of it licked my face. I reached both hands to the top of the walls, but I could get no hold there. My fingers tore through the mud. Slowly I forced my way along the slit. If I could get to the main headquarters trench I should be better off, for this, like all trenches that faced east, had a fire-step, a broad ledge some 2 feet higher than the trench bottom. I do not know how long it was before I turned the last corner. But suddenly I felt that the slit was wider. I turned round and with great difficulty got one foot up. Thank God! There was the ledge. A great heave and I was on it – another heave and scramble and I was on the top – panting and dripping – but out of the water, out of the greasy prison-walls of that horrible slit.

I stood there in the dark for a minute to get my breath. Then I called out, “Hullo, headquarters party, is anyone there?” Answering voices came from a few yards away, and, moving towards them I found the M.O. and five or six men standing by the hedge which ran along the centre communication trench. They were all sodden and shivering, and the M.O. and one of the men were clearly in a bad way – the others were supporting them. The ground was covered by the water – my feet told me that – and I realised that there was a flood from the hills, and that the water must have come *through* the Turkish lines. They were worse off than we were! But our lot was bad enough.

I could see the hedge clearly now, and the break in it where the trench I had just left opened into the centre trench. Taking two of the men with me, I walked carefully to the break, and turned along the headquarters trench, which, of course, I could not see for the flood water, calling out as I went. Answers came from more than one point, and I heard the adjutant and the second-in-command. Moving on, I found they were on the top, each with two or three men, but separated from me and from each other by the small trenches that led to the dug-outs. Gradually, going carefully hand in hand, and feeling with one foot ahead so that we might not step into a hidden trench, we came opposite them and as one man had a stick which would reach across the slit, we were able to help them over in turn, and in the end we collected most of the party, though some were missing. We moved cautiously back to the hedge, and in it or near it we spent the night. Most of us stood on the lower branches to keep out of the water. It was bitterly cold.

My memories of that night are growing a little dim. One memory is of shouting from the darkness beyond the hedge. This came from the Captain of ‘C’ Company – which was in the support line. He told me many of his men were drowned, and nearly all collapsed from cold, and he asked me what to do. I told him to keep his men together and moving about while it was dark, but at the first sign of light to lie down behind the parapets of the trench. His voice had a desperate sort of ring to it, which told me more than his words did. Other shouts were heard at intervals, and to those who came close enough the same orders were given. During the night several of the men near me collapsed, and the M.O. seemed to be dying of cold.

With the first streaks of light came a young officer from ‘A’ Company, which was on the right flank – and the lowest ground. He had managed to jump out of the trench when the flood came pouring over the parapet, and was dry, fit, and strong. He had got a plank from somewhere and crossed the intervening trenches by means

of it. And he came splashing along in the grey dawn with the plank on his shoulder. He had a dismal tale to tell of his own company. Many were drowned, others missing. He had left a few men behind the parados.

I told off the strongest of our party to salve two spades as soon as the water sank a little, and to dig a hole for the others to sit in - a shelter of some kind.

I decided to try to get up the front trench with the young subaltern and his plank. All the trenches were abrim and the water swirling along strongly. The torrent had eaten away the sides and each trench looked like a small river in spate.

We went up the hedge side. This gave us some cover from view, and also led straight to the front line. We crossed several trenches and ditches with some difficulty, and reached the front line in the middle of the sector.

No Man's Land was a lake. No attack would come over *that* for some time. North and south the front trench was of sullen brown water, and behind it was no sign of life. Only here, where the hedge joined the front trench, were there any men. Fifteen of them were there, with the company sergeant-major of 'A', a very stout fellow who had saved several from drowning, and was cheering them up as best he could. They were all blue with cold, shivering and wild-eyed.

'B' Company lines ran on to higher ground, so we turned north to find them. For some way the trench was full, and the muddy water hid its dark secrets. At the extreme end of our line the slope of the ground told, and here, behind an old stone wall, we found some twenty men and three officers. They had got their machine gun in action, and I told the company commander that he must watch the whole front carefully, and be prepared to cover most of it. On our way back to Headquarters we saw a number of bodies of men who had obviously died of cold and exhaustion.

The men were digging when I got back. Eight of them were taking turns with two spades, and they had dug down about 4 feet in a square of 9 feet. In this hole we existed for another forty-eight hours. In the afternoon two runners got up from the Brigade. Our orders were to hang on for the present, and I learnt that the whole front was disorganised, ration parties drowned, trenches impassable, and floods everywhere in the basin.

No rations came up in all that time. We found one tin of gooseberry jam and a rum jar half full of rum and muddy water. These were shared out among the party. 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.

Next day there was not more than 2 or 3 feet of water in the trenches, and we had about forty rifles in action as well as the machine gun, but all the men were exhausted. One Turk sniped at us from a tree, and hit several men before we got him. It was quite impossible to get the wounded men away. Five other Turks struggled across No Man's Land (it took them an hour) and gave themselves up. Poor devils - they were half-dead already.

On the second day the brigadier waded up. He stood thigh deep in the trench to hear my gloomy report and went back with hardly a word. He had seen all that was

necessary - and there was nothing to say. Moving about carefully on the top we found a number of bodies. None was wounded, all had died of cold and exposure. Two brothers of 'C' Company had died together. The arm of one was round 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 there to fight, and had fought bravely, had been killed by the elements.

The trenches were a foul sight. Everything was covered by a slimy scum of mud. The front trench in the southern half was unspeakably horrible; this was where the flood had been deepest and strongest.

On the third day we were withdrawn. Forty-five of us all told crawled back to a ravine near brigade headquarters - many on hands and knees. Forty-five out of 500. The adjutant was killed on the way by shrapnel from a solitary shell.

In the ravine we camped under tarpaulins, and slept round a fire. They sent us up brandy and tinned chicken from the medical stores, and dry boots and clothes. On each of the succeeding days we stumbled up to the trenches to collect identity discs and to bury our dead.

Lieut.-Colonel F. W. D. Bendall was before the war captain, unattached list, Territorial Army. 1914, promoted Lieut.-Colonel to raise and command 2/3rd Battalion The London Regt. (Territorial Army). 1915, Malta; The Sudan; Gallipoli, Suvla Bay. 1916-1917, France commanding 8th and 7th Battalions Middlesex Regt. Wounded August 1917, Battle of Passchendaele Ridge. 1918, Home service. Despatches (2) and C.M.G.

Editor's note

The Medical Officer referred to was Capt William Ernest Rielly, RAMC, attached 2/3 The London Regiment (this unit arrived at Suvla 24 September 1915), died 28th Nov 1915. Captain Rielly has no known grave, though he must have been buried. His name appears on the Helles Memorial. I have been unable to trace the unnamed adjutant Lieut Col Bendall states was killed by shell fire during the withdrawal from the firing line.

FLAGS AT THE NEK?

Haluk Oral

One of the controversial legends during the tragic Australian attack on 7 August at The Nek are the 'flags' seen on Turkish trenches. This 'legend' can be found in Charles Bean's *The Story of Anzac*:

...yet about this time observing officers stationed in the trenches on Russell's Top undoubtedly saw, through the haze of dust raised by machine-gun bullets, a small red and yellow flag put up in the enemy's front line. It was on the south-eastern corner of the trench. Who placed it there will never be known, but there were almost certainly a few men of the first line who had managed to get into the extreme right of the Turkish trenches. For ten minutes the flag fluttered behind the parapet, and then some unseen agency tore it down. The fight in that corner was over; it could only have one ending. The Australian staff was subsequently told by a Turkish soldier, who had been in the front Turkish trench at the time and who was afterwards captured, that he knew nothing of any Australians having entered it alive. "They came on very well," he said,

“and three men succeeded in reaching the Turkish trenches, falling dead over the parapet into the bottom of the trench.

These faint evidences are probably all that will ever be obtained concerning the incident. But its effects were important. After the second line had started, the men of the 10th Light Horse (Western Australia), forming the two lines which were next to attack, filed into the trenches which their predecessors had just left [1, pp615–616]

The officer who supplied the information to Charles Bean (in a letter in 1924) was Lieutenant William D Oliver. At the time of the attack Bean was in his dugout having been wounded earlier in the August fighting [2, p140]. It seems clear, therefore, that he relied on information given to him after the attack.

As a result of the Turkish flags presence allegation, the attacks continued and hundreds of Australians lost their lives. Later, the flag issue was one of the focal points of debate. According to Bean [1, p.617], Lt. Colonel Antill, the brigade major of the 3rd Light Horse Brigade, was influenced by the news of the flags into ordering the attack continued by the 10th Light Horse Regiment to the trenches between the Nek and Pope's Hill. Antill later denied any knowledge of flags.

In his book *The Nek* [3], Peter Burness mentions the story of the flags. He uses a lesser known Turkish source – the Miralay Şefik (Aker) Memoirs [4]. Şefik was the commanding officer of the Turkish 27th Regiment and his defence line did not include the Nek. Burness gives a summary of what Şefik wrote:

In his description he says that two light horse officers with some men fought their way into a front trench which had been broken down and was thinly held following the artillery shelling. The Australians briefly held this section and it was then, he says, that a flag was raised on the parapet. The Turks quickly rallied, counter-attacking the position, and killed all the occupants. They found some maps on the two they had identified as the officers, and it was said that the Australians were later buried in ‘a special place.’ [3, pp145-146]

First of all, the 27th Regiment was not at the Nek, The Regiment at the Nek was the 18th and its commanding officer was Major Mustafa who was later killed in action. Let us now focus on what Şefik wrote. He states that the Australians occupied only a small part of the trench which is numbered 21. This trench is located at the end of Waterfall Gully, about 100 metres from the flag location that is shown in a sketch in Bean's book. [1, p615].

I should mention here that I have a report in my collection written by Major Halis to Şefik on the day of the attack. Halis was the commanding officer of the 3rd Battalion of the 27th Regiment which was defending No. 21 Trench. The following is an extract from the report:

[The enemy] started to attack to the left of Sergeant Ali Trenches and to the trench number 21, and in spite of the complete casualty eight or ten enemy soldiers due to the continuous bombings have managed to penetrate to the area of two squads where the trenches were empty and signalled for help by throwing stones but very few of the both who entered the trench and those who tried to come to help managed to escape and the rest were all completely fell to the ground.

The report also mentions the map and the officers:

From the enemy a map showing the location of the trench was obtained. Two enemy officers among the casualties, one being a captain, were buried.

These officers were Lieutenant B P Nettleton and Major J M Reid of the 1st Light Horse Regiment. The attack of the 1st Light Horse has been covered in detail by Bean [1, pp625–628]. It is consistent with what Halis wrote; namely that the soldiers of the 1st LHR reached the old trenches of the 13th Battalion which had been dug during the attack of 2 May and from there they threw bombs into the Turkish trenches. In that attack every officer other than Glasgow was hit. Only two officers' bodies were not recovered – Reid's and Nettleton's. As a matter of fact Esat Pasa, the Commanding officer of the Third Division, in his partly-published memoirs, mentions a map given to him and carrying the name of M L Reit [Reid?]

Conclusion: The flag that Şefik mentions was not at The Nek. It was at trench No. 21, which was near Pope's Hill. The officers he mentions are the officers of the 1st Australian Light Horse – Reid and Nettleton.

The Nek or The Neck? Major Hüseyin Avni, commanding the 57th Regiment, mentions in one of his reports a red and yellow enemy flag on Steele's Post. Turkish troops designated Steele's Post as 'Boyun' (meaning The Neck). As readers will know, Steele's Post is 200 metres below The Nek. So, if a flag was seen it was in The Neck, but this Neck was not *The Nek* designated by the Australians!

Notes

The relevant page numbers given in the text relate to the notes below eg. [2.p.140]

1. Charles Bean, *The Story of Anzac*, Vol II, 1944.
2. Peter Stanley, *Quinn's Post*, Allen & Unwin, 2005.
3. Peter Burness, *The Nek*, Kangaroo Press, 1996.
4. Şefik Aker, *Çanakkale-Arıburnu Savaşları ve 27. Alay*, Askerî Mecmua 1935.

Haluk Oral, a professor of Mathematics at Koç University, Istanbul, is a recognised authority on Gallipoli and the author of a number of books in Turkish and English including *Gallipoli 1915 - Through Turkish Eyes*, *Arıburnu 1915* and *Gallipoli*, the latter co-authored with Julian Thompson and Dr Peter Pedersen.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT LEMNOS-GALLIPOLI PROJECT

Jim Claven

Last year the Australian government made a historic announcement for all interested in the remembrance and commemoration of the Gallipoli campaign.

The Greek island of Lemnos in the northern Aegean was the advanced base for the campaign, performing a crucial role as a marshalling, supply, medical and rest camp base. Allied troops arrived on the island in the weeks before the landings on 25th April, a major presence being maintained there throughout the campaign and the place to which many of the Allied troops returned after the evacuation of the battle fronts on the Gallipoli Peninsula. A major medical presence was established on Lemnos during the campaign, with British, French, Australian, Canadian and Indian Army medical units operating there and treating the wounded and sick. The

island would remain an Allied military base for the rest of the war and was the location of the signing of the armistice with the Ottoman Empire – the Armistice of Mudros, in October 1918. Over 1,300 Allied military personnel are buried in Lemnos' two military cemeteries.

The Australian government has recognised this role and is funding 'a scoping study for a commemorative site on the island of Lemnos, Greece.' The study commenced late last year, with consultants engaged, community consultations held, and site visits on Lemnos conducted. A formal cooperation agreement between the Hellenic Ministry of Defence and Australia's Department of Veterans' Affairs was signed in late 2019. It has been my pleasure to be engaged on the study as a historical consultant. The study and its proposals have now been completed.

This recognition of Lemnos' role in Gallipoli gives backing to the many commemorative initiatives on the island. The local authorities on Lemnos have long held a Gallipoli commemorative service in April, including an impressive centenary program in 2015 which included the presence of the Royal Australian Navy's HMAS *Success* in Mudros Bay. The Gallipoli Association has been represented at recent annual services by myself and Dimitris Boulotis, who has had the honour of laying a wreath on behalf of the Association in recent years. The existing commemorative infrastructure on the island – three military cemeteries maintained by the CWGC and a number of campaign memorials – have recently been enhanced by the Allied Nurses Memorial at East Mudros Military Cemetery (unveiled in 2015) and the new Australian Pier memorial north of Mudros, researched by myself and supported by the Lemnos Gallipoli Commemorative Committee and the Victorian Government (unveiled in 2018).

The Lemnos Gallipoli Commemorative Committee is working with the local authorities on Lemnos to realise a Lemnos Gallipoli Heritage Trail, identifying and marking out the key commemorative sites on Lemnos and connecting them to assist visitors. We plan to install two new memorials on Lemnos as part of next year's (April 2021) commemorative service – one recognising Sapper Dimitris Passa (an Australian WWI soldier born in the Lemnos village of Kontopouli) and a memorial to the Royal Australian Navy's connection to Lemnos in WWI.

It has been my pleasure to have led a number of commemorative tours of Lemnos since 2012, taking visitors to the key sites connected to the Anzac and overall Allied presence on the Island. These tours have demonstrated the potential interest of descendants and other commemorative visitors in coming to discover Lemnos' part in the Gallipoli campaign.

The Australian government's initiative gives hope to all of us seeking to raise awareness of the island's role in the Gallipoli campaign. It is hoped that this may result in an important enhancement to Lemnos' commemorative physical and/or on-line infrastructure – and a potential major boost to commemorative tourism to Greece as we all eventually emerge from the current pandemic.

We look forward to the next stage of this important Australian initiative for Greece. Let's hope that this might spark similar interest in expanding the Gallipoli experience to Lemnos amongst other participating Allied nations such as the United Kingdom, France and Canada. Watch this space. *See photos pages 31-32.*

THE JAPANESE BOMB-THROWER

It was sometime in May that they first used the Japanese bomb-thrower. It was to all appearances an iron tube about 13 inches long and 2 or 3 in diameter, mounted on a piece of board. Very easily carried from one place to another. The maximum range was 450 yards. It fired a projectile which looked something like a hand grenade. The handle was put down the muzzle of the gun and when fired it went almost straight up into the air and then fell into the trench.

As it fell it could be seen turning over and over. When it burst it went off with an awful ripping sound and pieces of red hot jagged iron would come whizzing down the valley. The first night they were used the Turks cried out "Allah! Allah!" and some, jumping out of the trenches, offered a fine target for our machine guns. Small hot pieces of jagged iron often dropped in and around my dugout. On Pope's Hill every man had to keep well down when they were being fired. One evening we were all sitting by our dugouts enjoying the evening air when one of them burst over Quinn's Post. Carlyon was sitting in front of his dugout on the side of the hill and a piece of jagged iron hit him in the throat. After going through awful convulsions he died and never did a man's death affect me so much. (*Diary*, T C Farrer, 1st Field Company, New Zealand Engineers).

2 Jun - [Pope's Hill] 'Last night just before dark a New Zealand Engineer, who has done good work here and received a DCM a couple of days ago, was sitting by our trenches smoking when one of the Japanese bombs was fired on Quinn's Post & a piece of the shell came across, cutting the Engineer's throat & he bled to death in a few moments.' (*Diary*, F H Tomlins, State Library of NSW, ML MSS 1002).

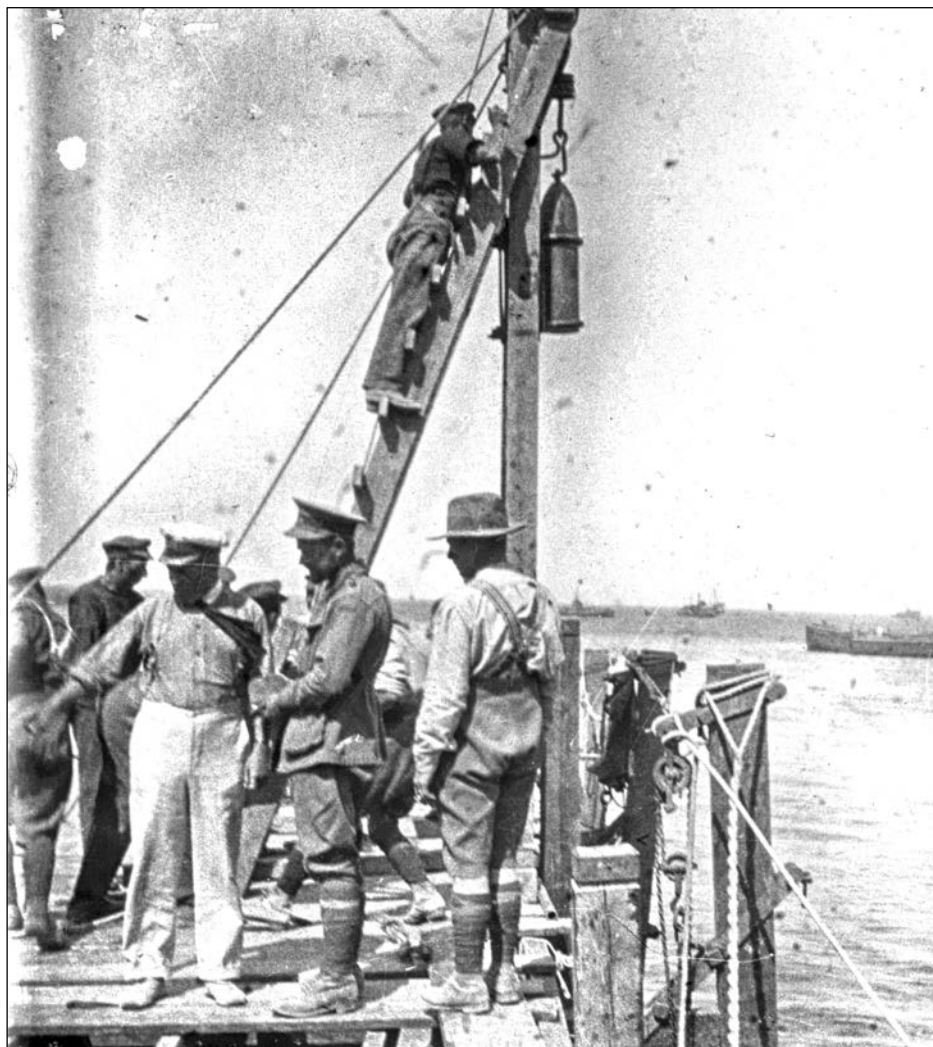
Editor's note:

4/911A Sapper Samuel Carlyon, blacksmith, aged 27, died (severed windpipe and artery), Mentioned in General Sir Ian Hamilton's despatch of 20 May 1915 (*London Gazette* 5 Aug 1915 p7668), and is buried in Shrapnel Valley Cemetery, Anzac.



Sapper S Carlyon, NZEF
Photo: *Otago Witness*
14 July 1915 page 36





Soldiers constructing Watson's Pier, Anzac. Lieutenant S H Watson (front, middle) supervising construction.
FL774769: Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

WATSON'S PIER AT ANZAC

While recently in Adelaide I ascertained from Lieut.- Col. S. H. Watson, D.S.O., M.C. who is a senior officer of the Railway Dept. in that city, that the dud shell which was used as a pile driver in the building of the jetty at Anzac (which bore his name) was a 9.2 fired from the Turkish battleship *Goeben*. Major Watson mentioned that before using the shell he had removed its explosive 'innards', this being his first attempt at such work, and a ticklish experience with the unknown quantity of an enemy shell. He tackled it, he said, in a funk, but remembering the hourly risks he took during the construction of the pier, that sounds like exaggeration. (Lieut-Colonel Edmund Osbourn Milne, *Reveille* 1 April 1938 p48).



OBJECTIVES

To advance education for the public benefit by raising public awareness of the Gallipoli Campaign of 1915 and by encouraging and facilitating the study in the legacy and lessons of that campaign. To keep alive the memory of the campaign and to ensure that all who fought or served in it, and those who gave their lives, are not forgotten by applying such means as the Trustees deem fit.



The River Clyde at V Beach, 25 April 1915 by Charles Dixon

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The Gallipoli campaign is characterised by countless deeds of heroism and endurance. It took place in an area smaller than Southampton amid appalling conditions - heat, flies, lack of water, equipment and proper sanitation. Later on rain and a freak spell of sub-zero temperatures had to be endured, to say nothing of the desperate close-quarter fighting throughout the campaign. Some 559,000 Allied personnel were committed, of whom 420,000 were British and Empire troops, including 50,000 Australians and 9,000 New Zealanders, and 80,000 French. The cost in human terms was terrible. The Allies had 250,000 casualties, of whom approximately 58,000 were killed, with only 11,000 having known graves. Ottoman forces, with some Germans, numbered between 300,000 and 400,000 and of these some 87,000 were killed. The evacuations in December 1915 and early January 1916 were masterly operations – one of the great feats of military history.