

The Gallipolian

The Journal of the Gallipoli Association

No. 169 - Winter 2025



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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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This edition's cover:

Detail from 'Dirigible and hangar at General Headquarters, Imbros'.
 4/26A Sapper Horace Moore-Jones, New Zealand Engineers NZEF, 1915.
 Australian War Memorial, ART03246. See article pages [6 – 18](#).

GALLIPOLI / ANZAC DAY 2026 (LONDON)

Saturday 25th April 2026

5:00 am - Dawn service at Hyde Park Corner (no ticket required).

9:00 am for **9:30 am** - Gallipoli memorial service in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral (no ticket required).

10:30 am for **11:00 am** - wreath-laying ceremony and parade at the Cenotaph, Whitehall (ticketed event).

12 noon - service of commemoration, Westminster Abbey. Restricted ticketed event for Gallipoli Association members only.

1:30 pm - 4:00 pm Gallipoli Day Lunch. The Albert Public House, Victoria Street.

Tickets are not required for the dawn service at Hyde Park Corner, nor for the Gallipoli Association memorial wreath-laying ceremony at St. Paul's Cathedral, although photo ID will be required.

The 2026 events are being organised by the New Zealand High Commission, which will be responsible for issuing tickets.

For all information, please email events@gallipoli-association.org

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2025, EDINBURGH

The Gallipoli Association thanks Jim Duffy, who represented the Association this year at Edinburgh Castle on Sunday 10 November 2025. See photo page 31.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2025, LONDON

Members of the Gallipoli Association were once again honoured to march during the Remembrance Sunday event at the Cenotaph, London, in autumn sunshine. The gun fired at the end of the two-minute silence; the bugler played the Last Post and the Rouse, and the marchers moved forward. We laid a wreath at the Cenotaph, and on entering Horse Guards Parade the order, "Gallipoli Association, eyes right," was given, bringing a smile to the Duke of Edinburgh, who was in position as each group of marchers passed. Prince Edward is of course the patron of the Gallipoli Association. After a chilly morning outside the Association contingent then settled down for lunch at The Admiralty pub where we had brilliant service, as always.

See the Association marchers on BBC iPlayer's *Remembrance Day: the Cenotaph* at 2.19.15. We're just behind the St. John's Ambulance Brigade in their green uniform, but blink and you will miss us.

We look forward to returning to the Cenotaph in 2026 to continue this very special act of remembrance. A big thank you for all those that attended this year, and a special thanks to Hester for organising the GA contingent with military precision.

2026 GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION WALKING TOUR

Six Day, Five Nights : 10 - 15 May 2026

The following appeared in the Winter edition of *The Gallipolian* of 21 years ago:

I am entirely confident that the tours arranged by the Association are the best organised and the best value for money of any tour operators.

These tours really are first class, and I commend them to anyone. Book up early for next year!

Nothing's changed since then – the Gallipoli Association tours are still the best out there. See the report of the 2025 tour on the next page, check the GA website for a full itinerary and cost summary for 2026, and contact Stephen Chambers for more information or to join the 2026 tour. tours@gallipoli-association.org

'COURAGE WITHOUT GLORY' CONFERENCE

The Gallipoli Association and The Western Front Association welcomed a sellout crowd in the RAF Club, Piccadilly on 1st November 2025, at their joint conference.

Five papers that each shone a light on very different facets of the Gallipoli Campaign were presented, following which 60 guests gathered for the gala dinner in the club's magnificent Presidents' Room. Colin Wagstaff (events coordinator & trustee, WFA), Hester Huttenbach (events coordinator & trustee, GA) and Thomas Iredale (overseas liaison officer & trustee, GA) were thanked for their hard work in making the event possible. See the Association website for a full account of the day.

REMEMBRANCE DAY, BERMUDA

Antony Siese

Remembrance Day is always celebrated on the actual date, November 11th, in Bermuda and it is a public holiday.

The day started with high winds and rain which continued throughout the day. Nine veterans marched, an improvement on 2024 when only five participated. Lieutenant Lowe of the Bermuda Regiment was in charge of the veterans.

In spite of the conditions, a large crowd assembled to recognise those who died in conflict, also giving a very good reception to those who marched. After the service, the Governor took the salute as we marched off parade.

To round off this commemoration, the Bermuda Regiment provided lunch for the participants. This gave everyone a chance to socialise in dry conditions.

I marched with my father's medals to commemorate him and to remember also my cousin, a surviving Chindit, unfortunately both now deceased. See photo [page 30](#).

2025 GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION WALKING TOUR

Paul Simadas

The 2025 Gallipoli Association walking tour of the Gallipoli peninsula brought together a diverse group of members not unrepresentative of the men and women who served there in 1915. Alongside British members and friends of the GA, members from Canada, the USA, France, Ireland and Australia formed the group of thirty-two battlefield visitors. As it turned out, all were able to successfully complete the challenging series of walks set for the tour.

This year, in addition to four days spent on the peninsula, many remained for a final day to visit the island of Imbros.

On arrival in Turkey the tour travelled, mostly by modern motorway, from Istanbul International Airport south-west to Çanakkale, the tour base.

A specific geographic area was allocated each day for the tour to visit: The first tour day was called Anzac Day; the others, in order, Helles, Gully Ravine, Suvla and Imbros Days. This ensured a complete coverage of the peninsula campaign including the island of Imbros.

Instead of a large coach, three mini people-carriers were employed to convey the group, who were split into three syndicates. Dubbed the 29th Division, the Royal Naval Division and the Anzac groups, these vehicles permitted the tour to safely navigate routes that were otherwise not ideal for a single larger vehicle to drive over.

There were many highlights on the tour. The boat ride off the coast of Anzac Cove was the first and it was a wonderful experience. The landing was described, the group shared Anzac biscuits on deck, and some even took to swimming in the sea! This was followed by the first walk that retraced the route of the furthest advance of the Anzac troops on the first day of the landing, walking from Beach Cemetery up and over the First and Second Ridges to Third (Gun) Ridge.

The next day the group ascended Achi Baba to survey the Cape Helles front, then visited V Beach, Colonel Doughty-Wylie's grave and the Helles Memorial. We then embarked on the main walk of the day to W Beach. The day ended with a relaxing wine tasting in a local vineyard, before our return by ferry to the hotel.

Gully Ravine Day saw the group walk from the Ottoman Nuri Yamut Memorial south to Gurkha Bluff, then along Gully Spur to arrive at Gully Beach. The day ended with a visit to Pink Farm Cemetery.

Turkish authorities have recently made many improvements to facilities on the peninsula. The sign-posting of the Gully Ravine route and construction of interpretive boards was evidence of this; very helpful, and it surprised the guides.

The next day at Suvla the group walked several routes around the battlefield to sites rarely reached by visitors. These revealed new vistas and perspectives of the battles fought there in 1915. The day continued with a special visit to the new Ottoman war cemetery on Kiretch Tepe Ridge and then on to Suvla Point and General Stopford's

former headquarters. The day ended with a visit to the Newfoundland Regiment Caribou memorial and Hill 10 Cemetery.

The final touring day was an optional vehicle-ferry journey to Imbros, and most of the group stayed for this special opportunity. This was a remarkable day of exploration, and the first peninsula off-shore trip for many. The group undertook an overland walk to the sites of the former headquarters of Sir Ian Hamilton, K Beach at Kephalos, the Australian field bakery (where evidence of the bread kilns was rediscovered), the RNAS airfield and seaplane-landing beach, and the Gallipoli journalists camp.

Though the group travelled together to visit sites and do the main walks, individual travellers' requests to visit particular sites of personal importance were met by a quick and safe excursion in one of the people-carriers, accompanied by a guide to and from the location.

Battle Honours UK were our tour guide company. Our guides were GA stalwart Steve Chambers accompanied by Clive Harris and Julian Whippy who took turns to deliver presentations on the ground to the group. We were ably assisted by experienced local guide Adem Biçer and an expert team of fixers and drivers. A big thank you to everyone on the tour.

See photographs [pages 35 and 36](#).

Paul Simadas is Chair of the NSW/ACT Chapter of the Gallipoli Association.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE 2025

As always, Clive Summerson represented the Association at the plot at Westminster Abbey. Clive wrote out 110 dedications (to mark the 110th anniversary of the campaign) and placed the crosses and other symbols at the plot. Among others, Her Majesty Queen Camilla stopped to talk to him about his work. Hester was there to record the moment, and the photo appears on [page 29](#).

It appears that The Gallipoli Association plot was the only one to have the names of those we are remembering actually written onto the crosses and other memorials, so a massive thanks to Clive for this. They will be remembered.

SEE YOUR ARTICLE IN PRINT

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 editor@gallipoli-association.org. It is not always possible to feature articles in the issue following submission, but where there is an element of topicality the editor will try to accommodate them, or refer them to colleagues responsible for the Association website. If considering submitting articles or other items, the editor can email the document 'Notes for the Guidance of Contributors' on request.

THE GALLIPOLI BLIMP

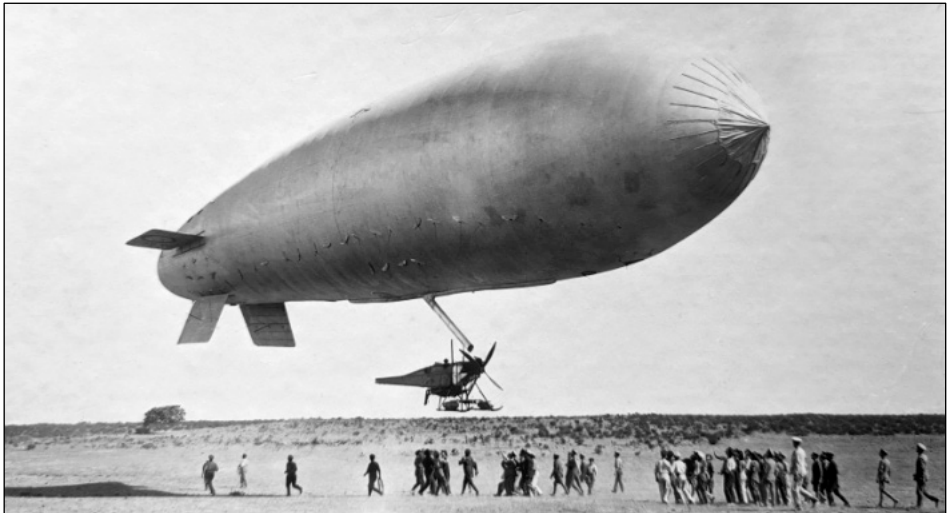
Bernard de Broglio

The use of observation balloons during the Gallipoli Campaign, tethered to specialist kite balloon ships like HMS *Manica*, will be familiar to readers. The balloons provided a vital, if vulnerable, platform for gunnery spotting and general reconnaissance. Less widely known is the deployment of a powered, steerable lighter-than-air craft – an airship – to the Aegean theatre. Unlike tethered kite balloons, which were essentially static observation platforms, the airship was a self-propelled, navigable vessel capable of independent patrol. The type sent to Gallipoli was the Submarine Scout or ‘SS-type’ airship. Between September and October 1915, one naval airship (SS.7) operated from Imbros.

Genesis and design of the Submarine Scout

The Submarine Scout airship was developed in response to a direct and urgent threat: on 4 February 1915, the German government announced its intention to commence unrestricted submarine warfare against Allied merchant shipping, a campaign set to begin a fortnight later. This declaration presented a profound challenge to Allied maritime security and supply lines – a threat that would prove particularly acute in the Mediterranean, where tonnage losses would eventually account for nearly a third of total Allied shipping losses globally.

The First Sea Lord, Admiral of the Fleet John ‘Jacky’ Fisher, a known proponent of airships for naval reconnaissance, recognised the potential of lighter-than-air craft in countering this underwater menace. Aeroplanes of the period, while rapidly evolving, generally lacked the endurance or payload capacity deemed necessary for sustained anti-submarine patrols. Consequently, Fisher convened a conference with



Submarine Scout SS.7 outside its shed, on the Kephalos headland. This view looks towards the Gallipoli Peninsula, which is visible when you crest the ridge in the distance.

senior Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) officers at the Admiralty on 28 February 1915 to address the need for a dedicated submarine-hunting airship.

The core design philosophy underpinning the Submarine Scout was dictated by the pressing need for rapid development and deployment. The airship had to be constructible from readily available materials and components, minimising the delays associated with bespoke designs or specialised manufacturing. The solution devised was remarkably pragmatic: a standard B.E.2c aeroplane fuselage, stripped of its wings and tail assembly, would serve as the airship's car. This gave a proven structure, complete with its reliable 70-horsepower, eight-cylinder V-type Renault engine and propeller, and offered convenient attachment points for rigging to an envelope. The envelope itself was of a non-rigid 'pressure' design, maintaining its shape through internal gas pressure, drawing on existing RNAS experience. An ingenious feature was the adoption of a simple blower tube, positioned in the propeller's slipstream, to channel air into the internal ballonets, thus maintaining envelope pressure as the gas was expended, without the need for a dedicated mechanical blower.



A good view of the car, a modified B.E.2 aeroplane fuselage with its wheeled undercarriage replaced by skids and floats. Note the blower tube in the slipstream of the propeller, which allowed the crew to force air into the ballonets.

The basic requirements laid out by Fisher were for an airship capable of patrolling enclosed or relatively enclosed waters, with a cruising speed of 40-50 mph (64-80 km/h) and an endurance of approximately eight hours at full speed, carrying a crew of two, wireless equipment, and a 160 lb (72.6 kg) bomb load.

When Fisher enquired about the timeline for a prototype, the RNAS officers committed to three weeks. Remarkably, the first SS-type airship, SS.1, was assembled and made its maiden flight just eighteen days later, on 18 March 1915, entering operational service on 18 April.

The Submarine Scout was a relatively small airship. Its envelope measured 143 feet 5 inches (43.7 metres) in length, with a maximum diameter of 27 feet 9 inches (8.5 metres). The envelope was manufactured from two layers of cotton fabric, doubled with rubber interposed between them and an additional rubber coating on the inner (gas-holding) surface. To minimise solar heating and gas expansion, and to provide a degree of weatherproofing, the envelope was treated with multiple coats of dope: two of Delta dope, followed by two of aluminium dope, and finally one coat of aluminium varnish. This finishing process gave the Submarine Scout its characteristic silver appearance.

The U-boat threat in the Mediterranean and at Gallipoli

The Mediterranean and Aegean seas, far from being a secondary theatre, became a critical arena for submarine warfare during the First World War. Allied shipping losses in these waters were substantial, accounting for nearly a third of the total tonnage sunk globally by the Central Powers. This was not merely a war against merchant vessels; sixteen Allied battleships and cruisers were also lost in the Mediterranean. The psychological impact of this unseen enemy was profound.

At Gallipoli, the arrival of German U-boats, notably U-21 under *Kapitänleutnant* Otto Hersing, had an immediate and disproportionate effect on the Allied campaign. Even before their operational debut, the mere intelligence of their impending arrival prompted the withdrawal of the Royal Navy's most powerful battleship, HMS *Queen Elizabeth*, depriving the land forces of her significant fire support. The subsequent sinking of HMS *Triumph* on 25 May 1915 and HMS *Majestic* two days later, both within sight of the Gallipoli beaches, sent shockwaves through the Allied forces. These dramatic losses forced a fundamental shift in naval strategy: large transports could no longer risk direct approach to the peninsula, instead terminating their voyages at the more distant and protected harbour of Mudros on Lemnos island. This, in turn, necessitated a complex and vulnerable chain of smaller vessels to supply the troops ashore.

For the soldiers clinging to the precarious footholds at Anzac and Helles, the submarine threat exacerbated their already dire situation. An Australian infantryman, John Renison Bell (12th Battalion, AIF, later Flight Lieutenant, Australian Flying Corps) captured the prevailing mood in his war experiences. Describing the sinking of HMS *Triumph*, he wrote, 'This event depressed us all very much and the subsequent disappearance of all shipping, particularly the cruisers, created an uneasy feeling of insecurity.'

Sykes' assessment and the call for airships

Amidst the growing submarine threat and the general demands of the Gallipoli campaign, Colonel Frederick Hugh Sykes of the Royal Flying Corps was dispatched to the Dardanelles in June 1915. His mission was to assess the state of the Royal Naval Air Service units operating in the theatre and to report on the aerial

requirements for both naval and military forces. He submitted his comprehensive report on 9 July 1915, noting, ‘The necessity for aerial reconnaissance is very real and urgent.’

A key component of Sykes’ recommendations focused on bolstering anti-submarine capabilities. While acknowledging the limitations of existing seaplanes in locating submerged U-boats, he strongly advocated for the trial of Submarine Scout airships in the Aegean. His report proposed the establishment of an ‘Airship Expeditionary Force’ comprising a squadron of eight SS-type airships, organised into two flights of four. Sykes envisioned these airships primarily undertaking ‘routine of submarine patrolling and in the protection of firing ships.’ He detailed the operational concept: upon sighting a submarine, the airship would signal its presence, mark the location with sea markers or calcium flares as a guide for the destroyers, and potentially attempt to bomb the target directly.

Establishing Imbros Airship Station: innovation and improvisation

Following Colonel Sykes’ recommendations, the Admiralty approved the despatch of ‘Airship Detachment No. 2’ to the Dardanelles. Commanded by Flight Commander Evelyn Hayley ‘Robin’ Sparling, Royal Navy, this unit initially consisted of 7 officers and 87 ratings, growing to 11 officers and 88 ratings by mid-October. Among the officers were several who would later become key members of the Royal Navy’s rigid airship programme when these ships became operational in 1917–1918, including Sparling himself, and Flight Sub-Lieutenants G.M. Thomas and F.L.C. Butcher.

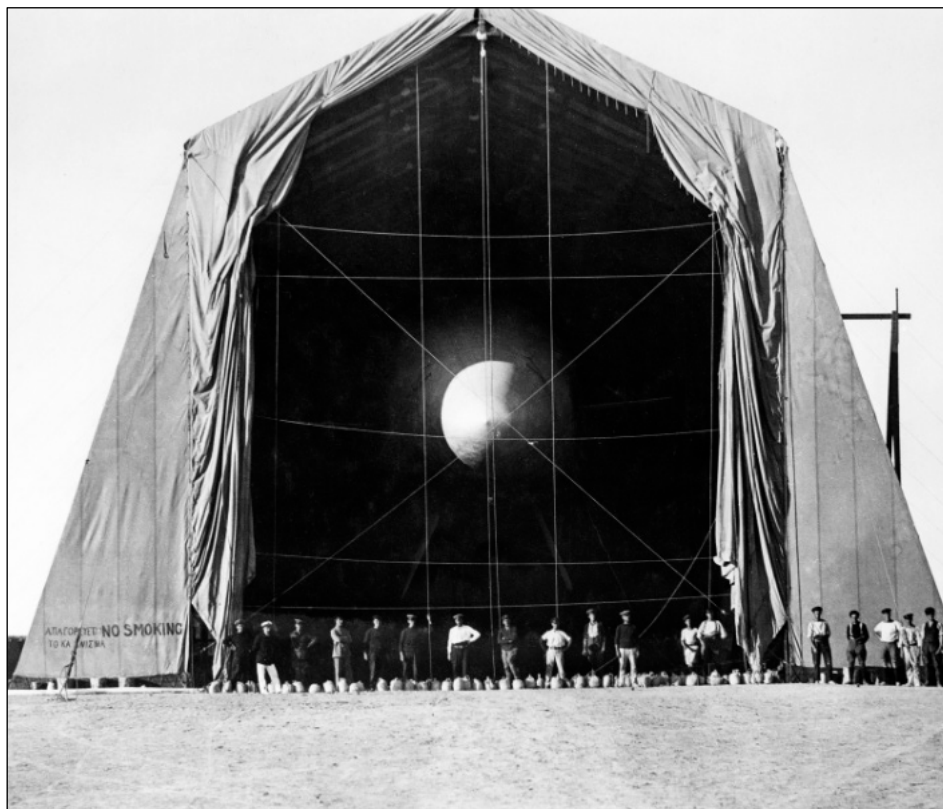
The advance party arrived on the island of Imbros on 2 August 1915. Their immediate task was the erection of an airship shed on the eastern arm of Kephalos Bay, near the aerodrome of No. 3 Wing aeroplane squadron (commanded by Charles Rumney Samson) and the headquarters of General Sir Ian Hamilton.

The airship shed was a portable Marechal and Hervieu hangar constructed with a skeleton woodwork frame covered by canvas. Its dimensions were considerable: 150 feet (45.7 meters) in length, 45 feet (13.7 meters) in width, and 50 feet (15.2 meters) in height.

To provide hydrogen lifting gas for the airship, a portable Silicol gas generation plant was erected by the shore, connected to the airship shed by a 4-inch (10.2 cm) steel hydrogen pipeline, 1,250 feet (380 meters) in length, which the detachment resourcefully obtained from the ‘Military Authorities’ on the island. The gas generation plant, which produced hydrogen through a chemical reaction involving ferrosilicon and caustic soda, was supplemented by gas supplied in tubes from the kite balloon ship, HMS *Manica*. A ‘nurse balloon’ was laid out in the shed and used to temporarily store and transfer gas to the airship, though Sparling noted its design was not entirely satisfactory and proposed improvements.

Sparling proved to be a meticulous and forward-thinking commander. He sent several detailed reports to the Admiralty in London aiming to develop this new arm of naval warfare. He highlighted where better equipment was needed, and suggested improvements to everything from the hydrogen plant to the design of petrol tanks and the pilot’s seat for better comfort on long flights. He even proposed a ‘Monthly Report on Progress in Airships’ to disseminate learnings across the RNAS.

Greek labourers, varying in strength from 50 to 100, were employed daily to assist with the heavy work at the airship station. These labourers proved essential when airship ratings were detached for other duties, leaving Sparling short-handed and frustrated. Nevertheless, the station was prepared with commendable speed, allowing for the first airship to be ready for flight by mid-September.



The Gallipoli airship in its shed on Imbros.

Initial trials and first flights

On Sunday 12 September 1915, the nurse balloon was filled with hydrogen from the Silicol plant, and preparations were made to inflate the envelope of SS.7.

The first engine trial was conducted the following afternoon, and deemed 'very satisfactory.' Later that afternoon, at 4pm on Monday 13 September, SS.7 departed the shed for its inaugural series of flights. A total of three trials were carried out, with an aggregate flight time of 1 hour and 37 minutes. The report noted 'everything very satisfactory' although extra tricing lines were fitted to the canvas doors of the shed, as it was observed that bights of canvas touched the airship even when the car was only 12 inches (30.5 cm) from the ground.

Two days later, on Wednesday 15 September, three more trials were flown, amounting to 2 hours and 45 minutes, primarily for testing the wireless telegraphy (W/T) equipment and conducting short patrols.

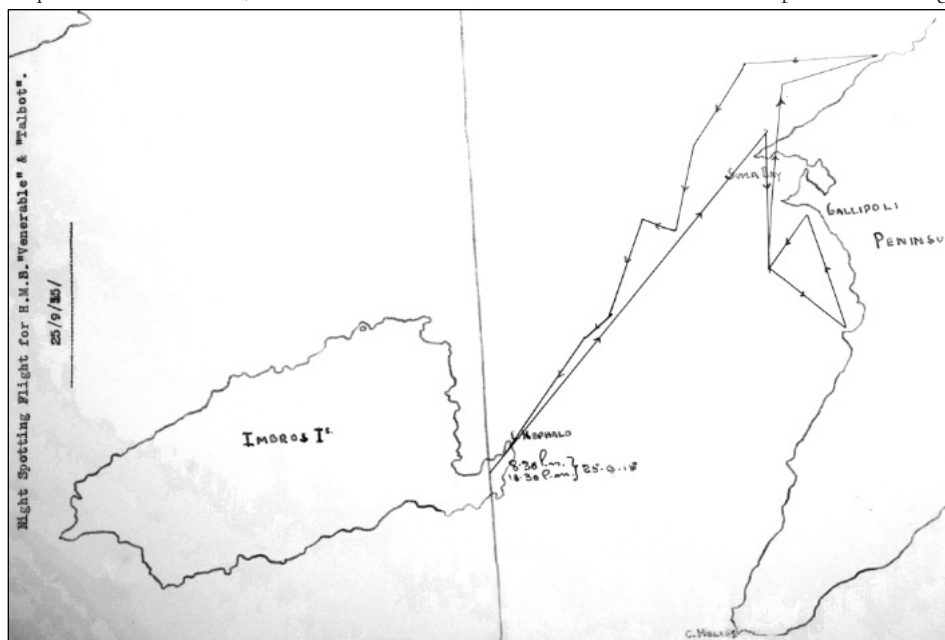
Operational patrols from Imbros

Following the successful trials, the airship commenced its primary designated role: anti-submarine patrols over the waters surrounding Imbros and the sea lanes leading to the Allied bridgeheads at Anzac, Suvla and Helles.

Operations were, according to some contemporary assessments, somewhat 'haphazard in nature with no overall plan or direction,' with pilots given considerable latitude in their patrol areas. Nonetheless, each flight was diligently recorded with track charts illustrating the course of each patrol – a valuable resource illustrating the extent of their operations.

The airship's endurance allowed for substantial patrols. Track charts show flights extending south to Mytilene, west of Lemnos and Strati islands, and north to the southern shores of Samothrace. The airship would typically fly at altitudes between 500 and 2,500 feet, the clear Aegean waters offering good conditions for underwater observation when visibility was favourable.

A notable and experimental operational flight occurred on the night of 25 September 1915. The Gallipoli airship, piloted by Flight Sub-Lieutenant G.M. Thomas, departed at 8:30 p.m. for 'Night Spotting for *Venerable* & *Talbot* in neighbourhood of Suvla.' The warships were targeting Büyük Anafarta and Tursten Keui. Despite a bright moonlit night, the airship, operating at 3,800 feet and about a quarter of a mile (400 metres) offshore, found the task 'almost impossible owing



'Night Spotting for *Venerable* & *Talbot* in neighbourhood of Suvla.' 25 September 1915.

to difficulty to see targets or burst of shells.' Compounding the difficulties, the wireless telegraphy equipment broke down whilst in communication with HMS *Venerable*. The airship landed at 10:32 p.m., the experiment deemed unsuccessful and not repeated. This was probably the first, and likely only, occasion during the Great War when an airship was employed to correct gunnery fire.



The airship being walked out of the southern door of its shed, with a view to the high ground across Kephalos Bay. The picture is a beautifully composed photograph, probably taken by Ernest Brooks, but its purpose was utilitarian. Flight Commander Sparling wanted to illustrate to the Admiralty 'how close the car must be kept to the ground to prevent envelope touching the shed.'

Joyrides

On 18 September 1915, the Gallipoli blimp gave General William Birdwood, the commander of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC), his first-ever flight. He was taken up for a brief circuit of Kephalos at an altitude of about 700 feet. In a letter to his wife, Birdwood described his 'first fly... I went up in a small airship which they have recently got, and we just flew about round this place 10 minutes or so... It was quite nice though there was a strong wind and she kept diving her nose down and then bumping it up again.'

The presence of the silver airship also attracted the attention of the Admiralty's official photographer, Ernest Brooks, who was documenting the Gallipoli campaign. His aerial photographs, taken from the airship, are the best visual records of the British base at Imbros. Brooks may have been commissioned by Flight Commander Sparling as some of Brooks' photographs, like the image illustrating the overly-snug fit of the airship within its shed, were attached to Sparling's reports to the Admiralty.



Above: Photograph taken by Ernest Brooks from the airship, looking back towards the shed. On the left middle is the pier that serviced Hamilton's headquarters. The portable gas-generating plant was placed beside the pier, under the cliff, with a pipeline running to the shed. The discolouration of the water is due to the gas-generating plant.

Below: Another photograph taken from the airship by Ernest Brooks of the British base at Imbros. In this picture we see the airship's shadow, and Hamilton's headquarters camp. The general's camouflaged shed is on the far right of the picture, in the centre, in front of a large white tent.



The novelty of the airship also provided an opportunity for practical exchange. An airship officer, Sub-Lieutenant W.F. Horner, RNVR, writing home, described how the captain of a merchant ship that had put into Kephalos harbour was offered a 'joy-ride.' In return for this ten-minute flight, the grateful skipper 'promised us a week's provisions... then had to dole out the chop... he enjoyed it immensely.'

Air attacks on the airship station

The airship shed, standing prominent on the Kephalos headland, quickly became a target for Ottoman and German air power.

The first significant attack occurred on Thursday, 16 September 1915, just three days after the airship's initial trial flights, when aircraft dropped several bombs and many darts in the vicinity of the airship station.

Two days later, Birdwood witnessed hostile aircraft dropping bombs. 'Just as we were going to dinner we heard a series of bangs quite close and found two Turkish planes right over us and *very* low down. They again dropped 8 bombs but did no harm. Even though it was bright moonlight, it was impossible to see them unless they happened to get right between you and the moon, though of course you heard them passing over and they seemed to be only just over the tents from their noise.'

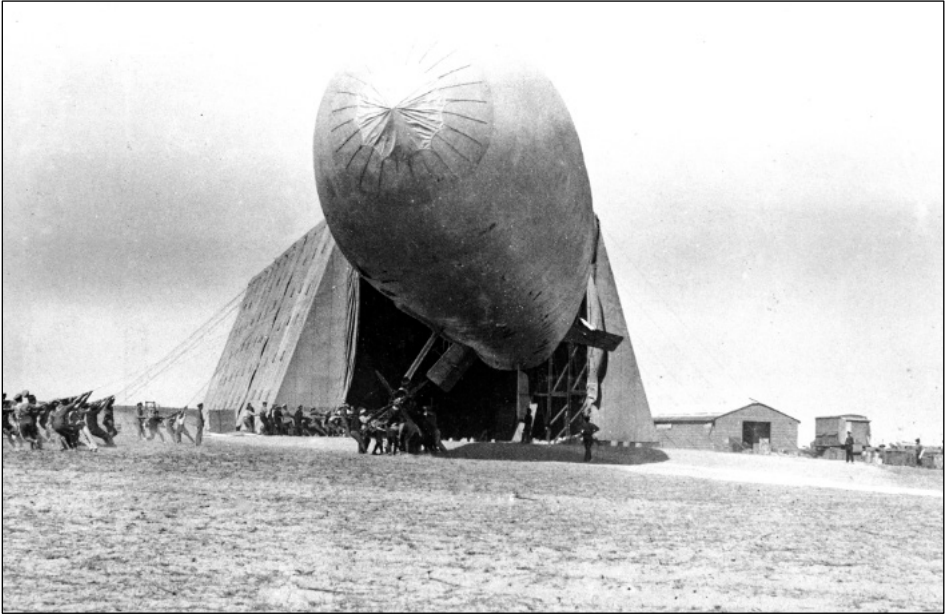
Despite attacks occurring on 'almost every flying day,' the airship itself suffered no material damage, the nearest bomb landing 150 yards (137 metres) from the shed.

In response to these raids, British forces implemented defensive measures. By day, men of the RNAS Anti-Aircraft Corps stood by with machine-gun and rifle.



Anti-aircraft machine gun and crew on Imbros. Air raids by Ottoman and German aircraft were frequent in late 1915.

Searchlights were used at night. Dugouts were excavated for protection, and Commander Samson's aeroplane squadron instituted a policy of immediate counter-attack, bombing the Ottoman airfield at Galata in retaliation.



An attempt to return the airship to its shed on 30 Sept. Wind made ground-handling difficult. On this occasion, the attempt failed. The airship was forced to go aloft and wait till the wind lessened.

Wind: the Gallipoli airship's real adversary

While Ottoman air raids presented a periodic threat, the most persistent and ultimately decisive adversary for the airship was the Aegean wind. Sparling's reports paint a vivid picture of the relentless struggle against this elemental force. The canvas-covered shed proved ill-suited to the exposed conditions at Imbros.

From the outset, the shed's canvas fabric was under constant strain. Sparling noted that a 'constant N.N.E. Wind was experienced from 20th to 25th September of 25-30 and at times 40 miles per hour,' and that winds of this force had also occurred on other days. The unceasing buffeting took its toll. As early as 23 September, large rents began to appear in the roof of the shed, making it impossible to send hands aloft for repairs due to the dangerous 'bellying of canvas.' The following day, these rents were reported as 'increasing in length,' and repairs remained impossible.

The design of the shed itself exacerbated the problem. Sparling observed that the canvas doors were 'entirely useless' as originally designed, and the north door facing the prevailing wind had to be permanently closed, sandbagged, and reinforced with numerous extra guys and cross-bracing lines. Despite these efforts, draughts penetrated 'innumerable crevices,' causing considerable motion to the airship housed inside. This movement, even within the shed, necessitated the airship being

tightly roped down to prevent its envelope and planes from chafing against the structure, which in turn strained the airship's car and bracing wires and was detrimental to the life of the envelope. The 'continual chafing of the canvas against the frame-work' was an ongoing issue, and Sparling noted the canvas was becoming 'very nearly threadbare in many places.'

Handling the airship outside the shed was equally problematic in windy conditions, especially given the limited number of personnel. On 30 September, an attempt to return the airship to the shed after a handling guy stranded had to be abandoned due to 'too much wind and handling party too small.' The airship was forced to stay aloft until the wind dropped.

The constant stress on the fabric and framework was unsustainable. The final blow came on Friday, 22 October 1915. A high wind caused a large rent to appear in the canvas roof of the shed. The airship inside became unmanageable and, as a consequence, had to be deflated. This event effectively ended airship operations from Imbros.

The airship's effectiveness

Between its first operational flights in mid-September and its deflation on 22 October 1915, the Gallipoli airship conducted a total of 46 flights, accumulating 93 hours and 17 minutes of flying time and covering 2,634 miles (4,239 km).

These flights yielded no tangible results in terms of submarine sightings or attacks. But the airship was looking for a needle in a haystack. During its limited period of operation, there seems to have been only one U-boat operating in the Aegean, U-35, which claimed its most notable success – sinking the transport *Marquette* on 23 October on the sea lane to Salonika – the day after the airship was deflated.

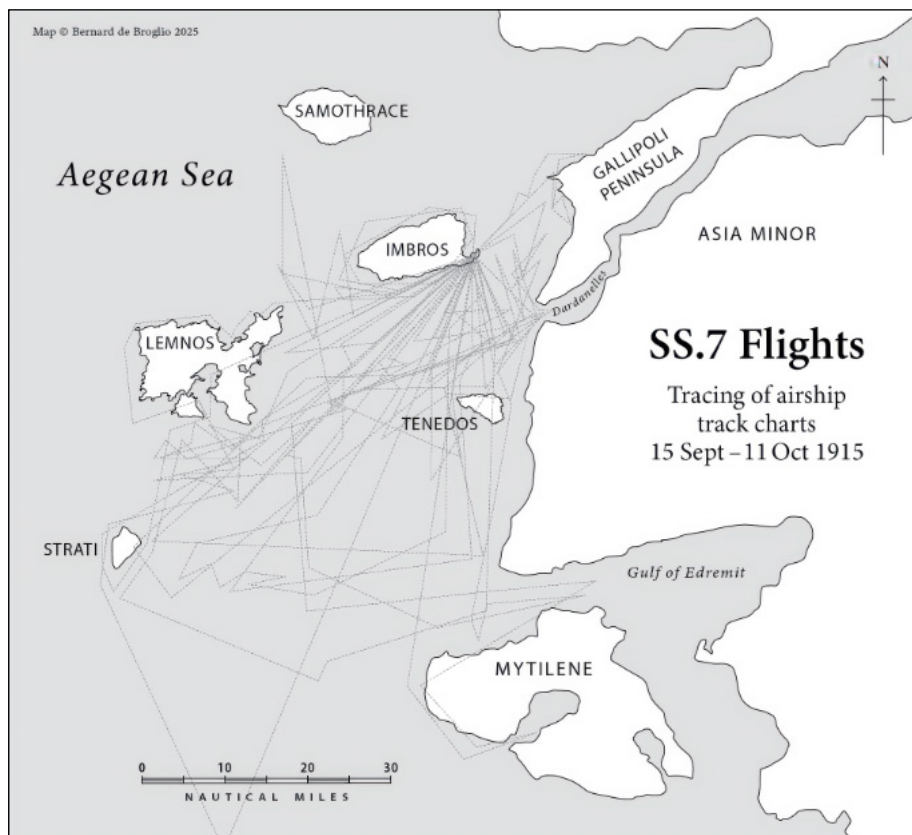
Messages were sometimes received regarding suspected submarine sightings. On 2 October, a message was received that a submarine had been sighted, and the airship was despatched to the location, but ultimately 'nothing having been sighted, returned to Shed'. The visible presence of the silver airship may have had a deterrent effect, even if this impact is difficult to quantify.

The Director, Air Services, reviewing Sparling's final report, wrote: 'Although this expedition has not actually accomplished much so far, it has paved the way... and shewn up the difficulties which have to be overcome.'

Relocation and subsequent operations

The shed at Kephalos was dismantled and a new, more sheltered site sought at Mudros on the island of Lemnos. By mid-November 1915, the transfer of the airship unit was complete and flights resumed from Mudros in April 1916. However, operations at Mudros also faced challenges. In 1916, a new airship station was established at Kassandra, in the Gulf of Salonika. Kassandra became the primary base for British airship operations in the Aegean for the remainder of the war.

A total of 60 Submarine Scouts were built during the war. This pioneering class marked only the beginning of the Royal Navy's extensive wartime development and deployment of non-rigid airships. It was followed by improved versions like the Sea Scout Zero (SSZ), of which 77 were built, and other types such as the Coastal,



Flights made by the Gallipoli airship between 15 September and 11 October 1915.

C-Star, and the large North Sea class. (Notably, of these airship classes, only the Submarine Scout was employed in the *Aegean*.) In total, the Royal Navy operated 215 blimps during the Great War.

Imbros Airship Station today

The author has walked the site of the airship shed several times. Few physical traces of the RNAS station remain. A small cut stone in the centre of the field might have been part of an anchor point, or other built structure. Shards of thick, dark glass found south of the shed location probably indicate one of the camp sites, where a partially-complete stone building is visible in aerial photographs. The area remains open grazing, affording excellent views over the bay. Your companions on the headland are likely to be goats and the occasional rafter of turkeys. The call of the partridge, a favourite prey for Commander Samson, is often heard. In spring, the visitor will encounter hundreds of nesting seagulls and their ground-bound fledgling chicks, and can expect renewed attacks from the air!

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Australian War Memorial, Canberra

Correspondence between Field Marshal Lord William Birdwood and Lady Janetta Birdwood, 1915. 3DRL/3376 8/1.

See photographs [pages 32, 33 and 34](#).

GALLIPOLI ESSAY COMPETITION

The Gallipoli Essay Competition is run by the Gallipoli Association and is supported by Helion and Company, the prominent military history publishing company and sponsors of the competition.

The competition is open to anybody who has an interest in the Gallipoli Campaign

The essay should be on any subject related to the Gallipoli Campaign and should be an absolute maximum of 4,000 words.

All entries should be sent to education@gallipoli-association.org

The deadline for entries is 1st April 2026

Prizes

First prize: £200, a book kindly supplied by Helion & Company, and a year's digital subscription to the Gallipoli Association

Second prize: £100, a book kindly supplied by Helion & Company, and a year's digital subscription to the Gallipoli Association

Helion & Company is honoured to support the work of the Gallipoli Association. As a leading independent military history publisher based in the UK, they are deeply committed to preserving and promoting the study of military history across all periods and conflicts.

Their catalogue features a wide range of meticulously researched titles covering the First World War, including the Gallipoli campaign, written by respected historians and subject matter experts. To find out more about their latest publications, including titles relevant to Gallipoli and the Great War, visit www.helion.co.uk.

Competition Rules.

- All essays should be on a subject related to the Gallipoli Campaign (1914-16). Any essays outside this period will be rejected.
- The closing date for the essay will be 1st April 2026 and any entries received after this date will be entered into the following year's competition.
- The result will be announced on 1 May 2026.
- The essay must be submitted in Microsoft Word format.
- The essay must be written in English.
- All essays must have a maximum length of 4000 words *excluding* references, bibliography, footnotes and notes. A word count must be provided with each entry, and all pages should be numbered.
- Any essay longer than 4000 words will be rejected.
- Where a quotation is used, or author referenced, it should be marked in the text by a superscript number and these can either be referenced as footnotes or endnotes. Footnotes / endnotes are excluded from the word count.
- A list of all reference sources (book, article or online) must be provided at the end of the essay.
- Any evidence of plagiarism or use of AI will result in the essay being disqualified.
- The decision of the judges will be final.
- The judges will not be allowed to submit an essay.
- On submitting the essay, the writer automatically gives permission to the Gallipoli Association to publish the essay in the Association's journal and / or on its website (first publication rights only).
- The competition is open to everybody and the judges will make due allowance for the age of participants.

The Gallipoli Association, through genuine passion, enthusiasm and support, is the foremost organisation helping to keep the memory of the campaign alive.

Our key focus is education, in particular of the young of those countries that took part in this tragic campaign. By raising public awareness of the Gallipoli Campaign, encouraging and facilitating study, we keep the memory of the campaign alive, ensuring that all who served in it and those who gave their lives are not forgotten.

This is a summary of the full set of instructions and rules. For the original version visit <https://www.gallipoli-association.org/news/2025/gallipoli-essay-competition/>

FROM FIRST TO LAST, THE FORGOTTEN VETERAN OF THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN

Bill Sellars

They say that old soldiers never die, they simply fade away. Well, the same is true for old sailors, and at V Beach at the toe of Turkey's Gallipoli Peninsula, one of the oldest sailors of the campaign of 1915 lies forgotten, somewhat faded but with a unique place in history.

Lying in 10 metres of water and 100 metres off the beach where the Dublin and Munster Fusiliers were slaughtered when they tried to land on April 25 1915 is the *Saghalien*, a ship with the rare distinction of being present at almost the first moment of the Gallipoli Campaign and at its last.

Launched in 1880, the 4050 tonne ship was built for France's Messageries Maritimes line to serve the growing Asian market.

Designed as a mixed passenger-cargo carrier, the 130 metre long *Saghalien* sailed to far eastern ports such Saigon, Shanghai, Singapore and Hong Kong, as well as runs to Australia, before being shifted to routes in the Mediterranean later in her career.



Pre-war view of *Saghalien* as a passenger-cargo ship sailing between Europe and the far east.

When war broke out in Europe, the *Saghalien* was sent to then neutral Ottoman Turkey to evacuate French nationals who wanted to return home and to transport French reservists recalled to the colours. Well over 1200 crowded onto the *Saghalien* and another French-flagged vessel, *Henri Traissinet*.

One of those aboard the *Saghaliën* as she left Istanbul on August 9 1914 was 31-year-old French national Stephanie Castelli.

“The cabins, the deck, everything is full of travellers; the weather is splendid and we sleep with the beautiful stars, on deckchairs or in hammocks... the boat pulls away,” Castelli wrote years after the war.

Along with the *Henri Traissinet*, the *Saghaliën* anchored off the town of Çanakkale on the Asian side of the Dardanelles on the evening of August 10, awaiting final clearance to leave Turkish waters.

A Reuters journalist aboard a nearby vessel that was also awaiting permission to sail described what happened next.

“Just after sunset two large ships of war were seen approaching very slowly, preceded by a pilot boat. Immediately the greatest excitement was aroused, and the rumour spread that they were the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*. When they arrived alongside us, however, it was already too dark to see.”

When war broke out on August 4, Germany had two naval units in the Mediterranean, the battlecruiser *Goeben* and its attendant light cruiser *Breslau*. Evading the Royal Navy, *Goeben* and *Breslau* shelled French ports in north Africa and then set a course for the Dardanelles, British warships in hot pursuit.

Having eluded the Royal Navy squadron tasked with bringing them to battle, a failure that cost the commanding British admiral his job, the *Goeben* and *Breslau* anchored at Çanakkale, after being given permission to enter the straits by Enver Pasha, the Ottoman Minister of War.

Stephanie Castelli takes up the story as German sailors boarded the *Saghaliën*.

The next morning we see the *Goeben*, the *Breslau*. German officers climb on the bridge, destroy the wireless telegraphy and give the order to the captain not to slip and to secure his anchors.

The captain is livid with rage but begs us to keep our cool.

At least one passenger was cool enough to snap a photo of a German sailor heading to the *Saghaliën*'s wireless office, a photo that ran in the French press just eight days later, under headlines which screamed “German aggression against the *Saghaliën* in the Dardanelles”.

Her radio smashed, and unable to communicate the position of the German ships to the British squadron that had gathered too late off the mouth of the Dardanelles, the *Saghaliën* was held at Çanakkale until August 13 before being allowed to leave Turkish waters, her safe passage guaranteed by a Turkish officer who stayed on board until the ship was out of range of the *Goeben*'s guns.

The two ships of the German Mediterranean Squadron continued their own voyage through the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmara, arriving at Istanbul and being commissioned into the Ottoman fleet on August 16 – albeit still with their German crews, though now wearing *fezes* as part of their uniform.

Six weeks later, under a new flag and renamed *Yavus Sultan Selim* and *Midilli*, the *Goeben* and *Breslau* sailed with the rest of the Ottoman fleet into the Black Sea to attack the Imperial Russian navy, an attack launched without warning or

COQUETTE ANNÉE. — N° 1374. LE NUMÉRO QUOTIDIEN : 10 CENTS. — ÉTRANGERS : 20 CENTS. Jeudi 20 août 1914

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L'AGRESSION ALLEMANDE CONTRE LE "SAGHALIEN" DANS LES DARDANELLES



On connaît l'aventure dont fut victime le paquebot français *Saghalien* qui, le 12 août, dans les Dardanelles, fut arrêté par les croiseurs allemands *Göben* et *Breslau* et menacé d'être coulé au moindre signe d'appareillage. Deux officiers du *Breslau* montèrent à bord du paquebot français et se firent conduire à la cabine contenant le poste de télégraphie sans fil, dont ils brisèrent quelques manettes à coups de crosse de revolver. Ce cliché a été pris au moment où le marin allemand qui, sur l'ordre des officiers, sabota le poste de T. S. F., regagne son bord, emportant une boîte d'instruments. (Phot. E. Belling)

French Newspaper 'Excelsior' Thursday August 12 1914

GERMAN AGGRESSION AGAINST THE "SAGHALIEN" IN THE DARDANELLES

We know the adventure that befell the French liner *Saghalien* which, on August 12, in the Dardanelles, was stopped by the German cruisers *Göben* and *Breslau* and threatened to be sunk at the slightest sign of setting sail. Two officers from the *Breslau* boarded the French liner and were taken to the cabin containing the wireless telegraph station, where they broke some of the levers with revolver butts. This picture was taken at the moment the German sailor who, on the orders of the officers, sabotaged the radio station, returned to his ship, taking a box of instruments with him.

declaration of war. World War One's equivalent of Pearl Harbour caused little damage, but brought Ottoman Turkey into the growing conflict, and ultimately led to the Gallipoli Campaign.

A New Career

The Saghalien's Dardanelles adventure was one of the last voyages in her long career, with the 35-year-old veteran taken out of service soon after.

Perhaps fittingly, given her run-in with the German navy on her last peacetime voyage, the Saghalien was converted to a prison ship. Docked in Marseille, she was used to house some 1200 German prisoners of war captured on the Western Front.

However, her role as a prison afloat ended in October 1915 when French authorities decided to send the Saghalien back to the Dardanelles, to be sunk as a breakwater at V Beach to turn the exposed cove into an all-weather berth.

The Saghalien was not the only ship to be sacrificed at V Beach, with the decommissioned French pre-Dreadnaught battleship *Massena* – a sister ship to the *Bouvet* that was sunk with nearly all hands in the ill-fated Allied naval attack on the Dardanelles on March 18 – towed from Toulon to be scuttled off shore.

Manoeuvred into place at right angles to the coast, the two ships were sunk on November 10, the Saghalien closer to the shore at the western end of V Beach. French army engineers built a pier out to the ship's bows, complete with light rail line, anchoring her forever to the land.

The Saghalien's new role as a pier only lasted two months, with the Allies – having accepted defeat – evacuating the last of their troops from the Cape Helles position on the night of January 8 - 9 1916, with some of the last men to leave boarding boats under her lee.

Having been present at one of the key events that led to the Ottoman Empire entering the war and the Gallipoli Campaign it inspired, the Saghalien was also there to witness its closing moments.

Unfriendly Fire

While the Allied armies may have left the peninsula, the Saghalien's war was far from over.

Having endured Turkish shellfire for two months after being run aground at V Beach, the Saghalien became a target for British shells and torpedoes following the evacuation.

Within hours of slipping away from the Cape Helles position, the British were back, with the Royal Navy shelling both V Beach and W Beach to the west on 9 January, the day of the evacuation of the peninsula.

Along with trying to destroy the tonnes of supplies that had been abandoned the cruiser HMS *Grafton* – commanded by Captain Henry Grace, son of the famed English cricketer W G Grace – had been tasked with trying to deny the Turks use of the artificial harbours at Cape Helles.

From January 9 onwards, the Grafton returned to the waters off the peninsula almost daily until early February, shelling the Helles sector and, on one occasion, launching a night-time attack directly targeting the Saghalién.

Soon after the evacuation, a decision was taken to destroy the block ships off V Beach, the attack to be carried out by small steam picket boats carrying torpedoes, the craft towed to the Helles area by the Grafton.

The attack was seen as being important enough for Admiral Sydney Fremantle, one of the Royal Navy's most senior officers serving in the Aegean theatre, to come aboard the *Grafton* ahead of her sailing from the British base on the island of Imbros to oversee the operation.

The ship's log for the night of January 11 and 12 reads:

10.00pm: Rear Admiral Fremantle came aboard

10.10pm: Weighed & proceeded as requisite out of harbour

10.35pm: Shaped course S80E, four picket boats in company

1.05am: Stop as requisite off Cape Helles. Picket boats proceeded to torpedo breakwater vessels

2.25am: Picket boats returned. Proceeded N35W

4.00am: Course as requisite into harbour

While the log of the Grafton gives only the barest details of the operation, and no comment on its success or otherwise, the Saghalién herself does offer evidence that at least one of the British attacks struck home.

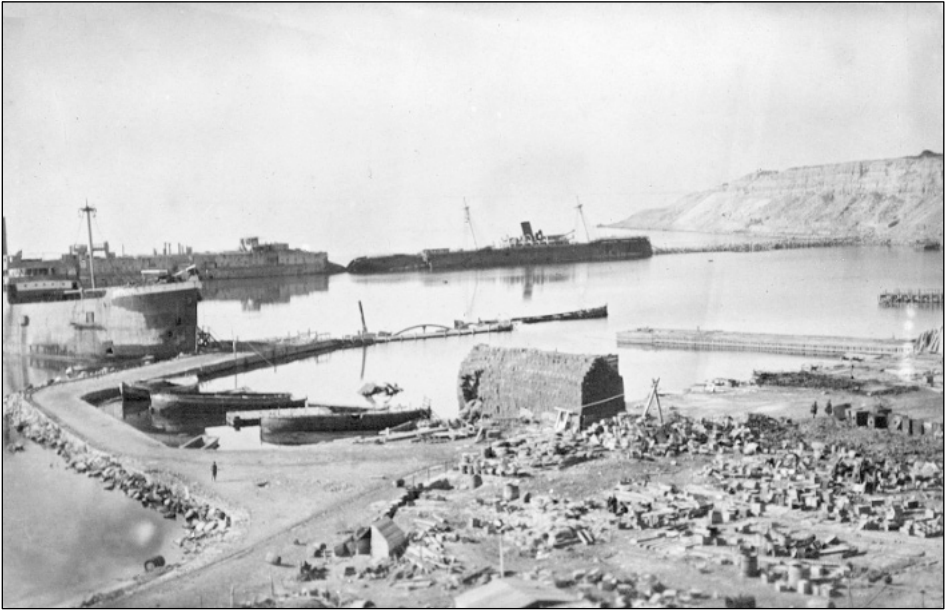
Among the stripped down bones of the wreck on the seabed are a number of metal plates about one third of the way in from the Saghalién's stern and still attached to her keel, apparently forced inwards and not cut when the ship was broken up in the 1920s.

Positioned on the Saghalién's port side or outer side of the ship which faced out to sea, the plates are at the point where the stern broke away from the rest of the vessel some time after the attack, possibly indicating an explosion outside the hull, while the location of the plates closer to the keel points to the blast being on or below the waterline.

While one or more torpedoes from the Grafton may have hit their target, the effects of any impact appear not to have been fully felt immediately.

A German photo of V Beach, taken just days after the evacuation, shows the Saghalién intact, though possibly listing more to port than during the campaign. Subsequent photos, taken months after the January attacks, show the stern of the Saghalién missing, and an extensive gap between midships of vessel and the hulk of the Massena.

This points to the Saghalién partly breaking up after the attacks by the Grafton, with the break coming where the plates were driven inwards.



A German photo taken just after the final evacuation in Jan 1916 showing the *Saghalien* (far right), *Massena* and *River Clyde* at V Beach. Note the *Saghalien* has not yet broken up.
Below: Detail from above showing *Saghalien*'s stern missing, and the gap between midships of vessel and the *Massena* on the left (Serpil and Bill Sellars collection).



The Grafton's attacks were mentioned in the Turkish official history of the campaign,:

Sunken vessels used to form breakwaters and sea vessels that had ran aground were being destroyed as much as it was possible by gun and torpedo fire a day or two after the evacuation.

The attacks on the *Saghalien* were also documented by a Turkish officer when writing in his memoirs about a visit to Cape Helles on January 23, 1916.

"First we went to Seddülbahir where we inspected the French base and their landing jetties," wrote Yüzbaşı (Captain) Nazım, who was involved in efforts to clear Allied mines from the waters around the peninsula.

“The French had run aground a mesajeri steamship and just behind her, an armoured cruiser to block the southern wind and form a break water. We were told that the British were from time to time firing at Seddulbahir.”

Silent Witness

Despite being battered, the *Saghalien*'s role as a witness to history was by no means over. Having been present in August 1914 when the *Breslau* and the *Goeben* sailed into the Dardanelles, the *Saghalien* was again there when the two warships sortied from the strait on 21 January, 1918.

The two Ottoman warships, still with their German crews, aimed to attack British warships based at Imbros. While managing to destroy two monitors — shallow draft vessels carrying heavy guns designed for bombarding targets on shore — the *Goeben* was badly damaged, while the *Breslau* was lost, along with half her 330 man crew, both victims of the minefields laid by the Royal Navy in the waters off Imbros.

Taking in water, the *Goeben* was able to limp past the *Saghalien* at the mouth of the Dardanelles that same evening. She was run aground further along the strait to avoid her capsizing, later being patched up and towed to Istanbul, her part in the war over.

Having played a role in the events that helped bring the Ottoman Empire into the war, and three years to the day after being scuttled, the *Saghalien* also bore witness to one of the conflict's last chapters.

With its forces defeated in Iraq, Syria and Jordan, the Ottoman government signed an armistice on October 31, 1918, eleven days before Germany followed suit. British troops soon returned to the peninsula, with the first landing of occupying forces taking place on V Beach on November 10 as the combined Allied fleet sailed through the Dardanelles on their way to Istanbul.



Post war photo (30 Dec 1922) of V Beach, showing the wreck of the *Saghalien* missing her stern.

With a touch of historic irony, among the Allied ships to sail past V Beach and into the Dardanelles as part of the occupation force was the cruiser HMS *Grafton*, the ship that had launched the attacks against the *Saghalien* in January 1916.

The *Saghalien*, along with the River Clyde and the Massena, also reverted to their roles of 1915, that of providing shelter for Allied troops coming ashore at V Beach.

One of those to land at Cape Helles that day was journalist Harry Collinson Owen, who had accompanied the British troops sent from Greece to be among the first of the occupying forces.

We left Mudros at four in the morning to see the landing, and arrived off Cape Helles about nine. We anchored just off the beach where the River Clyde was ran ashore, immediately outside the breakwater formed by the stripped skeleton of an ancient French battleship Massena, and an old hulk of a Messagerie steamer.

It was strange, indeed, to put foot on that narrow shore, realising how much we had paid to take it and find it now completely deserted.

The 'old hulk of a Messagerie steamer' was of course the *Saghalien*, witness to one of the last chapters of the Gallipoli Campaign as she had been to among the first.

The wreck of the *Saghalien* remained at V Beach throughout the Allied occupation of Turkey, which only ended in 1923, still partially sheltering the beach as visiting tour groups came ashore, till she – along with the Massena – was broken up for scrap, stripped down to her bare bones in the mid-1920s.

Though these bones may tell little of the voyages made or history seen, the wreck of the *Saghalien* is still a link to the Gallipoli Campaign, from its very origins to final chapter.

THE DEATH OF SERGEANT MINNS

From the *Clutha Leader* (NZ) 4 June 1915 page 1

The hospital ship *Plassy* recently arrived at Plymouth with wounded Britishers from the Dardanelles.

One, a marine, had a very narrow escape. He was sitting on the knee of a sergeant to aid in steadying a boat from one of the battleships when a bullet penetrated his chest, touching the lungs and the apex of the heart.

The bullet came out of his back and killed Sergeant Minns instantly. The marine was successfully operated on.

PLY/11711 Sergeant Arthur William Minns, Plymouth Battalion, Royal Marine Light Infantry, Royal Naval Division, died 4 March 1915, aged 33.

Sergeant Minns has no known grave. His name is commemorated on the Plymouth Naval Memorial.

GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION BURSARY 2025 REPORT

Clive Harris

Each year the Gallipoli Association offers a bursary tour for a school or youth organisation to visit Gallipoli. It's always a real pleasure to guide and share this evocative, thought-provoking battlefield with today's youth, who this year hailed from Upper Wharfedale School in Skipton, North Yorkshire.

Twelve students, two staff members, Adem Biçer (our lead guide in Çanakkale) and I made up the party spending the week based in Çanakkale and studying the events, impact and legacy of Gallipoli from both sides of the wire.

The group began by looking at the naval operations prior to the landings with visits to the excellent Çanakkale Naval Museum, the famous minelayer *Nusret* and fortifications close to Kilit Bahir. They then studied the Helles Landings at V and W beaches before visiting the French battery to discuss the coalition nature of the campaign. The day ended at the Helles Memorial.

The following day focussed on the Anzac sector, beginning with a boat trip to Anzac Cove to glimpse the key points from the sea, a walk along the landing beaches, visits to Lone Pine and Quinn's Post, and ending the day at The Nek.

Our final day was spent at Suvla Bay, including following a number of the Yorkshire battalions that fought there. After visiting Suvla Point, Hill 10 and Azmak, we made our way to Scimitar Hill, where we examined the importance of this feature, alongside the W Hills, in protecting the Turkish gun lines and logistical hubs beyond. The tour ended with visits to the excellent museum in Büyük Anafarta where the students loved meeting owner Özay Gündoğan to discuss their own country, as well as Turkey, and of course football, before a final visit to Bigali to truly understand Mustafa Kemal's command and control of the campaign.

Assistant Head John Mitton's comments following the return of the school's staff and students indicated that the trip had been a huge success:

"I have had a chance to speak to all the students and teachers about their time in Turkey. The feedback has been absolutely tremendous. All of the students said it was a rich and particularly interesting trip - and hugely enjoyable. The teachers were gobsmacked by the whole experience - from the food to the hotel to the guides. Everyone spoke so highly about it all."

These tours are vital in many ways, not least of which is that we must pass the torch to the next generation in order that they continue the process of remembrance and study. One standout success in the programme has been the appointment of a youth engagement post by the Gallipoli Association. Sophie Haworth, from Portsmouth, went to Gallipoli on the bursary trip in 2022 and found it so interesting that she is now studying War Studies at Kings College London, and we are sure she will go on to be a great ambassador for the Association and the fine work it does.

If you are a school, a college, or a cadet group, and interested in a future bursary battlefield tour, please email tours@gallipoli-association.org

Clive Harris is an Association member and *Battle Honours* guide.



Clive Summerson speaking with HRH Queen Camilla.



The Gallipoli Association plot - with 110 named memorials, thanks to Clive Summerson.
Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey 2025.

Photos this page courtesy Hester Huttenbach. See [page 5](#).



Above: Clive Summerson speaking with RAAF Wing Commander Matthew Harper CSC DSM, Head of Australian Defence Staff, London, and Australia's first F-22 *Raptor* pilot
Photograph courtesy Margaret Christodoulou. See [page 5](#)

Below: Association member Antony Siese leads the veterans' march, Remembrance Day 2025, Bermuda. See details [page 3](#)

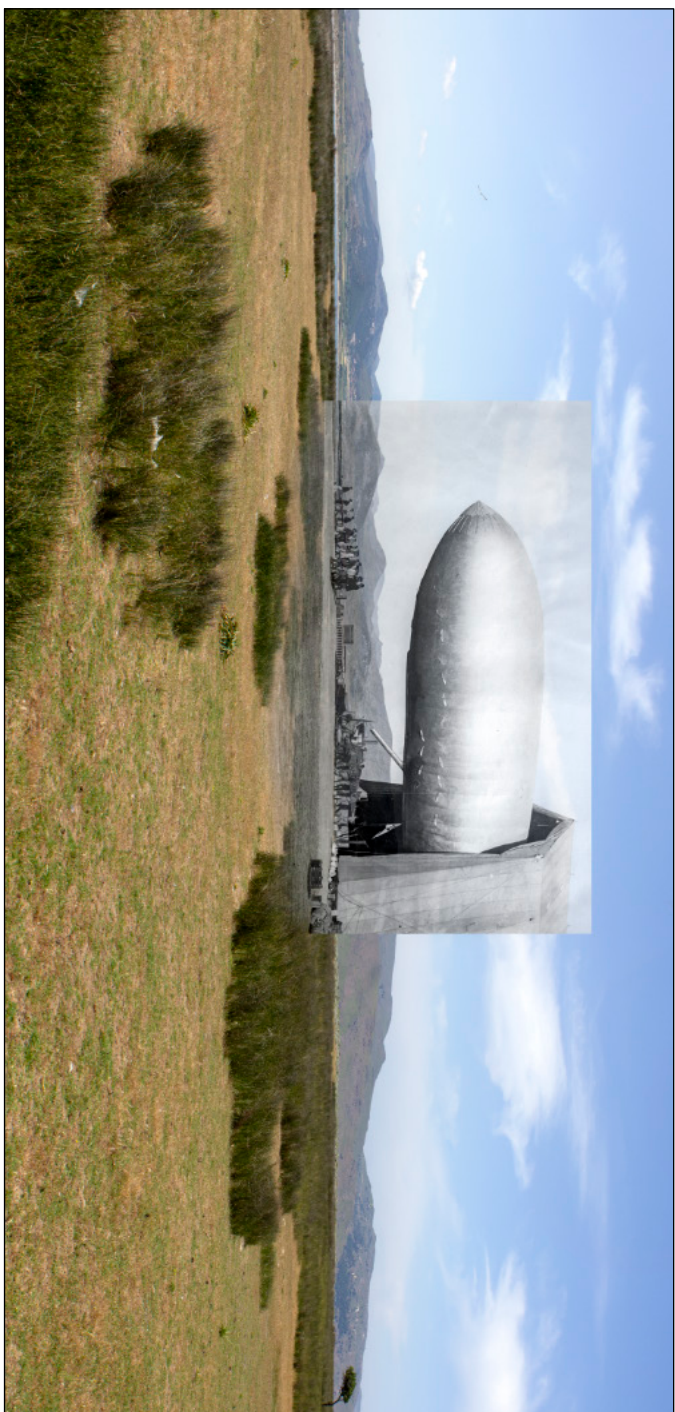




Member Jim Duffy represented the Association at Edinburgh Castle, Remembrance Sunday, 2025. See [page 2](#).

Below: Mike Crane speaking at Sedbergh School on 'The Gallipoli Whistle.'
See [page 59](#).





Then and now image by Bernard de Broglie, on *Kephalos* headland.

The silver airship was a remarkable feature in the landscape. As such, it was often photographed, sketched and painted by Allied troops. Two watercolours by Horace Moore-Jones, a New Zealand sapper attached to Birdwood's headquarters at Gallipoli, appear on page 31.

Another is this edition's front cover image.

The Submarine Scout airship comprised an envelope with a capacity of 60,000 cubic feet (1,700 cubic metres) of hydrogen gas, with two internal ballons (capacity 6,000 cubic feet, 170 cubic metres) for air, which could be filled by a blower tube placed in the slipstream of the propeller. The car was rigged to the envelope using glued patches. In sandy environments like Imbros, these patches proved problematic. When a patch began to lift from the envelope, sand got underneath. This compromised the adhesion, causing the fabric around the patches to stretch and pull away. Flight Commander Sparling suggested that in future patches be both sewn and stuck.

See article pages [6 - 18](#).

[Contents](#)



'Printing section, G.H.Q. Dirigible's Hangar'
Horace Moore-Jones, 1915.
(Australian War Memorial, ART03250)



Greek shrine with the dirigible, Imbros.
Horace Moore-Jones, 1915.
(Australian War Memorial ART03244)



Colourised view of the Submarine Scout SS.7

GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OF "S.S." AIRSHIP.

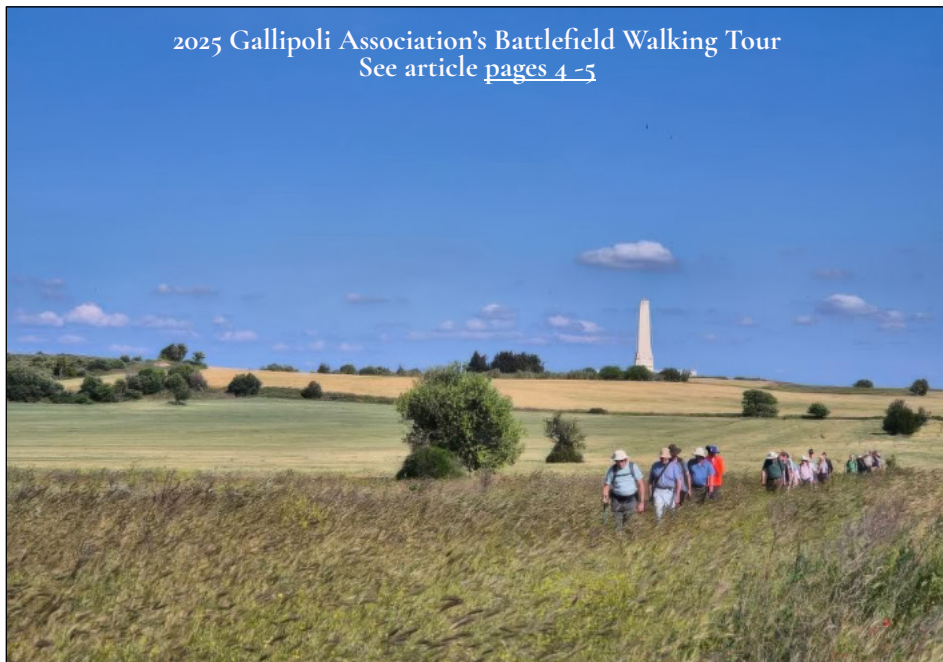
DIMENSIONS.

Overall length (Envelope)	143' 5"
Overall height (top of Envelope to Skids)	43' 5"
Maximum Diameter (Envelope)	27' 9"

VOLUME OF ENVELOPE 60,000 CU. FT. BALLONETS, 6,000 CU. FT. EACH.

Flight Commander Sparling suggested that in future patches be both sewn and stuck.

2025 Gallipoli Association's Battlefield Walking Tour
See article [pages 4 -5](#)



Above: the group heads towards W Beach; the Helles memorial on the horizon.

Below: overlooking W Beach ('Lancashire Landing').





Above: The group off Anzac.

Below: in Beach Cemetery, on the southern point of Anzac Cove.



ALBERT DOVER – THE SOLDIER IN GULLY RAVINE?

Andrew Ferry



IWM Q 13315

The picture above (IWM Q13315), taken by Ernest Brooks, the official Admiralty photographer, has often been reproduced in publications about the Gallipoli campaign. The IWM caption reads ‘Royal Fusiliers, carrying rifles and stores, returning from the trenches through Gully Ravine’. In this article I present a case that the soldier in the foreground may be in fact No. 949 Gunner Dover of the 6 (Burnley) Battery, 1st East Lancashire Brigade, Royal Field Artillery (TF).

The future Gunner Dover, christened Henry but known as Albert or Bert, was born in November 1895 at 2 Collier Street, Burnley, Lancashire to Sarah Alice Dover, unmarried at the time. In 1902 she married William Spargo, whose father, a miner, had moved from Cornwall to Burnley in the 1890s in search of work. William and Sarah Spargo were my wife’s great-grandparents.

Albert was brought up with William and Sarah’s two sons born after their marriage and by 1911, aged 15, was working as a ‘doffer’ in a cotton mill, removing the full bobbins from the looms.

He must have had a sense of adventure, because prior to WWI he volunteered for the Territorial Force, his local unit being the Burnley Battery (No.6) of the 1st East Lancashire Brigade, RFA. It is possible that Albert's job at the mill involved working with the ubiquitous horses of those times, as he was assigned and trained as a Lead Driver.

The wartime experiences of the Burnley Battery, later B/210 Battery, are well covered in the unit's history *The Long March* (Jack Horsfall 1986), which I have relied on heavily for the summary below. Any errors that may have crept in are my own.

Following the outbreak of war four days earlier, the 1st East Lancashire Brigade was mobilised on 8th August 1914. After four weeks of intensive training and gathering of stores, on 6 September the Burnley Battery marched out of their barracks to the nearby railway station, from where they were transported to Southampton, together with their horses and four 15-pounder field guns, as part of the East Lancashire Division (TF). On Thursday 10th September, the convoy carrying the Division set sail for Egypt, the first Territorial formation to go overseas.

Fifteen days later they arrived in Alexandria after stops in Gibraltar and Malta. Gunner Dover, as a driver, would have been kept busy looking after the many horses the Brigade was taking with them; unused to the cramped and uncomfortable conditions of the sea voyage, some 5% died during the trip.

The next 4 months were spent in camp at Heliopolis, firstly acclimatising and then in intensive training. Egypt must have been an enormous culture shock to the young miners and mill hands of Burnley! In camp they met up with Australian and New Zealand gunners for the first time, who were destined to become their close comrades for the next year or more.

In anticipation of a Turkish assault on the Suez Canal, on 20th January the Brigade was deployed to the banks of the canal which they continued to fortify, the Burnley Battery being located at El Kantara. In the early hours of 3rd February Ottoman and German forces attacked, to be met by the fire of all six batteries of the Brigade. 'B' Subsection of the Burnley Battery claimed to have fired the very first shell, although they were not the only unit to dispute this honour! This attack was repulsed, and the Turks tried again on 22nd March, again being forced back with heavy losses.

After that the Canal Zone remained mostly quiet; from March onwards, new formations were arriving in Egypt for the forthcoming Dardanelles landings, and the East Lancshires were excited to be also detailed for that campaign, although disappointed to learn they would not be in the first assault wave.

So, on 1st May 1915 the Burnley Battery left Kantara, and on the following day embarked on the SS *Manitou* with the rest of their brigade, arriving at Mudros harbour on Lemnos on 7th May. The following day was devoted to disembarkation practice, and the day after that the ship sailed again for 'W' Beach on Cape Helles, and action.

The landing was a fiasco. The first battery, the 5th (Church) got ashore, but such was the crush on the beach that there was no room to land the whole brigade. Just two guns of the Burnley Battery with their crews and horses made it to the beach, along with a lighter full of mules. Their other two guns, together with the 4th (Blackburn)

Battery, and most of the Brigade HQ and Ammunition Train, were turned around and sent back to their ships.

The following day the Divisional GOC ordered all the Brigade's horses landed so far to be sent back to the ships, which on the day after steamed back to Egypt, where the rump of the formation would stay for more than four further months.

At this point we have to ask which half of the Burnley Battery Gunner Dover remained with? There is no documented proof, but from the stories he later told his wife it would seem that he was part of the element that got ashore in May.

On the night of 5th-6th May, as reinforcements for the Second Battle of Krithia, one New Zealand (3rd) and four Australian (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6th) field artillery batteries, each consisting of four 18-pdr guns, which had been unable to get ashore at Anzac, had been ferried to the Helles front. The six guns of the 1st East Lancashires which had been able to get ashore on 9th May were augmented with Anzac batteries surviving after the battle to bring the unit up to full brigade strength, under the command of the East Lancashires' CO, Lt. Col Arthur Birtwhistle. On Friday 14th May, in a daring daytime manoeuvre, the composite brigade went forward some 3,000 yards to form a firing line across the peninsula between Gully Ravine and Krithia Nullah, the Anzacs providing the necessary horse teams to move the guns and limbers. Once in their battle positions, the Lancashire men were on the left of the line on Fir Tree Spur above Gully Ravine, near some ruined buildings which had been christened 'Pink Farm'. The Church battery was on the extreme left, then the two 15-pdrs of the Burnley half-battery, with the Anzacs extending to the right. Brigade HQ was established on Gully Beach.

Once settled in these positions, the brigade did not move again until late September. From HQ at Gully Beach supplies were carried to the guns by mule or by hand. The drivers, such as Gunner Dover, became 'gophers', doing anything and everything necessary to support the gun crews. This would have mostly consisted of repeated trips on foot up and down Gully Ravine between the gun positions and the beach.

On 25 May the East Lancashire Division (TF) was renamed 42nd (East Lancashire) Division, and the 1st East Lancashire Brigade RFA became 210 (CCX) Brigade RFA, with the Burnley Battery becoming 'B' Battery.

The Brigade was briefly in action in the Third Battle of Krithia on 4th June, after which the rest of the month was relatively quiet, although unlike the infantry the gunners did not have the opportunity to go into reserve. July brought appalling numbers of flies, and a serious water shortage. The under-employed gunners were used as labour helping to fortify the infantry's trenches.

At this point I would like to mention an article published in New Zealand's *Dunedin Evening Star* on 1 September 1915 (page 6). The article comprises a letter written from Helles on 4th July 1915 by Gunner Graham Slater, 3rd Battery, New Zealand Field Artillery, to his parents in Dunedin. It describes a mission to lay a telephone cable, under artillery fire, up to the new front lines following an advance (presumably the Third Battle of Krithia, which resulted in a net gain of some zoom by the 42nd Division). This article was followed up by a photograph (below)

published in the same newspaper three weeks later, with the caption 'Gunner Graham Slater (on right) and a comrade establishing telephonic communication at Gallipoli.'

The reader will, I am sure, quickly recognise that this is the identical image to the one heading this article but with the leading soldier cropped out.



TELEPHONES IN WAR TIME.

Gunner Graham Slater (on right) and a comrade establishing telephonic communication at Gallipoli.

Photo: *Evening Star* (Dunedin NZ) 21 September 1915 p10.

The Gallipolian's editor has managed to provide a pre-war image including Gunner Slater, which shows a sufficient likeness with the soldier in Gully Ravine to support the conclusion that these two soldiers are indeed New Zealand gunners, and places the date of the photograph most probably in June 1915.



B BATTERY SQUAD (DUNEDIN), AT THE RECENT PALMERSTON NORTH CAMP

Back row (from left): G. G. Slater, S. Hayward, T. Saunders, L. Beaumont, R. C. Sinclair, F. Clark, R. W. Dancey. Middle row: W. H. Harvey, Sergt. J. M'Dougall, Lieut. R. Richards, Sergt. J. A. Jeffries, Corp. R. M'Pherson, Bomb. R. D. Cowie, H. W. Sinc air. Front row: G. H. Thomson, F. G. Sinclair, Corp. W. M'Lennan, A. Harrison, F. Helean, L. R. Lockhead.

Photo above and detail of Gunner Slater (right) from
Otago Witness (Dunedin NZ) 7 October 1914 p42.



The brigade was in action again in the co-ordinated Allied offensives of early August, during which they fired their most sustained barrages of the war, but after these petered out following appalling casualties on both sides, the gunners again had to stay in the line dealing with flies, water shortage and dysentery.

In late August the 42nd Division took over the extreme left-hand sector of the Cape Helles beachhead, between Gully Ravine and Fusilier Bluff on the cliffs above the Aegean Sea. The Division's infantry made themselves at home in their new location, naming many trenches after their home towns, including amongst others 'Burnley Road'. This redeployment did not, however, require a move for their artillery, who already had the range to cover the new sector from their existing positions.

On 14th September, a burst of Turkish shelling landed near the horse and mule lines, killing or severely injuring six horses and 14 mules, the wounded being shot to put them out of their suffering.

On 26th September, the remainder of 210 Brigade (less their horses and their drivers, who were still deemed unnecessary) finally landed on the peninsula from Egypt and moved their guns forward into the line. After two weeks bedding in, on 7th October the new reinforcements relieved the Anzac gunners from the composite artillery brigade: the Burnley Battery moved rightwards during night to take over the vacated gun pits on the east side of Krithia Nullah, just south of the 'Clapham Junction' fork.

210 Brigade saw plenty of action throughout October and November, as the supply situation eased and more ammunition was made available. The weather was more comfortable than at any time since the Landing, and the troops took every opportunity to improve their dugouts for the coming winter, becoming adept at scrounging materials from the supply dumps at the beach.

In November the weather became much colder and wetter, and the Turks counter-attacked fiercely; but even more destructive was the storm which raged for most of the last two weeks of the month, flattening shelters and flooding every trench and dugout. Both sides were affected and for a while the battlefield was silent as both sides struggled to recover.

The Turkish bombardment recommenced in early December, but by that time the decision had been taken by the Allies to progressively evacuate the peninsula. Most of the infantry left during that month, but to cover them the artillery stayed in action right to the end: eventually, on 1st January 1916, 210 Brigade started their own withdrawal. Sadly only a few of their very best horses could be taken away; the remainder, and all the mules, were shot in batches in the side gullies off Krithia Nullah by their grieving drivers. The brigade was shipped back to Egypt, to spend a further year defending the Suez Canal before serving out the war with two years on the Western Front.

That, in summary, was the experience of the Burnley Battery in Gallipoli. So how does Bert Dover and the photo taken in Gully Ravine figure in all this?

Like many veterans, Albert Dover did not talk much about his war. Post-war he did visit the Western Front with his wife Mary, who he married in 1924; what little we know of his wartime experiences was shared with her, and passed on by her to their son Victor and grandson Ian after Albert's death in 1970.

Apart from the horror of the heat and the flies, common to all troops who spent the Summer of 1915 on the Gallipoli peninsula, two particular memories survived: in the first, Albert and another soldier were detailed to escort a blindfolded Turkish officer, under a flag of truce, to Gully Beach for a meeting to discuss a ceasefire to bury the dead. They were told to take the most confusing and roundabout route possible, and then again escorting him back to no man's land. This most likely took place either following the Third Battle of Krithia in June, or in the heat of August, when it was imperative for both sides to quickly bury the dead resulting from the Allied offensives to avoid the threat of disease.

In the second memory, deeply personal to a driver, he recalled the name of 'his' two horses, Bess and Jess, that he was ordered to shoot, most likely just prior to the final evacuation, but also possibly following the incident in September when the wagon lines were shelled.

So what of the photograph? It is not clear exactly when it was taken: the original IWM record does not include a date; In Stephen Chambers' 'Battleground Europe – Gully Ravine' book it appears, captioned as June; in 'The Long March', it is mentioned as taking place in October, but this is clearly impossible given that a version of it was published in a New Zealand newspaper in September (it also appeared in the *Western Mail* (Perth, WA) of 10 Sept 1915). However, for our story the exact date is not critical: it would appear most likely that Gunner Albert Dover was on the peninsula continuously between early May 1915 and the first days of 1916. As a driver with few horses to look after, his days would mostly have been spent slogging up and down Gully Ravine between the gun line, the unit's waggon lines, and Brigade HQ on Gully Beach, running messages and doing odd jobs. To have been in front of Brooks' camera on one of these many occasions is in no way unlikely.

What does the photo itself tell us? Well, from the kit the soldier is carrying, there is no direct evidence that he might be an East Lancashire Gunner: he is carrying an SMLE rifle and associated bayonet – Albert Dover's 42nd Division was issued as standard the Long Lee Rifle and associated (shorter) bayonet; secondly he is wearing Pattern 1908 infantry webbing – whereas both artillery and transport men were issued bandolier type (1903) equipment. He is not wearing breeches or even puttees (as the two soldiers behind him are). However, as Brooks was well known for 'staging' his photographs some leeway may be allowed where things appear not quite as they should be.

Having said that, it will be remembered that the East Lancashire Artillery Brigade landed in May only as a partial unit with the minimum of kit, and that its drivers worked entirely in a dismounted capacity. After a few weeks in theatre it would not be surprising if more appropriate kit had been drawn from stores available on Gully Beach or from supplies available to the ANZAC gunners in the composite brigade.

The evidence from the New Zealand *Evening Star* newspaper strongly suggests that the two soldiers immediately behind the one in the foreground are New Zealand field gunners, some of whom were brigaded with the Burnley Battery from their arrival in May until late September 1915.

At what point was the connection first made between the photo and Albert Dover? Well, in the 1970s Albert's son Victor was in the habit of taking long summer touring holidays on the Continent with his family. On one of these tours, around 1976, they found themselves in Thessaloniki, Greece, wondering where to go next. Almost on the spur of the moment, they decided to visit nearby Gallipoli to see the sites of Albert's former wartime adventures.

The family visited the war museum at Çanakkale, to be greeted by a life-sized blow-up of Brooks' Gully Ravine photograph, at which point Victor's wife Renee immediately remarked that the soldier in the foreground looked just like Albert. Returning home, Victor tracked down another copy of the photo (not so easy in that pre-internet age!), and showed it to his mother Mary, whose instant reaction was, 'That's Albert!'

The only photo of Albert as a relatively young man I have been able to use for comparison is a studio shot taken in around 1929, with wife Mary and their son

Victor. By eye, the resemblance to the soldier in Brooks' photo is more than passing: the downward slope of the eyes, the prominent straight nose, the rightwards cock of the head. For a more technological assessment I used the Apple 'Face/Face' app to compare the two images, and the resemblance is shown as 63% similar, 'Noticeably alike!'. Given the c.14-year age gap between the subjects and the limited definition of both images, this is a pretty good start, but not by itself decisive.



Albert, Mary & Victor Dover c.1929

Sadly, all those who knew Albert as a young man have long since passed on, and his only surviving descendant, grandson Ian Dover, was still a boy when his granddad himself died. However, from the evidence of his unit's activities, from other information about the subjects in the photo, from the stories his family tell, and from the remarkable resemblance between the two men in the photos, it seems to me more than possible that Albert Dover was indeed the war-weary, slightly bedraggled young soldier marching down Gully Ravine immortalised by Ernest Brooks' camera that day in 1915.

If any reader has any further information, on Ernest Brooks' Gully Ravine photograph or any other aspect of this story, which would help prove or disprove the soldier's identity, I (and Albert's grandson Ian, himself a Gallipoli Campaign enthusiast) would be delighted to hear from you.

I am indebted to Bernard de Broglio for his highly-informed comments on this story as it has developed, and for his encouragement to publish. Thanks also to Mike Crane for his observations on uniform and kit; to Ian Dover, who provided the family memories of his grandfather's Gallipoli experiences; and to Albert's half-niece, Stella Spargo, who provided the original intriguing suggestion that there was a photo of Albert taken on the peninsula.

TO AVENGE HIS FATHER

Boy Of 15 Enlists

The widow of a soldier killed at the Dardanelles appeared at the Blackburn [Lancashire] Recruiting Office with the attestation paper and fee of her son and begged that he might be released, as he was the eldest of four children and only fifteen years of age. The lad, who is strong and big for his age, when questioned, declared his intention of avenging his father's death, and said that if the Army refused him he would join the Navy. His attestation was cancelled. (*Daily News* (Perth, WA) 18 February 1916, page 3).

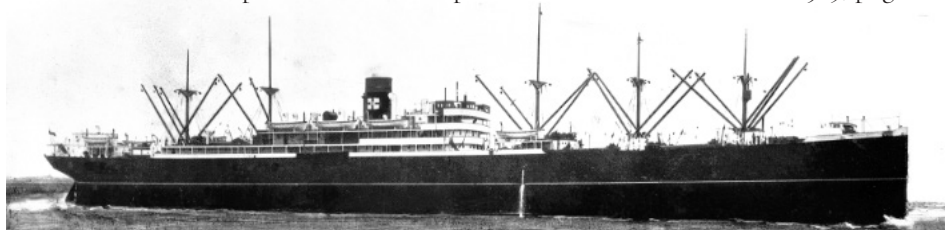
BATTLE SCARRED

A Marked Steamer

Townsville. October 25.

The steamer Wiltshire, which arrived in port on Sunday morning, has seen exciting times when stationed at Gallipoli. Being the largest boat among a number of others, she was paid particular attention to by a Turkish aeroplane, which only got within 30 yards of her. The shore batteries were more successful, and their shells caused several holes in her upper works.

Her cargo is 450 tons of frozen mutton and 50 tons of frozen beef for Melbourne, and 100 bales of sheep skins for British ports. (*Cairns Post* 26 October 1915, page 8).



OPINIONS ON THE ENEMY

"Our fellows don't appear so bitter against the Turks ... The Turks are good fighters, reckless and gallant in their way, and we hear they are treating the prisoners well. But, give them their due, these Germans are pretty game. One night one dressed in an Australian officer's uniform got in at the head of one of our trenches and shouted out the order 'Officers to the left.' This was all but acted upon, and the effect would have been deadly, but the trick was discovered in time, and I need not tell you that chap is not fighting for the Fatherland any more. He was plucky all the same. Whatever else may be said we are up against a brave crowd in the Germans." (Extract, letter dated 29 May 1915 from Captain Chester Reynolds, Army Service Corps Headquarters, 1 Australian Division, in the *Sun* (Sydney) 18 July 1915 page 8).

FINDING MY FATHER AT GALLIPOLI

John Shephard

In January 1914, my father Arthur Shephard, then aged 18, volunteered to join The Queens Own Dorset Yeomanry (TA) and attended one training camp before the outbreak of war on 4 August. In 1915, he along with most of his unit, volunteered for overseas service and was posted initially to Egypt and then to Gallipoli where the Dorsets, together with the Buckinghamshire Hussars and the Berkshire Yeomanry, formed the 2nd Mounted Brigade under the command of Lord Longford. On arrival in Gallipoli he had been assigned the role of regimental stretcher-bearer – on the strength, he always maintained, of a First Aid badge awarded in the Boy Scouts before the war! The reality behind this was that he had trained in first aid with the local detachment of the Red Cross.



Stretcher bearers at work at Gallipoli. Source: IWM Q109205

In common with other regimental stretcher-bearers he would have not have been carrying a rifle during his time in action. His first taste of active service was the daylight advance with the rest of 2nd Mounted Division from Lala Baba to Chocolate Hill on 21 August. This was on foot and in open order under shell fire, a feat that is still one of the well-remembered events of the Gallipoli Campaign. During this advance the bearers were under strict orders not to pick up casualties, presumably the responsibility of the RAMC, but in consequence many wounded became engulfed by the flames from shellfire.

The Yeomanry were expecting to deploy into reserve trenches at that point. In the event they took cover awaiting orders behind Chocolate Hill. My father recounts

how the Dorset bearers found themselves ushered into a dugout occupied by a group of engineers. Whilst awaiting developments the engineers told them they were an execution squad! (This has never been verified).

Whilst there, the orders were changed unexpectedly and Second Mounted Brigade was ordered to immediately assault Scimitar Hill (Hill 70), as 87 Brigade was finding it impossible to maintain a presence on the summit. Dusk was falling. The stretcher-bearers followed up closely with the main assaulting troops (in the confusion that occurred, mostly behind the Buckinghamshire Yeomanry) but it was not long before one of the party was hit in the arm and had to make his way back to the front line, his elbow shattered. The remaining bearers gathered wounded men night long. Father estimated that he only saw about 50 men from 87 Brigade left on the hill from the previous attack (probably South Wales Borderers). The Yeomanry took the hill, but at great cost, and they too had to retire during the small hours.

The following day the brigade padre, Capt. Parham, called for volunteers to collect wounded in no-mans-land, somewhere in the area to the south of Chocolate Hill. Father was one of them. Some of what follows is as he described it to Peter Liddle years later. The first point of note is that they had very little in the way of first aid kit as they had used almost all they had the night before. They found some of the wounded covered in flies. Once on the stretcher, one wounded man asked for water. Father refused because the man had a stomach wound and bearers were forbidden to allow men with stomach wounds to drink. The man called him all names under the sun until they arrived at the field dressing station. On a separate occasion, a man was in such pain that it took four men to keep him on the stretcher while they made their way to the casualty clearing station. However, he always maintained that the Turks withheld fire when the stretcher parties were out in the open, even when on one occasion he buried a dead Turk lying on the parapet of the trench. For his courage in organising the recovery of the wounded, Parham was awarded the MC.

In the stalemate of September and October, action for stretcher-bearers was centred less on recovery of wounded and more on tending the sick. Father described the appalling conditions in some detail in his submission to Peter Liddle. Dysentery became rampant. After witnessing the sight of the severely wounded, it might be expected that care for those with dysentery would be mild in comparison. Quite the reverse, the conditions were terrible, with men disfigured by pain literally losing their lives on the latrines.

Because of the high casualty rate after the assault on Scimitar Hill, 2nd Mounted Brigade was re-formed into the First Composite Mounted Brigade in September and found itself in trenches just to the south of Chocolate Hill and Tint's Corner, almost directly opposite the Turkish salient at Hetman Chair. It is here that the story about finding my father really begins.

Although I only heard him talking about Gallipoli when in the company of other Dorset Yeomanry veterans, he did ask me for some help on one matter when I was a student. He had been told that a photograph had been taken of him in the front-line trenches at Gallipoli and that it had been published in one of the pictorial magazines of the time – he thought possibly the *London Illustrated News* or *The War Illustrated*. He asked me to see if I could trace it. I was unsuccessful both then and at

the National Newspaper Library, then at Colindale, some years later. Ironically it was not until after he died in 1974 and when sometime later helping my mother to clear the house that I chanced on an unsealed and unmarked envelope in a drawer he always kept locked. Much to my surprise on opening the envelope I discovered a clipping from a magazine folded in two. This was clearly the picture he must have had in mind; I recognised him in an instant. Unknown to him, or unremembered, it must have been in his possession all the time (below). He is the trooper in the pith helmet on the right with a trench periscope, and just visible beside that can be seen the handle of a stretcher.



The handwritten note at the bottom reads *'This picture is of Dorset Yeomanry in the firing line. I know most of the above fellows'*. I would guess that a man, perhaps from the detachment of the Yeomanry that drilled locally before the outbreak of war, or a returning wounded soldier, had spotted the photograph, clipped it from the magazine and sent it to my grandparents.

This raised several questions - who had taken the photograph, when and where was it taken, and was it indeed the firing line or perhaps the support trench? It was known that Rev Parham had taken photographs in the Suvla sector, some of which he had sold on to the press to raise funds for a Church of England children's charity, so that was a line of enquiry I wanted to follow up. But how? The answer came unexpectedly when good fortune put me in touch with Parham's daughter (another next generation descendant of a Gallipoli veteran). She had a type-written transcript of Arthur Parham's Gallipoli diary in which the original photographs had been pasted in or near the relevant dates in the text. In the entries between 28th and 29th September, there was the identical photograph to the one in the clipping, but of course in much better definition.



Detail from photo supplied by Rev. Parham's daughter; from her father's Gallipoli diary.

The position of the picture in the typescript, the War Diaries and the identity of the building in the background helped unlock the when and where questions. The building behind the trench line is recognisably Cator's House.' It was a landmark often mentioned in War Diaries of various units. There is a drawing of it made by an officer in the Dorset Yeomanry among the records in The Keep Museum in Dorchester and another photograph amongst a series of pictures taken by Lt Col Weston Jarvis in the KSY Museum in Kent both with contemporary handwritten captions identifying it as Cator's House. All the pictures show the stubby chimney at the gable end and the same trees in the background. These sources are consistent and make the identification secure.

Was there any further evidence that the photo was taken around late September as suggested by its position in the Parham typescript? The answer has implications for whether Cator's House was on the firing line at that time, or whether sapping forward had changed it into a support trench. The war diaries make it clear that the Dorset Yeomanry were in the area of Cator's House at that time. An entry reads

'28 – 30 Sept. Ordinary routine. Troops engaged nightly in digging communication trench between CATER HOUSE and Reserve line trenches.'²

Later, after a few days in reserve, 8 October:

'Moved tonight into *front line* of trenches in line by Cater Sap Tint's corner' [italics are mine].

Parham's diary indicates that he too was in the same area at around the same time:

29 September: 'I walked round two lines of trenches, taking photograph in the Gloucester lines';³ 30 September: '... then I went to the Worcesters to arrange a service for Saturday at 7.00 and to the Dorsets for one at 6.30'; 1 October: 'I celebrated for the Dorsets at 6.30. 10 communicants.'⁴

Hence, within the timeframe of 29 September to 1 October, there is every likelihood that their paths would have crossed and the photo be taken.

The next consideration is whether the trench maps are consistent with this and show that the position at Cator's House was on the front line at this time? A GSGS [Geographical Section, General Staff] map dated 14 October 1915⁵ (opposite page) shows quite clearly that the front line trench even a while later ran from Green Hill, through Tint's Corner and Cator's House southwards. There is no sign of what was later to become Munster Lane to its east, which eventually became the new firing trench. When complete, this ran from Dorset Sap and passed between Owl Barn and Dead Mans Gully⁶ before proceeding south through White House to the area of Fort Conan and beyond.

From this it is possible to be confident that the handwritten caption on the photograph in the clipping was accurate.

In 2016, my younger son and I decided to visit the spot and travelled to the peninsula. Navigational technology has come on considerably in the meantime but the method we used to locate the site of Cator's House back then was to overlay a 1915 trench map showing Cator's House on the latest satellite imagery in Google Earth Pro. The fit was surprisingly accurate such that we could see that by following a trackway shown on both the trench map and in the contemporary satellite image, it would be possible to see exactly where the house would have been by identifying various features along the sides of track as we walked.

As might be imagined, once at the site nothing of the building was standing. Even the stonework had been robbed. The only trace of the building that had once been

¹ War diaries and other sources spell Cator's in a variety of ways.

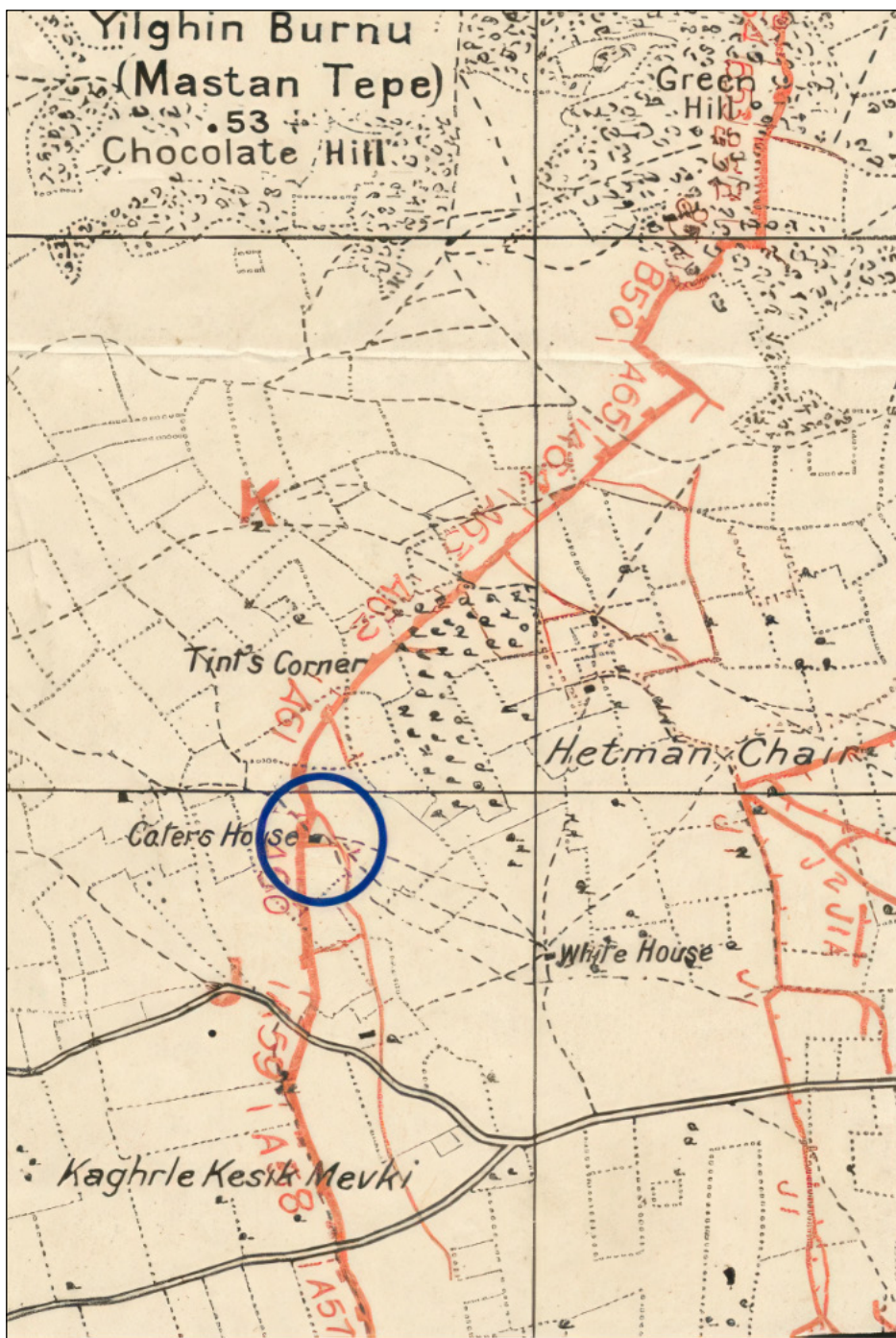
² This was to be named Boycott Alley when inspected by the Divisional GoC on 3 October.

³ The Dorsets and Gloucesters seem to have relieved each other at around this time.

⁴ My father was a regular and lifelong church goer and was likely to be one of them.

⁵ National Archives WO 301-535

⁶ It was the Dorsets who re-wired Dead Mans Gully on 24 September. My father was there and described it as a vision of Hell. Presumably the trenching of Munster Lane had only got this far by that date.



Geographical Section General Staff (GSGS) map of part of Suvla dated 14 October 1915.

there was a well (below). The trees in the background, though not identical with the ones in the photograph, were clearly of the same kind.



We left a little reminder of Dorset at the site and made our way back. But we had succeeded in finding my father at Gallipoli, albeit after the lapse of 101 years.

We drove along the main track to The Green Hill Cemetery in our hire car and I asked my son to drop me there and go on ahead as I wished to walk the line of advance that 2nd Mounted Brigade took on the evening of 21 August 1915 when they attacked Scimitar Hill. Walking the route had a certain appeal for me as being able to progress unopposed would, I hoped, provide a feeling that in that respect at least, the world had become a better place.

At roughly the halfway point I saw an elderly and weather-beaten local man coming towards me, and at first sight he gave the impression of having lived through some pretty hard times and even then was finding it a challenge to make ends meet. As we converged, much to my surprise he crossed the track with arm outstretched. What followed warm handshakes and smiles whilst all the time expressing what must have been well meaning remarks, all of course in our respective native tongues. However my initial assessment of his circumstances proved to be slightly wide of the mark when our conversation was brought to an abrupt stop by a shrill ringtone on his mobile phone of which I had been unaware. Mobile phones being used at that time by the elderly was still a bit of a rarity even in England and were not obtained or used on a light budget. I left him with a silent salutation, but with the sense that he had brought our expedition to a rather touching end.



THE WRESTLING CHAMPION OF GALLIPOLI

Laurence McCarthy

In March 1915 *The Egyptian Mail* newspaper carried a wrestling challenge from Thomas McCarty (aka McCarthy), a British soldier who had travelled to Egypt with the 1/5th Manchester (127th Brigade, 42nd East Lancs Division) in September 1914.

McCarty was a well-known wrestler in Lancashire and had been winning cups and medals since 1908.

In June 1914, while on training exercises with the 1/5th Manchester, he defeated William Pritchard, the previously unbeaten champion of North Wales. The bout took place in front of several officers, Sir Charles Assheton Smith and 6,000 of his quarrymen at his Vaynol estate in North Wales.

Although Pritchard, dubbed 'the Welsh Hackenschmidt', was almost three stone heavier than Thomas and by all accounts an impressive physical specimen, he was unable to deal with the Wiganer's speed and technique and after seven and half minutes of wrestling was defeated by two falls to none. McCarty picked up the Sir Charles Assheton Smith £20 silver Cup. The cup was renamed the 'McCarty Rose Bowl' and displayed in the officer's mess of the 5th Manchester Regiment in Wigan drill hall.

Just before WW1 Thomas became 'Catch as Catch can' wrestling champion of England in the 9st 7lb featherweight category.

This regional style of wrestling was real and could at times be brutal; it often took place in open fields for side stakes and wagers. Most matches were decided by either two falls or a submission. Despite its notoriety as a tough and violent sport, which appealed to its working class followers, it did often follow a set of rules prescribed by the now defunct *Manchester Sporting Chronicle*.

While stationed near Cairo, *The Egyptian Mail* challenge was printed: "Sergeant Tom McCarty, Abbassia, will wrestle any man in Egypt at 9st 11lbs to 10st for a sum to be mutually agreed upon by both parties or for the best purse offered. First come, first served. Business only is meant."

Such was the reputation of Wigan wrestlers at that time that even the Anzacs were reluctant to take up the challenge. Eventually the Australian Hitchcox stepped up, only to be defeated by Thomas by 2 falls to none for £5. Thereafter, McCarty was referred to as the wrestling 'Champion of Egypt'.

McCarty and the Manchesters landed at Gallipoli, where he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his bravery during the diversionary action at Krithia on 6th



Wigan Examiner Supplement
20 June 1914 p1

August 1915. His official *London Gazette* citation was brief: "For consistent gallantry and good work under heavy fire."

But a later report in the *Wigan Military Chronicle* describes the action in more detail:

During the assault a particularly fine piece of work was accomplished by a platoon of 'B' Company under Lieut. Cowan. Instead of jumping over our front line trench, or crossing by the bridges, the men took shelter in it 'and got their wind', whereupon they rushed the objective without a casualty. They were immediately attacked by the enemy and in a short time nearly every man became a casualty, but Lieut. Cowan continued to lead the defence until he was killed. Sgt T. McCarty twice rushed the enemy bomb pit under heavy rifle fire, and although men from neighbouring platoons found their way into the position, they were all casualties. After about an hour, as there were not enough men to offer an effective resistance, Sgt. McCarty, again working under a hot and accurate rifle fire, tore away a sandbagged barricade and extricated the whole of the party, including all the wounded. A survivor wrote shortly afterwards, "All the time he was working they were shooting at us down the trench, every shot hit, and if he had not made the road none of us would have got out."

It is also reported that McCarty won the wrestling 'Championship of Gallipoli' under fire from Turkish snipers.

As well as his DCM, McCarty was mentioned in dispatches for his actions at Gallipoli. Promotion to Company Sergeant Major followed in early 1916 and he served on the Western front. Thomas was declared 'Missing in action, presumed killed' in March 1918, only to be found half submerged in mud in no man's land, suffering from shell shock.

After the war McCarty joined Wigan Rugby League club as trainer and unofficial physiotherapist. He was in charge of the team the first time they won the Rugby League Challenge Cup in 1924 at Rochdale, when Wigan defeated Oldham 21-4 and the second was in 1929 when Wigan defeated Dewsbury 13-2. The 1929 final was the first to be held at Wembley Stadium.



Thomas was introduced to the Prince of Wales (future King Edward VIII) on a visit to Wigan Rugby club in November 1932. The Prince walked down a line of ex-servicemen and when he came to Thomas he asked where he won the DCM, Thomas responded 'Gallipoli.'

Although he was born in Ryhope, County Durham, he lived most of his life in the Wigan area. His parents were from a show family of theatre actors, circus performers and dancers. In between his stints in the army and navy, Thomas held a variety of jobs including circus gymnast, minstrel, professional ghost, clog dancer, puppeteer, weightlifter, miner and it is claimed he was the first person in Wigan to operate a cinema reel.

In 1930 he was elected chairman of the Wigan Boxers and Wrestlers Association and in 1952 became chairman of the Ince (Wigan) Royal British Legion, regularly attending remembrance events.

In later life he was a Punch and Judy man. He died on 27th September 1954 aged 71 and was laid to rest in Gidlow Cemetery in Wigan.



ENVER'S WIFE

Enver Pasha is indeed the Sick Man of Europe. Some eight months ago he married the Princess Mehemed, who was not only enormously wealthy, but possessed one of the finest palaces in Constantinople. Unlike most married Turkish ladies, the Princess is no submissive wife, and when Enver, in obedience to his German employers, plunged his country into war, his wife flew into a passion, scratched his face, and virtually turned him out of doors. Enver would like to get rid of his patriotic spouse, but the days of the bowstring, the sack, and the Bosphorus, are gone. He must have struck a Tartar of a wife! (*Free Lance* (NZ) 1 October 1915 p4).

GENERAL GODLEY

A New Zealand officer, writing from the firing line at Gallipoli, says: General Godley in passing through a sap recently, accidentally bumped into one of the Australians who was working vigorously with a pick. 'All right, that's the seventh — that's bumped me this morning,' said the Australian. The general simply smiled and remarked: 'I don't seem to be very popular here.' (*Woodville Examiner* (NZ))¹³ September 1915 p2).

DISCLAIMER

Readers are reminded that the observations and opinions expressed in articles and letters published in *The Gallipolian* are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of either the editor, or of the Association.

THE VITAL ROLE OF THE CWGC

Charles Garrett OBE

Director of Global Strategy and International Relations, CWGC

Speech at the Gallipoli Association's Autumn Lunch 2025

I joined the Commonwealth War Graves Commission last year after 36 years as a British diplomat, motivated not only by the desire to prove to myself that there is life after the Foreign Office, but also by the prospect of supporting the unique role the Commission plays. To this audience, I don't think I need spell that unique role out. But, while our core purpose of caring in perpetuity for the graves and memorials of 1.7m fallen is familiar, some aspects of that work are not so widely known. I'd like to say a few words about two things, challenges and diplomacy.

The Commission faces some mighty challenges.

One of the mightiest is climate change. As an organisation active in 153 countries, our teams tending the cemeteries face this daily. Some plants, which have thrived for a century, no longer do. The green swards in some cemeteries are no longer sustainable. They require too much water to keep going which is impractical, expensive and hard to justify if communities living alongside our sites are themselves unable to afford or access water for their daily needs.

Rising sea levels and the ferocity of storms are increasing coastal erosion.

Gallipoli is sadly a good example. On our annual Commissioners' tour, which this year was to the peninsula, we took them to Anzac Cove and showed them how the site of the 1915 landings, where the annual commemorations take place, is being steadily surrendered to the sea. The Turkish authorities have been immensely supportive of efforts to protect the landing site. But there is a strong sense of King Canute about it all.

We also showed them the impact of the wildfires last summer which destroyed vegetation across many of our sites and much of the battlefield. With the undergrowth having been burnt down, subsequent heavy rain washed away the topsoil exposing remains of the fallen. Again, the Turkish authorities were immensely helpful both in identifying remains and in efforts to repair the damage. You may have seen news coverage of the interment ceremony we conducted in August at No 2 Outpost cemetery. And I am glad to say that the damaged cemeteries, if not yet back to their best, are well on the way.

Another mighty challenge is in finding new ways to engage the younger generation. Veterans of these wars, first-hand witnesses of what actually happened, have always been the most effective advocates for messages about the human cost of war. If you saw one of the VJ80 or VE80 events this year, you may have seen a veteran handing the Commission's torch of commemoration to a schoolchild. It is a powerful image, capturing the way we must pass on knowledge to the next generation if the fallen, as promised, are to be honoured in perpetuity. But as the two World Wars recede into history, instinctive understanding of their significance is weakening. So we must up our game, and find new and creative ways to get the message across. The

work that you do as an Association, in particular your bursary programme, is so welcome in that regard.

As an ex-diplomat I have to mention a third challenge, geopolitical change. As a Commission, we depend on a shared understanding of our work among our six funding members and the wider Commonwealth. But it would be complacent to assume that the framework within which the Commission has operated for over a century will remain unchanged. Those six funding members each have their own world views which don't always coincide and which are evolving. The two *Times of India* articles on the Gallipoli Association website, which together show the poles of opinion about commemorating India's fallen from World Wars 1 and 2, are a small illustration of the powerful pressures shaping our environment. And across the globe, within the Commonwealth and beyond it, the tectonic plates of geopolitics are shifting more dramatically than for forty years.

This isn't to say the Commonwealth or the CWGC is coming apart at the seams. Far from it: but the rapid pace of change means we must do all we can to underline the continuing relevance of commemoration in perpetuity.

As part of that we have been exploring the link between commemoration and diplomacy. The CWGC's core purpose, commemoration, gives us a unique place to contribute. Over the decades, our sites have often been the venue for diplomatic moves. Kemal Ataturk's famous quotation addressed to the mothers of Gallipoli's fallen, inscribed on monuments across the peninsula, is an early example. The sixtieth anniversary of D Day, when the German chancellor was invited for the first time and stood alongside leaders of allied nations, is another.

But this goes beyond set-piece events. The CWGC's approach to commemoration has often been overlooked, in my view, as part of the foundation that societies across the Commonwealth are built on, and as part of the glue that brings our countries together.

When Fabian Ware argued for an egalitarian approach in 1917, he faced great opposition. The approach was seen as unwelcome and revolutionary. A hundred years earlier after the Battle of Waterloo, the vast majority of the fallen were simply placed in unmarked mass graves. Some were even used as agricultural fertiliser. That began to change through the 19th century. But Ware's innovation was a huge shift and something we can collectively take great pride in.

Thanks to Ware, the CWGC's starting point is about the individual casualty and insists that all the fallen be treated equally. That is above all a democratic approach, centred on the individual. It puts the fallen individual, and therefore the human cost, front and centre. In recognising all the fallen equally it is a reflection of how democracy in society has developed through the 20th century and into the 21st.

The way we commemorate is also an important thread in the relationship between state and citizen. All those commemorated at CWGC sites were serving their nation, either voluntarily or through conscription, and found themselves in danger's way as a consequence of policy decisions made by the government. The state therefore has a solemn responsibility to them and to their families to ensure that what they gave is fully and properly marked.

That's important not just for individual countries but also for relations between them. Full and proper commemoration of the fallen at Gallipoli, for example, is a necessary part of the close relationship between Australia, New Zealand, the UK and their allies for whom that campaign remains a painful and sensitive memory. It is also important for the wider Commonwealth, an association of 56 countries built on shared values.

Our approach to commemoration is also an adjunct to international structures. Many of these structures - UN agencies, international conventions and the like - were established to constrain humankind's baser instincts, such as the instinct to fight. On their own, those institutions and conventions are insufficient. Having a visible, physical reminder of the human cost of war, especially if used effectively in education, can bolster those structures and help reduce the risk of new conflict. In today's geopolitical environment, that may feel like a drop in the ocean. But societies which value their freedoms and democratic structures, and want to protect them on the world stage, have to be able to demonstrate that.

And I cannot leave the subject of diplomacy without a mention of what is arguably our most important project since 1945. Some years ago it emerged that several thousands of the fallen from both World Wars, mostly black African and Indian personnel, had not been commemorated by name according to our founding principles. We have since then been working to identify the missing names and to make arrangements to honour them. In January we inaugurated a major new memorial in Cape Town to honour 1700 mostly black and coloured South Africans. Our work on the non-commemorated continues elsewhere in Africa and in India. And, while the omission itself represents a signal failure, the ongoing work nonetheless presents opportunity to deepen relationships between Commonwealth partners and to renew messages about the human cost of war.



The Reverend Charles Pierrepont MC, working with the Graves Registration Unit at Anzac
IWM (Q 14444)

THE GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION AT SEDBERGH SCHOOL, CUMBRIA

Introduction

On 5 November 2025, the Gallipoli Association's Educational Outreach Programme visited Sedbergh School, Cumbria, to deliver a presentation to Year 11 students. Sedbergh, with over 500 years of history, holds a unique connection to the Gallipoli campaign of 1915: nearly 60 former pupils served, of whom 27 lost their lives.

The outreach team comprised Mike Crane, Sophie Haworth, and Trustee Tom Iredale. They were welcomed by History master Rupert Follett, who introduced them to the cloisters before the session began.



(L to R) Mike Crane, Rupert Follett & Sophie Haworth at Sedbergh School

Preparation and Materials

Students assisted in arranging seating while Mike and Sophie displayed the First World War artefacts and Tom managed the IT setup for the presentations. Each student received a 36-page booklet summarising the Association's mission, the Gallipoli campaign, and the stories of Sedberghians who fought there. Among those highlighted was 2nd Lieutenant Arthur Behrend, author of *Make Me a Soldier*.

Mission and Context

Following Rupert Follett's introduction, Sophie outlined the 'Order of Battle' for the session. Tom then explained the Association's mission — To Remember, To Honour, To Study — emphasising the importance of engaging younger generations.

Time constraints prevented further exploration of this rich legacy.

Association Opportunities

Sophie then outlined opportunities offered by the Gallipoli Association, including the essay competition and school or cadet bursary tours. She shared her own bursary experience to illustrate the impact of such initiatives.

Film Screening

A short dramatic film *Race against Time* produced by Mike Crane and the Helles Battlefield Study Team was shown, underscoring the importance of recording battlefield sites before they are obscured by vegetation or agriculture.

The Gallipoli Whistle Reenactment

The reenactment with student participation recalled Captain Herbert Sutcliffe of the 1/10th Manchesters, who led his men ‘over the top’ during the Third Battle of Krithia on 4 June 1915. Guided by Mike Crane, Adam Sutcliffe, the captain’s grandson, first commemorated this moment on 4 June 2015, exactly 100 years later, by blowing his grandfather’s whistle at the battlefield site (see photograph page 31).

Conclusion

The hour-long session concluded with thanks from Rupert Follett and warm applause from the students. Pupils then engaged directly with the artefacts, asked questions, and tried on Captain Sutcliffe’s dress uniform and helmet.

The visit successfully combined historical education with personal narratives, reinforcing Sedbergh School’s enduring connection to Gallipoli and the Gallipoli Association’s mission to ensure remembrance and understanding among younger generations.

SOLDIER’S BURIAL DESCRIBED

Mrs. T. Edmunds, of Giffard street, Williamstown, has received from a chaplain at Anzac the following account of the death of her nephew, Private H. Hicks, who was killed in action at the Dardanelles:

“I trust that you have been given grace to bear with fortitude the great sorrow and trial it has pleased God to send you. Last Wednesday your nephew and his comrades were digging in holes, which were to be joined up at night into sap - that is a safe passage for the men. As he hopped out to join his comrades a bullet from an enemy sniper struck him through the back and chest. He was immediately unconscious, and died within a few minutes. We buried him by moonlight. It was quite a decent burial, very different, I can tell you, from what many a fallen hero had in the early days. About 40 of his comrades followed him to his grave, and O.C. of his squadron was also present. He died doing his duty for his country and the cause of freedom.” The late Private Hicks’ mother lives at Moonee Ponds. (*Essendon Gazette and Kellor, Bulla and Broadmeadows Reporter* (Moonee Ponds, Melbourne) 27 January 1916 p4).

A VISIT TO SALTUS GRAMMAR SCHOOL, BERMUDA

Antony Siese

This past week there was an article in the *Royal Gazette* newspaper of a project done by Grade 9 (Year 10) students of Saltus Grammar School, Bermuda, investigating Bermudians who participated in WWI on the Western Front. This article showed the students explaining their project to the governor, Mr. Andrew Murdoch. They had done a lot of research and diligence to accomplish this project.

I contacted the school, speaking with their teacher, Mr. James Anthony. I explained my father had been a survivor of the Gallipoli campaign, that I had visited Gallipoli with the Association, and that I would be happy to speak with the students.

On 3 December I visited the school and received a warm welcome by Mr. Anthony and the students. I showed them my father's medals, his discharge papers and a brass shell case which we used as a poker stand at the fireplace.

We talked about his joining the Territorial Army in 1911, the 2nd Welsh Field Ambulance and his embodiment at the start of WWI, and his being in Egypt as part of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.

The campaign was discussed and I pointed out that Seaman George Mackenzie Samson, who was the first Victoria Cross awardee from the *SS River Clyde*, was the only VC buried in Bermuda, having died on a Merchant Marine ship in 1923 and been buried in the Military Cemetery in St George's, with full military honours. [See the article in *The Gallipolian*, Spring 2017 page 63 - ed.]



Saltus Grammar School students with their teacher, Mr. Anthony on the left. I am in the centre. The young lady on my right is holding my father's medals and the young lady on my left is holding the brass shell casing.

BIRD NOTES FROM GALLIPOLI

24 September 1915

Yesterday I witnessed a sight that gladdened the eyes. High in the air, over the topmost hill as seen from our camp, the Swallows were gathering in hundreds for their great migratory flight. It was most interesting to watch them wheeling and circling in such numbers. I was on my way to a trench near the summit of the hill, and as I mounted the slopes I obtained a grand view of the great army of birds gathering their forces together for the long southern flight. At times, when massed together, they formed a dense, dark cloud for a few minutes; then they would gradually thin out in wide, sweeping circles, and swoop towards the earth, cleaving the air with a swishing sound quite foreign to their usual graceful motion. The idea they gave me was that they were angry and excited. They moved off eventually in a south-eastern direction as far as the eye could follow them. To-day I notice a few of the birds still about. Very little bird-life here. I have seen, so far, three forms — a bird like a Honey-eater, a shy little Robin, and a little bird, observed one day on a flat near the beach, which closely resembles our Field-Wren. From the nature of the country, I should not think it attractive to bird-life.

6 October 1915

One morning I heard a commotion on the hill opposite our camp. Such a clucking and challenging of notes! I could see across the gully to open patches of clayey cliffs, and - there were the creatures having a high time, and chasing each other like rabbits. Then I saw they were Partridges. Visions of juicy roasts rose before my eyes, but, alas! friend Turk can sweep the area with his guns.

6 November 1915

I found such a pretty little bird one day — something like our White-eye (*Zosterops*), with a quiet green plumage and soft, dove-coloured under-parts. The throat, when pulsating, shows a beautiful flush of yellow. The song is very sweet. The boys call it the Canary.

5 December 1915

A few migrants have reached us here. Near the beach I noticed a dozen birds of the Stint family. They remained but a few hours; probably the noises of war hastened their departure. In Tasmania, at Lake Sorell, I have shot these birds in November. If these are going Australia way they are late on their journey. More birds are now observed here. Some are very beautiful, but to what family they belong I do not know.— Extracts from letters written by Mr. A. W. Swindells, R.A.O.U., when stationed near Suvla Bay.

Swindells, Arthur Wilfred (1916). 'Bird notes from Gallipoli.' *The Emu: Official Organ of the Australasian Ornithologists' Union*, 16(1), page 59.

Arthur Swindells was a clerk, stated age 35 at enlistment, of Bothwell, Tasmania. Served on Gallipoli as private and lance-corporal No. 3802, 'C' Section, 7th Field Ambulance AIF. He survived the war and returned to Tasmania in 1919.

BOOK REVIEW

Stephen Chambers

Gallipoli: Letters from the Front 1915–1916

Author: P K Fraser(Author),Charles M Coutts(Narrator)

Softback: 196 pages

Publisher : independently published

Publication date: 30 May 2025

ISBN-13: 979-8309672509

Gallipoli: Letters from the Front 1915–1916 is a quietly powerful collection of letters that brings Gallipoli into focus through the unassuming voice of Charles ‘Charlie’ Coutts (served in 1/4th Royal Scots, 52nd Division). Written as letters home to reassure anxious parents, these pages offer a rare blend of honesty and restraint. Coutts describes trench life at Gallipoli, before and after being wounded (the Battle of Gully Ravine), with a calm, matter-of-fact tone that makes the hardships more striking precisely because they are never overstated.

Beyond the front lines, the letters read like a travelogue of war: the journey to the Dardanelles, convalescence in hospitals in Egypt after the June battles, his return to the trenches, and the final, remarkably successful evacuation from Cape Helles. Throughout, Coutts’s light-hearted humour and steady optimism serve a dual purpose — shielding his family from worry while revealing the resilience required to endure such conditions. Lines such as “our food is excellent, and we eat a lot of biscuits of the brick species ... they will serve the double purpose of being either food or hand grenades”. A hilarious account of an officer falling headfirst into mud whilst trying to use spades as stilts, and upon hearing that “Kitchener’s army are on their way out” his hope that “they have learned how to dodge shells”. Coutts also wrote that, “the men are getting sick of the ignorant puppies that are being sent out here as officers”, quite a damning statement of the young, probably naive and under trained officers the division was receiving.

Knowing Coutts’s background enriches the reading. A young man who left his job at Standard Life to join the Royal Scots, a keen rugby player and golfer, and later a long-serving employee back in Edinburgh, he emerges as grounded, modest, and deeply human. This book is not a dramatic retelling of battles, but an intimate, personal record that captures the everyday reality of war and the enduring strength of family connection. A recommended read.



Taking wounded aboard Hospital Ship *Sicilia*
State Library of Tasmania NS669/11/1/18

LAST POST

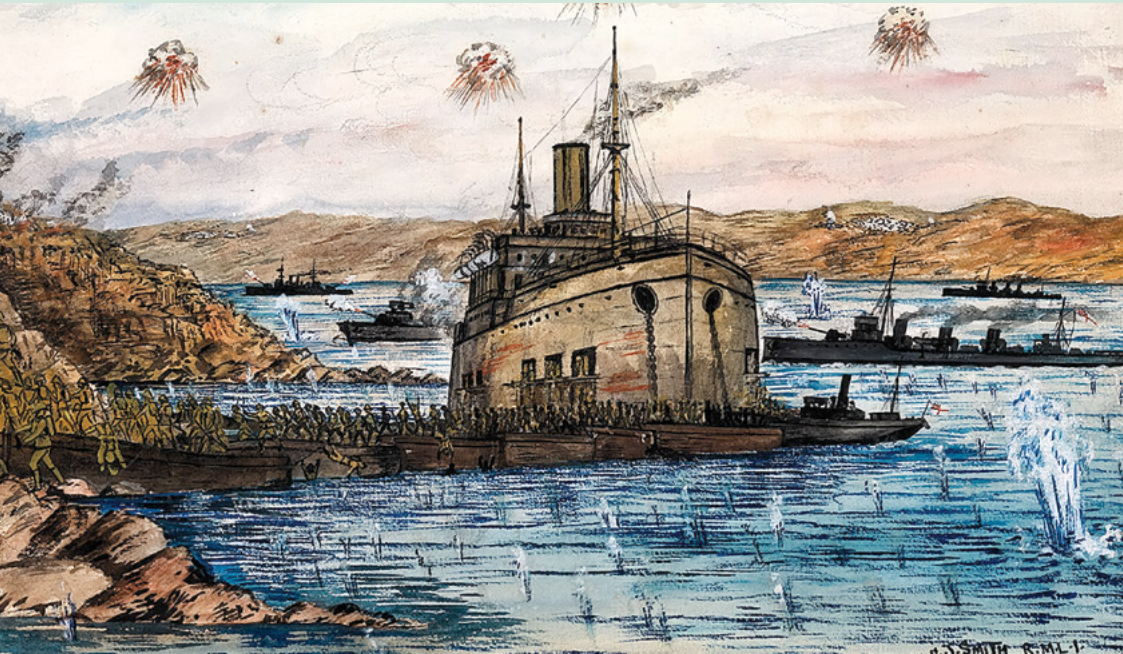
It is with regret that the Association learnt of the death of Charles Morton (Member 1697), who died on 22 November 2025. His father, also Charles Morton, served in 1/8 Battalion, Manchester Regiment, 42nd (East Lancashire) Division. His membership is being taken over by his son, John Morton.



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.



Smith, C J: *The Landing from the River Clyde, Gallipoli Peninsula 1915.*
National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, PAH5181

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. 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.

www.gallipoli-association.org