

The Gallipolian

The Journal of the Gallipoli Association

No. 157 - Winter 2021



THE GALLIPOLIAN

No 157, Winter (December) 2021

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

The Gallipoli Association

Registered Charity No. 1155609

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Members' contact details

Members occasionally change their email address without notifying the Membership Secretary. As a result notices and information do not reach the intended member. If you do change your email address please confirm the details to the Membership Secretary (contact details opposite) who will change the information on our database.

This edition's cover

Bennett, T P. Photograph: *Snow on dugouts at Gallipoli* State Library of Victoria 43350

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY CENOTAPH MARCH PAST

London 2021

The Gallipoli Association representatives at the 2021 march-past at the Cenotaph in London. They all survived to make it to Horse Guards Parade and the salute from Prince William.



A big thank you to Hester Huttenbach for doing such a good job with organising the Gallipoli Association's attendance at this event.

Some of the feedback:

"I can't tell you how thankful my son and I were for today. It was such a lifetime memorable event. Thank you, sincerely. And what a special group of people. I hope we can march again! Thank you for the photo too. It's a future good memory!"

"It really was a memorable day and so lovely to meet all the others."

"Thank you so much, we'll worth the journey from North Carolina, a very special day for my daughter and I"

"I can't tell you how thankful my son Jordan and I were for today. It was such a lifetime memorable event. Thank you, sincerely. And what a special group of people. I hope we can march again!"

GALLIPOLI / ANZAC DAY MONDAY 25TH APRIL 2022

5 am: Dawn service. Hyde Park Corner

The main service will take place at the Australian Memorial, Hyde Park Corner. The service will last approximately 45 minutes and is open to the public.

9.30 am: Gallipoli memorial wreath-laying ceremony, crypt, St. Paul's Cathedral

(please be seated by 9 am)

Wreaths will be laid by a representative of Her Majesty's Government, senior representatives of the Royal Navy and the Army and high-ranking officials from Australia, New Zealand, France, Ireland and Turkey. The event is open but you will be asked to show photographic identification as part of the security checks. Members are encouraged to attend this service which is arranged by the Gallipoli Association

11 am: Wreath-laying ceremony and parade, the Cenotaph, Whitehall

(Details of where to meet for those wishing to march, will follow)

Following a march onto Whitehall, a requiem is read and at 11.00 am, the High Commissioners for Australia and New Zealand will lay the first wreaths. Wreaths are then laid by representatives of the UK Government, High Commissioners and Ambassadors, as well as representatives from various service and ex-service organisations. A wreath will be laid on behalf of the Association. Only members and guest with named tickets will be allowed access to watch from the west side of Whitehall. Access details will be given on the tickets.

The service will conclude at approximately 11.15 am, allowing time for the short walk to Westminster Abbey

12 noon: Service of commemoration and thanksgiving, Westminster Abbey

The Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving to mark Anzac Day, commences at 12.00 noon. Members should be seated by 11.45 am. The service will last approximately one hour.

1.30 pm to 4 pm Gallipoli Day lunch. Venue to be confirmed

Arrangements for a lunch at a convenient location to the Abbey will be announced in the near future.

For now, please use the attached form to express your interest in attending any of these events.

Any queries, please email: events@gallipoli-association.org

GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION TOURS OF GALLIPOLI 2022

Following previous tours of Gallipoli, in conjunction with Battle Honours Ltd, we are pleased to be offering trips for members and friends to visit the Peninsula in the company of fellow enthusiasts and authorities.

Gallipoli Battlefield Tour (May, 8-13th, 2022)

During May, travel restrictions permitting, will see us running concurrent walking and coach tours which will visit all the most important spots of Gallipoli. This comprehensive battlefield tour will not only cover the main areas of the campaign, at a relaxed pace, but also some of the seldom visited spots not offered on other tour itineraries. We believe this tour is second to none, and with all the advantages of like-minded individuals, this intimate group will discover trench remains, old mule tracks, dried up gullies and the quiet beaches of this beautiful peninsula.

Our tours are led by Gallipoli Association and Guild of Battlefield Guide members. Costs:

- £1550:00 with flights (£1500:00 for GA Members)
- £1350:00 non-flight option (£1300:00 for GA Members)

Cost based on a Hotel bed & breakfast basis with pack or café lunches included

The tour is led by our historian and author, Stephen Chambers alongside battlefield guide, author and member Clive Harris, will offer a series of walks covering the highlights of the campaign, conducted at a relaxed pace and with scope to visit spots not offered on other tour itineraries. . The distances are not excessive, our average day involves around 5 miles over undulating ground but at a pace to suit the needs of the group, if you have any concerns, please feel free to give us a call. There will also be a coach option for those preferring not to walk.

Check the Gallipoli Association website for itinerary details <https://www.gallipoli-association.org/events/hidden-gallipoli-battlefield-tour-may-2022/>

'Hidden Gallipoli'

Have you been to Gallipoli before with us and would like to explore new areas such as Kum Kale and Kereveş Dere to study the French contribution to the campaign? Would you like to explore the new walking routes at Anzac where original trenches and tunnels have recently been uncovered, or get out to Suvla and walk Kiretch Tepe? Then contact us as there are options for the tour to reach new areas for our regular travellers.

To enquire or to reserve a space, please email: tours@gallipoli-association.org

A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN (AND ON GALLIPOLI)

Charles Watkins (6 Lancashire Fusiliers 42 Dlv) (Member 161)

On August 7th 1915, 2nd Lieutenant Eric Duckworth of No. 8 Platoon, 'B' Coy, 1/6th Bn. Lancashire Fusiliers, went 'missing' near The Vineyard. We all know what 'missing' so often meant on Gallipoli.

In 1922 Eric's parents made a pilgrimage to the Peninsula where, in memory of their son they planted a small British Oak in Redoubt Cemetery, and where many of Eric's Platoon - all boys from Rochdale and district - found their last resting place. Eric's younger brother Geoffrey has also since made a pilgrimage to this sacred land of lost endeavour and where so many other trees and plants have been nurtured by the bones of other British and Colonial boys.

Geoffrey tells me this little oak sapling is now a big British Oak over 30 feet high. I like to think of this symbolic British Oak having weathered many a Mediterranean storm over the past 50 years, as we ourselves once weathered an equally violent storm there, in 1915.

Geoff is particularly appreciative of the kindness of Major Hughes, late of the Imperial War Graves Commission, who, after assisting to plant this little oak sapling, took water to it every day for a long time to foster its early growth. Such a kindness as this, as Geoff himself says, gives a nice warm glow to the heart. Me - I think of those two lines of the poem:

**Such things as this, and some more now
and then**

**Are part of the strong golden friendship
of men**



'A WORTHY RECOGNITION A CENTURY ON'

Corporal Sutton Henry Ferrier MG, 10th Light Horse Regiment AIF

Ian Gill

The *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* of Friday, 4 December 2020¹ noted, under 'Gallantry & Distinguished Awards', the Medal for Gallantry to 176 Cpl Sutton Henry Ferrier, awarded 105 years after his actions in the battle for Hill 60, Gallipoli.

The citation reads:

For acts of gallantry in action in hazardous circumstances during an assault by 10th Light Horse Regiment on Hill 60 at Gallipoli, Turkey, on 29 August 1915.

How did this come about, one might ask. In late April - early May 2011, Kaye Attrill, a volunteer curator of the 10th Light Horse historical collection located at Es Salt Lines, 'A' Squadron 10th Light Horse at Irwin Barracks in Karrakatta, Perth, noticed an advertisement in the *West Australian* newspaper from the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal. They were holding enquiries into unresolved and unrecognised past acts of gallantry and valour for Australian military and naval personnel. Being aware of 'Sid' Ferrier's story, Mrs Attrill decided to formulate a submission. She



Corporal S ('Sid') Ferrier, died of wounds at the Dardanelles, 10th Light Horse. Well-known in Fremantle. *Daily News*, Perth, WA, 21 Nov 1915

initiated contact with one of Ferrier's family in Carapook, Victoria and continued the journey with the blessing of Stuart Ferrier, 'Sid's' great nephew. The research was passed to Major Geoffrey Craggs, then Commanding Officer of 'A' Squadron 10th Light Horse, who added weight to the submission over several months, with the hope that a Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) be awarded to Ferrier. This imperial award was second only to the Victoria Cross in standing for 'other ranks' personnel.

After a period of consideration, the tribunal decided not to take any further action, partly because the award sought was not part of the current Australian honours and awards system, but an old imperial honour that no longer existed. In 2016, however, Major Phil Rutherford of the Australian Army History Unit contacted Major Craggs to notify him that he had been tasked with further investigating the original submission, as part of an investigation into those that had been denied or discontinued. As a result of extensive research based on examination of army archives, personal diaries, letters and journals, Major Rutherford's produced a more-than-60-page, highly detailed report on his findings.

Though originally from rural Victoria, 'Sid' Ferrier was an original member of the 10th Light Horse Regiment,

raised in Western Australia in late 1914. He was a member of 2nd Lieutenant Hugo Throssell's 'C' Troop of 'A' Squadron at Gallipoli. Ferrier had survived, along with Throssell, the well-known charge at The Nek on 7 August 1915, where seven officers and 82 other ranks died and two officers and 52 other ranks were wounded. Only three weeks later, at 1am on Sunday, 29 August 1915, this much-depleted regiment charged the Turkish trenches further north at Hill 60.

Hill 60 (*Kaiajik Aghala* or *Bomba Tepe* (Bomb Hill) to the Ottoman forces) was a small knoll that had commanding views over terrain towards Suvla Bay, where a landing operation had taken place at the beginning of the August offensive. Attacks on Hill 60 had begun on, and continued since, 21 August by Irish, English, Welsh, New Zealand, Gurkha and Australian units, all for little result, with only parts of the lower knoll gained at very high cost.

The 10th Light Horse Regiment's turn came after these, and with only 180 officers and other ranks available, 'A' and 'B' Squadrons were amalgamated for the assault. The actual number that assaulted was less than this - around 160 according to Throssell. The newly-formed composite 'A' Squadron formed the right attacking party and 'C' Squadron the left, both going forward in two lines. The South Australians of the 9th Light Horse were also on the left. The enemy trenches were gained quickly at the point of the bayonet and desperate fighting took place over the next six hours, with three major counter-attacks by the Turks. Bomb fighting was a major feature of this battle, with both sides throwing, at close range, grenades and jam tin bombs, which, if not caught and thrown back, caused awful wounds or death. Throssell and Ferrier were in the thick of it on the hotly-contested right of the trench line.

Ferrier, after bayonetting, shooting and then catching and throwing enemy bombs for hours on end, eventually had an enemy bomb blow up in his hand, shredding his right arm. He walked 300 yards unaided, after a rest and a tot of rum, to the 16th Casualty Clearing Station where his arm was amputated at the shoulder, before being evacuated, initially to Lemnos. He died aboard the hospital ship *Devanha* en route to England over a week later and was buried at sea off the coast of Portugal; Throssell was also on board, weeping as Ferrier's body was committed to the sea. Casualties for the regiment between 28-31 August were three officers and 39 other ranks killed or died of wounds, and four officers and 51 other ranks wounded.

Throssell was subsequently awarded the Victoria Cross for this action, as well as being mentioned in despatches. Four other men were awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, as well as mentions in despatches, while another 10 officers and other ranks were mentioned in despatches. Ferrier was put forward for recognition by numerous men present in the fighting, including Throssell, who had been right beside him all the way until after daybreak when both retired due to wounds.

Major Rutherford's research revealed that the upward path for award recommendation was confusing. Some were sent via 10th Light Horse Regiment HQ to 3rd Light Horse Brigade HQ, of which the 10th was part, but others went through New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade HQ to the HQ of New Zealand & Australian

Division, also of which the 3rd Light Horse Brigade was part. The honours and awards policy at the time of the Gallipoli campaign was not clear as to how recommendations were to be submitted, nor on which award was appropriate for action against the enemy. The fact that Ferrier died over a week after his wounding meant this was not known to some in charge of recommendations or approving awards, and the DCM could not be awarded posthumously. Ferrier was certainly recommended by three officers and NCO's present in the fighting, but in one case of review in the chain of command, the recommendation was reduced to only 'threw bombs.' There was also the fact that Ferrier was alive at the time NZMR Brigade HQ initiated a recommendation, but was deceased by the time another 'periodic' recommendation was initiated by the CO of the 3rd Light Horse Brigade, which allowed only a Victoria Cross or mention in despatches to be awarded.

Ultimately, the several failures of the then chains of command to deal with Ferrier's recommendations, and the lack of recognition at any level of available awards, have been proven as mistakes (maladministration) by Major Rutherford's detailed research. While awarding retrospective gallantry awards is seen by many as contentious, this particular case is gratifying and just. Certainly Stuart Ferrier, his wider family, Kaye Attrill, Major Craggs, 13 Brigade at Karrakatta, 'A' Squadron 10th Light Horse, and many Australians will feel rightfully proud of Corporal Sutton Henry Ferrier MG. Lest We Forget. See photograph page 30.

Association member Ian Gill is co-author of *Gallipoli to Tripoli – History of the 10th Light Horse Regiment AIF 1914-1919*.

Reference

Commonwealth of Australia Gazette C2020G00981 Friday, 4 December 2020



THE BURIAL AT SEA OF CORPORAL SID FERRIER OF THE 10th LIGHT HORSE, WHO FOUGHT SO GALLANTLY AT GALLIPOLI

The burial at sea of Corporal Sid Ferrier.

Photograph by Lieut Throssell VC, *Western Mail* (Perth) 10 November 1916 p28

A SUFFRAGETTE IN KEPHALOS BAY

Jim Claven

Across my many years as a student of history, the discipline has never failed to surprise me. Truth is often stranger than fiction. Delving into the sources and records of an event throws up stories that connect the unexpected and travel down the years to resonate with us today.

Today's story brings together a suffragette, her wealthy English peer husband and former governor of Victoria, their ocean-going yacht, the waters of the northern Aegean, the Greek residents of Imbros and the Gallipoli campaign.

I first came across a hint of this story when reading General Sir Ian Hamilton's *Gallipoli Diary*. Amongst his daily reflections on the ups and downs of the campaign was a reference that intrigued me. As he inspected the Allied field hospitals on Lemnos in early September, with their Australian and Canadian nurses, he remarked on 6th September that he had not seen such women 'since Lady Brassey descended in some miraculous manner upon Imbros.'

Readers will no doubt be aware that Imbros was the location of a major Allied base for the Gallipoli campaign (along with the nearby Islands of Lemnos and Tenedos), with rest camps, stores, medical facilities and Hamilton's own headquarters, its bay providing a roadstead for the hundreds of Allied vessels going to and from the fronts on the nearby Peninsula. Recently liberated from Ottoman rule in 1912,



Lord and Lady Brassey at the 1896 Melbourne Cup, a still from a film now held in Australia's National Film and Sound Archive.

its Greek population hosted these new arrivals from across the globe. Having researched the Allied nurses on Lemnos for many years I was intrigued. Who was Lady Brassey and what was she doing in the war-zone of the Gallipoli campaign?

Further research revealed that Lady Brassey was Sybil Capell, an aristocrat in her own right and by the time she arrived at Imbros the second wife of Lord Thomas Brassey, an English peer and former Liberal MP. Both were supporters of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Society, Sybil a president of a number of local branches and participant in some of the large suffragette rallies organised before the war. One should remember that, in arguing for votes for women, the suffragettes challenged

the status quo, all in the face of stern measures from the authorities. In joining this movement Sybil was in the company of not only the famous Pankhurst women but also Australian suffragettes like Vida Goldstein, Catherine Spence and Miles Franklin.

The outbreak of the First World War split the movement with some opposing the war and others suspending political activity in favour of supporting the war effort as a demonstration of their loyalty in the hope of gaining women's suffrage at war's end. The latter would not merely support recruitment but actively sought to join in the war effort, principally through volunteering in medical units or as drivers. The Australian author Miles Franklin had already left Australia to work for the socialist and trade union cause in the United States and by late 1915 was in London working at the feminist Minerva café. She would come to Greece as an orderly with the all-female Scottish Women's Hospital, organised under the auspices of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, serving alongside its Australian chief medical officer, Dr Mary de Garis, as they ministered on the Salonika front.



Bakers of 1st Australian Field Bakery and their fresh bread. The unit was based on Imbros, where the Brasseys may have obtained some fresh bread. Imbros, 1915. AWM Coo894

This is the context in which to view Lady Brassey's arrival at Kephalos Bay in August 1915. The couple were accomplished sailors. Thomas had strong connections to the Royal Navy and had sailed the world, even to Australia and back. He had even sailed the waters of the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean with his first wife Annie, visiting the Greek Islands, Constantinople, the Asia Minor coast and on to Cyprus in the years before 1900. Sybil studied the principles of sea navigation and had accompanied him on his voyage to and from Australia.

So it is in some ways no surprise that the outbreak of war saw the couple decided



Local Greek hawkers selling 'comforts' to Allied soldiers on Imbros, 1915-1916. IWM Q 13284

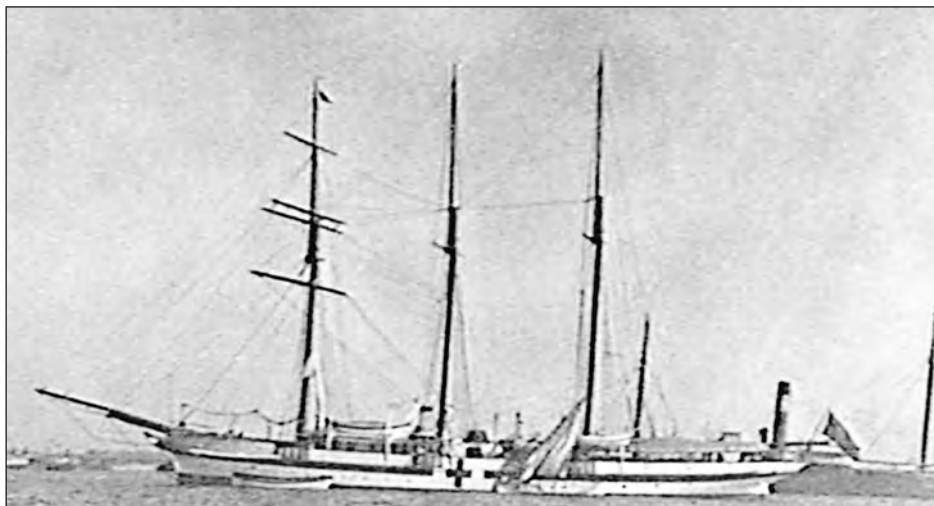
to re-fit their ocean-going auxiliary steam yacht, the *Sunbeam*, as a hospital ship, complete with bold red crosses on its sides. Their offer of this swift hospital yacht was no doubt welcomed by the War Office as it faced the increasing casualties at Gallipoli and as it sought to overcome the deficiency of the military medical provisions in the region, including appropriate medical transport.

Sunbeam and its prestigious crew sailed from England, through the Mediterranean, across the Aegean. She arrived first into Lemnos' Mudros Bay on 30th July and then on to Imbros's Kephalos Bay. General Hamilton's diary records that they arrived with 'two friends' on 14th August having shown in his view 'great enterprise in getting here.' The arrival of *Sunbeam* was reported in Australian newspapers, the 79-year-old Lord Brassey reported as representing 'the bulldog breed' for his deed.

My research so far reveals only the slightest hint of their activities at Imbros. The general's diary mentions that Thomas and Sybil came ashore, conferred with General Hamilton and had discussions with the doctors at the Allied military medical facilities on Imbros who relayed the accounts of some of the wounded being treated there. Thomas shocked the general by his view that the renewed stalemate following the August offensives presaged the ultimate failure of the campaign. It is also likely that the visitors interacted with the many Allied troops based there as well as the local Greek population. The latter operated temporary shops near the Allied camps selling their goods to the soldiers and sailors who came to the island and were photographed by British official photographer Lieutenant Ernest Brooks. Did the Brasseys enjoy

some of Imbros's local produce? Did they buy some fresh bread from the Australian bakeries on Imbros? It is more than likely they might have done, replenishing their supplies with some fresh food and drink – maybe olives, cheese, bread and maybe even some local beverage!

It does seem that their efforts were of limited value at Gallipoli, given the scale of the medical emergency facing the Allies. Despite General Hamilton's view that *Sunbeam* would 'make first class carriers,' a photograph from the time shows the vessel at anchor in Alexandria harbour, being used as a convalescent ship for Allied officers. By the end of October, Melbourne's *Argus* had reported that Lord and Lady Brassey had returned to England, perhaps leaving *Sunbeam* at Alexandria in its new role. In an account that would have dismayed the somewhat optimistic General Hamilton, the same article reported Thomas's despair at the prospects of success for the Gallipoli campaign, calling for an end to 'the useless slaughter.'



The *Sunbeam* at Alexandria being used as a convalescent ship for officers, c.1915, as it would have looked in Imbros's Kephalos Bay. AWM P01155.001

In coming to this conclusion, I wonder if Thomas would have felt the analogy with the story of the siege of Troy. Anchored in Kephalos Bay, with the Gallipoli peninsula near in both sight and sound, did they reach for their multi-volume copy of Homer's *Odyssey* (possibly Alexander Pope's translation) that they are reported to have kept in *Sunbeam's* library, making a comparison with that other ill-fated campaign near the Dardanelles?

One of the other interesting aspects of this story is its connection to Melbourne and Australia. Accompanied by Sybil, Thomas served as governor of Victoria for five years, sailing back to England after his term ended in 1900. While in Melbourne, they witnessed the days of Marvellous Melbourne, attending the city's premier horse

race - the Melbourne Cup - and the politically tumultuous years leading up to Australian federation. Sybil's support for advancing the cause of women in society can be detected in some of her actions in her role as the wife of the governor – delivering her own speeches, welcoming female university students to Government House, officiating at the opening of Victoria's Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital – the first women's hospital in Victoria - alongside the South Australian suffragette Catherine Spence and Dr Constance Stone, the first female doctor to graduate from the University of Melbourne. She also encouraged the new activity of bicycle riding, with its promise of increased freedom for women. How fascinating that nearby Sybil and Thomas's official residence at Government House there now stands the Shrine of Remembrance, the Hellenic Memorial and the Edith Cavell Memorial.

A few years ago, I looked over the waters of Kephalos Bay on Imbros, having descended to its great crescent from the hills and valleys to the west that stretch back into the island's hinterland. It is a great bay and now it is often filled during summer with holiday-makers on its shoreline and windsurfers on its waters.

I look at the old photographs taken in 1915, with the bay filled with all manner of vessels – from great warships like the aircraft carrier HMS *Ark Royal* to the small naval pinnaces darting from shore to ship – and of course the local vessel of choice, the famed Greek caiques, leaving the shore to begin a fishing trip or selling their wares to Allied soldiers and sailors keen on some fresh food to replace their monotonous field diets.

I try to imagine *Sunbeam* at anchor in the bay, standing out amongst the hard naval warships, this gentleman's yacht with its newly painted red cross and its distinguished crew who had sailed the world and known our own Melbourne town. I reflected on how I myself had also come all the way from Melbourne to touch the waters where *Sunbeam* sailed over a hundred years ago.

Having visited Imbros – as well as Tenedos and Lemnos – over many years myself, I can highly recommend adding them to your next Gallipoli tour. They played an important role in the campaign and the men and women who served there should not be forgotten. You might be surprised at what you find.

Further Reading

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'Uproarious Scenes by Suffragettes', *Hastings and St Leonards Observer*, 16 Nov 1907, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0000293/19071116/068/0010>. AWM Collection, "Alexandria, Egypt, c. 1915. Lord Brassey's Yacht "Sunbeam" used as a convalescent ship for officers, anchored in the port of Alexandria', Photographer unknown, AWM P01155.001.

AWM Collection, 'Imbros, Aegean Islands. c. 1918. A gathering of vessels of various types.

Photograph by James Pinkerton Campbell, AWM H03186.

IWM Collection, Men of the Royal Army Medical Corps buying 'comforts' from the tent of a Greek hawker at Imbros' Photograph, Creator Lieutenant Ernest Brooks, IWM Q 13284.

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CORRECTION

John Toohey wrote to kindly point out that James Ockendon VC MM CdeG (below), mentioned in last edition's 'Last Post', was a member of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, not, as was stated, the Royal Munster Fusiliers.



ARTHUR WALDERNE ST. CLAIR TISDALL, VC

(1890 – 1915) British soldier poet

Lucy London

During the course of my research into the poets who served during the First World War, I received help from Historian Debbie Cameron, who has a page on Facebook *Remembering British Women in WWI – The Home Front and Overseas*. Debbie knew I was trying to find poems written by Raymond Asquith (1878 – 1916), the eldest son of Herbert Asquith, prime minister at the start of the conflict. The article, published in *The Westminster Gazette* on 3 November 1916, was entitled ‘Literary Losses of the War.’ It was there that I first discovered a soldier poet who was awarded a Victoria Cross at Gallipoli.



Having kept a note of the poets, writers, artists, photographers and chaplains who were awarded medals for bravery during the First World War, Arthur is the first recipient of the Victoria Cross that I have found. I imagine if we haven't heard more about Arthur it is because his notebooks and diary were lost when he was killed on 6 May 1916, a few days after his brave actions.

Arthur Walderne St. Clair Tisdall was born in Girgaum, Bombay, India, on 12 July 1890. His parents were Marian Louisa Tisdall, nee Gray, and her husband, The Reverend William St. Clair Tisdall, a minister in the Anglican church. By all accounts Arthur's early life must have been interesting as he was born in India and his father, who was a linguist, historian and philologist, served as the secretary of the Church of England's Missionary Society in Isfahan, Persia, where three of Arthur's siblings were born. Arthur's father was fluent in several Middle Eastern languages, including Arabic, and spent much time researching the sources of Islam and the Qur'an in the original languages. He also wrote grammars for Persian, Hindustani, Punjabi and Gujarati.

Educated at Bedford School, Arthur went on to Trinity College Cambridge, where he gained a BA Double 1st class degree with honours and was awarded the Chancellor's gold medal.

Arthur joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) as a Sub-Lieutenant and served in the Anson Battalion. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery on 25th April 1915.

The VC Citation reads:

During the landing from the S.S. 'River Clyde' at V Beach in the Gallipoli Peninsula on the 25th April, 1915, Sub-Lieutenant Tisdall, hearing wounded men on the beach calling for assistance, jumped into the water and, pushing a boat in front of him, went to their rescue. He was, however, obliged to obtain help, and took with him

on two trips Leading Seaman Malia and on other trips Chief Petty Officer Perring and Leading Seamen Curtiss and Parkinson. In all Sub-Lieutenant Tisdall made four or five trips between the ship and the shore, and was thus responsible for rescuing several wounded men under heavy and accurate fire. Owing to the fact that Sub-Lieutenant Tisdall and the platoon under his orders were on detached service at the time, and that this Officer was killed in action on the 6th May, it has only now been possible to obtain complete information as to the individuals who took part in this gallant act. Of these, Leading Seaman Fred Curtiss, O.N. Dev 1899 has been missing since the 4th June, 1915." (Supplement, *London Gazette* 31/3/1916. No. 29530, pp 3515-16)

Arthur was shot in the chest by a sniper on 6 May 1915. He has no known grave but is remembered on the Helles Memorial.



He is also remembered on a wall plaque in the school chapel of Bedford Preparatory School in Bedfordshire.

Arthur's brother, John Theodore St Clair Tisdall, was commanding B Company, 11 Battalion, King's Liverpool Regiment, when he was killed at Guillemont on 8 August 1916 during the Battle of the Somme.

Regarding Arthur's poems, I found this reference to his time at university:

A. W. St. C. Tisdall, who has just fallen in the Dardanelles, was a frequent contributor to 'The Cambridge Magazine' during 1912-13. He was an enthusiastic and conscientious member of the O.T.C., and during the Michaelmas Term, 1912, published, under the pseudonym C. Vilian Roberts, two forcible criticisms of the Corps which caused a great deal of excitement at the time. We feel sure the authorities had long forgiven his indiscretion.

He was also a staunch supporter of the C.I.C.C.U., and though he did not succeed in converting the staff to the tenets of that body, he contributed an account of its weekly sermon to our columns. But many of our readers will remember him chiefly for two little poems signed W. T., which we cannot forbear to quote.

The first, "White Hands," was thus:--

Lady, your hands are white, so white and clean,
But I have looked and seen
The chapt and grimy hands that keep them so.
You do not know.
Your hands are white like Pilate's, white and clean;
For others come in between
To shed the innocent blood that gemmed them so.
What did you know?
With your white hand, my lady, stop your ear,
Lest you may chance to hear
Your reckless slaves that curse you in their woe.
Why should you know?

The second was inspired by the Balkan war, and entitled "Nick of Crnagora (vulgarly called Montenegro)."

Who batted first in this great war a-
Gainst the Turk and proved a scorer?
Who chased the Turkish carnivora
Like rabbits to their own Angora,
And made them wiser p'r'aps, if sorer?
Who now of liberty restorer
Shining red fingered like Aurora
Reigns haloed in a golden aura?
Who, but King Nick of Crnagora?

And then, poor fellow, himself to be killed at the hands of the Turks! He was a careful and accurate scholar; Bell Scholar in 1909; Double First in the Classical Tripos and first Chancellor's medallist: and we deplore in his loss not only the vivacious contributor, but, with all who knew him.'

After Arthur's death, his father had some of his letters and poems published under the title *Verses, Letters & Remembrances of Sub-Lieutenant Arthur Walderne St. Clair Tisdall, V.C.* - in London in 1916. It was reprinted in 1992.

I think I will have to produce a re-print of the *Gallipoli Poets* book I produced for the Association in 2015 as I have found quite a few more to add since then.

See photographs on page 34.

Sources:

An article found by Debbie Cameron, which was written by Dr E M Purkes and published in the *Westminster Gazette* on 3 November 1916.

Find my Past website

Supplement to the *London Gazette* of 31 March 1916. Numb. 29530, pp 3515-16

<https://vcgca.org/our-people/profile/329/Arthur-Walderne-St-Clair--TISDALL>

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/10687645/arthur-walderne_st_clair-tisdall

<https://astreetnearyou.org/person/3055222/Sub-Lieutenant-Arthur-Walderne-St.-Clair-Tisdal>

<https://livesofthefirstworldwar.iwm.org.uk/story/85015>

Lucy London, Commemorative First World War Exhibition Project

I wrote to Arthur's old school – Bedford School – and have just received this reply from the headmaster, James Hodgson.

I am delighted to let you know that Arthur remains very much a part of his former school Bedford and was recently the subject of an assembly in the Prep School given by the headmaster there Ian Silk. We have a prep school building named for Arthur, called Tisdall's and a replica of his Victoria Cross is displayed there. As well as this, one of his relatives donated a beautiful trophy, which is given as the Tisdall's award to a boy in the Prep School each year at Speech Day and Prize Giving. The citation reads:

This award is in honour of an OB, Arthur St Clair Tisdall, who died in action in the First World War in 1915. The Master of Trinity College Cambridge, where he received a double first, describes him as being 'our foremost scholar ... a man of generous intellectual culture and also of high ideals. He seemed made for distinction in life, and that not of the selfish kind.' He was awarded a Victoria Cross in Gallipoli for saving many lives under heavy fire. The award has a sum of money associated to it so that the recipient can spend it on a beneficial and worthwhile endeavour. It is given to a Y8 pupil who is respected by peers and teachers alike, who most embodies the school's ethos, and in particular displays kindness to others.

OLD EDWARDIANS AT GALLIPOLI

Gareth Davies

Like Leonard Hiscock I'm an Old Edwardian (OE) and I was pleased to see him remembered in the previous edition of *The Gallipolian*. Leonard Hiscock left King Edward's School Bath in 1912 and, as was noted, headed across the Atlantic to Canada but on the outbreak of war he returned to fight for the old country. He was commissioned in to the Worcestershire Regiment and posted to the 9th Battalion which sailed for Gallipoli on 24 June 1915, arriving in Mudros on 10 July. Three days later they boarded smaller vessels and were transported to V Beach. The battalion went into the trenches on the night of 14 July. The battalion withdrew on 29 July and marched to Gully Beach, on to V Beach, and then by boat to Lemnos to prepare for the attack at Sari Bair the following week. The battalion landed at Anzac on 5 August and was involved in very heavy fighting for the next few days. The War Diary records the battalion's action on Tuesday, 10th August:

Just before dawn, the TURKS attacked all along our line They also employed big spherical bombs of unusual size which they rolled down the slopes in amongst our men, causing heavy casualties. By 07:00, Lt Col NUNN, Maj CROFTON, Maj BOYD-MOSS, Capt ROLPH, 2nd Lts LANCASTER and E L HISCOCK had been killed.

Leonard Hiscock wasn't the only OE to be killed that day.

2nd Lieut Russell Hafrenydd Jones left King Edward's in 1912. He enlisted in the Queen's Westminster Rifles and was later commissioned into the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and posted to the Battalion. The battalion landed at dawn on 9 August, 3½ weeks foot on land, and almost immediately took their first casualties. The battalion lay under the west slopes of Lala Baba and was the next morning. Orders were issued in a hurry and the without company commanders having had time to brief their brigade was led over the Salt Lake in daylight shelling by the and they came under rifle fire as soon as they deployed on the lake. Orders were received for the 5pm advance and attempts made to replenish the water supplies but some of the wells marked



on the maps did not exist and others were covered by Turkish snipers who seemed to shoot from every direction, including the rear. The casualties of the 1/7th RWF were very heavy, around 200, including 16 officers, 9 of whom were killed. 2nd Lieut Russell Jones was posted missing, presumed dead. His body was never found and he is commemorated on the Helles Memorial.

The third OE to die on the peninsula was Sapper Alan Cuthbert Calvert, son of the school's surveyor, who worked at the office of the Llanelli architect and enlisted there into the Royal Engineers. Sapper Calvert was posted to the 1/1st Welsh Field Company

and arrived in Gallipoli on 31 July. He was killed by Turkish rifle fire on 8 September 1915, aged 25, and is buried at Green Hill Cemetery.

Other OEs were a little more fortunate. Captain Wilfred Frederick Darke was at KES from 1902 – 1910. By 1915 he was in the 7th Gloucesters and landed with his battalion in July 1915. On 8 August the battalion found itself fixed on the south-western slopes of Chunuk Bair. They suffered terrible losses; every single officer was killed or wounded that day and Wilfred Darke was one of those injured. For his actions that day he was awarded the Military Cross.

And finally OE brothers Arthur and Maurice Fortescue. I think it is highly unlikely that when they joined the navy in 1915 that either imagined that they would end the year in trenches on the Gallipoli peninsula. Arthur was a sailor who ended up in the RND's Hawke Battalion and Maurice served with the Royal Marines Medical unit. Arthur was later commissioned in to the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers before transferring to the Indian Army Supply & Transport Corps, ending the war in India. His brother Maurice also survived the war.

JONES, 2nd Lieutenant Russell Hafrenydd, 1/7th (Merioneth and Montgomery) Battalion (T.F.), Royal Welsh Fusiliers (photograph previous page).

Lieutenant Jones was the youngest son of Reverend Canon Edmund Osborne Jones, Vicar of Llanidloes, Montgomeryshire, and Ada Jones of Rushton Rectory, Kettering, Northamptonshire. After the outbreak of war he had enlisted as a Private in another regiment, but was later gazetted 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers. Killed in action during the assault on Anafarta Spur, Suvla, on 10 August, 1915, aged 21 years (he was originally listed as wounded and missing, but was later determined to have been killed on that date). Name commemorated on the Helles Memorial and on the memorial plaque at the Church of St. Idloes, Llanidloes, Montgomeryshire. 2nd Lt. Jones's parents received the news of their son's death on 18 August, 1915.

TURKISH POUND NOTES

In *The Gallipolian* No 5 (Spring 1971) member 291, A L G Whyte wrote:

There is a mystery in connexion with the Gallipoli campaign to which I have never seen any reference made in any of the books and it is this: In October 1915 while in the Anzac area we were suddenly issued with the amount of £1, in the form of two 10/notes duly entered in our pay-books. These notes differed from the standard insofar as they were overprinted with two lines of presumably Turkish characters, generally assumed to be an acceptance of responsibility on behalf of the British government. Where we could possibly have spent these notes, otherwise than in a Turkish town is a mystery, but the question was not long in doubt because within about three days the notes were all called in and the strictest precautions taken to see that every one was accounted for. Why were these notes issued, and so suddenly withdrawn, and do any still exist?

CHARLES BROUGHTON HARROP BECK

2nd Lieutenant, Cheshire Regiment (T.F.)

Born Upton Priory, Prestbury, near Macclesfield, Cheshire 14th June 1891.

Died of wounds 15 August 1915, aged 24.

Only son of the late Colonel C H Beck, CB, of Upton Priory, Macclesfield, JP for the County of Cheshire, who commanded the 4th (Militia) Battalion of the Cheshire Regiment in the South African War, and of Mrs. Beck, youngest daughter of the late Rev C F Broughton, Rector of Snelston, Derbyshire.

Harrow School West Acre 1905-1910. Shooting VIII 1909-10. Pembroke College, Cambridge.

Married Alice Hilsden in 1913, and left a son, Edward Charles, born 6 April 1914.

2nd Lieutenant Beck volunteered for active service on the outbreak of the war and received a commission in the 7th Battalion, Cheshire Regiment. He left England for the Dardanelles in July, 1915, and was fatally wounded, in saving his gun, at the landing at Suvla Bay. He died of his wounds aboard the hospital ship *Euripides en route* to Alexandria, on August 15th, 1915.



A brother-officer wrote to his mother :

He was bringing the gun up when he was shot. I was about twenty yards in front and saw them come up the hill ; they got the gun itself up, when the man with the tripod got hit in the right hand, which made him drop it. Beck (who thought of nothing but his gun) ran back and picked up the tripod, and turned back ; he had only got about three strides, when he put his hand to his face and fell : the bullet went in just above his right eye, I believe, but he lived for some time after. . . . His men got the gun up and working well, enabling more men to come up under cover of its fire.

2nd Lieutenant Beck was buried in East Mudros Military Cemetery, Lemnos.



REMEMBRANCE ON THE PENINSULA

Bill Sellars

Beneath cloudy skies, a small gathering marked the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month on the Gallipoli Peninsula, observing two minutes silence followed by the reading of the ode and of John McCrae's poem *In Flanders Fields*, and then the laying of a wreath to mark the sacrifice of all those who fell in war.

There are 45 Commonwealth servicemen who died on November 11, 1915, commemorated on the peninsula, with at least 16 more belonging to units serving at the Dardanelles dying in hospitals in Egypt, Malta and on the Greek island of Lemnos that same day. Between those 61, men from most countries within the Commonwealth serving in the campaign were among the fallen, with soldiers from India, Nepal, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Britain, New Zealand and Australia all commemorated in stone.

Even though little fighting took place that day, it is fair to assume a similar number of Ottoman soldiers succumbed to wounds or illness or were killed on 11 November 106 years ago.

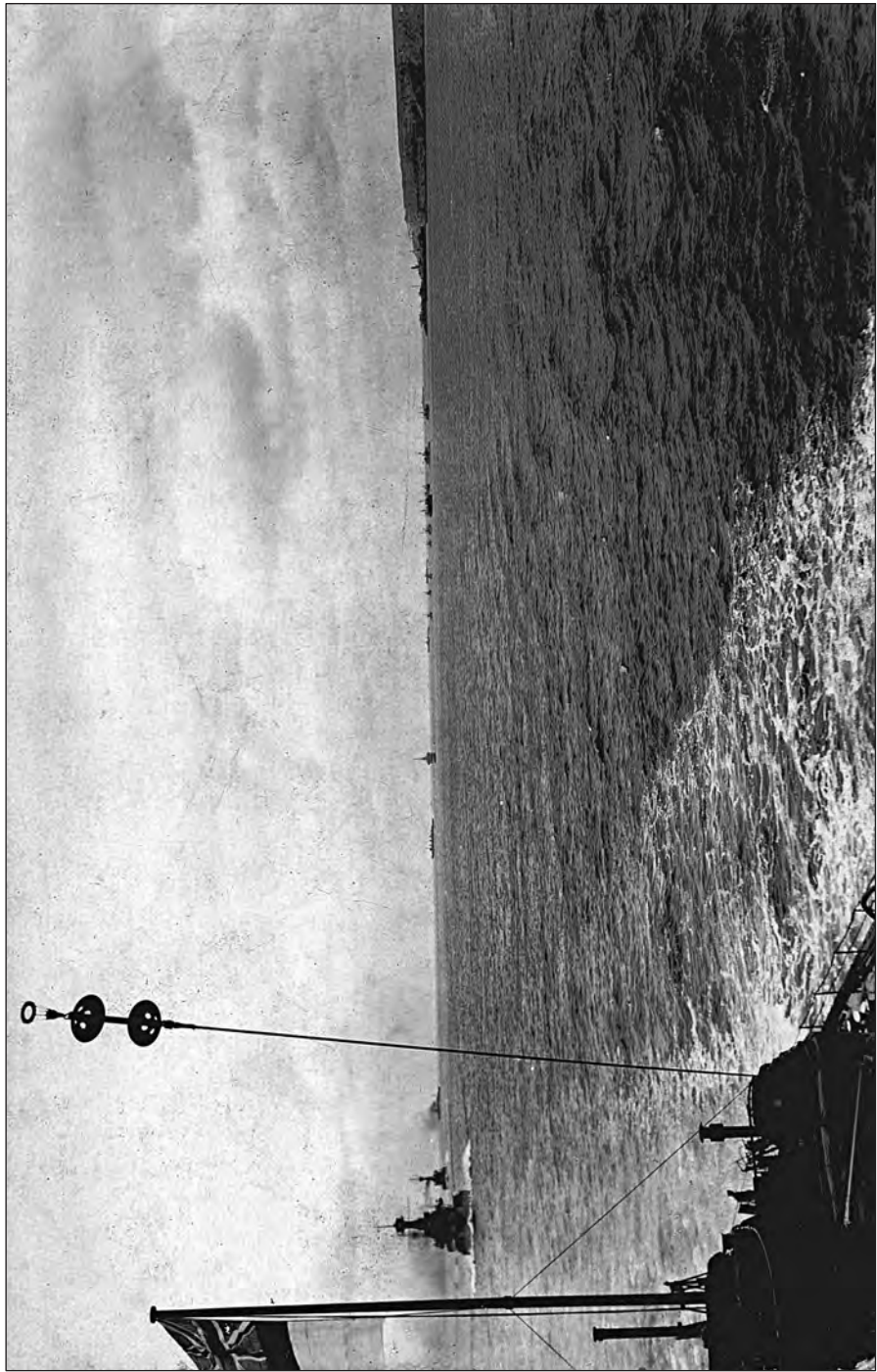
While the French Corps Expéditionnaire d'Orient had 11 men wounded that day, its war diary does not record any fatalities.

Though the Ottoman Empire had signed its own armistice with the Allied powers on October 31, November 11, 1918, still had significance. A slow parade of Allied warships continued to make their way through the Dardanelles that day, the first ships having entered the straits on November 10 on their way to Istanbul. British troops landed on the peninsula, symbolically coming ashore at V Beach under the lee of the River Clyde as the first wave of an occupation that would last four years.

Tragically, that wave brought its own losses, mainly through the influenza that was sweeping through the armies and civilian populations of the world. November 11, 1918, saw the death from pneumonia of Staff Sergeant R T Frost of the Royal Field Artillery's 82nd Brigade, who is now buried in Istanbul's Haidar Pasha Cemetery.

The informal service on the battlefields has been conducted since 2006, and for the past decade has been held at Embarkation Pier Cemetery, the last resting place of 944 Commonwealth servicemen. Of these, four – three Australians of the 2nd Light Horse and a New Zealand engineer – fell on November 11, 1915, making it a fitting location for the site of the annual commemoration.

This year's service attracted some 25 people, locals, resident foreigners and overseas visitors, with Turkey, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and Spain all represented.



Allied warships entering the Dardanelles, November 1918. To the middle right can be seen the River Clyde, with ships carrying the first British troops to return to the peninsula off V Beach. Bill & Serpil Sellars collection.

GALLIPOLI ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

October 2021

Peter Biles

Members of the Gallipoli Association and their guests met at the Royal Air Force Club, Piccadilly, on Saturday 23 October for the 9th annual conference. This was our first conference since the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions in the summer and Tom Iredale and Stephen Chambers did an outstanding job in meeting the challenge of organising the event and finalising the programme of speakers.

Lieutenant Colonel Mike Tickner, a regular army officer with an interest in the British Army in India, opened proceedings, seeking to answer the question: *Who Were The 29th Indian Brigade?* The names of 1,500 of these men are found on the Cape Helles memorial but their contribution is so often overshadowed. Mike emphasised the diversity of the Indian Army in 1914, but said the army was neither equipped nor trained for general warfare, and was not an expeditionary force. Furthermore, members of the regiments at Gallipoli were largely illiterate. One of the reasons the Indian Army was sent to Gallipoli was the vested interest in the Suez Canal zone, as well as Aden. Mike pointed out that General Sir Ian Hamilton had wanted the 29th Indian Brigade to be an all-Gurkha force, yet Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs all fought at Gallipoli, adding colour and interest to the campaign.

Our second presentation was by Dr Chris Martin, reader in maritime security and head of School of Politics and International Studies at the University of Hull. His subject was *Franco-British naval cooperation at the Dardanelles, 1914-1916, new friends, old enemies, eternal rivals?* This was an academic paper undertaken with experts from the University of Lille and the University Du Havre. The focus was on the friction between Britain and France. Chris said that from the outset, as far as the British were concerned, the Royal Navy simply did not require the assistance of the Marine nationale, and whilst overtly cordial, relations between British and French officers were marked by deep-rooted antipathy and prejudice. French participation at the Dardanelles had not been received with much enthusiasm and French disillusionment had set in early. An indifference to French sensitivities had continued until the start of the Gallipoli campaign. Chris highlighted the British sense of superiority, and said that in theatre, the problem for the French was that Britain controlled communications. He summed up the presentation by concluding there had been no equality of partnership. 'We are eternal rivals', Chris said.

Michael D Robson has been a member of the Gallipoli Association for 28 years and is the grandson of a veteran in the Royal Naval Division. He is a regular visitor to the battlefields on the peninsula and lives in Israel. So it was a delight to see him at this year's annual conference and listen to his talk on *Trumpeldor, Patterson & the Zion Mule Corps*. The starting point was the declaration of war between Russia and Turkey, when thousands of immigrants living in the Holy Land were given the choice

of either becoming Ottoman subjects or being expelled as enemy aliens. Those who chose the latter course ended up in Egypt. Michael gave an insight on how they wanted to form a fighting unit to take on the Turks, but the British High Command in Egypt offered only a support service role which became the Zion Mule Corps. Once they had landed on Gallipoli, the handlers and their mules worked tirelessly to move supplies and ammunition to where they were needed. 'They did excellent and merciful work throughout the campaign,' Michael added. Several of the members were awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal and were mentioned in dispatches.

Gallipoli Association historian, Stephen Chambers, then took the opportunity to remind members of the forthcoming Gallipoli battlefield tour in May 2022. The schedule, he said, would feature not one battlefield, but four of them: the Dardanelles, Helles, Anzac and Suvla. There is plenty to whet the appetite, with cemeteries, old trenches, flora and fauna, as well as forts and historical finds. After the travel disruption caused by Covid, Stephen clearly relishes the chance to get back to the peninsula, and is also promising something new for 2022: *Underwater Gallipoli*.

The final speaker of the day was Mike Crane, a Gallipoli Association member for the past 11 years, who has established a reputation for his survey work in mapping the Helles battlefield. Three years ago, Mike showed the conference how combining contemporary maps - including battlefield maps - with Google Earth, allowed further study of the battlefields. In a series of personal reflections titled *The Gallipoli Whistle*, Mike again highlighted the poignant story of the Bolton brothers, whose great-nephew, Lord Hacking, attended this year's conference. Adam Sutcliffe, the grandson of Captain Herbert Sutcliffe, 10th Manchesters, then attended the stage to join Mike in the story of the Gallipoli whistle. The whistle, once used by his grandfather during the Third Battle of Krithia, was blown to fitfully end this wonderful talk.

In closing the event, the Gallipoli Association chairman, Brigadier James Stopford, warmly thanked the RAF Club for its hospitality and all those involved in making the annual conference a success after the two-year break.

THE MULETEERS

Unattributed; from *The Gallipolitan* No 3, Autumn 1970

Not many men on the Peninsula did a lousier, more thankless and more dangerous job than did these muleteers. Their only weapon: the rope that dangles from the mules' heads as they led their protesting charges along the slippery, sliding narrow paths. From these deadly dangerous narrow paths both mule and muleteer would occasionally hurl headlong to destruction into the sea of mud below. It's not a job that earns many VCs, in fact I doubt if any of them ever earned a medal at all.

But in Valhalla, there'll be a special lot of seats at the tables of the mighty for these little brown men of frail physique, with the frightened eyes and guts of steel.

EVACUATION

By Commander (S) E Allison Burrows R D RN R (Member 302)

From *The Gallipolian* No 5, Spring 1971

In the middle of December 1915 the ship in which I was then serving was slowly plugging her way across the eastern Mediterranean in one of those storms which can be so surprisingly severe for an inland sea.

Slowly is the operative word as our top speed was only nine knots. We were making our way from Alexandria to our war station at Mudros, having been for the past month in Alexandria repairing sundry damage inflicted upon us by 'Beachy Bill' a Turkish gun situated at Gaba Tepe on the extreme right of the position at Anzac and which could reach the ships landing troops on that beach.

Although officially we were described as HMS *Partridge* we were far from being a spick and span, spit and polish, vessel associated with the Royal Navy, but in fact a somewhat elderly cargo cum passenger cum cattle ship which had been running between Ardrossan and Belfast for many a year and our crew and officers were a hotch-potch of many sorts.

The ship herself was a queer old thing with two well decks forrard and aft, with large cattle doors on either side reaching down almost to water level; aft were passenger cabins on two decks which we used as store rooms and accommodation for the officers, our wardroom was what had originally been the passenger lounge.

On the outbreak of the Gallipoli campaign the ship had been sent out to Mudros to act as a ferry from that Base to the Peninsula; being of shallow draft she could get close inshore and with considerable deck space could a large number of troops be carried over the short distance to the beaches. As a matter of fact tight packed we could transfer a thousand men at a time.

This had been our job all through the summer of 1915 until our encounter with Beachy Bill, with our scars healed, we were now returning to Mudros.

Arriving at Mudros we were astonished to learn for the first time that the Peninsula was being evacuated and that in fact Suvla and Anzac (our particular beach) had already been evacuated and that we had only arrived buck just in time to take our share in the evacuation of Helles. The day before we arrived in Mudros, the retreat from Anzac had been successfully completed so we were immediately sent to Helles to start the same work there.

We left the same night taking up a few reinforcements on a bright moonlight night and as we were halfway through our offloading the Turks opened fire on us with 6" high explosive from Chanak or batteries lower down. It was a very close call for us since they got eight shells within fifteen yards of us before we could get a move on.

As soon as we got our pick-up and move, they shut down and we crawled round the corner into the comparative safety of 'W' beach where we received the consoling

signal 'Return the same place in half an hour', but a swell sprung up too heavy to load troops and we had to leave empty and return to Mudros in beastly weather, in fact so bad that after the spell in Alexandria dock, I am ashamed to say I was seasick yet once more.

Two nights later we were there again, but this time they left us alone and we left fully loaded with troops. Christmas Eve we were there again, and again escaped without any undesirable attention; there were a few seekers sent out for us, and a few shells whistled over our heads bound for the beaches, but it was too rough to load any troops and we returned empty to have our Christmas dinner in the safety of Mudros harbour.

We were back at the beaches for Christmas night and the next day, December 26th, we were loaded with troops and together with five other transports and two destroyers and a gun-boat were sent off to make a new landing on the coast of Greece in the neighbourhood of Salonika.

This landing passed off without incident and we quickly returned to Mudros to continue the evacuation.

Friday, 31st December, we left Mudros for Helles with a General and his staff and various other officers, all of whom had been in the evacuation of Anzac and Suvla, and we learned that that night we were to return laden with a thousand troops of the to be ever-famous 29th Division as amongst the first batch off. Lying off 'W' beach this time we were left alone though a few shells came over but nothing to cause us to move.

Exactly at 12 o'clock midnight as a new year's gift an original present came over in the shape of what we took to be a seventeen-inch shell, as we understood that a gun of this size had just got through from Germany.

It shook the ship from end to end with the force of the explosion in the water although it did not drop very near to us, but the arrival of this monster made us wonder how the rest of the evacuation would proceed.

New Year's Day we spent as Christmas Day at Mudros, but by the evening we were back at 'W' beach. That night the beach got an awful pasting with shells about four or five hundred feet in front of our nose and we were very relieved that they did not send any seekers for us, as they were using heavy stuff.

We wondered what sort of a time the troops on the beaches were having waiting to come off, but in the event they were well dug in, and when the firing died away came off to us in pretty good order.

I think it was this night that, to my great surprise, amongst the troops that came aboard was a young man in plain clothes, amid such a crowd of khaki and blue uniforms, he stuck out like a sore thumb.

On the way back to Mudros I had an opportunity of a talk to this young man and found, according to his story, that he was a Quaker and a conscientious objector

who had been serving as a volunteer in the canteen at Helles; this story has a sequel of which more anon.

Saturday 8th January, all troops having been withdrawn back to the beaches, was the last night of the evacuation. We had gone up for the last night, more or less prepared for anything to happen, we having received orders to remain in our loading positions come hell or high water, but as a matter of fact it was almost the quietest night of the whole evacuation. Hardly a shell was fired and we were the last but one ship to leave, save only the destroyers bringing off the beach parties; the previous night there had been heavy shelling and an attack by the Turks; however, the evacuation was safely over and as we left we watched the huge fires burning the stores taken to the Peninsula with so much trouble and danger.

Same fifty years after this event, I came across an article in a very famous Scottish monthly entitled 'Five Christmases' in which the author described where and how he had spent his Christmas Day in the five years 1914 to 1918. Christmas 1915 he had spent at 'W' beach, Helles, a hundred or so yards away from us, the high-light of which had been an impromptu concert party in the Canteen. I wrote to the author complimenting him on a remarkable feat of memory and asking him if he remembered a civilian at the canteen party. In due course I received an answer that he did, and so confirmed a tale told to me fifty years before.

I'M ON MY WAY

G E Dale R F A (Member No 53)

Today at Whitehall's big white stone
 I'll be an honoured guest,
 With comrades lined, erect and grave
 Proud 'gongs' across my chest.
 Thoughts will turn to absent friends
 Still on that far off coast;
 Nor shall such memories fade until
 We face our own Last Post.
 But hasten, hasten - 'Where's my stick?'
 I will set out forthwith;
 Must not be late for parade when
 It's on the twenty-fifth.

From *The Gallipolian* No 14 (Spring 1974).





Gallipoli Association plot, Field of Remembrance, Westminster Abbey 2021
Photograph by Clive Summerson



Frostbite, Dec 1915; Sketches at Gallipoli, 1915 by Leslie Hore MC MiD
Served in AN&MEF - Major, 8LHR WIA 7 Aug 1915
State Library of NSW NdeQaGQK5oyL5

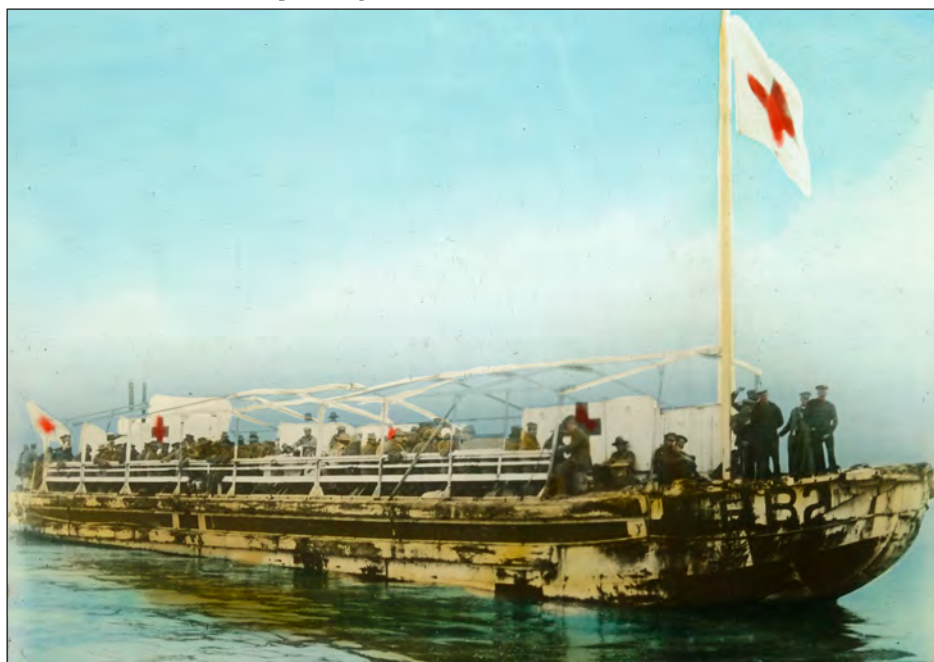


Stuart Ferrier (right), accepts the Medal for Gallantry (MG) awarded to his great-uncle, Corporal Sid Ferrier, from Major Geoff Craggs. See pages 6 - 8. Photo Ian Gill.



Storm, Watson's Pier, Anzac. Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW: FL949662

Bennett, T P. *Hospital barge, Anzac* : State Library of Victoria H83.103/341



Sunbeam, 227 tons, was probably the most famous of all the auxiliary steam yachts of the Victorian era. Built for Mr Thomas (later Lord) Brassey in 1874, *Sunbeam* was continually in use by the Brasseys for 42 years. Painting by George Mears (1865 - 1910), who lived in Brighton and painted shipping scenes off the south coast. Dated 1895. See pages 9 - 14.



Photograph by kind permission of Richard Gardner,
Richard Gardner Antiques, Emsworth, Hampshire.



Imbros's Kephalos Bay today, with the Gallipoli Peninsula in the distance, where the *Sunbeam* with Victoria's former Governor Lord Brassey and his suffragette wife Lady Brassey aboard lay at anchor in 1915. Photo Jim Claven 2015. See pages 9 - 14.

April

THE VICTORIA CROSS

1916



The King has been graciously pleased to approve of the grant of the Victoria Cross to the following officer in recognition of his most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty:

**SUB-LIEUT. ARTHUR WALDERNE
ST. CLAIR TISDALL, R.N.V.R.**

(killed in action May 6th 1915)

During the landing from the S.S. River Clyde at V Beach in the Gallipoli Peninsula on April 25th. 1915. Sub-Lieut. Tisdall, hearing wounded men on the beach calling for assistance, jumped into the water, and, pushing a boat in front of him, went to their rescue. He was, however, obliged to obtain help, and took with him on two trips Leading Seaman Malia and on other trips Chief Petty Officer Perring and Leading Seamen Curtis and Parkinson. In all Sub-Lieut. Tisdall made four or five trips between the ship and the shore, and was thus responsible for rescuing several men under heavy and accurate fire.





Bennett, T P Photographer: *Gun post at Gallipoli* : State Library of Victoria 1787264
Hand coloured glass lantern slide.



Foreign awards to Baron Birdwood of Anzac and of
Totnes in the County of Devon, formerly Field
Marshal Sir William Riddell Birdwood GCB, GCSI,
GCMG, GCVO, CIE, DSO



BIRDWOOD'S FOREIGN DECORATIONS

John Meyers

The Maryborough Military & Colonial Museum in Queensland is happy to announce that we were successful in acquiring the four foreign decorations for General (later Field Marshal) Sir William Birdwood, which were auctioned in London on 1st December 2021.

Birdwood commanded the Anzacs at Gallipoli in 1915, was referred to as 'the soul of Anzac' and later took the title that included the place-name 'Anzac':

To my surprise, towards the end of December 1937, I had a letter from the Prime Minister, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, informing me that he proposed to submit my name to the King for the honour of a peerage in the New Year's Gazette. ...After consideration I did accept, taking the title of Baron Birdwood of Anzac and Totnes, in the County of Devon. Incidentally, there was some little doubt as to whether there was in fact any such place as 'Anzac,' but on my producing my war-maps it was decided that the title would pass muster. (Birdwood, *Khaki and Gown - an autobiography* p426).

The Australian War Memorial acquired Birdwood's campaign, jubilee and coronation medals in 1980.

The awards (opposite page) are, clockwise from top left:

The Belgian Order of the Crown 1st Class Star, the reverse contemporarily engraved 'Lieut. General Sir W. R. Birdwood. A. & N.Z. Corps. 1916.'

The Portuguese Order of St Avis 2nd class set of insignia.

The Egyptian Order of the Nile 2nd class set of insignia

The Portuguese Order of the Tower and Sword collar chain set of insignia.

These are most of the foreign decorations that Birdwood received and to the best of my knowledge this was the first time they have come on the market in 43 years. All four are named to BIRDWOOD on the reverse.

These decorations are a great addition to the Gallipoli collection that is represented in our museum. They will be framed and placed on display in our Gallipoli Room.

John Meyers is director of the Maryborough Military & Colonial Museum and a former RSM in the Australian Army - Editor.



A HIGHLAND PRIVATE AT GALLIPOLI

The Diary of Private Thomson, 1/5th Argylls – Part 2

Mike Morrison

Private (later Sergeant) David Thomson's experience of life as a soldier at Gallipoli is told in his diary; a work which is articulate and expository. After their introduction to direct and violent combat, he and his mates settled in to life in the trenches under constant threat of various dangers of man and nature and they tried to make the best of it. We see that the air war is becoming a new part of their existence and it seems to provide a diversion from the tedium of living in holes in the earth only to emerge to fight or work.

The tone of the diary is optimistic. He truly believed in an eventual victory and subdual of 'The Hill' (Achi Baba). He even relates the beauty of the sight of a night Turkish bombardment of their own lines. I sense the tale of a dedicated citizen-soldier who understands the magnitude of 'his war', has every intention of returning to civilian life and wants a record of his life on 'Active Service'.

It's interesting to see the gossip going around the trenches which, to the men, was news, some of it rather fantastic. That is a part of every soldier's life and is articulated so well here.

When he comes to hear that it is time to evacuate the peninsula, he first believes that 9th Corps is relieving them, but the reality of what is going to occur seeps in as preparations proceed. He is aware that Suvla has been evacuated, but that almost seems like another war. Theirs is restricted to what they see in front of them. And the way he ends his time on the peninsula is somewhat amusing at that.

I can't help but wonder what a continuation of this Gallipoli diary would look like after he and his unit were next to be committed in France for the rest of the war. It might have been as interesting as this narrative.

August 1915

31/7/15 Battleships bombard 'Hill' – news to hand of 20,000 Turks surrendering at Persian Gulf.

1/8/15 Digging again – hard work

2nd Letter to Rev. Still – Letter from L.M.N. Hannah [?] & P. C. from W. McLean & Mr. Still – replied – frequently shelled –

3rd Taubes over – something new – rice & figs for dinner. Shells landing too near for one to rest comfortably – many men leave for base sick & weak caused by the excessive heat – air cool at night – heavy dews fall

4th Busy making 'something'?? out of the 'ord'ner' – grind down biscuits into pulp, mix with water & in a few moments after being heated in a 'dixy' have – well – a

sort of 'bungoo' – quite good!

Interested in a wild chase by one of our planes after a 'taube' – The hun gets clear

Inoculated for second time against Cholera

The thought of being clear of the trenches for a spell affords much hilarity amongst the boys'

so we 'set to' and have sing-songs & chats on the dear old homeland we miss so much –

5th Enjoy feed of eggs bought at KOSB canteen – the best feed since leaving home – taubes over – no damage – intermittent shelling from both sides –

6th Wakened by heavy bombardment from our battleships on the left of the 'Hill' – Kitchener's Army troops were forcing a new landing further up the coast which proved successful –

Heavy bombmt. continues on the Turkish lines – the 'Hill' is lost from view owing to the high columns of dust & smoke thrown up by the bursting of the heavy shells.

Bombmt. continues all night – our lads gaining other 3 trenches – The Turks are feeling the strain from want of proper food, water & reinforcements. (like ourselves)

All ordered to 'stand to' & prepare to move forward, but towards morning receive word to 'stand down'.

7th Bombmt. continues & word leaks out that all is going well – the 'Hill' being now surrounded by our troops – we again 'stand to' to move if necessary –

The Turks are getting a stiff beating rifle fire continues all night, but we are told to 'stand down'.

Had our usual chat prior to sleeping – the only part of the day which we enjoy while out of the trenches – cool air & cheery talk.

8th Bombmt recommences – heavy on the left – 12' shells from the battleships caused tremendous explosions on & around the 'Hill' – The Turks must be having a 'rotten uncomfortable' time

Turkish warship sunk by one of our submarines while endeavouring to reinforce the Turkish Armies. Another feed of rice & figs.

Afternoon – Turks march in massed formation against Australians but are mowed down & flee in disorder. (Pte. A. McNeil dies in hospital)

As darkness set in the Turks, for the first time since we landed, opened fire on us with their field guns at night – We kept well down under cover – but at times had a glimpse of the 'doings' – The sight was 'beautiful' in the sense of the word and & worth watching. – The whole 'Hill' presented a glow of continuous illuminations – bright – dim – bright – still brighter – then red flares & green parachutes being shot into the air – our guns replied with a tremendous thundering roar and in next to no time the Turk ceased fire – we got our targets all right – Fell asleep with the

ping – ping – ping- of the rifle reports ringing in my ears.

9th Towards morning our guns peal forth & let the Turks feel some ‘stinging’ shots – Turkish gunboat & transport sunk in Dardanelles

Heavy fighting heard on other side of ‘Hill’ – word passed to get into fighting kit & prepare to move forward (7 pm) – Battn. Ready to move 9 pm – Colonel Lannowe, [Lieutenant-Colonel Brownlow Henry Hamilton Matthew-Lannowe] who replaced Col. Darroch makes a round of inspection & to our great delight dismisses us at midnight – out of the 29 officers who landed with the Battn. only 9 remain.

10th Rumour of early ‘Peace’ before ‘Hill’ is captured – but that’s ‘Tommy Rot’ – still our lads are determined to capture same before such an opportunity opens to light. – Kept busy at the perpetual ‘digging’ – dig – dig – dig – ‘I dig in my sleep’

11th Daily inspections occurred by the Colonel. He was wise & made sure of keeping down insanitary conditions – We were in a climate where every care was necessary to prevent disease.

Big bombmt. commences on French side & also from our monitors – The ‘Hill’ & the Turks received a nasty mauling.

12th Nothing of importance during day. But at night the Turks put up a fight & try to regain lost ground – they fail & lose heavily

13th Battn. proceeds to trenches after – well – a pleasant spell of rest – under the circs – I am told off for duty with the stores party loading mules etc. & acting as guard over same toward the trenches – tiresome work – receive heavy rifle fire from the enemy trenches & are forced to take cover – arrive in the trenches much fatigued & relieve HLI – the usual old troubles – fatigues – no sleep – no food worth talking about – little water – heat – shells – etc. etc. – Oh! It’s great!

We occupy the front line – duty all day long – ping – ping – ping - whiz – whizz – over our heads – if the people at home could only see us – such sights – I could not refrain from smiling to myself.

17th In the early hours of the morning an attack took place by the 6th HLI on a position of the Turkish Trenches, but same proved a failure. The Turks were too well supported with M.G. & Artillery fire. No further pressure was indulged in – our Battn. was in ‘support’

The fighting strength of the Battn. gradually diminishes to a low figure – owing to so many men having to leave the trenches through sickness, etc. – never mind – we ‘hold on’ just as if the Battn. were at full strength

Fever was an epidemic in the Battn. (as in other Battn.) so arrangements were made to collect our blankets & have same disinfected at ‘Rest Camp?’ New ones replaced this lot, so our ‘friends’ were somewhat missed for the time being.

18th Feel feverish so reported myself to the doctor who sent me to the L.T.A. at the ‘beach’ where I lay for a few days feeling absolutely ‘out’. Other lads were in a worse

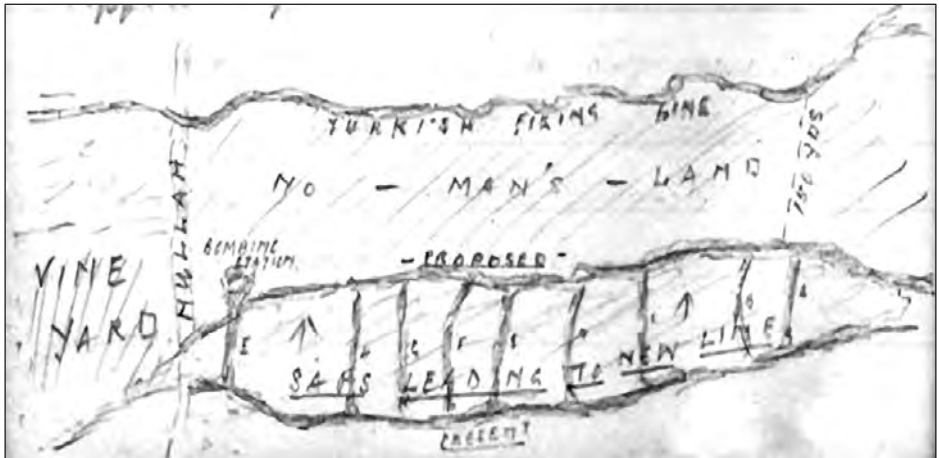
state, so I felt happy with my little lot.

19th & 20th at Ambulance

21st Feel better so return to the Battn. detail camp situated behind the trenches & after reporting to the O. in C. pat myself on the back on hearing him say – Thomson! You will remain here for a day or so until the Battn. comes out of the ‘line’. Mail arrives – Busy at Q.M. stores – The firing from the trenches & from the artillery rather weak – Nothing special doing – On guard duty at stores all night.

22nd Heavy shelling from Turks – we are forced to take cover – Sickness comes on me again & am forced to lie down – legs weak – could not sleep.

23rd Continued work with stores party, escorted ‘goosies’ to beach for rations. – Gun on Adriatic side keeps us on the alert – continually shelling beach – night falls as we pack rations on mules & proceed to the trenches through the large ‘nullah’ – return to stores 10 pm & manage a sleep.



24th Wakened early morning with rapid firing in trenches. Usual work at stores.

Heavy winds sweeping the peninsula which cause great volumes of sand to fly in all directions – sand to breakfast? Dinner? Tea? & the flies – enough to drive one crazy – In fact could not make our tea owing to sand storms.

Italy declared war on Turkey –

Word received about 6 pm & on our way to the trenches with rations. A great shout was heard and ‘Hell’ was ‘let lose’ {sic} – (so to speak) – the firing became so heavy that the Turks got windy & returned our fire – we settled into holes to escape the flying shells & bullets – some ‘narrow ones’

25th Nothing of importance happened with regards to the advance of our troops – intermittent firing all day long on either side of the ‘Hill’ – Something ‘special’ is expected from the ‘Suvla side’ & the Turks know it – our present positions are viz

26th Join Battn. in trenches. Nothing exciting on – digging most of day & night.

27th Sentry go – 1 hr. over the top. 1 down 1 to try & sleep – not bad eh! It's great to peep over & have a few shots at 'Johnnie' – Tit for tat –

28th French troops arriving, also some of Kitchener's Army – Italian troops are said to be making preparations to land either in the 'Cape Helles' or the 'Suvla' side – 'the more the merrier' –

29th Battn. moves to Reserve line

30th & 31st Digging etc.

September 1915

1st Sept & 2nd quiet!

3rd Battn. again moves to firing line for a few days – operations are somewhat disregarded – intermittent firing – Sentry go!

4th & 5th Heavy firing on other side of 'hill' – action! – news of advance - heavy fighting – 5000 Turkish casualties & 1000 British.

6th, 7th & 8th 'standing to' day & night – no sleep-

9th Battn. moves back to reserve line Heavy bombardment on Turks – Chenack Fort {Chanak Fort} in Narrows and on the left.

10th Laid low with dysentery – rotten! And in addition feel filthy – of course nothing new!

11th Had chat with T. Gibb – Told me to write his home for any necessities required – Pass uncomfortable night

12th Battn. moves back to firing line C & D Coys. in line. A & B support

Detailed to carry water for use of company – long tramp – about 4 miles to a little spring which was continually 'peppered' by the Turks – went to & fro 3 times – then afterwards detailed for sentry go!

13th Greatcoats arrive – thankfully received – Heavy guns active otherwise quiet.

14th Intermittent firing all day & night

15th A & B Coys. relieve us move to 'supports' & manage a rest

16th Bombardment commences – we 'stand to' ready to move if desired

The poor old Turks must have received a fair mauling – we could see them running from the trenches

During night detailed for fatigue duty to reconstruct parapet of front-line trenches – By Jove it was some job – Hauling down sandbags & pushing the earth parapets forwards leaving a 'rest' in front – This had begun owing to the winter approaching & the heavy rains would cause the parapets to give way if built up too near the trench.

Kept 'ducking' all the time. - shells bursting & covering us with debris etc. – digging up Turks bodies - & Oh the stench!

17th Still in supports - Guns very active - working on parapet at night fall. – till midnight – then back for a nap.

18th Quiet! Digging.

19th Remove from supports – (Coy. consists of 35 NCO's & men) to redoubts, situated further behind. Heavy outbursts of firing periodically all day – principally from our battleships lying out on the left – very few shells coming from enemy.

20th Bombardment continues – heads well down! – digging at night

21st Quiet. Digging

22nd Move to firing line – usual routine – feeling weak from want of decent sleep & cleanliness

23rd & 24th Firing line – sentry go!

25th Move back to supports – out all night repairing wires – parapets

26th same

27th Absolutely stiff – report to doctor & swallow some 'physic'. No duty

28th Battn. moves to Eski lines for 4 days rest – much looked for. Sent to Divnl. HQ at 'rest camp' for guard duty along with other 6 men. Fine guard - not much to do. 2 hours on & 4 off. At 7 pm great cheering commences - guns open fire – a salute to the great victory in France 20,000 German prisoners. Turks would be at their wits end to know the reason

29th Partook of the best feed since arriving on the Pen. Eggs arrived at Divnl HQ so I purchased a dozen – fried 4 & sat down to eggs, bread & tea. How nice! – 4 for dinner & 4 for tea – not bad!

Pack up & rejoin Battn. Manage to get boots & socks off & enjoy good sleep

30th Had a wash in a few pints of water and feel A.I.

October 1915

1st October Battn. moves to firing line. It's really comical to see the lads trodding up the narrow saps – laden with kit – pieces of firewood – old tin cans, etc. etc. - travelling tinkers with rifles & bayonets. Slowly we dodge forward, single file, until our destination is reached, then we shuffle into our respective positions in the line & commence duty – keep our rifle in tune & wire OK

2nd Sentry go & repairing wire

3rd French attack & move forward a trench

4th Good news – we pack up & move back to the rest camp after the Battn. having been 7 weeks in the lines – my word, we are happy to get away from the smelling trenches.

- 5th** Bathing parade to beach & did 'washing'. Digging in afternoon – till 6 pm – 3 eggs for tea –
- 6th** On Divisional Guard again
- 7th** Digging rubbish pit at DHQ
- 8th** Relieved from Guard by R.S.F. & rejoin Battn. at rest trenches – Heavy rain during night – 'washed out'
- 9th & 10th** At rest trenches
- 11th** Battn. moves to trenches & relieves R.S.F. 156th Bde. – In 'supports' – Intermittent artillery fire – otherwise quiet.
- 12th** In 'supports' (young brother to hospital Enteric Fever)
- 13th** C Coy. moves to firing line – gifts {?} of Lady Hamilton – Heavy bombardment commences while in 'Death Gully' unloading rations 8 pm – all had to make for cover – a hot time! – no casualties!
- 14th** Batt. moves back to redoubt lines & Eski lines – C Coy. in Redoubts
- 15th** In redoubts – Heavy bombardment and weather broken – Coy. forced to move further to right of Redoubts.
- 16th & 17th** In 'redoubts' – consolidating (Bde. Pipe band & divnl. Brass band performed at Rest Trenches)
- 18th** Detailed to report to Bde. HQ as 'runner' - a busy job
- 19th** Battn. moves to firing line, HQ in 'supports' – liking my new job but a very risky one (brother promoted Sergt.)
- 20th** Turks shell trenches - a few casualties – our trench mortars annoy Turks who fire point blank with artillery at firing line trying to locate mortars. Lieut. Orkney killed
- 21st** Turks bombard sap newly taken by us without a casualty – we are forced to keep well under –
- Britain formally declares war on Bulgaria Allied ships bombarding Bulgarian Coast.
- 22nd** Battn. moves to No.2 support lines – just as heavy downpour of rain sweeps the trenches – washed out – cold! Rain continues all night – uncomfortable – trenches 'Knee deep' – such a rotten time.
- 23rd** Rain subsides – which affords us opportunity to get rid of some of the heavy 'muck' – bad cold in left eye – attend doctor –
- 24th** Batt. moves to Rest Trenches – 12 casualties en route – enjoy good sleep –
- 25th** Change in weather – dry & warm! – Meet {W.C.?)
- 26th** Heavy wind blowing – visit beach – bathing – Buy chain of shells from Greek – wind stronger – sand storm - Artillery quiet

27th At Rest Trenches – digging during day

28th, 29th, 30th at Rest Trenches – digging & ‘fatigues’ unloading barges at beach etc. – lousy shirts – It’s time we had a change

31st Early rise – tidy up & prepare to move. Leave for trenches 10 am – in ‘supports’. Digging in front line & ‘sentry go’

November 1915

1st Nov. 2 & 3 – In supports – watched interesting air duel – the German was driven down & landed in the Turkish lines – slight bombardment.

4th Bn. Moves to firing line – usual routine – frequent firing in our sector found to be in a position to suffer enfilade fire from the enemy. So, we commence to dig forward & straighten line – tough task – 8 saps to be dug out from firing line – between saps 6 & 7 - risky job – 2 men entered each sap-head and dug forward protected by rifle fire from the firing line –

The following is a diagram of the supposed position –

5th Nov Had at new constructions - Brother leaves for Mudros – wiring during night.

6th Nov – Reinforcements – 50 in number from 3/5th Battn. all very shaky – Glad to see them & hear all the home news.

7th Heavy intermittent artillery fire on left. We are forced to keep up heavy rifle & M.G. fire - Turks windy.

8th & 9th Heavy bombmt. On Turkish trenches – feeble reply – heavy rain came on 7 ‘working parties’ cancelled – soaked in no time trenches flooded.

10th 11th & 12th On 10th rain discontinues & we prepare to ‘bail out’ the trenches – rotten – digging trenches.

13th Blessed with a supply of cheese – how nice & wholesome – the troops are crazy – no wonder! – Heavy rain again – worse than before – trenches a running stream – just got to stand & try to enjoy ‘the lot’ – absolutely soaked to the skin – ‘O’ for the life of a soldier’

Lord Kitchener said to be at the beach – He didn’t manage to get much further – A glimpse of the place from the beach was enough –

14th Hurroo! Bn. Leaves for Rest Trenches what a task! Through the mud – arrive 11 am – ‘set to’ dig a sort of comfortable ‘dug out’ – Damn it all! – the rain again – comes in heavy during night & we are forced to evacuate our homely positions – flooded out – Dawn appeared much to our satisfaction – but – what a mess – kit mushy, rifles mucky. In fact, we looked a mucky cow in a mucky land.

15th Very cold & stormy - gathered our belongings together & prepared to [?] a ‘dug out’ capable of keeping out the heavy rains

Parade at Divnl. HQ for bath. Long canvas troughs were erected & filled

with water – we stripped & got well ‘mucked in’ with soap & scrubbers – emerge from the bath feeling O.K.

Afternoon – Heavy bombardment commenced 1 pm slackens 5 pm and 156th Bde. Storm Turkish trenches on left positions – 2 lines carried – casualties slight. Turks counter attack at night but are driven back. Heavy Turkish casualties – we ‘stand to’ all night

16th Quiet – winter clothing to hand – receive waterproof sheet & cardigan jacket. Fatigues at Beach.

17th Breezy morning – high winds sweep the peninsula & much damage is caused – no cooked food today - High winds continue into night. The pace of the wind was terrible & could quite easily have carried a man off his feet. We lay huddled together – such a time! If we were only off this ‘God forsaken peninsula’ – The ordeal gets worse – sheets of rain splash over us – lightning rents the air – couple with wild fire. Heavy peals of thunder. We lie still, but in next to no time the heavy rain food {floods}? the dug outs, so we get into the open & lie face downwards (not to view the scene) in the mud – The rain & wind subsides about 3 am so we manage to get to our feet – such a sight I’ll never forget – the dawn was appearing – chaps lay about as if they had been wounded or killed – Oh! I’ll never forget the sight. I felt my legs give way from under me, and was forced to lie down cold & stiff. Something must be done to save the lives of some of the unfortunate souls who were badly beaten – fires were lit & in doing many lives were saved – what about the boys in the trenches – Well, God knows how they withstood the ordeal – Dry clothes arrived from Mudros – so we soon became like ourselves again

Quite a number of the lads were shipped to hospital. – I lost practically all my kit – Heavy firing heard in the trenches – we ‘stand to’ with odds & ends of kit & mucky rifles – of course the lads in the trenches were prepared for the torrents with waterproofs, etc. and their first duty was – to protect rifle & ammo. I heard later that the boys had to lie over the parapets all night the trenches having got flooded – they had a worse time than us. No sleep tonight.

19th Busy trying to clean kit & rifle. Very cold but dry – manage a sleep in the open.

20th ‘cleaning up’

21st Move to trenches through mucky saps – Turks shell us en route – arrive in supports which were partly reconstructed – commence right away to consolidate positions

About 3 pm Turks open out bombmt. & we are forced to keep under – our artillery reply & a continual shower of shells from each side buzzed over our heads until 6 pm expected every moment a shower in amongst us. Stand to! Turks attacking our lines, but they get no further than the top of their parapets when they were cut down & forced to retire – our artillery splendid - & we let them have a stiff shower of bullets – this attacking was forced 3 times by the Turks, but the affair was useless – they suffered heavily & our casualties were many from the effects of his artillery fire

– Many chaps fell in our line – I was posted along with other two chaps at a sap-head on sentry duty all night no relief. – Beastly cold & when relieved in the morning we had to report to the doctor for treatment – no duty. The cold out here meantime is as severe as a winter season at home.

22nd No duty – lying in the trench feeling absolutely ‘done up’ – Young brother home (received news from one of the draft men) lying in hospital in Southampton suffering from ‘Enteric Fever’ –

23rd Many men leave for hospital – feeling better myself –

24th Still in supports – digging!

25th Move to firing line which looks not so bad after the heavy floods, etc.

26th Dull! Rain again – Thunder & lightning trenches mucky

27th Freezing – keep jumping on the fire step for warmth – On wiring party during night

28th Snow – the peninsula a white sheet – very cold - & we do feel it after the warm weather. Rub our feet with whale oil for protection against frost-bite. Sleet & rain.

December 1915

29th Frost continues – freezes water in bottles – no life in my hands & feet – getting windy for frost bite, but the whale oil comes to the rescue. Bn. moves back to supports at night

30th Frost continues – tramp- tramp all day long to ease feet – digging at night.

1st December, 2nd, 3rd and 4th – in supports

5th Bn. Moves to Rest Camp – occupy 87th bde dug outs – specially built for the winter season – news of young brother being dangerously ill

6th to 10th At Rest Camp = enjoying a rest. Major Lyle & Capt. Agnew wounded by shrapnel – visit W.C. at R.A.M.C. Dry weather.

11th Bn. Leaves for trenches – winter routine etc. 8 days in trenches & 8 days at Rest Camp Heavy Bombmt, on Turkish positions during night

12th Advance made on our right, and after consolidation of captured trench. Turks desperately try to regain lost trench but fail.

13th Supply of shells seem to have favoured the Turks, Our Rest Camp and environs being constantly shelled

14th Batt. relieved in line and consequently move to Rest Camp – Occupy 7 HLI winter quarters – comfortable sleep

15th Quiet at R.C. visit W.C. at R.A.M.C. Quarters Turks again attempt to regain lost trench on right but are repulsed with heavy losses.

16th R.C. routine

17th Turkish reinforcements – preparing for active measures –

18th Employed at ammo dump preparing large quantities of SAA for immediate dispatch to the trenches.

19th We seem to be the only Battn. at Rest Camp – remainder of Bde. left us in early morning for trenches. Also our Grenadiers – News of ‘advance’ in afternoon.

Bombardment commences with an accompaniment of heavy rifle & M.G. fire – monitors shelling heavily. Bombardment continues all night.

20th Batt. moves to trenches. Heavy rain – Turks attack our positions three consecutive times only to be driven back with losses.

21st B Hdqs move to second line (supports). Very heavy rain continues to fall – Soaked through.

Trenches commence to flood and are ‘clammy’ with mud knee deep. Turks made another fruitless attack on our right. Had a good view of same and could see the poor Turkish devils trying their ‘mightiest stretch’ to obtain ground but our artillery is superb and our rifle fire excellent – Ha! Ha! Narrow shave – bullet grazed my head.

22nd Trenches in a nasty mess – having no gum-boots the existence is deplorable – the old nullah is a raging torrent – waist deep. Got no sleep – legs stiff & sore. Still in firing line

23rd Clearer weather. Mucky!

24th Battn. move to supports. Turks put up heavy bombardment. Our troops having evacuated Anzac & Suvla on the other side of the ‘Hill’. We are blessed with more force of artillery etc. Poor old 52nd – Capt. Thomson (5th HLI) commanding our Batt. killed by shell fire – Four ‘taubes’ overhead. We keep up a heavy rifle fire on them which drives them off not to prevent bombs being dropped on our Rest Camp – and unfortunately while our late C.O. is being buried one of the burying party ie Lieut. Wilson is wounded, also some of the lads standing nearby.

25th Dec Xmas Day – Fine morning – not too chilly. We have been very unfortunate with the loss of so many of our officers only one original remains ie – Capt. Brown – 38 officers left home with the Batt. others of course, have joined us with the drafts from the 3/5th Batt. and other Bats. The majority of those have also escaped from us. Turks commence heavy bombardment

Shells dropping all along the line of trenches we occupy, Batt. Hdqs. is shelled by big ‘coal boxes’ & we are forced to evacuate our Hdqs. Just as we emerge from these positions two dirty big shells land absolutely amongst us. Thank God we cleared out to miss the ‘sweet’ effects – no casualties –

Terrible times! Enjoy a Xmas dinner consisting of hard biscuits & bully -we emerge from some very dastardly positions – safe & sound – Huddle ourselves together in the trench expecting every minute to go ‘west’ – Heart rending scenes we witnessed – not to be repeated!

Bombardment terminates slowly, so we gain chances to consolidate our positions – mud from head to feet!

Move later to ‘supports’ – During night a few of us pay the old Hdqrs. a visit to collect kit etc.

We are spotted and having a rather exciting time. Devastation everywhere – no kit to be seen – manage to dig out’ my greatcoat with many holes, also my haversack.

26th After a rather thrilling night the batt. ‘packs up’ & moves back to ‘reserve’ line (Eski) – Conditions awful – Turks again very active - Fall into a comfortable! Sleep along with a chum, but we are wakened in the early hours of the morning by heavy rain - Curse it! No further sleep –

27th Rain continues and helps to give the trenches another ‘rotten’ appearance – we no sooner begin to feel a little comfortable than auch! – no wonder I’m lousy – Again we plod through the mud – without gum boots – We commence heavy bombardment on Turks – an artillery duel is the outcome

28th Some thing urgently required! – What - we receive gum boots – a pleasure to wear same

29th Battn. moves to Rest Camp. Get settled down in quite a comfy little hut – good news – we are being relieved by the 9th Army Corps. High time!

30th Excitement prevails – Sent to Sedul Bahr with urgent message & enjoy heavy shell fire – wind up!

Receive word to pack up all surplus stores etc. for dispatch to ‘W Beach’. Expect to move at any moment.

31st Hogmanay (not at home) no thought for Hogmanay - still hanging on in suspense – Happy news! 208 O. Ranks told off to prepare for evacuating the Peninsula – leave midnight – about 100 O.O remain (including myself). I am including in a party detailed for fatigues at the Beach loading shells baggage, etc. etc. on barges which when loaded steamed out to big ships lying off the shore.

Such a buzz – but being done in a systematical manner – we are really evacuating & not being relieved by the 9th Corps. Exactly at midnight ‘Asiatic Annie’- the big Turkish non-located gun opens fire on us – some scatter

I happened to be carrying a box of SAA board the barge when the first shell landed near the stone pier – I scuppered off for safety – ‘Not ‘aff – When the flash of A.A. I seen on the Asiatic side, a bugler posted on the uppermost part of Sedul Bahr blows a long ‘G’ on his bugle & the occupants of the beach scatter behind the rocks for safety – time given to reach its mark is 10 seconds – so we require to MOVE

Left Beach at 12:10 am 1916 on a ‘Garry’ driven by a Hindoo – The old Hindoo was risking no chances so we scattered back at some speed – My chum Black was with me, so we left the old Hindoo in fits – He was at his wits end. We tried to force him to stop his Garry so as we could shake hands, but the effort was useless – he seemingly

did not understand, but when I said 'New Year' and figures in Hindoostani – he understood and was happy. Black & I managed to secure a bottle of whisky each. From the stores at the Beach and sold same for 10/- We were 'hard up' for cash

January 1916

1st Jany. 1916

The next 106 pages are blank. Tucked into the front of the book is a clipping from a magazine or newspaper of 'Hamilton's Guard of Honour' formed up to receive Field Marshall Haig. Is the man who has 'X's above and below him our diarist?



ARTICLES FOR THE GALLIPOLIAN

Articles and items of interest about any aspect of the Gallipoli campaign are always welcome. These should be submitted direct to the editor, preferably as an e-mail attachment, at the email address shown on the inside front cover. It is not always possible to feature articles in the issue following submission although where there is an element of topicality the editor will try to accommodate them, or refer them to colleagues responsible for the Association website.

For those considering the submission of articles the editor can provide notes for the guidance of contributors on request.

Disclaimer

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

A LETTER FROM THE YEOMANRY

Jason French and Christopher Pollard

Jason French, the grandson of Trooper Sidney Barnes French (23 May 1895 - 3 July 1975), County of London Yeomanry, writes that his grandfather dictated memories of the Suvla landings to his daughter, probably in the 1960s or 70s. The original copy was very difficult to decipher.

Jason and his cousin, Mr Christopher Pollard, found the account and believe it 'would be wonderful if our Grandpa's tiny part in a dreadful war could be acknowledged.' - Editor.

From: Trooper French SB.1029.
3rd Co. of London Yeomanry
2nd Mounted Division,
M.E.F.

Gallipoli, Suvla Bay, August 1915

As a pre 1914 Territorial (I joined at the latter part of 1913), I selected the Yeomanry as I was very keen on horses. I attended Whitsun and Easter camps in 1914 with regular cavalry units and in July 1914 attended the annual 14 days training in Kempton, Brighton. We had only been there a few days when general mobilisation orders came through and we had to break camp and return to London. It was not until March/April in 1915 we left for Egypt taking, of course, our horses with us. We lost quite a few horses coming through Biscay suffering from sea sickness. These were all 'stabled' below decks and had to be winched up on a type of crane and dumped overboard. No time was lost by the sharks who left a trail of blood behind the ship.

On arrival at Alexandria, we entertained for Moascar Camp, situated in the dessert a mile or so from Ismailia on the Suez Canal. Having settled down there, we then began hard training as regular cavalry. It was only in August that rumours began to spread that we were to become an infantry unit – you can understand that we all had no idea at the time what was behind this. Furthermore, as mounted troops we had no training in infantry work. Masses of material arrived at the camp which turned out to be infantry webbing, equipment etc. To suddenly become infantry overnight was a problem, but this was eventually overcome as it so happened we had several old regular infantrymen in the regiment who were able to advise how to assemble the kit. If my memory serves me correctly, I think it was within two days of being kitted out we entrained for Alexandria and here boarded a troop ship for Mudros [Lemnos – ed] one of a group of islands in the Aegean Sea. After a day or so here, my division, was detailed to embark on HMS *Doris*. I cannot now remember whether she was a destroyer or a cruiser, but I do know she took aboard just on 2,000 men. I can well remember with a few of my chums sleeping at the base of one of the funnels, the ship was so crowded (a coal burning ship) men were

curled up anywhere and in any old corners and incidentally, all of us loaded up with equipment – we could hardly rise from a sitting position we were so loaded.

On arrival at Suvla Bay, standing well off the beaches, we were transferred to lighters. Those resembled the old type Thames barge and were constructed mostly of steel or iron. They had a shallow superstructure with a gangway all the way round. We sat with our backs against this superstructure, our feet dangling over the side, and as soon as the boat touched the beach, we just hopped off into the water which meant, in some cases, men were in waist deep water and at the front the sea just covered our boots.

It was a beautiful day and Suvla Bay was like a mill pond and at the time we did not know what lay ahead of us. It was a glorious sandy beach on which we landed and on which the sun was shining brilliantly. Our landing was greeted with artillery and machine gun fire but I think our landing was preceded by the 10th Irish Division who had gone in first and were consolidating their position whilst we were landing. We had very little opposition at first apart from artillery shelling and machine gun fire but three or four taubes did appear when we landed but I do not think there were many casualties. We had an assembly point on the beach and the whole regiment eventually joined up at this point. For a few days we did a vast amount of digging and carrying stores etc. and getting our defences in order, also we had a chance of sea bathing. This was in selected places, not in view of the Turk. The weather was perfect but the sun was very hot and one was in a perpetual state of perspiration, but the nights were at times extremely cold. Our first really big 'do' was on the 21st August, a glorious Saturday afternoon, my unit (I think in fact the whole brigade took part) was detailed to 'parade' at Lala Baba. This was a range of shallow hills just beyond the beach and was a few hundred yards from our original position of landing. Our objective was Chocolate Hill which meant we had to cross the Salt Lake. This lay between Lala Baba and Chocolate Hill and was approximately a mile or so across. This covered quite a large area and at this time of year was quite dry although covered with a thick layer of salt and patches of scrub. We set off in line in extended order and as soon as we approached the edge of the lake, the shelling commenced, and heavy it was too.

Orders were that no man was to stop and help others in trouble. I can remember the man immediately next to me in line, a Canadian, suddenly called out 'I am hit' and collapsed. This made me realise that things were not going to improve and they certainly did not. The crossing of the Salt Lake was under extremely heavy artillery fire all the way and with the continuous shelling the scrub became ignited and quite a few who were hit were badly burnt. Our objective reached, our next step was to dig in. The ground was stony and very heavy going. Our dug outs as a result were just holes in the ground just below ground level. I can remember we eventually came across water in the trenches but it was too brackish to use for any purpose. Water was one of the sparse commodities and this was very severely rationed, although the cooks always found a dixie of tea. One mug of water per day was the issue per man.

Water was brought to the beach by the navy and was dumped straight on the beach together with stores, rations and communications etc. I can remember being on a ration fatigue and collecting sacks of bread which had been thrown direct onto the beach from the lighters, quite a few of which had become saturated with sea water, hence our diet of biscuits and bully for weeks on end. In the early Suvla days there was no temporary landing platform or jetty, hence the dumping of everything straight onto the beach. Eventually provision was made for landing stores etc. but during the great storm of November / December was completely washed away.

Our rations were very poor. For weeks we only had army biscuits and bully beef. It was terribly hot, flies everywhere, in fact everything in the way of food that was put to your mouth a swarm of flies settled.

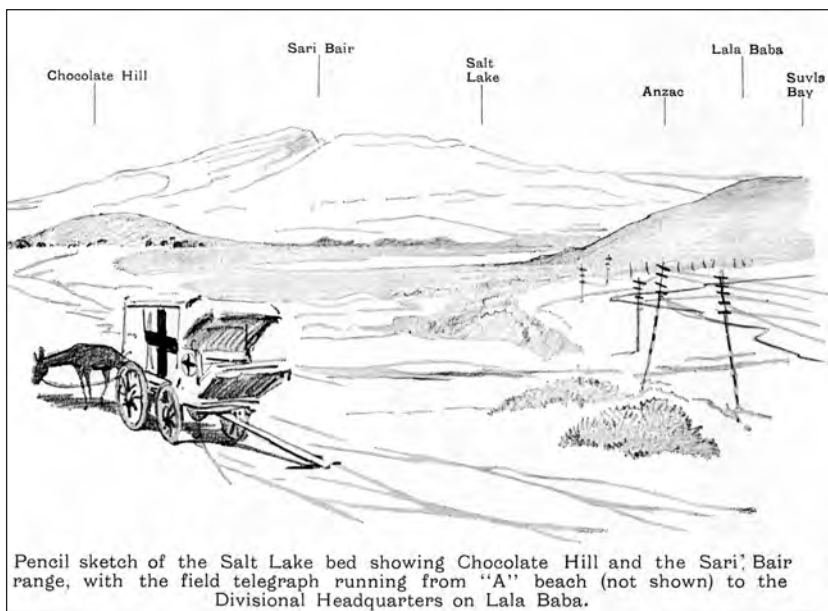
We only had pitch helmets and not steel. The nights were very cold and if one were not on a patrol of some sort or on watch in the trenches, it was not easy to try and have a sleep. On our expedition into no-man's-land on a listening patrol etc. one would occasionally run into the body of a decomposing Turk. We were, of course, crawling on our stomachs all the time, and suddenly a shower of Verey lights would go up, followed by the rattle of machine gun fire and you had to remain perfectly rigid otherwise the least movement would be acted upon by a sniper. Incidentally, at times it was possible to hear voices from the Turkish trenches, very uncanny, and then one would immediately stop crawling forward and just wait with baited breath until all was quiet again.

Most of us had balaclava knitted helmets which did help to keep us warm at night. The heat and flies, as I mentioned previously, were terrific and added to this poor and monotonous food, you can imagine sickness soon became rife. I cannot remember all my thoughts while on the peninsula. Naturally, I thought of home and my family. I am a bit of a fatalist, but cannot really remember being too 'windy' in the early days, but later I certainly began to feel tensed up. Anchored in the bay were two hospital ships both, of course, painted a brilliant white with a red cross marked on the side. One was the 'Roselart Castle', the name of the other I cannot remember. But at night when one was on duty in the trenches, to gaze out to sea and see these two great ships brilliantly lit from stern to stern made a lump appear in your throat. I eventually finished up on the 'Roselart Castle' with a flesh wound plus enteric and dysentery. You can imagine my reaction to once again lying in a bunk with clean sheets after weeks of living like a savage. We naturally needed some cleaning up. Socks came off almost taking the skin with them as they had been on for weeks on end. Only occasionally was one able to take off boots and all of us simply teeming with lice which were always with us.

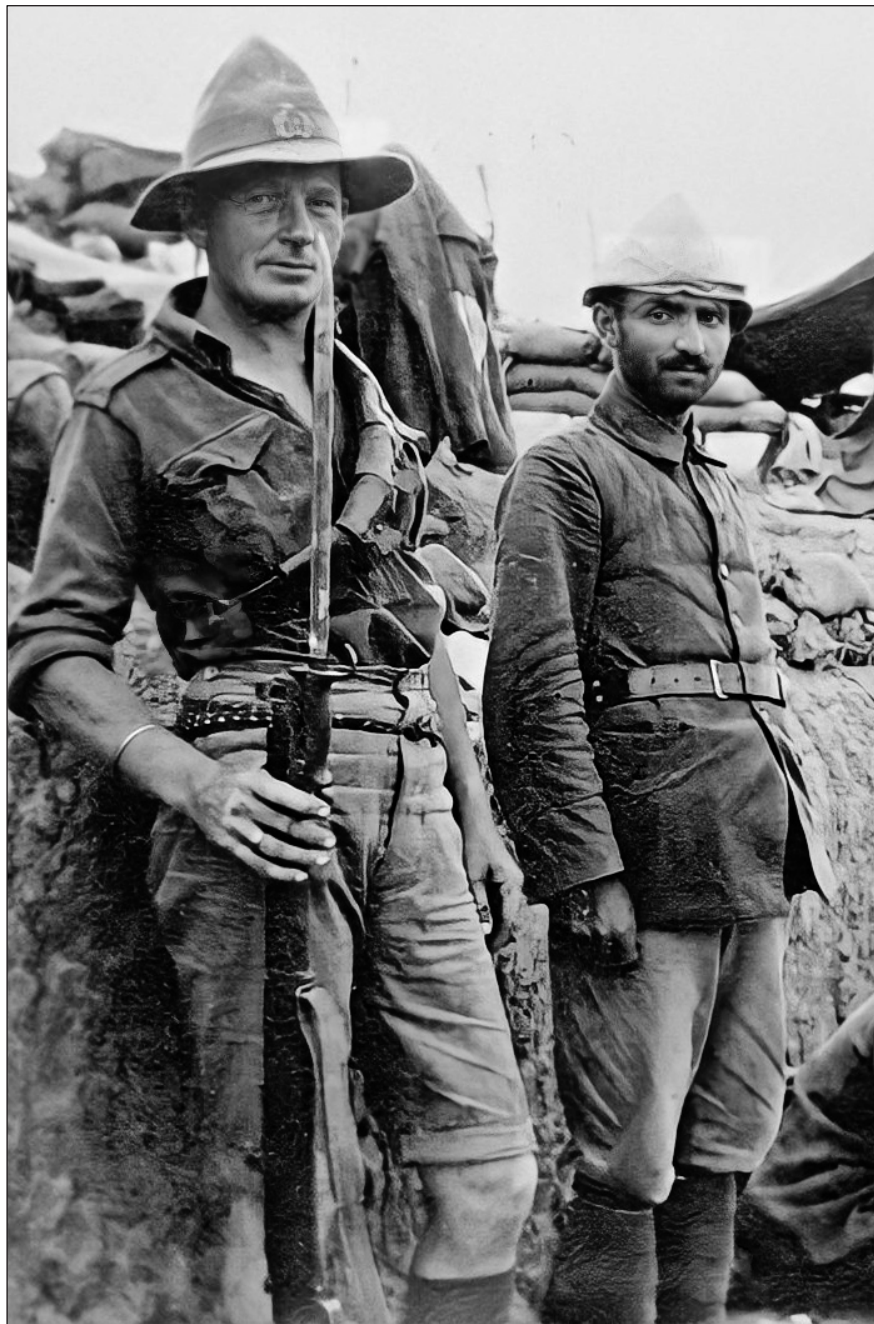
There was one point which may be of interest and that is the transport of the sick and wounded taken from the line. At the early stage of Suvla all we had was a two-wheel Indian cart drawn by mules and tended by an Indian driver. A badly wounded man had a shocking journey down to the beach to the CCS (casualty clearing station). Thrown about inside the 'cart' was not pleasant as you can imagine. The CCS was

actually sited on the beach and on arrival there cases were tended by the RAMC as soon as possible. It all depended, of course, on what state one was in. Walking cases of sick and wounded had about one mile or so to go and had to get there as best they could. Snipers were a real menace and must have caused no end of casualties. I can well remember being on duty in the trenches one day and the man on the fire step next to me fell to the ground – a sniper had got him through an opening in the sand bags. They were everywhere even up trees. When trying to get an hour or so of sleep, there was always the incessant clatter of machine gun fire and shelling, not exactly conducive to sleep, but we managed it. Some men almost fell off to sleep standing, in the trenches. I do vividly recall one day seeing a GS wagon drawn by four mules arriving at the base of Chocolate Hill and a shell falling short and suddenly dropping between the team of mules. All had to be shot, they were so badly hurt, by a young subaltern whose hand was not exactly steady when carrying out the execution. He was obviously a little nervous and this worried me terribly, but during the ensuing weeks we became immune to this sort of thing.

The Gallipoli campaign could have been successful if proper planning and leadership had been organised, but alas, the troops were just put ashore and had to hope for the best. We learnt later that at Suvla, 20,000 men were facing only 1,000 Turks. All ranks were aware that the campaign was not being conducted as it should have been and that it had definitely been badly planned. I was not in the peninsula when the great storm happened in November / December but I understand there were dozens of our men (and Turks also) who were drowned in the trenches. The campaign was certainly an experience I shall never forget.



Pencil sketch of the Salt Lake bed showing Chocolate Hill and the Sari' Bair range, with the field telegraph running from "A" beach (not shown) to the Divisional Headquarters on Lala Baba.



A trooper of the 6th (Manawatu) Squadron, Wellington Mounted Rifles, NZEF with a captured Turkish soldier, Gallipoli. Alexander Turnbull Library, NZ 1/2-164768-F.

THE GREAT BLIZZARD

H E Slaymaker RE Signals 160 Bde 53 Div (member 66)

From *The Gallipolian* No 7, Christmas 1971

At about 4 o'clock on Friday afternoon, November 28th, forty-seven years ago, there began for those of us of the Herefordshire Regiment who were then serving at the Dardanelles an ordeal which, in its dramatic suddenness and severity, will always be an outstanding story in the annals of the British Army. The preceding pleasantly warm autumn days that followed the intense summer heat gave no hint of the dreadful experience that was soon to befall us. A thunderstorm of tremendous violence with rain coming down as from a waterspout swept over us for the next 24 hours. Our part of the line was particularly affected as it straddled a dry riverbed (Azmak Dere) across which a stout sandbag barricade had been built to join up the two trench systems on either bank. The force of the water rushing down the steep slopes of the high hills in front of us soon swept the barrier away and brought with it the bodies of drowned Turks and mules. Before long our trenches began to fill, and we were almost up to our waists in water. We anxiously awaited the expected improvement that daylight would bring to give us some relief from our miserable condition. Fortunately for what little peace of mind that was left to us, we did not know that far worse was yet to come in the form of a hurricane wind from the north that brought with it a blizzard of snow which lasted for two days, and two nights of exceptionally bitter frost when the thermometer dropped to nearly twelve degrees Fahrenheit (about twenty degrees of frost). All thought of fighting was driven from the minds of friend and foe, and everyone in the trenches got out on the top and walked about in the open, observing an almost complete unofficial truce.

Our regiment was due to be relieved on the Friday night, and the relieving regiment duly took over in the flood. Our signals sergeant and two of us signallers were due to be relieved by our opposite numbers at daylight next morning, but for some reason or other they never came, and by this time we were the only ones left in the trenches. Our fingers were so cold that we could not turn the screws connecting the wires to the terminals of the buzzers, so we just had to leave them. The snow was now falling thickly and the sergeant decided that we should make our way to the back area, as it was obvious that the enemy was in no state of mind, body, or inclination to take advantage of the undoubted opportunity to break through the great gaps in the line and defeat us very decisively indeed. The three of us then started on our long march through the blinding snow down towards the beach. Soon after leaving the trench area we came across a tragedy which is probably the most vivid memory of the blizzard to all those who actually saw it. One of our regimental buglers was lying on his back dead in the snow, his face equally pallid, dressed in full marching order with his bugle neatly slung over his shoulders. I have said that the unofficial truce was almost complete. There had, however, been isolated rifle shots. Whether or not this had been an aimed bullet or a stray we shall never know,

but a thin streak of blood running from his temple told us that he had given his life that others might live and, more important still, that they might enjoy such measure of spiritual freedom as has since been maintained, however precariously.

Some distance further, we came across a supplies dump in which were several cases of rum. Unfortunately it was not guarded, and a number of men of various regiments had broken open the cases. Ignorant of their peril, many of them drank far more than was wise in that bitter cold and some of them lay stiff and dead in the snow. Others, with staring eyes and semi-conscious were being walked to hospital supported by the devoted RAMC orderlies, who worked night and day without rest to save as many of their fellows as they could. The warning to the three of us was too obvious, and we set about digging a large and shallow hole in the sandy soil to spend the night sheltered from the hurricane. Fully dressed, and, as I remember, with eleven damp blankets which we had collected from round about, we covered ourselves and slept till morning. Then with the intense frost rendered more biting still by the high wind, we made our way towards the crowded field hospitals near the beach, and I found myself separated from the others at the end of a long queue waiting for a boat to take us out to the hospital ship lying offshore. My destination was Malta, where prolonged and devoted nursing restored my frost-bitten feet, already black with gangrene, to full life again. Others, not so fortunate, lost one or both feet from the same cause, while some ultimately died from the after effects of the prolonged exposure.

In all, of the Herefordshire Regiment ten or twelve died from exposure and about fifty were sent to hospital. Of the whole force about two hundred were drowned or frozen to death and five thousand suffered from frostbite. A few weeks later the Gallipoli Peninsula was finally evacuated and some months of intense suffering and discomfort came to an end for all of us who had set out with such high hopes and apparent certainty of victory. Finally, it is most interesting to note that in the normal course of the weather in this region, severe winter is not experienced until January. Hence the army was totally unprepared for such conditions. Subsequently, however, similar severe blizzards occurred in November of 1922 and 1928.

THE GREAT BLIZZARD

Extract from Waite, F. *Official History of New Zealand's Effort in the Great War. Vol 1 The New Zealanders at Gallipoli*, Auckland, Whitcombe & Tombs, 1919.

With the advent of cooler weather the daily sick parades became appreciably smaller, but the men of Anzac were to have still another trial of their endurance and cheerfulness, for on November 27, the weather turned extremely cold. Next morning the troops awoke to find everything white with snow. A snowstorm is not a very disagreeable thing provided one has a comfortable home and clean streets. But at Anzac everyone lived in a dugout—clay walls, clay floor, and a clay track up to the door. The mud and slush made all the tracks as sticky as glue. Locomotion became difficult. Supplies ran short.

The blizzard was almost the fiercest enemy encountered on the Peninsula. We could fight with, and often outwit, the Turk, but against snow and slush we had very little defence.



A sergeant and another soldier stand with a gun of the 8th Battery AIF following the blizzard, McKay's Ridge, Anzac. State Library of Queensland 27331-3016-0112.

The troops were greatly indebted to some enterprising men who anticipated cold weather, and issued a small supply of whale oil with instructions how to apply it to the extremities in case of heavy frosts. This simple precaution prevented a very large number of frost-bite cases, as far as the New Zealand brigades were concerned. In comparison with the other troops we were more or less fortunate, as we occupied the higher ground on the Peninsula, and our trenches drained themselves down the slopes. But to those who had to go uphill to the trenches, the task was almost impossible. The deres which were always used as tracks became miniature rivers of mud, eventually becoming frozen and covered with snow. The troops will long remember the small hours of November 28 as they were rudely awakened by the tarpaulin roofs of their never-too-elaborate dug-outs collapsing on top of them with the weight of snow. The gale made playthings of the light craft in the Cove. Barges and launches broke from their moorings and completed their sphere of usefulness on the beach. The snow-covered hills presented a wonderful sight. Long icicles hung down from the parapets in the trenches. Comparatively few of our men suffered from frost bite, but it was really a very sad and pitiful sight to see long queues of stretcher bearers carrying the suffering men from the lower slopes.

The poor fellows caught it very badly, especially towards Suvla Bay, as the trenches became inundated with the rushing waters. Many of the occupants were drowned. The brigades of the 29th Division held the trenches into which drained the flood

waters from the Kiretch Tepe Sirt. They suffered severely. The Newfoundland contingent, now attached as a battalion to one of these famous brigades, almost revelled in the frost and snow, as might have been expected! The casualties among the Turks, according to those who surrendered at this period (and there were quite a few) must have been enormous.

The most popular place after the blizzard broke out was the ordnance stores, as everyone was in want of extra clothing — and, thank goodness, it was available. It was amusing to see sentries on duty after their experience of the first night. It would have needed a very energetic bullet to penetrate the amount of clothing worn! This is a fair sample: — Hat, balaclava cap, (two if procurable) waterproof cape, greatcoat, tunic, cardigan jacket, shirt, two singlets, two pairs of underpants, trousers, puttees, two pairs of socks, straw or paper round the feet, and a pair of trench boots! After each tour of duty a compulsory tot of rum was issued. Fortunately for all concerned perfect weather set in about December 4.

This blizzard set all thinking. The chief topic of conversation was “How will we fare, supposing the bitter weather holds out for a couple of months?” as nothing in the way of stores or provisions could be landed other than in perfectly fine weather. Units who had sited their homes near the deres carved out neat villas on higher ground. Hospitals evacuated their sick as quickly as possible, and men not employed making high level roads, were busily engaged in making winter dugouts, well beneath Mother Earth — well beneath advisedly, as about this time we were almost daily informed that our airmen were locating concrete emplacements for heavy howitzers. The Turkish prisoners were also kind enough to say that a large number of heavy guns were being placed in position to blow us into the Mediterranean, which was understood to be very cold in winter.



New Zealand Engineers' dugouts, The Apex, Rhododendron Ridge
Waite, Official History NZEF page 275, photo by Capt. Fairchild, NZDC.

THE BLIZZARD - IMBROS

Frederick Sykes, Wing Captain Commanding RNAS, EMS.

All doubts about the wisdom of the evacuation were set at rest by the great blizzard of hail and snow which raged from November 27 to 30. Small craft, covered to the funnels with seaweed and sand, were piled up on the beaches, and piers were wrecked or badly damaged. Even in the comparative shelter of our camp we were thoroughly uncomfortable. Drifting sand blew in dense clouds everywhere, and it was almost impossible to cook any food. Planes and hangars, including the submarine scout airship at Kephalos, were badly damaged by the gale, and all work was suspended. But this was as nothing compared to the sufferings of the unfortunate troops on the Peninsula. Waves broke over the improvised quays and jetties; for four days it was impossible for vessels to approach them, and the men were without greatcoats, food, or water. The cold was intense, and on the various fronts about ten thousand had to be evacuated with frostbite, while some thirty thousand more were in such a weak condition that they could only just carry on.

Fortunately, the cold weather put an end to dysentery, but the hospitals were full to overflowing. The trenches were in a terrible state. Many of them became raging torrents; parapets collapsed, and the unfortunate occupants were swept with machine-gun and rifle-fire until the blizzards of snow and sleet reduced visibility to such a degree that further fighting was impossible. Even after the storm died down the trenches were filled with about two feet of mud and stagnant water, which partially froze and made them almost untenable. The enemy, though on higher ground, were in a not much better plight, and many bodies of dead Turks were washed down into our lines.

Every one now knew that the army must be got away before it was too late. There was no protection against the weather, and if the troops had to pass a winter in the trenches the casualties would be enormous.

Sykes, F. *From Many Angles: An Autobiography*, London, George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1943.

Editor's note: Major-General the Right Hon. Sir Frederick Sykes GCSI GCIE GBE KCB CMG MP commanded the Royal Naval Air Service at Gallipoli from 24 July 1915, arriving on Imbros 6 August 1915:

As I was a Colonel in the Army and my new command consisted of RNAS units, special steps had to be taken by the Admiralty to avoid technical difficulties which rose as regards command. I was therefore made a temporary Colonel Commandant, Royal Marines, as well as a Wing-Captain, RNAS, and given the seniority of a Captain in the Royal Navy, of three years standing. Thus I held a curious assortment of ranks: I was at one and the same time a Captain in the 15th Hussars, Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel and Temporary Colonel in the Army, Wing-Commander RFC, Wing-Captain RNAS, and Colonel-Commandant of Royal Marines, with the seniority of a Captain, Royal Navy. (Sykes p165).

TALE OF THE SUVLA BLIZZARD

A medical officer who was present at the evacuation of Gallipoli writes to the 'Times' of 16th February:— I believe I have told you of the great blizzard and frost at Suvla; and hereon the fourth and fifth days dozens of men came in frozen solid to the knees, many with gangrene far advanced. A lot of them were just boys, but they refused to leave the trenches till reinforcements poured in. Even the sick in hospital rose up and took their rifles and went up to hold the line. It was truly magnificent.

One little picture I will draw illustrative of our life for five days. One morning a Newfoundlander in a trench near us called my attention to two figures in a ditch out by the Salt Lake. I took out a stretcher party and there we found two lads of the City of London Regiment sitting in the ditch, frozen and dead. One had his arms round the other, who held fragments of biscuits in the corner of his mouth.

Fancy the struggle for life across one and a-half miles of frozen marsh in the teeth of a blizzard, and then, within sight of the lights of our camp, the weaker had given way and his chum has sat down with him, and put his arms round him and tried to get him to eat a piece of ration biscuit, and so death had found them both. The agony of the battle of Sari Bahr was matched by the despair of the blizzard at Suvla. But these men were the heroes of the child's dream. (*Times* 16 Feb 1916).



Todd, Walter. *Wreckage at Anzac washed up after a storm*. Mitchell Library, State Library NSW
courtesy Mrs Bonnie Tucker.

BOOK REVIEW: GALLIPOLI DIARY 1915

Stephen Chambers

Alec Riley, Little Gully Press 2021, 360 pages, 47 photographs, 14 maps
ISBN: 9780645235913

Price: £13.99 (paperback) Also available in hardback and kindle

“We had a look around, through periscopes, at the remains of recent fighting. The dead were on top, and we, the living, were below the general ground-level. The usual order of life and death were reversed.” Riley, a signaller with the 42nd Division, was an eyewitness to the sharp end of Gallipoli, a campaign that most certainly made its mark on this soldier.

Thankfully for the reader Riley had kept meticulous notes during his time on Gallipoli, from landing in May, to his eventual evacuation in September due to jaundice, septic sores, and dysentery. The editors, GA members Michael Crane and Bernard de Broglie, have done a splendid job in discovering this diary from a *Gallipolian* that would have otherwise gone unknown.

Whilst Riley was never to return to the fighting on Gallipoli, it would not be his last visit to the peninsula as he returned at least twice. In 1930 he toured the old battlefield, his reminiscences and post-war photographs forming the basis of an article that was published in *Twenty Years After*, under the title ‘The silent nullahs of Gallipoli’. In 1938 he penned another article, published in the *Daily Telegraph and Morning Post* under title ‘Gallipoli under tranquil skies.’ Both Riley’s post-war visit articles are compelling reading, and the accompanying photographs fascinating to study. It appears from the editors’ research that Riley’s intention was to write a book on Gallipoli, but the original manuscript had been lost. Thankfully this diary survived.

Riley’s descriptive narrative is absorbing to read, and each day’s events are meticulously captured. He identifies individuals from privates to generals, humanising these events. When recording the actions of 6th August, Riley wrote “General Lawrence, our brigadier, came to the telephone arranging for further attacks by 200 of the 7th Manchesters. He spoke to division and pleaded that our men had done all that could be expected. Again and again, he asked that it should stop. There were tears in his eyes as he spoke. Hundreds of men had been lost. As I was wearing the earpiece, I heard the answer ‘No,’ from division.” A heart-wrenching episode, perfectly recorded, that would have otherwise gone undiscovered. In addition to footnotes, the editors have added extensive appendices that include detailed biographical notes on individuals that Riley mentions, as well as an order of battle and summary of arms for the 42nd Division at Gallipoli.

This is an extraordinary book that ranks alongside the classic accounts by Joseph Murray, John Gillam and Cyril Lawrence. Riley’s gem of an account brings alive the silent nullahs of Gallipoli in a vivid, well-written and compelling true story of one man’s war. Highly recommended.

CAPTAIN EDWARD HAIN, 1ST DEVON YEOMANRY

Tribute from another Cornish soldier

Published in The West Briton and Cornwall Advertiser, 1915 –

Following is an extract from letter received Mr. John Pearce, of Pare-avenue, St. Ives, from his son, who is serving in Gallipoli:-

By the time this letter reaches you, you will have heard, and perhaps somewhat have got over the shock of the news of the death of Captain Hain.

It is a terrible affair, and it has cast a gloom over the whole regiment. We could not spare him, not only on account of his being so popular with all ranks, but also because he was a really clever soldier.

He was the pet of the officers and men, and every one of us would have done anything for him. Our (the Cornish) squadron felt it very keenly. Although he had not been with us for the past few months, he spent most of his training with the Cornish squadron...

We had been in the trenches for eight days, and were just going out for a rest. We had very few casualties whilst there - only one killed and one wounded. We were congratulating ourselves on this fact when we heard of the death of Captain Hain. He was in his dug-out, when a shell pitched right on top, killing him instantly.

I attended the funeral, there being only the colonel and one other officer with a few men of his own squadron (including myself.) No more were allowed to come from the trenches. Captain Hain is buried in another such place as the hill overlooking the sea at Clodgy, St. Ives."

Edward Hain was born 15 August 1887, the only son of Sir Edward Hain, MP, JP, of St. Ives, Cornwall and Catherine Hain, daughter of James Hughes of Whitehaven, Cumberland.

Edward junior attended Winchester College and New College, Oxford. On leaving Oxford, Edward went to South Shields to study ship construction and engineering.

On the outbreak of war, having joined the Cornish Squadron of the 1st Devon Yeomanry in 1912, Edward rejoined his regiment and was quickly promoted to the rank of captain.



In 1915, the Devon Yeomanry were sent to the Dardanelles, and Captain Hain fell in action, aged 28, at Suvla Bay on 11 November 1915 when a shell hit his dug-out. He was buried in Hill 10 Cemetery.



LAST POST

It is with regret that the Association learnt of the deaths of the following members:

- Patrick Hayes, Member 1769, died 5 April 2021, aged 95.

Patrick's daughter, Frances, wrote the following:

Dad's father, John (Jack) Hayes, was a survivor of the Gallipoli campaign. At the age of 95, I think Dad must have been one of the oldest surviving children of veterans.

He enjoyed greatly receiving the Gallipolian, and also attended some of the events, the most notable being the centenary in London in 2015. He was particularly impressed with the police escort we received on the coach journey from St Paul's Cathedral to Whitehall! The day was a wonderful commemoration to those who died and to the survivors.

Thank you for the service you have provided over the years which Dad appreciated so much.

- Douglas Watts, Member 7459, died September 16 2021.



Baron Birdwood, of Anzac and of Totnes. See page 37.



OBJECTIVES

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



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

Reproduced by kind permission of The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal

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

www.gallipoli-association.org