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*Sabretache*



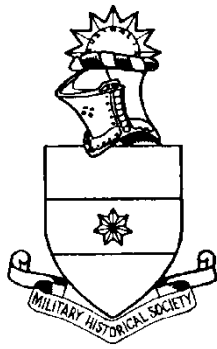
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[www.mhsa.org.au](http://www.mhsa.org.au)

Military Historical Society of Australia  
PO Box 5030, Garran, ACT 2605.  
email: [webmaster@mhsa.org.au](mailto:webmaster@mhsa.org.au)



**Patron**

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**Membership  
Secretary**

Gail Gunn  
[tonail@bigpond.com](mailto:tonail@bigpond.com)

**Editor**

Paul Skrebels  
[editor@mhsa.org.au](mailto:editor@mhsa.org.au)  
PO Box 247  
MARDEN SA 5070

**Society Website**

[www.mhsa.org.au](http://www.mhsa.org.au)

**Webmaster**

Peter Shaw  
[shaw@inet.net.au](mailto:shaw@inet.net.au)

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# SABRETACHE

The Journal and  
Proceedings of the  
Military Historical Society  
of Australia

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## Gallipoli Centenary

1915-2015

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## SPECIAL ISSUE

## INTRODUCTION

This special issue of *Sabretache* is the result of an initiative by the Federal President, Rohan Goyne, and represents the Military Historical Society of Australia's marking of the centenary of the Anzac landings on Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. At the same time it showcases the research and writing undertaken by its members over time, and so consists of a mix of past articles and new contributions that deal with a wide range of topics related to the Gallipoli experience. The ultimate decision about which articles to include has been left to me as editor, but I am confident that the choices made provide the reader with an insight into what those involved underwent at various stages before, during and after the Gallipoli campaign. Nevertheless I would like to have included many other items; there is certainly a wealth of material to choose from in the Journal's archives. I therefore wish to thank all those whose findings and expertise have made their way into *Sabretache* over the years, whether or not their work is included here. I particularly wish to single out Paul Rosenzweig and Colin Simpson, whose enthusiasm for and contributions to the project have added considerably to its outcome.

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**Paul Skrebels**

## FOREWORD

Of all the events that have shaped Australia, none stands with greater prominence than the First World War. The war's staggering cost in lives lost, in the minds and bodies broken and maimed, and in the grief and mourning is enough to account for that fact. There are also enduring reminders of its impact, such as the ubiquitous war memorials, national symbols like the slouch hat, expressions, organisations, rituals and ceremonies. For many of us there is still the memory of men who survived that war who once formed a backdrop to our own lives, perhaps as close family or friends or just as the old living veterans that we once referred to as 'returned men', and whose war was 'The Great War'.

In 2015 we mark the centenary of the Gallipoli campaign, and Australia's major entry into First World War combat. But 100 years on we may also reflect that there are no longer any old soldiers, or nurses, to tell us of their sad and proud experiences, none to show us their faded photographs, or to pass by in the annual Anzac Day parades. There are none left to whom participation in the war was their personal story. The First World War is now history.

A centenary is the opportunity for the Military Historical Society, and historians at all levels and of all interests, to re-examine the events of those war years and play a part in encouraging others to understand and appreciate their significance.

**Peter Burness**

**Australian War Memorial Lambert Gallipoli Fellow**

## GALLIPOLI CENTENARY 2015

SPECIAL ISSUE

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## GALLIPOLI GALLERY OPENED

*This is an abridged version of an article that appeared in Sabretache vol.25, no.3 (July/September 1984), pp.30-31. The Gallipoli Gallery referred to in the article is the previous one; a re-vamped gallery was opened in December 2014.*

\*

An historic gathering of approximately 240 surviving Australian Gallipoli veterans took place at the Australian War Memorial at noon on 20 August on the occasion of the opening of the new Gallipoli gallery. The gallery was officially opened by the Governor General of Australia, Sir Ninian Stephen.

The veterans are aged between 85 and 98 and travelled from every state and territory in Australia for the opening. The veterans represented nearly all of the 28 infantry battalions, the thirteen light horse regiments, Australian Army Medical Corps, Australian Army Service Corps, Ammunition Columns, field artillery, engineers and signals of the first Australian Imperial Force. Four veterans who served with New Zealand units and four who were with British units were also present. Sir Ninian addressed the veterans in the gallery of the Memorial adjacent to the new Gallipoli gallery. Some were 'side by side' for the first time in nearly seventy years. Some were able to meet members of their old units and it may be the last occasion for many of them to be reunited.

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*Address by the Right Honourable Sir Ninian Stephen, Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia, on the occasion of the Opening of the Gallipoli Gallery at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra on Monday 20 August 1984.*

What a fine and moving occasion this is with well over 200 Gallipoli veterans gathered here today, 69 years later, and coming from the four corners of Australia, some of them originally from the United Kingdom and New Zealand, and coming for the opening of the Gallipoli Gallery at this War Memorial of our nation. Their coming gives true significance to the occasion; they honour us by their presence.

This gallery is homage paid to the birth of the Anzac tradition. Australian and New Zealand troops have fought side by side on so many occasions throughout the years, but it was on Gallipoli that the word Anzac entered our Australian vocabulary; it was on Gallipoli that the name of Anzac acquired that special aura which still shines today.

Gallipoli would have had a very special meaning for Australians even if it had not been the scene of heroic deeds and long-sustained valour; it was the first occasion of any major engagement of Australian troops since the formation of the Commonwealth, since Australia became a nation and not just a number of British colonies strung out along the fringes of a continent.

But for us what has given Gallipoli its unique significance has been the knowledge of that ordeal of fire and suffering so gallantly withstood for so long against a great and redoubtable foe by those citizen soldiers from lands far away on the other side of the world. Between the landing on 25 April and the withdrawal eight months later Gallipoli claimed the lives of eight and a half thousand Australian men and more than 19,000 were wounded. For our young nation it was a dreadful cost, all too soon to be repeated on other battlefields in France, Belgium and elsewhere.

The extent of that sacrifice would itself have been enough to inscribe the name Gallipoli in the memory of a young but sorrowing nation; but that name has since come to mean far more to us even than the death and suffering associated with it. Gallipoli, and Anzac, have become synonymous with highest courage and unflinching endurance, personified in those Gallipoli veterans here today. The Australian people will always look to them, and to the many tens of thousands more who, after almost 70 years, are with us no more, for inspiration in times of need.

Unlike many another nation we celebrate in Gallipoli no great victory over an enemy. Instead we join with the Turkish people in tribute to valour, regardless of outcome, regardless of the fact that the campaign ended in bitter withdrawal from the peninsula. I doubt that a celebration of any great victory would be preferable. For it is the men of Gallipoli and what they stand for that is the central theme, not the campaign itself. Were it otherwise and were we celebrating one of the many victories of Australian arms we might indeed be glorifying war. But the veterans of Gallipoli know better than any that war is no glamorous pursuit: the unbelievable hardships, the dangers of death or mutilation that we may only read about were for them grim reality.

So our remembrance of the first Anzacs is an act of mourning for fine men sacrificed in their prime and a reaffirmation of pride in all those on Gallipoli who splendidly performed the duty demanded of them.

The Australian War Memorial is a superb setting for this new Gallipoli Gallery. The campaign by our first Anzacs has always been seen as of major importance here at the War Memorial and this new gallery will now enable a more complete and more impressive presentation of material from that part of our military history. The diorama of Lone Pine, the scene of such fierce fighting during the August offensive 69 years ago, occupies pride of place, as well it might. The fighting in the trenches resulted in 2000 Anzac casualties in one four-day-long period.

The Australian War Memorial may well be proud of the quality of the exhibits in this new Gallipoli Gallery. The gallery will bring to all who pass through it some greater understanding of what occurred in 1915 and what those surviving veterans here present today have endured. It will serve as a tribute to those who fought and to those who died – may they never be forgotten. I now declare open the Gallipoli Gallery.

-oOo-

### **Is it Anzac Day or ANZAC Day?**

**Dr John Moremon**

*This article first appeared in Sabretache vol.48, no.4 (December 2007), p.42.*

\*

What was once commonly ‘Anzac Day’ is nowadays often referred to as ‘ANZAC Day’ (in homage to the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps). Which is the more correct?

The official historian, Charles Bean, who knew more about Australians in the Great War than anybody, wrote of a day in early 1915 when a staff officer arrived at HQ seeking a code name

for the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. Having noticed ‘A&NZAC’ stencilled on cases and also rubber stamps bearing this mark, a clerk suggested:

‘How about ANZAC?’ Major Wagstaff proposed the word to the general, who approved of it, and ‘Anzac’ thereupon became the code name for the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.<sup>1</sup>

As a proper noun, as well as acronym, ‘Anzac’ entered the vernacular of the Diggers and Kiwis. At Gallipoli, they called their position, simply, Anzac; and the famous cove, Anzac Cove. They started referring to each other as Anzacs too. Eventually, any Australian or New Zealander who served in the war could be called an Anzac – although to them a true Anzac was a man who served at Gallipoli (later issued a brass ‘A’ to stitch onto each of their unit colour patches).

On 25 April 1916, when people paused to observe the first anniversary of the landing and pay solemn tribute to those who had died at Gallipoli, by common accord it was Anzac Day, in honour of the men (*not* ANZAC Day, in reference to the corps.) The NZ Returned Soldiers’ Association, for example, had an ‘Anzac day sub-committee’; the King sent a message to be published ‘on Anzac Day’; and songs and poems honoured ‘Our Anzac Boys’. As many more died on the Western Front, the day evolved to honour *all* Australians and New Zealanders in the war (that is, not just those of the ANZAC, which actually ceased to exist after Gallipoli). Later still, Anzac Day encompassed every other conflict.

The modern penchant for ‘ANZAC Day’ may reflect the influences of the Australian War Memorial and the RSL whose websites and publications [previously referred] to ‘ANZAC Day’ and to ‘the ANZACs’. Many people do not realise that the acronym is one which has only an initial capital and that this usage is enshrined in The Protection of the Word ‘Anzac’ Regulations. This is the word gifted to us by the men who forged the Anzac legend.

The ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915 gave us a legend and a date of commemoration, but the day has long been about so much more of our history and so many more of our people. This day is for all Australians to honour *all* who have served and died for our nation in the Anzac tradition.

‘Anzac Day’ reflects the history of this special word and the true meaning of the day. What is important is that the remembrance continues to be observed.

-oOo-

## THE GALLIPOLI LANDING

**Mervyn Spencer – late 1026, 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade AIF**

*Mr Mervyn Spencer of New Town, Tasmania, was one of the Gallipoli veterans who attended the opening of the Gallipoli Gallery at the Australian War Memorial on 20 August 1984. In Sabretache vol.25, no.3 (July/September 1984), pp.32-34, this reminiscence of his experiences during the landing on Gallipoli was published.*

\*

I was born at Waratah on the West Coast of Tasmania on 20 January 1891, one of a family of 13, nine girls and four boys. The First World War broke out in 1914 between England and

<sup>1</sup> C.E.W. Bean, *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918*, vol.1, *The Story of Anzac: ... the first phase ...*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 8<sup>th</sup> edn, 1938, p.125.

Germany and two weeks later they were calling for volunteers to go away to fight. My brother Tom and I journeyed to Hobart to join up. One have had to have certain qualifications to join, such as some military experience, Rifle Club etc, and we both belonged to a rifle club. The 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion brass band was being formed and we both played a brass instrument so we had no problems.

*Fig.1: 1026 Pte Mervyn Spencer, 12<sup>th</sup> Bn AIF, Egypt 1915. (Author's photo)*

The 12<sup>th</sup> Bn of 1000 consisted of 500 men from Tasmania, 250 from South Australia and 250 from Western Australia. We all trained together at Brighton Camp, Tasmania. We left Hobart on 20 October 1914 on the troopship *Geelong* and sailed to Egypt. We joined the rest of the Australian contingent, 20,000 in all, at Mena Camp, 10km from Cairo at the foot of the pyramids. All bandmen were made stretcher bearers and we were trained by a well-known Hobart surgeon, Dr V.R. Ratten. I had my 24<sup>th</sup> birthday in Cairo.

After three months' training we left on the troopship *Devanah* and sailed to the Greek island of Lemnos about 100km from Gallipoli. We sailed into Mudros Harbour and lived on the ship for three months training, practising rowing and handling. I was made a rower, being one of the strongest in the 12<sup>th</sup>.



We were the first ship in there and as we left at 3pm on 24 April 1915 the harbour was a forest of masts. Warships had been going out at dusk every night since we came, returning at daylight after blasting the forts at the Dardanelles but not with much success. Lemnos had plenty of spies on the island posing as Greeks, so the enemy knew as much about our plans as we did.

It was now 11pm, a lovely bright moonlight night, and not even a ripple on the water. The ship dropped anchor, the destroyer *Ribble* came alongside and in a few minutes 300 of us climbed down the rope ladders onto the deck of the *Ribble*. She then moved off, manoeuvring slowly through the early hours of the morning, keeping just far enough from land not to be detected.

We had been given 'Kye', a hot chocolate drink, every two hours by the *Ribble*'s crew while sitting on the cold steel deck – beautiful! The moon was slowly disappearing, the engines were stopped and there was a deathly silence in the atmosphere. I saw a searchlight track across the sky and a flash on the horizon as daylight started to appear at 5am. Then a rifle shot like the crack of a whip and they started to come faster and faster around the ship. Adjutant Hawley from Ross, Tasmania was the first man to get hit and he was paralysed for life.

Now the Skipper hurried down the ladder from the bridge and said with words I shall never forget, 'Come on boys, there's dirty work.' We took our places in the lifeboats which held 50 and with eight rowers in each of the six boats, three strapped to each side of the *Ribble*. A



pinnacle towed a string of three as far as it was safe to go to the shore, cut us adrift and left us to our own destiny.

Dozens of warships were now firing salvos over our heads, including the dreadnought Queen Elizabeth, the largest warship afloat, with 18-inch guns hurling thousand-pound shells into the enemy positions in front of us. Thousands of rifles were cracking and all hell was let loose. A mate of mine, George Wright from Western Junction, Tasmania, sitting between me and the edge of the boat facing the shore, was hit in a vital spot and felt a weight come over my oar. He cried out ‘Ooh’ and never breathed after that. Now I was in trouble, catching crabs; I could not get the blade in the water, the coxswain was shouting. I knew it was meant for me, so much noise, then he was silenced.

I half stood up, lifted up the twelve-and-a-half-stone dead weight, got the blade in the water and after that never missed a beat. Bullets were whistling past us, zip-zipping in the water in front and around. I was now straining every nerve and muscle to keep the blade in the water. I glanced along the boat and everyone except the rowers were crouching flat along the bottom like mussels on a rock.

I glanced down at George lying on his back, across my oar going back and forth, his white face looking up to heaven and only the whites of his eyes showing – looking so peaceful, not a care in the world. How do you think I felt – terrible. What a nightmare; my strength was starting to give out, wondering if I could make it and saying to myself, ‘Oh God, when will we touch?’

Seconds later we touched; I dropped the oar and it fell with my mate over the seat. I picked up my rifle and pack with 2-3 days’ rations, etc, and 200 rounds of ammunition strapped to my chest. I jumped overboard up to my waist in water. I thought I might not be able to make it up to the beach but I did. I did not see a soul around, I just remember falling on the beach exhausted for a short time before I heard a call, ‘Stretcher bearers!’ I got to my feet, my brother Tom was standing near with a stretcher and his first words to me were, ‘Look, poor Mitch got it.’ He was a stretcher bearer with us from Mitcham, South Australia. He was lying dead between us and the water.



*Fig.2: Mervyn Spencer in 1984, aged 93. In addition to his war medals, he wears a miniature of the Gallipoli commemorative medallion. (Author's photo)*

We soon got into action carrying in the dead and wounded. Calls for stretcher bearers were coming from every angle. Snipers were everywhere. Colonel Clark was hit by one leading the troops into battle, half an hour after the landing. We worked hard until near midnight, the shooting was easing down and I just lay down where I stood, so tired. I was beyond being tired and did not care what happened to me.

Now there were hundreds and hundreds lying strapped on stretchers, some moaning, others silent and bewildered and so brave. Then a shrapnel shell burst overhead and one man started screaming. I

made my way over to the stretchers to help him but could do nothing as he had a piece of hot shrapnel buried in his groin. His cries became lower and lower, then I knew he had passed on and thanked God for that.

He was just one of the many thousands that suffered the same agony and horror at Gallipoli. This is what I went through and saw in the first two days. I have been re-living Anzac for 68 years and I know I will continue to do so until I join those brave Anzacs who gave all for their country. Lest We Forget.

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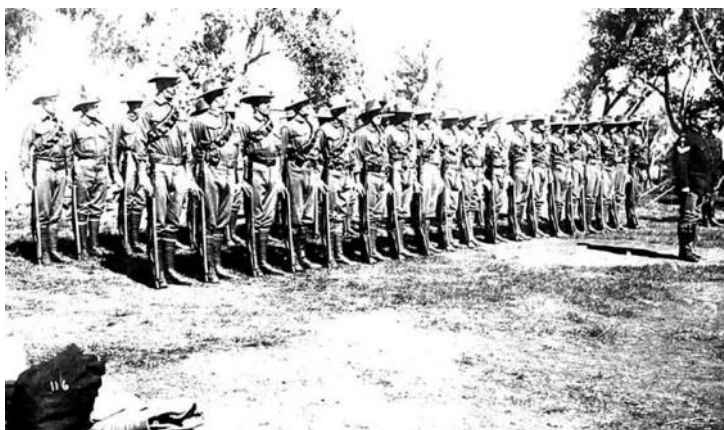
*Mervyn Spencer saw no further military service after he was evacuated from the peninsula. Following his discharge due to illness in 1916 he went to Britain to work as a foreman in an aircraft factory at Luton.*

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## **FIRST DIGGERS UNDER FIRE: AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS AT EL KANTARA, 3 FEBRUARY 1915**

**Graham McKenzie-Smith<sup>1</sup>**

The AIF was initially to field a division (1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division) with three brigades (each of four battalions) plus three artillery brigades, three field companies of engineers and supporting units. The first brigades of infantry and artillery were to be formed in New South Wales along with the first engineer company, while the second group was to be raised in Victoria. The third was to be raised in the smaller states, with Western Australia to form 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Bn, 8<sup>th</sup> Field Battery and 3<sup>rd</sup> Section, 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Company. The other sections of 3<sup>rd</sup> Fd Coy were formed in Queensland, Tasmania and South Australia.



*Fig.1: 3<sup>rd</sup> Section, 3<sup>rd</sup> Fd Coy on parade at Blackboy Hill Camp (RAEAWA Archive).*

Recruiting opened at Perth on 14 August 1914 and of the 46 men allocated to 3<sup>rd</sup> Section, only two had previously served with engineer units. With no qualified officer available, CSM J.H.H. Napier acted as OC and trained the men until he was commissioned as 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant on 16 September,

while L/Cpl G.O. McMullen had also been in the militia. 13<sup>th</sup> Fd Coy, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sec trained at Blackboy Hill Camp east of Perth until they embarked at Fremantle on 31 October. The rest of 3<sup>rd</sup> Fd Coy had embarked at Melbourne on 21 September and after a stopover at Hobart reached Albany on 26 October. The Anzac convoy sailed for Egypt on 1 November, and the Fremantle ships left to join them on 2 November. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Napier and the men of 3<sup>rd</sup> Sec were united with the rest of 3<sup>rd</sup> Fd Coy at the Mena Camp on 12 December 1914. The OC was Maj H O Clogstoun

<sup>1</sup> MHSA member Graham McKenzie-Smith is a Military Historian in Perth and has written extensively on the Australian Army in World War Two. This article was especially written for the Gallipoli centenary issue.

RE, who had been acting Director of Engineers at Army HQ, while the 2i/c was Capt E.F.G. Bage, a regular officer who had accompanied Douglas Mawson to the Antarctic from 1911 to 1914.<sup>2</sup>

*Fig.2: Pontoon bridge built by 3<sup>rd</sup> Fd Coy, January 1915, at this time located at El Kantara (RAEAWA Archive).*



Mena Camp was on the edge of the desert, near the Sphinx and some 10 miles from Cairo. To assist their training, Gen Bridges (GOC 1<sup>st</sup> Inf Div) arranged for the Engineer Field Companies to work on the field fortifications along the Suez

Canal, so 3<sup>rd</sup> Fd Coy moved to El Kantara on 5 January 1915 and then to Ismailia on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Their eight weeks working at the Canal was described as the best camp they were to ever have and they mingled with the local French, Italian and Greek townspeople, earning a good reputation, which was not maintained by units that followed in the area.<sup>3</sup>

In his official history, C.E.W. Bean writes,

The British authorities at once began to discover in this company, men who were experienced in almost every work which was needed. Within a week some were detached to manipulate searchlights, others had taken over the powerhouse at Ismailia, others were surveying for artillery ranges or maps, while the main body was making bridgeheads at Serapeum, Ismailia and Kantara, and also a floating bridge for Ismailia ferry post.<sup>4</sup>



*Fig.3: Aust Engineers in the El Kantara Trenches, February 1915 (RAEAWA Archive).*

This floating bridge was designed to be used with the fixed bridgeheads at El Kantara, Ferry Post or Serapeum and could be towed between them as required. It could be retracted to allow ships to travel up the canal and was suitable for infantry and cavalry, but the War Diary reported that ‘camel traffic caused considerable side sway owing to height above water’.<sup>5</sup>

A long-expected Turkish attack on the Suez Canal developed in early February 1915, so 3<sup>rd</sup> Fd Coy withdrew the bridge and stood by in the trench system. Part of the company was

<sup>2</sup> G. McKenzie-Smith, *Sappers in the West, Army Engineers in Western Australia, 1851 to 2012*, RAE Assoc of WA, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> R.R. McNicoll, *The Royal Australian Engineers 1902 to 1919*, RAE Corps Committee, 1979, p.

<sup>4</sup> C.E.W. Bean, *The Story of Anzac*, Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918, vol.1, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1921, p.

<sup>5</sup> War Diary 3 Fd Coy, February 1915, AWM 4 14/22.

working on the trenches south of El Kantara and they came under fire on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, along with the party manning the searchlights which illuminated the Turks trying to cross the Canal. Another party was laying mines at Ferry Post when they were attacked by snipers. The main attack south of Ismailia was defeated by Indian and New Zealand infantry and as the pontoons that the Turks had brought across the desert were sunk, they withdrew. The bridge at Ferry Post was re-floated on 7<sup>th</sup> to allow a force of mounted troops to cross to harry the retreating Turks. Gen Bridges reported that ‘The GOC of the force in Egypt informed the High Commissioner by cablegram that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Field Company, Engineers, had been under fire in the Canal and had comported themselves as he would wish.’<sup>6</sup> He also quoted the Chief Engineer of the Canal Defences as saying, ‘they were simply invaluable, both officers and men, and have thoroughly earned the excellent reputation they have acquired everywhere they have been ... The men are delighted with the work and have been exemplary in conduct.’ 3<sup>rd</sup> Fd Coy was relieved by 1<sup>st</sup> Fd Coy on 25 February and returned to Mena Camp for further training.

Although two battalions from 2<sup>nd</sup> Inf Bde were sent to Ismailia in response to the attack, the sappers from 3<sup>rd</sup> Fd Coy were the only Australian troops engaged, and they can rightly claim to be the first Australian soldiers to come under enemy fire in the Middle East, almost three months before the rest of the AIF first came under fire at Gallipoli. The Royal Australian Engineers Association of Western Australia still commemorates the action at its El Kantara meeting each February.

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*Above: A brass Turkish Army officer's belt-buckle, with a silver Ottoman crest, souvenired at Gallipoli by a South Australian member of the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF. (Author's photo)*

To Turkey, the Dardanelles campaign was the ‘Canakkale War’, after *Chanakkale Bogazi* [‘the Dardanelles’], and 18 March is celebrated as their day of victory. Enver Pasha, Minister of War and Ottoman Commander-in-Chief during the Great War, had undergone part of his military training in Germany and consequently adopted German practices for the Ottoman armed forces. Turkish infantry wore uniforms which were very Germanic in design, with essentially German equipment. Only one Turkish battalion defended the western coast of the Gallipoli Peninsula where the Australians and New Zealanders landed on the morning of 25 April 1915 – the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment of the 9<sup>th</sup> Division commanded by Sami Bey.

**Paul Rosenzweig**

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<sup>6</sup> CA, CRS MP 133/1, File 122/2/381.

## LIEUTENANT HUGO THROSSELL VC, 10<sup>TH</sup> AUSTRALIAN LIGHT HORSE, AIF

**Malcolm Higham and John Sweetman**

*This article was typed from the original interview by the Northam Advertiser, of Hugo Throssell VC, at his Northam home, before his return to Palestine. It details the action in which he won the Victoria Cross, Hill 60, Gallipoli, 29-30 August 1915. The original article was sent by Mrs Throssell to her sister, Mrs Thomas Hardie, of Warralong Station, near Marble Bar, in 1918. Mrs Hardie was the grandmother of contributor Malcolm Higham. This is an edited version of the article first published in Sabretache vol.42, no.2 (June 2001), pp.39-46.*

\*

In May, when our boys moved off to the firing line, I was left in Egypt with the horses. At the end of July, I got my marching orders and arrived at the Peninsula on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August.<sup>1</sup> I joined the rest of the 10<sup>th</sup> on Russell's Top and Walker's Ridge. Those of us who had just arrived were fit enough to jump out of our skins, and just spoiling for a fight, but sickness was beginning to make itself felt amongst those who had been there for three months. We were just in time to take part in the terrible charge of the 7<sup>th</sup> of August in which poor Tom Holler and so many other fine fellows lost their lives.

In the engagement the 8<sup>th</sup> Light Horse (Victorians) formed the first and second lines, and the 10<sup>th</sup> provided the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> lines. Between us we lost about 450 men in about a quarter of an hour, and not a man got near the Turkish lines. Our front trench was about 30 yards from the Turks. It was at 4.30am that the bombardment from the warships and the artillery stopped, and at once the 8<sup>th</sup> charged, first a body of 150 men, and then another 150 men. They were mowed down mercilessly and our turn came next. We got out about 10 yards and then lay there for an hour and a half, until Major Todd sent word back that it was hopeless attempting anything, and only throwing life away to remain there. Then we got orders to return to our trenches.

We held our positions for three weeks, when we were relieved by the 20<sup>th</sup> Battalion, a fine crowd of Australians, all fresh for the fray. We only had a half gallon of water per day, a wash was out of the question, and fighting was continuous. We had no rest for the whole three weeks, excepting a few hours' sleep, snatched in turn in the trench. The men were tired to death, and prostrated with sickness and vermin infested. Fortunately our food supply was pretty good.

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<sup>1</sup> 2nd Lieutenant Hugo Vivian Hope Throssell. 2<sup>nd</sup> Reinforcements. 30 years. Farmer. Single. Church of England. Northam, Western Australia. Remained in Egypt with the horses until being sent to Gallipoli, arriving 3 Aug 1915. Awarded the Victoria Cross:

‘29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> August 1915, at Kaiakij Aghala (Hill 60), Gallipoli Peninsula. Citation: For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty during operations on the Kaiakij Aghala (Hill 60) in the Gallipoli Peninsula on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> August 1915. Although severely wounded in several places during a counter-attack, he refused to leave his post or to obtain medical assistance till all danger was passed, when he had his wounds dressed and returned to the firing-line until ordered out of action by the Medical Officer. By his personal courage and example he kept up the spirits of his party, and was largely instrumental in saving the situation at a critical period.’ – *London Gazette*, 15 Oct 1915.

Invalided to Britain for treatment. Promoted to Lieutenant, 20 Feb 1916. Returned to Australia in April 1916. Although he was posted to ‘Light Duties’, on his return to Australia, he played an active part in recruiting activities. Posted to command the 23<sup>rd</sup> Reinforcements to the 10<sup>th</sup> Light Horse and returned to the Middle East, 22 Jan 1917. Fought in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Gaza, being wounded again on the 19 Apr 1917. Promoted to Captain, 15 Aug 1917. Commanded the Australian detachment of the Ceremonial Guard for General E.H. Allenby's formal entry into Jerusalem, through the Jaffa Gate, 10 Dec 1917. Returned to Australia, 4 Sep 1918.

*Fig.1: A studio portrait of Hugo Throssell as a captain in the 10<sup>th</sup> Light Horse. He is wearing the ribbon of the Victoria Cross on his chest. (Australian War Memorial photo P00516.001)*



We were told to go to Tabletop, a comparatively safe place to rest, and about 7 o'clock in the evening of the 27<sup>th</sup> August we started out. There was difficulty in getting mules and we had to carry our own belongings, clothes, rifles, ammunition, sandbags, water bags, picks and shovels. When we got near Tabletop the promised rest disappeared. Bullets were whistling around us, and at 9 o'clock in the evening we were ordered to sling off our packs and just take our fighting gear and ammunition.

We expected to be right into a charge, but the order was countermanded and we had a long walk to Hill 60, towards Suvla Bay. Wounded men were passing us all the time, on their way back from the firing line. The country was sapped the whole way until the last half mile, when we again got into the open, and the bullets began whistling around us again. One of the mules was shot, but all the men, between 100 and 200, got through. It had just been blind firing on the part of the Turks, as they could not see us over the hill. At the back of the hill we fell in with the 9<sup>th</sup> Light Horse (South Australians) and they told us where to go, and warned us to prepare for shrapnel in the morning. It was a bitterly cold night, and there was a lot of fighting going on.

During the night two or three lots of 50 men from the 9<sup>th</sup> made charges, and one lot was wiped out to a man, their bodies being found heaped up some days later. We were not called out that night, but did what we could to make our positions secure. In the morning the shrapnel started to come amongst us, and one 75 shell dropped right amongst us and failed to explode. I got a scratch on my leg, but nothing to speak of. We spent the morning digging into the side of the hill, to protect ourselves from the shrapnel and in the afternoon we got word that General Godley wanted to see us at three o'clock. We went across. Major Jack Scott, the only field officer we had left, was in command. The 'A' and 'B' squadrons combined could only muster 70 men, Capt Phil Fry in charge.

General Godley, a fine tall handsome man, told us what he wanted of us. We were to take a Turkish trench that had been taken twice before, and hold it. We were told that the trench was easy to take, but hard to hold. He made so light of it, I said 'Is it the only trench you want us to take?', and he said very quietly, 'Only one.' Phil Fry winked at me behind the General's back, and when we left him, one of the fellows said it seemed as simple as going down to Claremont Show. We were sent to General Russell, another New Zealand Officer, for further instructions, and he told off a Major, who took us to the top of a high hill to show us in the distance the

trench we had to take. It looked a maze. The trenches were so close, it was impossible to tell which were ours and which were Turks’.

The particular trench we had to take was held partly by the Turks and partly by our fellows. These trenches are constructed in a straight line for about five yards, then they bend back for a couple of feet, then go on straight for another five yards. This is to prevent the enemy, on capturing a section of trench, from sweeping it from end to end with a machine-gun. Well, in this trench our fellows had been steadily driving the Turks from portion to portion, erecting barricades of sandbags as they went. For five minutes at every hour they put up two pink flags, to show the artillery just where the dividing lines, and the Turks, seeking to mislead us, hoisted flags as well. We asked the Officer to give us a clearer view of the trench, and he took us down. It was the worst walk I ever had. The trench we had to traverse was shallow and wide, and a lot of wounded men were coming out, and 75s were falling around us. We came to a strip of twenty yards that we had to cross, was commanded by a couple of snipers, and we lost eleven men.

It was then decided that only the squadron leaders should go to investigate, and the rest of us awaited their return. They got back at about 7 o’clock, and it was after that with Capt Fry that I crossed that terrible 20 yards. We just doubled up and ran for our lives, treading on dead and wounded men. It was awful, but we had to find out what was before us.

At 9.30 we got back to the men, and had a little refreshment and a tot of rum, and told them we were to charge at 11 o’clock. The officers had to go at 10 o’clock for final instructions, and so meagre was the information at our disposal, that some thought the charge should be put off to enable us to get a better hang of the country. Our officers went to the General, and at 11.30 when they had not returned we all thought that the venture was off for the night. The men were all ready with their water bottles full, ammunition and 24 hours’ rations. Where they got the rations was marvellous, but our fellows showed resource in looking after themselves.

Soon after 11.30, Capt Fry came back and said that the General was very optimistic regarding our success, and thought that, as the Turks were digging themselves in, the longer we left it the harder it would be to shift them. One o’clock in the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> was the time appointed for the charge, and we got the men together and gave them their final instructions. We could only muster 160 men, all that remained of the 10<sup>th</sup> and the first reinforcements. We got them into three lines, everybody carrying three sandbags. The first line carried three bombs each, and those of the second line carried picks and shovels as well. Major Scott was in charge, and Capt Fry was in charge of our ‘A’ and ‘B’ Squadrons. The trench that we were to take was partly held by men of the 9<sup>th</sup> Light Horse, with only a sandbag barrier between them and the Turks.

We were to make our charge down 100 yards of the Turk portion, when the 9<sup>th</sup> would then take down their barricade, and we would re-erect it further on. As a matter of fact, we took a good two hundred yards of the Turkish trench and held it too. Well we went along our trenches as near as possible to the trench we had to take. There had been no preliminary bombardment, as it was to be a surprise attack. I was in the middle of a troop of 24 men, only two of whom got through the night. I told them to check their magazines and to see that their bayonets were properly set, when big McMillen (he was 6 foot 6 inches) shouted that the first line had charged. Then there was a fusillade of rifles. We could only get out of the trench one at a time, but we scrambled up, and went for our lives across the 60 yards that separated us from the Turks trench. It was a strange sensation to leave the high walls of the trench for the open air.

We had timed our charge to the minute, and it was wonderful thing to see the fellows running across the strip of ground with bombs bursting all round them. Half way across I got my foot in a bush and fell, and struggling up struck something else and rolled over and over. But I was not hit, and running for all I was worth, I jumped down into the Turks' trench. Our first line had got several of the Turks, and by the time we arrived the rest had fled.

### **The holding of the trench**

Capt Fry had paid me a great compliment, choosing for himself the task of greatest danger and difficulty, the leading of the first line against the right of the Turkish trench we desired to take, he selected me to follow him up with the second line. When I dropped into the trench, I saw him running up and down heedless of his own danger, encouraging his men. I posted myself at the corner of the trench, and looking around the bend I could see the next five yards of trench. We were piling our sandbags and endeavouring to make ourselves safe.

The Turks did not know how much of the trench we had taken, and it was not long before they began to come back into the section adjoining ours. One big man strolled in and stopped, giving me the finest target I could wish for. He fell, and others came on, and I got five before they found that we were there. It was bright moonlight, though dark in the trench. Having located our position, the Turks stopped in the next section but one, leaving about five yards of neutral territory. Each of the sections is about five yards long, and a bend of about two feet. We occupied section A, section B was neutral territory, vacant except for the bodies of the Turks, and section C was occupied by the Turks.

We could not see each other, and there was no opportunity for firing our rifles. We had fixed up our sandbags as well as we could, but a lot of the bags had no string to them, and we placed them in position as well as we could. Although we could not see the Turks, we could see the tops of their bayonets, and we could see them striking matches to light their bombs. Soon the bombs began to fall in our trench, and we picked them up before they exploded and threw them back again. That was the feature of the fighting that continued all night long. Our endeavour was to pick up the bombs quickly, and hurl them back into the Turks trench to explode there. Often there was not time to do this, and we just threw them out of the trench.

At times it wasn't possible to do even this, and we had to lie down flat while the bomb exploded and trust to luck. Several brave fellows went that way, but I was marvellously lucky. Young Leake from Kellerberrin, was one of the first to go, and when Capt Fry was killed, I was left in charge. It was fairly easy to send the bombs back so long as we kept the bottom of the trench clear. All the fellows had been instructed that if they got wounded and had to clear out, they must drop their equipment, rifles, ammunition, water bottles and tucker, and leave them for us to use. Our practice was to put these things on top of the parapet out of the way. But when three or four fellows got hit at once, we could not do this, and the floor of the trench became encumbered with stuff, amongst which the bombs fell. It was a bomb falling in this way that got McMillan and Capt Fry straight out. Another time I grabbed a bomb that had fallen amongst some equipment, and just as I raised my arm to throw it out, my thumb caught in something, and the bomb went spinning amongst our fellows. I called to them to lie down, and luckily none of them was hurt.

On one occasion, when I called for another bomb thrower, young McMahan from Kellerberrin, came along. He was only 19 years old, but a fine type of young Australian. He appeared on the books as having no next of kin. When he came along in response to my call, I asked him what



he was doing here. He said, 'I want to be in on this.' I asked him if he could throw bombs, and he said that he had never tried, but could pretty soon learn. He did not have to wait long for an opportunity, and after chucking out a couple he found that his tunic encumbered him, so he peeled it off and threw bombs all night long, until he fell in the counter-attack in the morning, of which I shall tell you later.

Another boy, Sid Ferrier, did equally good work, and Tommy Renton and McNee were there right through. McNee was wounded twice in the head and in the hand, and was awarded the DCM, Renton lost a leg, and Ferrier and McMahan were killed. These four were with me in the trench for most of the time, there was only room for seven, the trench being five yards long, 4 foot 6 inches deep with another foot of earth at the sides and about 4 foot wide.

At frequent intervals word was sent up to us to be sparing with our bombs, as the supply was not unlimited, and it was expected that we should have to meet a counter attack at daylight. To prevent the Turks throwing our bombs back, we timed them carefully. After lighting the fuse, we counted slowly, 'One, two, three', then threw the bomb, so the Turks never had time to handle the bomb before it exploded. During the whole long night, we never got one of our own bombs back, but we threw theirs back by the score, to explode in their own trenches. This went on for hours, heaving back their bombs and timing the throwing of our own. Whenever one of our men fell we sang out for another, and amongst those who took a hand were Burrows, Ladyman, Eakins, Steel and Sgt Henderson DCM, but the four I have already mentioned stuck to it all night through, having the luck to not get hit, except McNee, who was wounded, but preferred to stay.

We were making preparations to protect ourselves against shrapnel in the morning, and sent back orders for timber and iron to make a shrapnel proof cover, and in between throwing bombs we took turns with the pick and shovel. They sent up only one piece of timber and some lattice work iron, so we rigged the iron on top of the timber, stretched our coats over the top and piled sand on top, making the best protection we could.

Frequently we took a spell of five or ten minutes, it seemed as if it was done by mutual arrangement between us and the Turks. They would just throw the odd bomb or two, and we would pitch them back, without bothering with one of our own; then they would liven up again. Sid Ferrier had put his shoulder out playing cricket a few weeks before and during the night his shoulder gave away again so he had to abandon bomb throwing. We were very cheerful all the time, lots of laughing and joking, and each had some narrow escapes. One bomb hit Ferrier on the elbow and failed to explode; a piece of bomb hit me on the knee and bruised it, but without drawing blood. Several times I was hit like that, one smack on the foot caused lot of pain, but by some chance I escaped any serious injury.

It was very early in the morning, between four o'clock and 4.30, that our worst trial came. The expected counter-attack commenced then, and we were hopelessly outnumbered. We had started out with only 160 men and many had fallen, whilst the Turks seemed to be in unlimited numbers. We, who held the section of the trench on the extreme right next to the Turks, had to get our men in the next section to take down half of their sandbag barricade so that we could hop over and give up the section if things got too hot. Twice we had to do this, giving up five yards of trench each time and replacing the barricade each time.

Early in the counter attack I got a bullet through the back of the neck, and a piece of bomb through the shoulder. Not until long after did I realise that a bullet had struck my neck. It just

felt like a blow. We could see the bayonets of the Turks just above the walls, just as thick as they could stick. Then they crawled out of their trench and came straight at us, in the dim light we could see them on the skyline. I passed the word to our fellows, and when the first of them got to within ten yards of us, we stood up in the trench and fired as fast as we could, there was no thought of cover. We just blazed away until our rifles got red hot and the bolts jammed, then we picked up the rifles left by the wounded and those killed. Twenty yards was about our longest range, and I have no idea how many rounds we fired; I think I must have fired a couple of hundred, and when we were wondering how we could stand against such numbers, the Turks turned and fled.

In a few minutes they came at us again, and the same thing was repeated. We had no machine-guns, so we had to fire away with our rifles as quickly as we could. After the second charge, they changed their tactics and came at us from front rear and flank as well, getting behind us, between our trench and that occupied by the New Zealanders. Someone must have said something about retiring, although I did not hear it, but all around I heard angry cries of ‘Who said retire?’ The row was awful. Every man was determined to stick to the trench, and along with the firing, they were all shouting and yelling like demons.

The noise must have deceived the Turks as to our numbers, for they were all around us within ten yards, and if they had come on we should have been overwhelmed. Just at the critical moment, as it was getting daylight, a machine-gun came across from the New Zealand line, and was quickly placed in position. It settled the Turks third and final charge, and the trench was ours.

Young McMahon’s end was tragic but glorious. As the Turks were making one of their charges in the early morning, we saw a German officer picking up clods of earth and throwing them at the Turks to urge them on to the charge. Ferrier and McMahon put their rifles up and got a sight on the German against the skyline, and fired simultaneously. One or both of them got him, and of course both claimed it. McMahon said, ‘It’s been my ambition ever since I enlisted to get a German officer, and now I am satisfied.’ He rose up to get another shot, and got a bullet clean through his head. As he fell back a Turkish bomb crashed into the trench, and landed on top of him, blowing him to pieces.

At about 7.30 in the morning, after the last charge had been repulsed, I went back from the trench to get material to fix shrapnel shelters. Just as I came back, young Ferrier came out with his right arm blown to smithereens. He said, ‘Get the boys out of that, it’s too hot altogether.’ He walked about five or six yards and then sat down. There were no stretcher bearers, but someone gave him a tot of rum, and he walked to the dressing station about 300 yards away. They took his arm off at the shoulder, but he died on the ship. I was with him most of the time and never heard him groan or complain.

I was not feeling too bad, but Tom Kidd, from Geraldton came up to me and said that with so many dead men lying around I would be getting septic poisoning if I didn’t get my wounds dressed; so I went down to the dressing station and got fixed up. I got some timber and iron for the shelters, and some periscopes, and returned, but I suppose I looked much worse than I really was, with my hands all splintered from bombs and my face running with blood. Everything seemed nice and quiet, so I told the boys I would go and have a sleep. That was about 8 or 9 o’clock. Dr Bentley came and had a look at me, and packed me straight off to hospital on the ship.



*Fig.2: Hugo Throssell in Wandsworth Hospital, recovering from the wounds received at Gallipoli. (Australian War Memorial photo P00516.003)*

I cannot describe the luxury of a bath and clean pyjamas, clean sheets and a comfortable bunk. I slept for hours, and woke up with the beautiful face of one of those grand little Red Cross Nurses bending over me. I would not like to think that I have given a complete account of what happened on that long eventful night. I have just told you of the things I saw, the things that took place around me. I have here, in my pocket book, a copy of an extract of the report I made to the Commanding Officer from the hospital ship at Lemnos:

I want you, Sir, to recommend Corporal Ferrier, Trooper McMahon, Private Renton and Corporal McNee for special distinction. McMahon was killed, Ferrier had his arm amputated and died on the ship, Renton has had his leg taken off at the thigh, and McNee was twice wounded in the head and once in the hand.

In my opinion no Honour would be too high. They bore the brunt of the fighting for over six hours.

That we held the trench is, in my opinion, largely due to the courage and accurate bombing of these splendid men.'

From the Hospital Ship I went to Lemnos, then to Malta, Gibraltar and then to England. That night in the trenches and the wounds had rendered me temporarily deaf, but the specialist said it would need an operation to cure me. The operation was completely successful, but meningitis set in, and I was in hospital for a couple of months, but after that I recovered slowly. The treatment I received in England was wonderful, in common with all wounded Australian soldiers, but now I am home and on leave for three months.

## Reference

Lionel Wigmore, *They Dared Mightily*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1963, pp.47-51.

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*This bread knife comes from the transport ship Orsova which carried Australian troops between Australia and Alexandria. The SS Orsova was a 12,036 ton passenger liner belonging to the Orient Steamship Navigation Company Ltd of London. She was requisitioned as a troop ship in April 1915, and brought into service as A-67 HM's Australian Transport Orsova. She carried reinforcements from Australia to Alexandria, and from England back to Australia throughout the war. Later in the war it operated as a Hospital Ship returning soldiers to Australia.*

**Paul Rosenzweig**

## JAPANESE TRENCH MORTARS ON THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA, 1915

Rohan Goyne<sup>1</sup>

Some of the first trench mortars used by ANZAC forces on the Gallipoli Peninsula were four mortars which had been produced by a Japanese manufacturer from Osaka in Japan, hence the mortars were referred to as Japanese trench mortars. These mortars arrived in theatre on 20 May 1915 and each ANZAC division was allocated two.<sup>2</sup>



*Fig.1: Steeles Post, Anzac area (Gallipoli) 1915. Japanese trench mortar used by 'The Goodwin Team' (Photo and caption from the Australian War Memorial, PO1580.014)*

The mortars had been acquired to provide close fire support for ANZAC forces and they were stationed at various positions along the ANZAC line on Second Ridge. These high trajectory infantry support weapons were desperately needed on the peninsula.

Figures 1 and 2 show Japanese trench mortars at different locations along Second Ridge during the campaign: at Courtney's Post, Popes Hill, Steeles Post (as illustrated in fig.1) and 400 Plateau respectively. The trench mortar batteries were formed in the field as necessitated by the evolving tactics of the campaign. The mortar itself was a four-inch (101mm) weapon which fired a 30-pound (13.6kg) projectile with an effective range of 500-600 yards (c.450-550 metres) (see *Colour Plate 4 for an extant example*).

The map at fig.3 highlights the general locations for the firing positions for the mortar batteries on Second Ridge at Courtney's and Pope's Posts. Coincidentally, the Gallipoli Archaeological Project led by Professor Antonio Sagona of Melbourne University has been mapping Second Ridge for four seasons with the fifth and final year in 2014. They have recovered over 1,000 artefacts from Second Ridge and GPS located dugouts, trenches and firing positions along the

<sup>1</sup> This article was especially written for the Gallipoli centenary issue.

<sup>2</sup> R. Austin, *Gallipoli Encyclopaedia*, Slouch Hat, Rosebud, 2005, p.179.

ridge. The finds and locations have been mapped against 1/5000 scale maps produced by the Turkish cartographers during the campaign. The collaboration with Professor Sagona occurred after a lecture at the Australian National University titled ‘Unlocking Gallipoli’ in October 2013.



*Fig.2: Gallipoli, 1915. Members of an Australian trench mortar battery preparing to fire a Japanese trench mortar. The soldier in the centre is holding a cord which he is about to pull to fire the weapon. The nose of a mortar shell can be seen protruding from the end of the barrel. (Photo and caption from the Australian War Memorial, PO1850.004)*

Sir Ian Hamilton, the British commander, commented in his diary on the usefulness of the Japanese trench mortars:

The War Office can get no more bombs for our Japanese trench mortars! A catastrophe this! Putting the French on one side, we here, in this great force, possess only half a dozen good trench mortars – the Japanese. These six are worth their weight in gold to Anzac. Often those fellows have said to me that if they had twenty-five of them, with lots of bombs, they could render the Turkish trenches untenable. Twice, whilst their six precious mortars have been firing, I have stood for half an hour with Birdie, watching and drinking in encouragement. About one bomb a minute was the rate of fire and as it buzzed over our own trenches like a monstrous humming bird all the naked Anzacs laughed. Then, *such* an explosion and a sort of long drawn out ei-ei-ei cry of horror from the Turks. It was fine, – a real corpse-reviving performance and now the W.O. have let the stock run out, because some ass has forgotten to order them in advance. Have cabled a very elementary question: ‘*Could not the Japanese bombs be copied in England?*’<sup>3</sup>

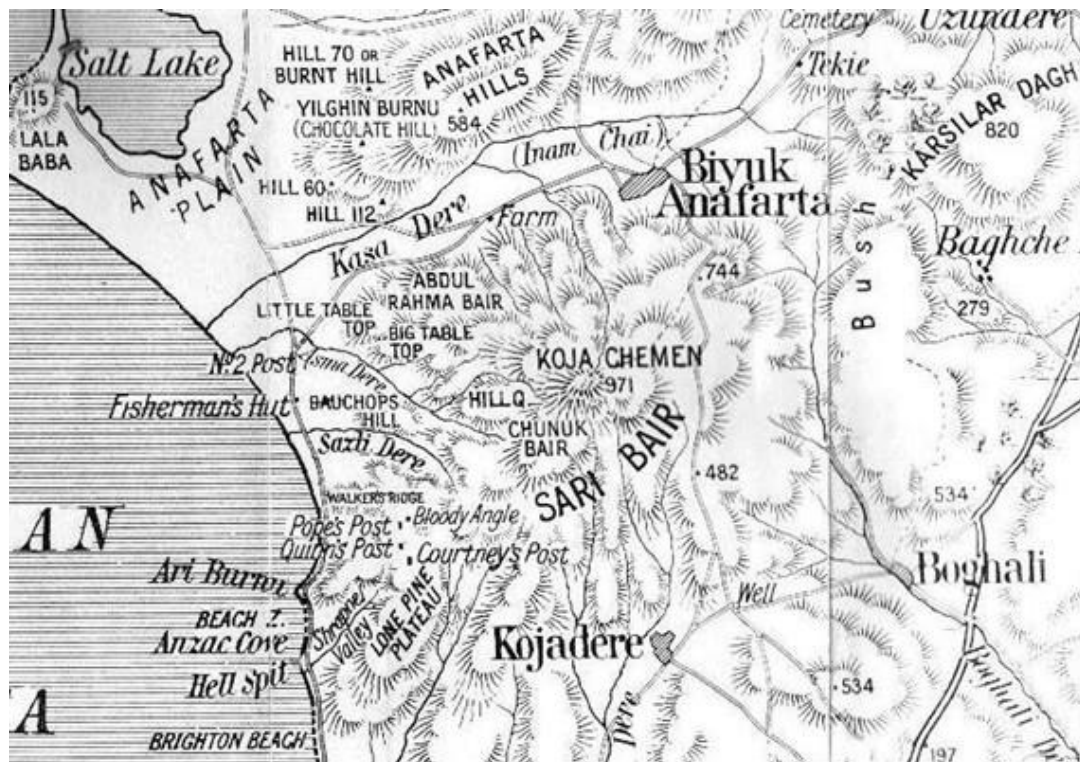


Fig.3: A map showing the general area where the Japanese trench mortars were situated (Gallipoli Association <http://www.gallipoli-association.org/content/a-z-of-gallipoli-locations>)

Similarly, Lieut Col H. Hart, Officer Commanding 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Wellington Infantry, wrote to the Grey River *Argus* in 1917 about the Japanese trench mortar used by his unit on the peninsula

This mortar was used by the battalion for many weeks at the ‘Apex’ and was one of the very few mortars used in that campaign ... It was being fired until late in the afternoon of the final day of the evacuation and at dusk it was carried to the beach by the mortar team ...<sup>4</sup>

Ultimately, the overall effectiveness of the Japanese trench mortars was reduced first, by the lack of a sufficient number of the weapon being made available; second, by the lack of sufficient ammunition available, around 500 to 700 rounds per mortar. This issue is clearly evidenced by Hamilton’s diary entry.

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<sup>3</sup> I. Hamilton, *Gallipoli Diary* vol.1, p.104 [www.aolib.com/reader](http://www.aolib.com/reader) (accessed 30 October 2013).

<sup>4</sup> [www.natlib.govt.nz](http://www.natlib.govt.nz) (accessed 25 May 2012).

## **‘A LITTLE ROTTING PIER’: STANLEY HOLM WATSON CBE DSO MC ED (1887-1985) – PART 1**

**Paul A Rosenzweig<sup>1</sup>**

As we prepare to commemorate the centenary of the ANZAC landing, some will recall that 2015 also marks a particular bicentenary. The now famous Battle of Waterloo on 18 June 1815 was the culmination of a campaign waged by the declared ‘outlaw’ Napoléon Bonaparte in which he was defeated by a multinational coalition under the Duke of Wellington and a Prussian army under von Blücher. The significance of this ‘defining moment in European history’ was recalled in a message by the 8<sup>th</sup> Duke of Wellington for the Waterloo 200 commemorative committee, in which he noted that the gallantry and sacrifice of those who died in the campaign, ‘ensured peace in Europe for 50 years’.<sup>2</sup> Of note, the centenary of Waterloo a hundred years ago was not overlooked by a group of Australian officers at Gallipoli who marked the occasion with a dinner, which fortuitously coincided with the opening of the first permanent pier at Anzac Cove – ‘Watson’s Pier’.

On Anzac Day 1980 in Adelaide, as the bemedalled contingents gathered on corners along King William Street in readiness for the main parade, Norm Wauchope MM proudly introduced his fellow signaller: ‘This is Colonel Stan Watson, he was the last man off Gallipoli’ (see fig.1). The 92-year-old gentleman standing beside Wauchope quietly corrected him, ‘That’s not quite correct’, pointing out that there were in fact a couple of others who left just after him. Nevertheless, Stan Watson’s array of decorations and medals clearly attested that this distinguished but humble hero of Anzac had some very interesting stories to tell – the construction of Watson’s Pier being one and the evacuation of Gallipoli being another.

### **Stanley Holm Watson**

Stan Watson was often described as having that rare attribute of being a ‘natural leader’. But leadership is not just about commanding and managing, although that may be what training institutions and management bodies like to portray. Leadership is more about being a role model, and only rare individuals like Stan Watson have the natural ability to display that characteristic throughout their whole life. In recommending Watson for the DSO, the GOC 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Division called him a, ‘brave and competent officer’.<sup>3</sup> In a eulogy delivered at St Michael’s Anglican Church in Mitcham seven decades later, Brigadier Phillip Greville CBE described Stan Watson as, ‘one of the most efficient and successful commanding officers of Signals in the First World War’.<sup>4</sup>

Stan Watson was almost 27 years old when he applied for his AIF commission on 19 August 1914.<sup>5</sup> By that time he had gained 2½ years’ militia experience as a junior engineer officer in Adelaide: as 2i/c of No.6 Field Troop and as commander of the 28<sup>th</sup> Signal Company. This leadership experience, and his family role as the eldest son, set the conditions for his success at Gallipoli. Watson was appointed to the AIF as a lieutenant, commanding HQ Section of the 1<sup>st</sup> Divisional Signal Company, Australian Engineers. The company had been mobilised at

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Rosenzweig is a medal collector and non-professional military historian and biographer. He has regularly contributed to *Sabretache* and various other Australian historical journals and Defence publications over the last thirty years. This article was especially written for the Gallipoli centenary issue.

<sup>2</sup> His Grace the Duke of Wellington KG LVO OBE MC DL: <http://www.waterloo200.org/>

<sup>3</sup> AWM (Australian War Memorial): awm28-1-118 part 2-0140 – recommendation dated 24 September 1918.

<sup>4</sup> Fielding (1990) pp.406-407.

<sup>5</sup> NAA (National Archives of Australia): Series No. B2455, ‘WATSON S H’, barcode no.1915217.

Broadmeadows, Victoria that same day, 19 August, under Major Harold Llewellyn Mackworth DSO RE, a British Army loan officer.<sup>6</sup>

The Signal Company embarked on HMAT A10 *Karoo* at Town Pier, Port Melbourne on 20 October 1914, and on 31 October she sailed with the convoy from King George Sound in Albany: seventh in line on the port flank. From Alexandria, General Birdwood and his ANZAC corps staff, and General Bridges and his 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Divisional staff, travelled to Mudros in the SS *Minnewaska*. Watson later noted:

During the short voyage some time before midnight, all officers on board *Minnewaska* were directed to assemble in the large lounge to hear an address by General Birdwood. It was a very good, heartening talk on the eve of the coming battle, and gave us much for immediate reflection.<sup>7</sup>

In this address, given just hours before the now famous landing, Birdwood referred to what he called the three Cs as essential to success in battle: Courage, Cooperation and Communication.

Watson's HQ Section and No.1 Section disembarked from the *Minnewaska* and came ashore at Gallipoli on 25 April between 0700 and 0800. The War Diary notes that HQ Section personnel had to carry signalling equipment, telephone gear, lamps, office stores and two bicycles, in addition to their personal gear.<sup>8</sup> The signallers furiously established a divisional signal office and began laying wires from the division headquarters out to the advanced brigades. A photograph shows Major Mackworth with Lieutenants Watson and Gordon outside Watson's dugout near Divisional HQ:

The officers said that they would not shave until they reached Constantinople but they recanted on the vow after several weeks, when the prospect of a forward move disappeared.<sup>9</sup>

Watson soon came to prominence not so much for his prowess as a signals officer, but for using his engineering knowledge in constructing the first permanent pier at Anzac Cove.

### **Watson's Pier**

The small cove between the two headlands of Ari Burnu and Little Ari Burnu (or 'Hell Spit') quickly became a substantial base and supply dump. Men and supplies initially came ashore via four floating jetties but these were particularly vulnerable to snipers and shellfire, notably 'Beachy Bill' at Gaba Tepe. The unloading of stores and control of the beach fatigue parties was managed by the Military Landing Officer Captain Charles Littler<sup>10</sup>, who held the formal appointment of 'Adjutant Anzac Cove Area' but was instead nicknamed the 'Duke of Anzac'. Littler had previously been in the Philippines after the turn of the century, running a stevedoring agency, serving with the US Army of Occupation, and providing intelligence for the Royal Navy.

A 'city' of supply depots soon arose between the scrub and the waterline with stacked ration boxes, ammunition and fodder, and picketed mules, along the busy thoroughfare running parallel to the beach traversed by work parties and reinforcements. In this narrow strip there was everything to sustain an army in the field. For the men coming down from the hills, Bean observed that the beach was, 'a crowded bustling centre of life, which ... became to them what

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<sup>6</sup> Mackworth already held the DSO (1901) and the Imperial Ottoman Order of the Osmanieh 4<sup>th</sup> Class awarded by the Khedive of Egypt (1909).

<sup>7</sup> Watson (1984) p.11.

<sup>8</sup> AWM: AWM4, 22/11/2 – 1<sup>st</sup> Divisional Signal Company War Diary, April 1915.

<sup>9</sup> AWM: image ID number A00871.

<sup>10</sup> Higgins (1986); Franki & Slater (2003) p.30.



a metropolis is to the country folk of a State'.<sup>11</sup> By the end of April the beach resembled an 'old-time port' with its piles of stores and beached barges. The overcrowding led to a second depot for engineer stores being established past the mouth of Shrapnel Gully to the south at 'Brighton Beach'. At the same time many of the wells that had been dug had run dry, and those that were producing water could not provide the minimum requirement for drinking and cooking (not washing). The sheer volume of stores ashore, and traffic continuously arriving, created the need for a permanent pier.

Meanwhile, a group of thirteen officers at HQ 1<sup>st</sup> Division came to be known as the 'elevenes' for their habit of gathering together each day at 1100 for morning coffee. Among them were Mackworth, Watson and Gordon, Captain Vernon Sturdee (Adjutant of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division Engineers) and Lieutenant Colonel Cecil Henry Foott. Watson knew Foott from lecture visits he had made to No.6 Field Troop in Adelaide in his capacity as Director of Engineers between 1901 and 1911; now Foott was Deputy Assistant Quarter-Master General 1<sup>st</sup> Division and the senior engineer. Watson recalled him fondly as 'the life and soul of the small group of Sappers at the First Div. H.Q. ANZAC'.<sup>12</sup> The engineer field companies were overwhelmed with urgent works, so Mackworth proposed to Foott that Watson should take on the task of building a pier with whatever 'elements of manpower as could be scraped together'.<sup>13</sup>

Although Watson was on the Peninsula as a signals officer, the 1<sup>st</sup> Divisional Signal Company actually belonged to the engineers, and Watson was himself an engineer by trade. After his schooling at Plympton Primary School and Sturt Street Advanced School, Stan Watson had studied engineering at the School of Mines<sup>14</sup> and the University of Adelaide. In 1904 he was apprenticed for five years as a draftsman in the drawing office at the Islington Railway Workshops, and continued his career with the South Australian Railways until the war intervened. Watson gathered some New Zealanders and anyone from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Company who could be released, and led them in the construction of Anzac Cove's first substantial structure using an improvised pile-driver. Watson later recalled: 'It took 30 of us about four weeks to build. It wasn't easy. We were working under intermittent fire from the Turkish artillery, and a number of men were lost through this.'<sup>15</sup>

Bean recorded that during June there was some mildly rough weather which, 'disturbed the piles and trestles of Watson's Pier, which was at the time being constructed'.<sup>16</sup> These trestles at the shoreward end were too easily displaced by tidal movements, so Watson decided to install piles instead. To drive them in, he used a Turkish 9-inch naval armour-piercing shell which had fallen into one of the gullies from the Turkish cruiser *Barbarossa*: 66 years later he told a newspaper reporter, 'I knew nothing about explosives and I was terrified'.<sup>17</sup> Watson 'deloused' the shell by removing all the powder and adapted it for the purpose: 'This I did with some fear, and it became the monkey of a prefabricated pile driver; it was filled with shrapnel [sic] pellets to add to its weight'<sup>18</sup> – the 'monkey' being the suspended 'monkey weight' which falls under its own power to drive the piles in. Some sources state that the RAN Bridging Train at Kangaroo Beach, Suvla improvised a pile-driver using an unexploded Turkish shell in order to

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<sup>11</sup> Bean (1921) p.543.

<sup>12</sup> Watson, S.H., Address to the Sydney Waterloo Dinner, 18 June 1984 (Pers Comm 23 May 1984).

<sup>13</sup> Watson (1984) p.15.

<sup>14</sup> Decorated graduates of the School of Mines were listed in *The Adelaide Chronicle* dated 21 December 1918, p.12.

<sup>15</sup> *The Advertiser* (Adelaide) 25 April 1981.

<sup>16</sup> Bean (1924) p.348.

<sup>17</sup> *The Advertiser* (Adelaide) 25 April 1981.

<sup>18</sup> Watson (1984) pp.15, 15a.

construct a pier. The RANBT did in fact erect some piers, but they were in support of the British IX Corps and had no association with the ANZAC force just four miles away. Watson noted that the RANBT's only involvement in his project was the provision of suitable timber.<sup>19</sup> Tom Frame and Greg Swinden have noted that any story which attributes the improvised pile-driver to the RANBT 'is false'.<sup>20</sup>

The first vessel to berth was a small destroyer, but a spray of Turkish shells caused her to quickly back out. At morning coffee on 18 June, Major Mackworth brought along a sign reading 'Watson's Pier', and this was placed at the shore end of the pier with some appropriate remarks. If this beach was a metropolis, as described by Bean, through to December 1915 Watson's Pier was its lifeline – for barges, lighters and fishing trawlers bringing in stores and personnel, and also for evacuating the sick and wounded. Day and night, Bean observed, Anzac Cove was abuzz with noise: 'launches with tows moving constantly in and out, the shrill whistles of small craft, the hoots of trawlers, the rattle of anchor-chains, the hiss of escaping steam'.<sup>21</sup> This pier, 210 feet long and with 19 bays, remained as the main access point for the great city of Anzac until September 1915 when North Beach was developed as a supply base.

Those trying to berth were all targeted by the Turkish artillery, particularly the Olive Grove batteries. As the intensity of shelling increased, Watson's Pier assumed a nocturnal posture: from the end of June all stores and reinforcements were landed by night. Landings were made using pre-arranging berths and a strict time-table, with the last gone by 0300, so that by daylight the anchorage and harbour were empty again. Bean noted that it was possible to bring ashore 6,000 troops in one night in this manner.

But it was through the opening of the pier on 18 June 1915 that Foott and Watson began an engineer tradition – the Waterloo Dinner, first documented in 1986:

[http://www.adfjournal.adc.edu.au/UserFiles/issues/59%201986%20Jul\\_Aug.pdf](http://www.adfjournal.adc.edu.au/UserFiles/issues/59%201986%20Jul_Aug.pdf)

When Watson had mentioned to the elevenses on 17 June that his pier would be available the next day for operations, Foott remarked, 'Waterloo Day, let's have a dinner to celebrate!'. The meal held on 18 June to commemorate the centenary of the Battle of Waterloo included biscuits and bully beef disguised as 'Boeuf Geleé d'Australie', washed down with something resembling 'Ponch Romaine' (as had been served as a palette cleanser on the 1<sup>st</sup> Class dinner menu on the *Titanic*) which was described on the menu as 'All the excitement of war, and only 25 per cent of its danger'. Watson's batman Sapper Roach drew up a menu and all diners signed it – except Watson whose signature would have been the thirteenth (after the dinner however, Sapper Roach himself signed it). Vernon Sturdee dined with them, but the young intelligence officer Major Blamey was perhaps on duty and could not. Another such dinner was held in 1924, and since then engineers have held an annual dinner. The irony is that Watson was a signals officer so, after the Royal Australian Corps of Signals was formed on 14 February 1925, the tradition was perpetuated by inviting a senior Signals Corps officer to the dinner each year. Watson himself was invited to speak at the Sydney Waterloo Dinner in 1984 at the age of 97, where he proposed a toast to the memory of Brigadier-General Foott.<sup>22</sup>

Several other piers of varying sizes were built a few months after Watson's, including one on North Beach north of the main headland of Ari Burnu. After a few months of clear skies, in

<sup>19</sup> Watson (1984) p.15.

<sup>20</sup> Frame & Swinden (1990) p.132.

<sup>21</sup> Bean (1921) p.545.

<sup>22</sup> Watson, S.H., Pers Comm 23 May 1984; *Army* dated 26 July 1984.

November the weather became more sinister: one wild storm swept over the Peninsula on 27 November with rain and a snow blizzard causing havoc in the trenches, the waves damaging Watson's Pier and washing barges ashore.

Another Adelaidean on the Peninsula was 392 Lance-Sergeant Leon Gellert (1892-1977)<sup>23</sup> from Walkerville: before the war he was a senior cadet at Unley High School and then a teacher, and had landed on 25 April with the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF (but was evacuated in July however, suffering from dysentery and septic poisoning). In January 1916, Gellert provided an evocative portrait of Anzac Cove as if he had returned there after the evacuation:

#### **Anzac Cove**<sup>24</sup>

There's a lonely stretch of hillocks:  
 There's a beach asleep and drear:  
 There's a battered broken fort beside the sea.  
 There are sunken trampled graves:  
 And a little rotting pier:  
 And winding paths that wind unceasingly.

There's a torn and silent valley;  
 There's a tiny rivulet  
 With some blood upon the stones beside its mouth.  
 There are lines of buried bones:  
 There's an unpaid waiting debt:  
 There's a sound of gentle sobbing in the South.

Watson did have the privilege of returning to Anzac Cove – in March 1977: he found no surviving trace of his pier, but was thoroughly dismayed when he reflected on the suffering and death that had occurred: 'Just looking at it I really wondered how the devil we ever stayed there'.<sup>25</sup>

#### **Exodus from Anzac**

In planning for the withdrawal from the Gallipoli Peninsula, Brigadier-General Cyril Brudenell White tasked Lieutenant Watson with managing the lines of communication. The evacuation proceeded according to plan on the nights of 18 and 19 December, with rearguard parties within each unit designated to leave for the beach at specific times: these select few who stayed to the last called themselves the 'diehards'.<sup>26</sup>

Bean recorded some of the 'lasts' of the campaign<sup>27</sup>: Private Egan threw the last bombs, and Corporal Worrall is said to have fired the last shot (not counting the rifles with delay mechanisms). The last to leave the trenches was the one almost left behind: Private Pollack awoke in his dugout and, finding the area deserted, ran to North Beach and embarked on one of the last lighters. The last casualties were one man wounded on shore and one 'unnamed light horseman' in one of the boats who was hit by a stray bullet from the fusillade caused by the explosion of the mines.<sup>28</sup> In addition to these and other 'lasts', Stan Watson was the last officer

<sup>23</sup> NAA: B2455, 'GELLERT L M', barcode no. 4104382; Gellert (1917); Souter, G (1996) 'Gellert, Leon Maxwell (1892-1977)'. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Melbourne University Press, vol.14.

<sup>24</sup> Gellert (1917) p.64.

<sup>25</sup> *The Advertiser* (Adelaide) 25 April 1981.

<sup>26</sup> Franki & Slater (2003) p.30.

<sup>27</sup> Bean (1924) p.894.

<sup>28</sup> The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website lists five AIF deaths on 19 December, and four on 20 December – all from illness except for Sergeant Harry Bowser of 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse Brigade HQ. Bowser died of

sent off by the Beach Commandant.

Final arrangements for the evacuation of Anzac were made in the very early hours of 20 December. At 0200, half the medical personnel of the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Casualty Clearing Station and the last 2,000 troops were ordered to embark on special barges. The other half of the medics, among the last 800 men at Anzac, embarked at 0300. The last two hundred men on the Peninsula were veterans of the 25 April landing, given the honour of fighting a rearguard action if it became necessary. The Signal Company's war diary recorded that the last message was received over the lines at 0200; the signallers moved off for embarkation at 0215, and they left at 0315.<sup>29</sup> At this time, Stan Watson was finalising arrangements at the signal station at North Beach. The Beach Commandant Captain Littler noted in his diary: 'At 3.30 all complete, but a few last down were 9 machine gunners and Captain Watson and 5 from Wireless'.<sup>30</sup>

Bean records that at 0330 the Divisional Commander of Rear Parties Colonel John Paton went to North Beach to send a prepared message to the naval wireless operators on South Beach for transmission to General Godley: 'Evacuation completed. No casualties left ashore. One sent aboard'. However, the telephone line was dead. Watson ran the length of Anzac Cove to South Beach where he ordered the operators Herbert and Jones to send a shortened message: 'Embarkation completed'. Watson then ran back past his celebrated pier to North Beach with Herbert and Jones, with Captain Littler encouraging them to hurry onto the last lighter. Watson went with that boat at 0400.

Later, after everyone was safely on the transport ship, Littler told Watson that he was the last officer he had sent off the Peninsula. Watson later recalled: 'I asked him if he would make a written entry on the Will page of my pay-book' – Littler's entry read, 'Capt. S.H. Watson was the last officer I sent on board at North Beach on the evacuation of Anzac. Signed C.A. Littler, Capt. Beach Commandant'.<sup>31</sup> The small party of Paton, his Rear Party Staff Officer Evan Wisdom, Captain Stavely and Littler plus perhaps two staff remained behind on the beach for stragglers. At 0410, ten minutes after Watson's group had left, they too cast off in Captain Stavely's steamboat.<sup>32</sup>

The poet-soldier Leon Gellert was found to have epilepsy and was medically discharged on 30 June 1916. He was later favourably compared with Brooke and Sassoon, vividly able to express in verse a soldier's disillusionment. Gellert was not actually present for the evacuation of the Peninsula, but in his collection *Songs from a Campaign* (1917) he published a moving reflective piece, placing himself in the boots of one who was on the beach that morning of 20 December 1915:

**The Last to Leave<sup>33</sup>**

The guns were silent, and the silent hills  
had bowed their grasses to a gentle breeze  
I gazed upon the vales and on the rills,  
And whispered, 'What of these?' and 'What of these?'  
These long forgotten dead with sunken graves,

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wounds on the Hospital Ship *Dunluce Castle* on 19 December and was buried at sea between Anzac and Mudros, and was listed on the Lone Pine Memorial as having no known grave.

<sup>29</sup> AWM: AWM4, 22/11/7 – 1<sup>st</sup> Divisional Signal Company War Diary, December 1915.

<sup>30</sup> 'The Last Australian: Gallipoli'. *Reveille*, 30 April 1930, p.29.

<sup>31</sup> *The Advertiser* (Adelaide) 21 April 1982; see also Broadbent (1990) pp.126-27.

<sup>32</sup> 'Gallipoli: First and Last Digger'. *Reveille*. RSS&AILA NSW Branch, Sydney, 31 Jul 1929, p.8.

<sup>33</sup> Gellert (1917) p.73.

Some crossless, with unwritten memories  
Their only mourners are the moaning waves,  
Their only minstrels are the singing trees  
And thus I mused and sorrowed wistfully

I watched the place where they had scaled the height,  
The height whereon they bled so bitterly  
Throughout each day and through each blistered night  
I sat there long, and listened – all things listened too  
I heard the epics of a thousand trees,  
A thousand waves I heard; and then I knew  
The waves were very old, the trees were wise:  
The dead would be remembered evermore-  
The valiant dead that gazed upon the skies,  
And slept in great battalions by the shore.

Watson was not a mourner that morning, but he probably did gaze back upon the vales and rills as he boarded his lighter, musing wistfully. Watson was recommended for a decoration for his support of the evacuation:

For excellent work in laying and maintaining the Divisional and other Signal lines of communication during the withdrawal. Under his control the communications of the Division worked excellently right up to the last moment.<sup>34</sup>

Based on this recommendation he was mentioned in dispatches, ‘for distinguished and gallant services rendered during the period of General Sir Charles Monro’s Command of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force’.<sup>35</sup> In a Military Cross recommendation in 1916, his commander also observed: ‘He played important part during the GALLIPOLI campaign including the landing and the evacuation’.<sup>36</sup> In a further (and successful) MC recommendation it was noted: ‘I have repeatedly sent forward his name for recognition of his valuable service’.<sup>37</sup>

Major Mackworth was mentioned in dispatches for his work on the Peninsula and during the evacuation, while the 1<sup>st</sup> Divisional Signal Company’s CSM Tommy Deam was awarded the MC for running the Divisional Signal Station during the evacuation. Cecil Foott, the 1<sup>st</sup> Division DAQMG and senior engineer, was recommended for a Mention-in-Despatches but it took a further recommendation to secure the award, for being ‘of the greatest assistance’ in the arrangements for the evacuation. This was the first of an eventual seven, and Foott also finished the war with a CB, CMG and the Serbian Order of the White Eagle 4<sup>th</sup> Class, with swords.

After a few tentative probes and patrols, the Turks victoriously seized the trenches that had for so long eluded them. The eerily quiet Anzac city then faded away: anything useable was salvaged, and any timber (including crosses in the cemeteries) was consumed as firewood. During Bean’s return visit in early 1919 he observed that, apart from the gentle waves, nothing stirred except a few of the piles of our old piers gently swaying in the swell.

*(Part 2 of the article begins on p.37)*

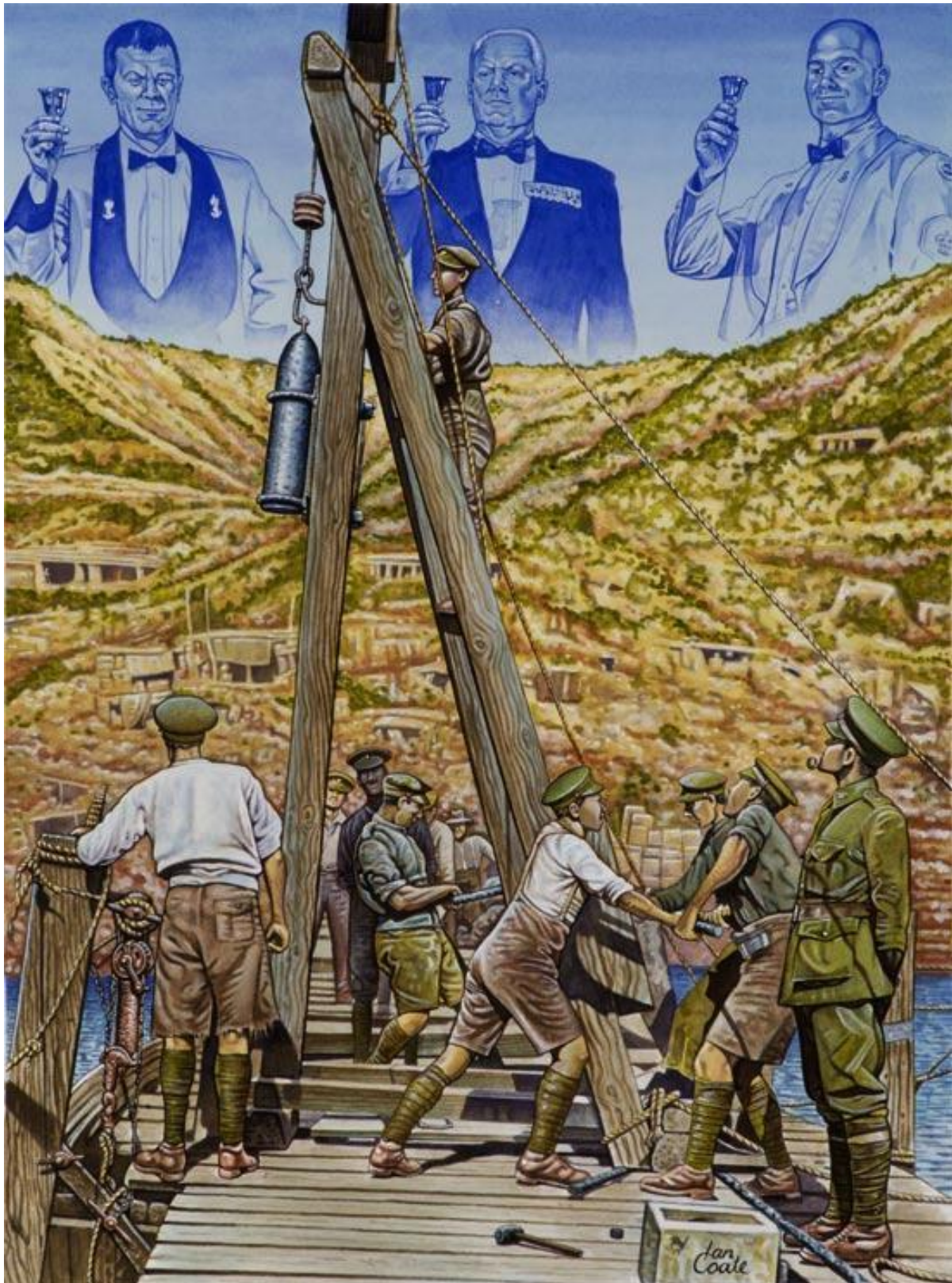
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<sup>34</sup> AWM: awm28-2-220-0011 – recommendation, undated.

<sup>35</sup> *London Gazette* No. 29664 of 11 July 1916, Fourth Supplement dated 13 July 1916, p.6954.

<sup>36</sup> AWM: awm28-1-69-0192 – MC recommendation, 1916.

<sup>37</sup> AWM: awm28-1-77-0039 – MC recommendation, 1916.



***Plate 1: 'Toasting Watson's Pier' by Ian Coate (2003)***

*A watercolour painting commemorating both the construction of Watson's Pier at Gallipoli and the Waterloo Dinner. (Reproduced by permission of the artist)*



*Plate 2 (above): The miniature medals of Stan Watson, including the Serbian Order of the White Eagle 5<sup>th</sup> Class with swords: the insignia is mounted reversed, showing the year of foundation of the Order (1883) – a pattern which was used after the accession of King Peter I in 1903 (photo P. Rosenzweig)*



*Plate 3 (left): Lt Col Stan Watson CBE DSO MC ED (retd) in Adelaide on Anzac Day 1980 (photo P. Rosenzweig)*

*Plate 4 (below): One of the Japanese trench mortars currently on display at the Australian War Memorial, on loan from the Imperial War Museum, London (photo R. Goyne)*





### ***Plate 5: Gallipoli Star 1914-15***

*The Gallipoli Star was originally designed in 1917 by Mr R.K. Peacock of the Australian Department of Defence. This is the third pattern of the Gallipoli Star – a two-piece bi-metal medal comprising an 8-pointed bronze star with a silver disc overlaid in the centre. The third striking comprised an additional 100 medals which were struck for sale to collectors, identical to the previous versions but bearing the mark ‘COLLECTOR'S ITEM II’ and the initials of the manufacturer A.J. Parkes on the reverse.*

*The suspension ribbon has a central dark blue stripe (representing the Aegean Sea and the navy) flanked by narrow stripes of red (representing the armies of Australia and New Zealand). This in turn is flanked on the left edge by a wide stripe of yellow/gold (to represent the golden wattle of Australia) and on the right by a wide stripe of grey (for the silver fern of New Zealand). Some say one red stripe represents the Australian red-flowering eucalyptus, with the opposing stripe representing the New Zealand ‘rata’ (a red flowering plant). (Photo and caption P. Rosenzweig)*

\*

*For a detailed description of the issues and circumstances surrounding the origins of this and other awards related to the campaign, see ‘The Gallipoli Star’ by Colonel David Chinn, pp.45-56 in this issue.*





**Plate 6: Anzac Medal 1965 lapel badge**

*The Anzac Medal 1965 was a cased commemorative medal established in March 1967 by the Australian Federal Government to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the campaign on Gallipoli. The medal was issued to those who served on the Gallipoli Peninsula, or in direct support of the operations from close offshore, at any time during the period from 25 April 1915 to the final evacuation in January 1916.*

*Approximately 10,000 cased medals and lapel badges were issued in 1967 to survivors of the Gallipoli campaign – the lapel badge was issued to surviving veterans only. An additional 5,000 medals (without lapel badges) were issued to next of kin. The medal was accompanied by a presentation certificate.*

*The lapel badge, struck in bronze metal, shows the obverse design of the medal with its iconic image of Simpson and his donkey bringing in a wounded man, which was designed by Mr Raymond Ewers. The medal/badge is surmounted by the St Edward's Crown of Queen Elizabeth II, set upon a laurel wreath with a scroll below containing the title 'ANZAC'. The reverse of the lapel badge is plain and bears the recipient's name, hand-engraved. (Photo and caption P. Rosenzweig)*



**Plate 7: 'A' Shoulder badge and colour patch, 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF**

*This is a colour patch of the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF worn by a South Australian who served with the battalion at Gallipoli, earning the right to wear the brass badge 'A' for ANZAC. In November 1917, Australian veterans of the 1915 campaign at Gallipoli were authorised by AIF Order No.937 to wear a brass badge in the form of the letter 'A'. This represents 'ANZAC', the acronym used to denote the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.*

*The 16<sup>th</sup> Bn AIF was raised in Western Australia on 16 September 1914, although 25% of the unit strength was South Australian. On 22 December 1914 the battalion embarked on the transport A40 Ceramic at Port Melbourne. It disembarked at Alexandria in Egypt on 3 February 1915, and established a camp at Heliopolis, and it was here that unit colour patches – a white over dark blue rectangle – were first issued. (Photo and caption P. Rosenzweig)*



**Plate 8: Anzac Landing Anniversary medal, 1916,  
Education Department of Victoria**

*This commemorative medal (or medalet) was issued to school children throughout Victoria in April 1916 to mark the first anniversary of the ANZAC landing at Gallipoli. The medal was commissioned by the Education Department of Victoria for distribution to school children; the medals were also sold through schools on behalf of the War Relief Fund. The medal was struck by Stokes & Sons of Melbourne, and is 27 mm in diameter. Similar commemorative medals in bronze, with different designs, were also issued by the Education Department of Victoria in 1917 and 1918. (Photo and caption P. Rosenzweig)*



**Plate 9 (left): Sweetheart Badge – Australian Imperial Expeditionary Force**

This particular badge is a brooch made in sterling silver, in the shape of Australia with the state borders and names shown, and in the centre are the initials 'AIEF'. In 1914, the 'Expeditionary Force to Europe' was first known as the Australian Imperial Expeditionary Force. It was while training in the Middle East in early 1915 that the AIEF was retitled the 'Australian Imperial Force' (AIF), although no badge was ever struck bearing this title.

(All photos and captions P. Rosenzweig)

**Plate 10 (right): Slouch Hat Souvenir**

A miniature slouch hat made in copper presented by Capt George Everett James, 8<sup>th</sup> Bn AIF, of Ballarat, Victoria to his mother Elizabeth before he went overseas in 1914. James landed on Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 and was wounded on 19 May. He returned to the 8<sup>th</sup> Bn to serve in France, at Pozières on the Western Front. He was mortally wounded by machine-gun fire and died on 24 July 1916, aged 25. He was buried in the Becourt Military Cemetery in France.



**Plate 11 (left): Identity Discs: 464 Trooper Stanley Wilkinson**

Stanley Wilkinson of Fitzroy, Victoria, enlisted on 16 September 1914, aged 22. He served at Gallipoli with the 8<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment AIF (dismounted), including the courageous but ill-fated charge at the Nek on 7 August 1915. He was not one of the unit's 375 casualties, and went on to participate in mounted operations in Egypt, the Sinai and Palestine during 1916-18. He was discharged in Melbourne on 8 February 1920, and died in Victoria on 21 May 1965, just before the Anzac Medal was issued.



*Plate 12: Veterans of Gallipoli land once more at dawn on Anzac Cove  
75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 25 April 1990 (photos P. Skrebels)*



*Walker's Ridge  
Gallipoli Peninsula  
7th August 1915*

*Above the ground on Walker's Ridge  
The air was hazy with lead.  
The chilling rattle of machine gun fire  
Swept over the troopers' heads.*

*But over the top went the gallant Tenth  
To follow the men of the Eighth,  
The sinuous flower of Australian youth  
Was crushed in that deadly place.*

*Today on top of Walker's Ridge  
Their neat white graves remain,  
Framed by the blue Aegean Sea  
The flowers have grown again.*

*B.E. Bamford  
544413*

## ‘A LITTLE ROTTING PIER’: STANLEY HOLM WATSON CBE DSO MC ED (1887-1985) – PART 2

### Watson, 1916-1918

Stan Watson went on to serve in France with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Divisional Signal Company, Australian Engineers, participating in every divisional engagement including Pozières. He was recommended (unsuccessfully) for the Military Cross for ‘valuable services’ throughout the operations around Albert,<sup>1</sup> but was nominated again (successfully) for ‘gallantry and devotion to duty’ in maintaining the lines and controlling the linesmen at Flers and Fricourt during November-December 1916.<sup>2</sup> The effectiveness of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Signal Company’s dedicated signallers – whose arsenal comprised runners, morse, field telephones, lamps, pigeons, dogs and ground-flapper equipment for signalling aircraft – was reflected in the honours awarded to the company by the end of that year: two MCs, two DCMs, eleven MMs and two MIDs.<sup>3</sup> The award of Watson’s MC in the 1917 New Year’s Honours List was announced at home with other awards under the headline ‘South Australian Heroes’.<sup>4</sup>

In February 1917, Watson was awarded the Serbian Order of the White Eagle 5<sup>th</sup> Class, with Swords<sup>5</sup> for his service in commanding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Divisional Signal Company from December 1916. The insignia of both the MC and Order of the White Eagle were presented by King George V in an investiture at Buckingham Palace on 6 June 1917, and Watson was later announced with others in the South Australian press: ‘Anzac Heroes, Holders of Decorations’.<sup>6</sup> As a major from January 1917, Watson was at Bapaume, the Hindenburg line and Bullecourt, and was mentioned in dispatches in September for his ‘tact and ability’ and ‘very fine service’.<sup>7</sup> From March 1918, Watson worked continuously on the Somme laying cable networks: he had full responsibility for communications for the battle of Amiens in August, and was mentioned in Sir Douglas Haig’s Despatch of 8 November 1918.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, Watson was awarded the DSO for his ‘splendid work’ on the Somme commanding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Divisional Signal Company.<sup>9</sup> In Adelaide on 20 September 1919, the Right Honourable Sir Munro Ferguson GCMG, Australia’s Governor-General throughout the war years, reviewed a parade of troops and conferred decorations upon a number of returned soldiers, including Stan Watson.<sup>10</sup> Watson quite deliberately spoke very little of his awards and citations: ‘I desire to avoid the appearance and the reality of any possible exhibitionism’.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, his brooch of miniature medals is a quite impressive representation of a long and very distinguished career (*see Colour Plates 2 and 3*).

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<sup>1</sup> AWM: awm28-1-69-0192 – MC recommendation, 1916.

<sup>2</sup> AWM: awm28-1-77-0039 – MC recommendation, 1916; *London Gazette* No. 29886 of 29 December 1916, Third Supplement dated 1 January 1917, p.44.

<sup>3</sup> Hinckfuss (1982) p.101.

<sup>4</sup> *The Register* (Adelaide) 2 January 1917, p.5; 3 January 1917, p.8.

<sup>5</sup> *London Gazette* No. 29945 of 13 February 1917, 6<sup>th</sup> Supplement dated 15 February 1917, p. 1608; the Australian War Memorial incorrectly lists his award as 3<sup>rd</sup> Class.

<sup>6</sup> *The Register* (Adelaide) 22 November 1918, p.7.

<sup>7</sup> AWM: awm28-1-87-0226 – MID recommendation dated 20 September 1917; *London Gazette* No. 30448 of 28 December 1917, Second Supplement dated 28 December 1917, p.13565.

<sup>8</sup> *London Gazette* No. 31089 of 27 December 1918, Fifth Supplement dated 31 December 1918, p.15226.

<sup>9</sup> AWM: awm28-1-118 part 2-0140 – DSO recommendation dated 24 September 1918; *London Gazette* No. 31092 of 31 December 1918, Supplement dated 1 January 1919, p.22.

<sup>10</sup> *The Advertiser* (Adelaide) 19 September 1919, p.12.

<sup>11</sup> Watson, S.H., Pers Comm 23 May 1984.

## Return to Australia

Watson returned to Australia on ‘1914 Furlough’ on 24 September 1918, and was amongst those welcomed home by the citizens of Adelaide on 25 November.<sup>12</sup> Thousands came out to cheer and pay a tribute of thanks: ‘The warmth of the reception must have convinced them that the home-coming made the long term of service at the front worth while’.<sup>13</sup>

Stan Watson separated from the AIF on 22 January 1919 and rejoined the South Australian Railways. On 5 April 1919 there was a spectacular carnival held on Adelaide Oval in honour of ‘the men who marched away’ – ‘The showers that fell were the tears of the war, and the sunshine was the smile of victory’.<sup>14</sup> The Governor inspected the Anzac Guard of Honour commanded by Captain Arthur Blackburn VC, and presented unit Colours: Major Stan Watson accepted the corded-silk Colours of the 1<sup>st</sup> Division Field Engineers.

Watson progressively served as resident engineer at Bordertown (1920) and Quorn (1921-23), and then as Superintendent at Peterborough (1923-24) and in Adelaide. He was General Traffic Manager from January 1935, recognised as, ‘one of the most efficient officers in the service’.<sup>15</sup> In this capacity he received the Coronation Medal of King George VI in 1937.<sup>16</sup> Watson served during World War 2 with the Volunteer Defence Corps, but did not qualify for service medals. He was appointed Deputy Commissioner of Railways in 1948 and retired in 1952, being appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1959, ‘For services to transportation organisations in the State of South Australia’.<sup>17</sup>

In April 1919, Watson had become the founding President of the Glenelg Returned Soldiers’ Association, the strongest in the state,<sup>18</sup> and he was a regular Anzac Day marcher in Adelaide every year. In readiness for Anzac Day 1981, Watson said: ‘I’m proud to march every year. Unfortunately, not enough people appreciate Anzac Day, and too many people seem to be ashamed to wave the Australian flag’.<sup>19</sup> These were the post-Vietnam ‘dark days’ when the ranks of AIF veterans were rapidly dwindling, there was some strange sort of embarrassment about the Anzac Day parade, and the interest in genealogy had not yet been sparked by the Australian Bicentenary. In 1982 there were just six surviving AIF signalmen in Adelaide, of whom only Watson marched – the last South Australian Gallipoli veteran. The Adelaide *Advertiser* remarked:

When Lieutenant-Colonel S. H. Watson can no longer march in the Anzac Day parade down King William Street, an era in Australian history will end.<sup>20</sup>

These were prophetic words: Stan Watson last marched in 1983 with five surviving signallers while for the 1984 march, his last, he rode in an Army vehicle.<sup>21</sup> The resurgence of public interest in Anzac Day and pride in our veterans came too late for Stan Watson and his

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<sup>12</sup> *The Advertiser* (Adelaide) 26 November 1918, p.7.

<sup>13</sup> *The Adelaide Chronicle* 30 November 1918, p.12.

<sup>14</sup> *The Register* (Adelaide) 7 April 1919, p.4.

<sup>15</sup> *The Advertiser* (Adelaide) 16 January 1935, p.18.

<sup>16</sup> Helfgott (1994) p.71: this source also confirms that Watson did not receive the King George V Silver Jubilee Medal in 1935, nor the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal.

<sup>17</sup> *London Gazette* No. 41589, Supplement dated 30 December 1958, p.21.

<sup>18</sup> *The Register* (Adelaide) 10 January 1920, p.8.

<sup>19</sup> *The Advertiser* (Adelaide) 25 April 1981.

<sup>20</sup> *The Advertiser* (Adelaide) 21 April 1982.

<sup>21</sup> Watson, S.H., Pers Comm 17 July 1984.

contemporaries: he died in Adelaide on 5 May 1985, predeceased by his wife and son, and survived by two daughters. After a service at St Michael's Anglican Church, Mitcham, he was buried in Centennial Park cemetery. In delivering his eulogy, Brigadier Phillip Greville concluded:

Colonel Watson combined the steadiness of the battle-wise soldier with the intellectual discipline of the civil engineer. He was, in one sense, a simple man – simple and direct as the railway lines he built – and just as purposeful.<sup>22</sup>

It was Greville, as Commander 4<sup>th</sup> Military District, who had encouraged Watson to put his valuable memories to paper.<sup>23</sup> The result was a small manuscript of some 50 pages, 'Gallipoli: The Tragic Truth', based on an extensive review of official records and Watson's 1978 return visit to Anzac. In this document, Watson referred to his war service only incidentally; rather, he recorded and criticised what were then believed to be errors in the landing at Gallipoli. Three years earlier he had expressed his dismay at the 'colossal blunder by the Navy' in a newspaper interview: 'Although the men didn't realise it at the time, they were landed at the wrong site. They never could have won there.'<sup>24</sup>

From about the time of the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landing, scholarly research has examined the Gallipoli landing from every possible angle and determined that the boats were not dropped in the wrong place, and there were no northward drifting currents steering the tows off course, as the 'wrong-place' mythology states. Rather, it seems Birdwood was influenced by last minute intelligence regarding underwater obstacles and prepared defences, and gave a late order to adjust the site of the landing to the least-defended portion of the coast, now known officially as Anzac Cove. This analysis was not available to Watson, who repeated the folklore of disgruntled Anzacs, on behalf of those who were sacrificed as a result of the apparent 'blunder'.

### **Anzac Highway**

Stan Watson had been born in Adelaide on 24 October 1887, 51 years after the Royal Navy vessel HMS *Buffalo* had landed at Glenelg and the Province of South Australia had been proclaimed. He was the first child of Harry and Adelaide Watson of Parkside, SA. His father worked with the Hydraulic Engineers' Department and was a member of the District Council of West Torrens from 1911 to 1923 (Chairman in 1917-19 and 1920-22). Stan Watson married Leila Vera McBride on 12 June 1911 and built his first home beside the Bay Road in Plympton to the southwest of Adelaide, on a parcel of land previously owned by his father.<sup>25</sup> Watson's pride in his service, particularly at Gallipoli, was evidenced by the naming of his home after the Atlantic Transport ocean liner that took him from Alexandria to Mudros and thence to Gaba Tepe on 25 April (and again to France later in the war) – 'Minnewaska'.

Bay Road was the original 11-kilometre track made by the wheels of bullock drays travelling from the landing site at Holdfast Bay (later the seaside resort of Glenelg) to Adelaide city – at first top-dressed with seaweed and later macadamised in 1852. Returning home in 1918, Watson would have been immensely proud to see that an 'Anzac Memorial Highway League' had been formed and had proposed renaming the Bay Road as 'Anzac Highway'. A bituminous concrete road was laid and the name 'Anzac Highway' was gazetted on 6 November 1924 as a

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<sup>22</sup> Fielding (1990).

<sup>23</sup> Watson, S.H., Pers Comm 23 May 1984.

<sup>24</sup> *The Advertiser* (Adelaide) 25 April 1981.

<sup>25</sup> Title 948/157, transferred to S.H. Watson on 8 March 1913. This building is now the house at the rear of Plympton Police Station [West Torrens Historical Society].



memorial to those who lost their lives at Gallipoli. Today, small monuments along the highway to Glenelg honour the Anzac heritage. Of interest to badge collectors, the first of these to be seen when leaving Adelaide displays a prominent 'Rising Sun' badge with the title 'Australian Imperial Force' in the scroll: of course such a title was never actually used on a badge, but the design became widely used as a commemorative insignia on veterans' headstones.

Watson's name is primarily recalled today by the 'Stan Watson Complex' at Warradale Barracks to the south of Adelaide. The Naval, Military and Air Force Club in Hutt Street has Watson's full-size medals on display – replacements, but these are the ones Stan Watson wore from the 1950s until his death because his originals had been stolen from his car following a VDC parade in Adelaide's South Parklands in November 1942. The erection of 'Watson's Pier' and the associated Waterloo Dinner at Gallipoli were substantial highlights in Stan Watson's impressive military career. A composite painting depicting both events is held by the 13<sup>th</sup> Field Squadron RAE at Irwin Barracks in Karrakatta, WA (see colour plates).<sup>26</sup> The significance of that centenary Waterloo Dinner at Gallipoli is now considerably amplified as the bicentenary and centenary respectively of these historic occasions are commemorated.

### Acknowledgments

I am indebted to the late Stan Watson for sharing his personal insights with me in the early 1980s, and for providing me with copies of his manuscript 'Gallipoli, The Tragic Truth' and his address to the 1984 Sydney Waterloo Dinner. Many thanks also to Mr Ian Coate for allowing reproduction of his painting 'Toasting Watson's Pier' (see Colour Plate 1).

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<sup>26</sup> Refer: <http://www.iancoate.com/index.html>.

## PRISONERS OF JOHNNY TURK

Barry Clissold

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‘Captivity is rather a hard thing to get used to.’

*(Lieut F. Hancock, 1st Light Horse, in a letter to his father, 15 March 1918)*

As an ally of Germany, in World War 1, the Ottoman Empire fought Australians in two major campaigns, Gallipoli and Palestine. During these campaigns, 217 Australians were taken prisoner, the first on 25 April 1915 at Gallipoli and the last on 29 September 1918 at Damascus. This is the story of a few of these men, their experiences of capture and treatment while in captivity.

Australia’s first casualties occurred on Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. Near Pope’s Hill in the confusion surrounding the landing, Capt R. McDonald, 16<sup>th</sup> Bn, mistaking a Turk for an Indian soldier, ‘was seized by men who rose out of surrounding brushwood undergrowth and hurried forward with a fixed bayonet in the small of the back’.<sup>1</sup> Bugler F. Ashton, 11<sup>th</sup> Bn, similarly confused, and lost, near Pope’s Hill was initially fortunate that the Turks mistook ‘my colour patches for officer insignia and treated me with some deference’.<sup>2</sup> This attitude, however, did not continue. Lieut W. Elston, 16<sup>th</sup> Bn, and Pte R. Lushington, also from 16<sup>th</sup> Bn, were to join McDonald and Ashton as prisoners that first day.

Early losses were not confined to the Gallipoli peninsula. In an engagement with a Turkish gunboat, the *Sultan Hissar*, the Australian submarine *AE2* was sunk at Kara Burnu in the Sea of Marmora on 30 April 1915. All 32 crew, including their captain, Lieut Commander Stoker, were rescued by the Turks although some had to swim to the gunboat, the rescue dinghy being too small. One of the submarine’s stokers, C. Suckling, was to state, ‘I don’t think, if we had known what was ahead of us, that any one of us would have left the boat.’<sup>3</sup> During major offensive on Hill 971, Pte J. Thomas was captured on 8 August 1915. Sgt W. Bailey, 15<sup>th</sup> Bn, was taken prisoner the same day. Thomas was to remember mistaking his Turkish captors for Australian reinforcements. Although severely wounded Bailey was to cite, ‘a body of Turks chasing across the ridge bayoneting and shooting any wounded’.<sup>4</sup>

In Mesopotamia and Palestine, the Australian Flying Corps and units of the Australian Light Horse were also taking losses. In Mesopotamia, on 13 November 1915, Capt T. White and his observer Capt F. Yeats-Brown, Indian Army, were captured, White recalled, ‘by Arab utter savages in different stages of nudity and variously armed’ then by Turkish soldiers ‘uniformed and well equipped, a smart detachment of gendarmerie’.<sup>5</sup> The pair had taken off in their aircraft from Aziziyeh, some 60 miles south of Baghdad. They had planned to land close to Baghdad and by placing explosive charges to telegraph poles destroy the city’s communication system. Unfortunately their aircraft was damaged on landing and they were unable to take off. Their problem was compounded due to the selection of a landing site being near an Arab camp.

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<sup>1</sup> AWM 30 B1.22

<sup>2</sup> AWM 30 B1.1

<sup>3</sup> 3 DRL.6226

<sup>4</sup> AWM 30 B1.36

<sup>5</sup> White, *Guests of the Unspeakable*, p.52

Meanwhile preparations were being made by British forces to attack Turkish defences at Ctesiphon on 21 November 1915. In a series of counterattacks by the Turks on 23/24 November the British fell back to Lajj and finally to Kut el Amara on 2 December 1915. Then began a siege by the Turks on British forces who finally surrendered on 29 April 1916. The garrison had consisted of 3000 British and 10,000 Indian troops. Before the surrender the Australian Half-Flight, Australian Flying Corps, which had been part of the garrison, was ordered to leave by air. Some however remained, including nine Australian mechanics who would begin a more than 1100km march to Afion kara Hissar in which only two would survive into captivity. Flight Sgt J. Sloss remarked, 'it would have been possible to have fought our way out but for the weakness of the garrison'. He added, 'the day we surrendered our rations were finished'. On the march Sloss tied his wrists to a cart to prevent him falling and being left behind: 'to drop out was to die'.<sup>6</sup>

The experiences of some Australians in Palestine differed little to those experienced by Australians at Gallipoli and Mesopotamia. Trooper P. Duffy, 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse, was captured after an advance against intense Turkish machine and rifle fire. He explained, 'with no reinforcements or ammunition available the situation became desperate. Until we saw our officer had surrendered and another white flag was flying ... we had no alternative but to be taken prisoner'.<sup>7</sup> Turkey's military infrastructure was not sufficiently developed to cope with handling large numbers of prisoners of war. Throughout Turkey the military used gaoles, hospitals, farms, hotels, construction sites, army barracks, camps, private houses and even monasteries for use as prisons.

Following his capture and interrogation in Constantinople, Capt McDonald was moved to Afion kara Hissar camp and placed in a 'good house' on the outskirts of town until March 1916. He was moved to 'very bad housing' the following year as a consequence of a failed escape attempt by the captain of the *AE2*, Lieut Cdr Stoker.<sup>8</sup> Bugler Ashton worked a six-day week under German supervision making bunds, carting stones and making roads. He was transferred to Turkish camps at Karqhali and San Stefano, a seaport on the Sea of Marmora. There he unloaded and loaded railway trucks and barges. Pte Thomas was taken to Stainbone prison in Constantinople before being transferred, firstly to a monastery at Aujora where he received 'fair treatment', then to Belemedik in January 1916 to work in the tunnels which the Germans were cutting through the Taurus Mountains, as part of a rail link to connect Berlin, Constantinople and Baghdad.<sup>9</sup> The German operators of the project usually preferred Allied POWs to indigenous workers.

The crew of the *AE2*, after spending some time in Constantinople and Angora were moved to Belemedik to also work in the tunnels. There prisoners record that pay received from the Germans enabled the local purchase of food such as bread, beans, potatoes, eggs and a fiery drink, Rakky. Work conditions were harsh as the prisoners loaded stone into trucks after it had been blasted from the tunnel walls. Stoker Suckling was eventually made responsible for looking after the project's air compressors, 'an easy job paying two shillings a day'.<sup>10</sup> During this period two of the crew attempted an escape but failed. Suckling himself, with two others, also attempted to escape but failed after four days on the run, 'when they ran out of food and

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<sup>6</sup> AWM 43 (802)

<sup>7</sup> AWM 30 B2 2A

<sup>8</sup> AWM 30 B1 22

<sup>9</sup> AWM 30 B1 33

<sup>10</sup> 3 DRL 6226 419/101/14

could not clear the surrounding mountains from the camp'.<sup>11</sup>

Sloss also attempted to escape from the northern camp at Afion kara Hissar. From there he attempted two escapes both failing; the second by building a portable boat in which he and a party of British sailors attempted to reach the coast and then sail 60 miles to Cyprus. They failed when captured by gendarmes 'who mistook them for deserters from the Turkish Army'.<sup>12</sup> Indeed stuff that legends are made from.

Medical arrangements, for prisoners and even for the Turks themselves, were often described as disgraceful and in many cases primitive. Malaria, diarrhoea and dysentery were the main causes of death of prisoners. Other causes included septicaemia, enteritis, typhus, bronchitis, pneumonia, Spanish influenza, chronic nephritis and meningitis. Amongst Australian prisoners there was a higher incidence of death at Angora than in other Turkish camps. On 17 February 1917 Sgt G. Drysdale and Trooper A. Day, both 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse, died there from tubercular bronchitis, and Pte D. Creedon, 9<sup>th</sup> Bn, died five months later of enteritis. Ptes G. Mathers and A. Nelson, both 15<sup>th</sup> Bn, having survived capture at Gallipoli, also died at Angora. Trooper P. Scoope was one of a number from 9<sup>th</sup> Light Horse who died of dysentery. Sgt W. Bailey, 15<sup>th</sup> Bn, also imprisoned at Angora, was to write, 'it was custom when a man was very ill and dying slowly to inject caffeine and kill him off very quickly'.<sup>13</sup> Trooper E. Hobson, 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse, wrote that if a man was incapable of helping himself he invariably died, as the Turkish orderlies would never help him.

At Belemelik three crew members of the *AE2*, Petty Officer S. Gilbert, Able Seaman A. Knaggs and Chief Stoker C Varcoe died; two from typhus and Varcoe from meningitis. Stoker M. Williams died from malaria at neighbouring Bozanti. Pte L. New, 15<sup>th</sup> Bn, died from complications after being crushed by a falling rock at Belemelik while working on the Baghdad-Constantinople railway. It was acknowledged that Belemelik was an overcrowded camp riddled with malaria and meningitis.

Winter in Turkish prisons brought hardships for Australians, and life for many was maintained by slender margins. Despite the cold and poor living conditions prisoners were required to work long hours. Small allowances were paid by the Turks for work. Many prisoners worked from daylight to dark at Afion kara Hissar, or when transferred to Angora Trooper G. Handsley, 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse, captured at Romani, worked on the railway receiving no pay and fed on a ration of bread and boiled rice. He remembers being badly treated and food very scarce. When released on 11 November 1918, Duffy told authorities that many held captive at Adana worked on railway construction for about 13 hours a day and received payment. Such payments could be used to supplement Turkish-provided food and clothing. Many officers sought funds, by using personal cheques, to survive. McDonald had his Army pay and field allowances credited to a Turkish bank in Constantinople. During the war the American Embassy in Constantinople regularly assisted prisoners in camps. Bailey recalled, 'conditions were almost impossible to live without parcels and money'.<sup>14</sup> Without the support of outside organisations supplying parcels of food, clothing, money and medicines, many prisoners would not have survived.

Air Mechanic K. Hudson recalled conditions at Bagtehe Camp as the very worst. He said 'of the men who went there very few ever got back alive. The work, railway construction on

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> White, op. cit., p.177

<sup>13</sup> AWM 30 B1 36

<sup>14</sup> 1 DRL Box 9/4

difficult ground was hard.’ In one week he remembered 133 deaths, ‘the dead never were put more than a foot away from the surface and not every man got a coffin’. Often a blanket sufficed which was withdrawn after the burial.<sup>15</sup> Treatment, in some camps, of officers was better. At Afion kara Hissar, McDonald was admitted to hospital for typhus and was well treated although he was required to buy all medicines and food. Writing from there he observed, ‘the health of the camp is excellent as far as the officers are concerned. Of course we do not see any of our men but I believe they are well’. By comparison, at Nisibin, overcrowding, filthy conditions, the sharing of bedding, lice-infested hospital clothing and the re-using of bandages compounded problems and increased the death rate. Such conditions were exacerbated by malnutrition and poor sanitary facilities.

For many the dull routine of prison life was relieved by ‘once a week lectures where we learned from the men who had done things; how coconuts are grown in the Malay States, of archaeology in Ceylon and Turkey, of elephant hunting and Arctic exploration’.<sup>16</sup> Some prisoners studied the Russian language, initially from Russian prisoners, then from books sent by the Australian Red Cross. White, particularly, studied Russian with the thought of escaping there. With a false Russian passport he did escape, near war’s end, to Odessa on 6 October 1918 aboard a Ukrainian steamer. At Afion kara Hissar McDonald became the camp’s dressmaker, doing untold mending.

Despite the hardships, horror and often ill-treatment by the Turks, McDonald, Ashton, Elston, Lushington, Thomas, Bailey, Suckling, White, Sloss, Handsley, Duffy, Hobson, Stoker, and Hudson survived the war and returned to Australia. Sixty-two other Australians did not return. For their conduct in the face of great hardship and service during captivity Sloss and Hudson were awarded the Meritorious Service Medal. White, knighted in 1952, was Australian High Commissioner to Great Britain from 1951 to 1956. Earlier he had been Minister for Air and Civil Aviation. He died in 1957, aged 69. Suckling, aged 92, was the last of the *AE2* to die; his latter years were blind caused by the beatings to his head when a prisoner of the Turks. Stoker was recalled to duty again in 1939 as Chief of Staff to Admiral King. In 1944 he was appointed, at 59, to the staff of the Navy command force for the invasion of Europe. He died in 1966.

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## THE GALLIPOLI STAR

Colonel David Chinn

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As a consequence of the landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps on the Gallipoli Peninsula, at what is now known as Anzac Cove, on 25 April 1915, negotiations took place between the British Government and the Australian and New Zealand Governments from late 1917 to late 1918 for the issue of a decoration to Australian and New Zealand troops who served in Gallipoli. These negotiations were finally abandoned because the decoration (the Gallipoli Star) was not to be awarded to other Empire troops who also served at Gallipoli.

Over the years, a number of proposals have been raised for the Gallipoli Star or an equivalent medal to be approved and issued. The latest action has been a private venture which has produced the Star in sufficient quantity to allow presentation prior to Anzac Day 1990, to surviving Australian veterans of Gallipoli, from proceeds of sales of the remainder of the Stars to collectors and others. It was in anticipation of enquires expected to be generated by this 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, as well as this private venture, that this article was prepared.<sup>1</sup>

### Background

As early as 1916, questions were asked in Parliament in Britain as to whether a special decoration would be issued to British troops who had fought in Gallipoli. The Government's reply was that it was too early to take decisions about the award of medals for the war still in progress. The view of the British War Office expressed in 1917 was that in conformity with the views expressed by the King, the number of different medals for the British Army should be quite limited. Although the idea of granting a separate medal for each theatre of war was considered, this was found to be impracticable. There was concern if such a system was instituted that some soldiers who had fought continuously in one theatre would receive only one medal while others who had spent time travelling between different theatres would receive three or four medals. The preferred War Office solution was therefore for the issue of only two medals/decorations for the British Army. These would be:

- an international medal, i.e. one of similar design issued by all the Allied powers, thus overcoming problems of inter-Allied awards, for which clasps for battles or localities could be issued; and
- a British medal to be issued to all officers and enlisted personnel of the British, the Dominion, Indian and Colonial armies.<sup>2</sup>

Some significance had been attached to the dispatch of elements of the British and Indian

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<sup>1</sup> The primary reference for the article was the DOD file 448-6-2554 (1919-1937), held by Australian Archives (Melbourne) in the series MP367, Bundle no.31. A photocopy of that file is held by DEGP, MAT DIV, Army Office. The article is based on material available as at 11 April 1990.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Defence (MOD) HB(A)/6/3 of 28 February 1990.

Expeditionary Forces (BEF, IEF) to France and Belgium following the outbreak of war in 1914.

From the Australian viewpoint, significance was similarly attached to the departure from Australia of some 32,000 members of the AIF for the Middle East prior to 31 December 1914. While members of the BEF were involved in heavy fighting until 22/23 November 1914, the AIF had arrived in another theatre of war, under threat of Turkish attack, in the shadow of which it undertook extensive training. There was some discussion of the question of the award of medals at the Imperial War Conference in 1917 with the New Zealand representative being very insistent as to the desirability of awarding a special decoration to those who had left New Zealand (and Australia) in 1914 and had fought in Gallipoli. This view was reflected in subsequent messages to the UK. The Canadian and Newfoundland representatives agreed in theory but felt that all troops who had left their native land to fight overseas should be eligible for any such award, not just those involved in Gallipoli. However, no firm decisions were taken.<sup>3</sup>

On 2 October 1917, Lt Gen Birdwood, in his appointment as GOC 1 ANZAC, cabled Defence HQ, Melbourne, on the subject of leave in Australia for original members of the AIF who had left Australia in 1914. Included in this cable was a final paragraph:

Realising what great difficulties there must consequently be suggest for your consideration that the 1914 medal which is about to be sanctioned for men who left England in the original Expeditionary Force during first months of the war should be extended to men of Australian and New Zealand Forces who left in 1914 with their original contingents (stop). This would doubtless not be as completely satisfactory to all members of the Force, but from what I can gather from large numbers would go a long way toward granting desire of all ranks that their coming forward in first instances should receive special recognition and it would include those present at landing Anzac April 25<sup>th</sup> 1915 and would be appreciated enormously. I therefore suggest that this point of view should be urgently pressed on Imperial Government.<sup>4</sup>

## Developments

This proposal was apparently accepted by the Australian Government, as a cable was subsequently dispatched to the Secretary of State for the Colonies strongly urging that the 1914 medal 'should be extended to men of Australian forces who left in 1914 with original contingents. This would include those present at landing Anzac 25th April 1915'. (The suggestion that a particular operation – Gallipoli – should be singled out for special treatment caused the Canadian Government to reserve the right to make further representations on behalf of its soldiers should the award go ahead.) The Secretary of State for the Colonies responded on 22 November 1917 by cable as follows:

Careful consideration has been given to suggestion that Australia and New Zealand should give some recognition to Australians and New Zealanders who left in 1914 and afterwards took part in the operations in Gallipoli. The decoration to be issued by the two Governments. Question has been discussed by Army Council and proposal has their full approval on condition that the decoration is only given to members of Australian Imperial Force or New Zealand Expeditionary Force. It has been submitted to His Majesty who has been graciously pleased to approve. It is his Majesty's wish that this mark of

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<sup>3</sup> H. Taprell-Dorling, *Ribbons and Medals*, George Philip & Son, London, 1960, p.63; *Discovering Gallipoli – Research Guide*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1990; MOD HB(A)/6/3 of 28 February 1990.

<sup>4</sup> DOD file 448-6-2554 folio 1.

distinction should take form of a decoration such as is being given in the case of British Expeditionary Force 1914 rather than of a medal. Design and riband should be submitted His Majesty's approval it should of course be quite distinct, from any past or present British decoration. Similar telegram has been sent to New Zealand.<sup>5</sup>

The Comdt AIF HQ London, in following this development, indicated by cable on 22 November 1917 to Defence HQ Melbourne, that the Secretary for War, Lord Derby, had suggested that 'two or three designs for the star and riband be submitted for King to make selection'. Lord Derby had also suggested that after agreement with New Zealand, designs of the riband (another term for ribbon) should be cabled to AIF HQ for manufacture of samples for the King's approval. Designs for the star could be submitted later.<sup>6</sup>

Concurrently in November 1917 the Secretary of State for War in Britain was approached by a representative of the Australian Government who suggested that the recognition of those Australian troops who left Australia in 1914 and fought in Gallipoli, by means of an award of some sort, was a critical factor in the outcome of the impending election in Australia where the question of conscription was being considered. The discussion between the Australian representative and the Secretary of State for War covered the possibility that, subject to the approval of the Sovereign, the Australian and New Zealand Governments should issue a special medal to the men who fell into this category. At that time it was expected that the British troops who fought in Gallipoli would be awarded a clasp to one of the British war medals if the special committee on this subject so decided. Details of this discussion were circulated to the Army Council. Although the earlier idea of limiting the different number of medals available to the British Army to just two had only recently been breached by the award of the '1914 Star', the British authorities, especially in the War Office, still wished to limit further types of medals as far as possible. However, one member of the Army Council noted that even if the British authorities wished, they could not prevent the Dominion Governments issuing any special medal.<sup>7</sup>

On or about 1 December 1917 a cablegram was dispatched from Australia to New Zealand referring to the Secretary of State for the Colonies' cable of 22 November 1917 and advising the views of Comdt AIF HQ. It was indicated that designs of star and ribbon would be forwarded when prepared, for the New Zealand Government views.<sup>8</sup>

At this stage, the press appears to have become aware of the proposal, prompting the submission of designs for the award by at least two interested citizens:

- Mr Merriman, Station Master at Lilydale, Vic: three designs for an Anzac Medal, each based on a seven-pointed star, and a laurel wreath around a central circle; variations consisted of the suspension point being a crown, the AMF badge or plain, and the circle containing 'ANZAC' and '1914', with variations of crown, AMF badge and New Zealand fernleaf.
- Mr Whitelocke, journalist of Mosman, NSW: three designs – two crosses and one six-pointed star – each heavily emphasising the letters 'ANZAC', the stars of the Southern Cross and mottoes on the themes of 'King', 'Flag' and 'Home' in various arrangements.

At about the same time, on 6 December 1917, a Warrant Officer R.K. Peacock, Military Staff

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid folio 3; MOD HB(A)/6/3 of 28 February 1990.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid folio 4.

<sup>7</sup> MOD HB(A)/6/3 of 28 February 1990.

<sup>8</sup> DOD file 448-6-2554 folio 8.



Clerk, apparently on the staff of the Quarter Master-General (QMG), submitted a design for and description of what he titled 'The Anzac Star'. They are significant because WO Peacock was later to submit the design for the star finally selected, and because the title (as well as that of Mr Merriman's designs) reflected the trend towards a prime purpose of recognition of service in Gallipoli, and the lessening of the significance of 1914 expeditionary forces, the original consideration by Lt Gen Birdwood.<sup>9</sup>

Lt Gen Birdwood recommended by cable on 30 November 1917 that emblematic colours should be chosen for the ribbon and suggested gold or yellow to represent Australian wattle, green for the New Zealand fernleaf, and blue the sea 'upon which we depend'; for the star a seven-pointed pattern as for the Commonwealth star on the Ensign, was suggested, the star to be of bronze with possibly a suitable silver design superimposed. The QMG on 3 December 1917 supported Lt Gen Birdwood's recommendation in a minute to the Secretary for Defence, proposing the text of a cable to be sent to the New Zealand Government. He recommended however substitution of an eight-pointed star instead, 'as the seven-pointed star of the Australian ensign is considered to be representative of the seven states of the Commonwealth'.<sup>10</sup>

Press reports of the proposal, some titled 'Gallipoli Star', meanwhile had prompted a number of letters to various newspapers, to the Secretary for Defence, MHR the Minister for Defence and ultimately the Prime Minister.<sup>11</sup> The issues addressed were:

- the inclusion of those who had landed in Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 but had left Australia after 31 December 1914; and
- the inclusion of those who had landed in Gallipoli later in the campaign, some having served as members of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force (AN and MEF) which annexed German New Guinea in late 1914. Later contingents included 2 Aust Div and the light horse brigades.

These aspects were subject of telegrams between the Secretary and the Minister for Defence over the period 5-10 December 1917.<sup>12</sup> The staff estimate of Australian troops involved in service in Gallipoli was 29,000 of those who left Australia in 1914, and 21,000 who left in 1915.<sup>13</sup> A cablegram was dispatched to New Zealand on 12 December 1917, referring to the cablegram of 1 December 1917 and dealing only with Lt Gen Birdwood's recommendation regarding ribbon colours and design of star increased to eight or nine points. The question of conditions for award was left at those who had departed in 1914.<sup>14</sup>

The Adjutant-General (AG) submitted a minute to the Secretary for Defence on 21 December 1917 discussing three courses open and recommending that the awards should be given 'to all ranks who took part in the Gallipoli operations at any time included in the period between their disembarkation in Egypt and the final date of the Gallipoli evacuation'. He considered that 'in accordance with usual custom, the area of the Gallipoli operations should include all line of communication troops of the Expeditionary Force'.<sup>15</sup> On 22 December 1917, the New Zealand Governor General responded to the cablegram of 12 December 1917 and went straight to the

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid folios 7, 21 and 26.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid folios 11 and 12.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid folios from 9 to 45 (not all relevant).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid folios 14-17, 27, 30-33.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid folios 23-24.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid folio 37.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid folio 46.

key issue of conditions for award:

With reference to your cipher telegram December 12<sup>th</sup>, my government of opinion that decoration should be given to all Australian New Zealand troops taking part in the campaign and I am so informing the Secretary of State for Colonies.<sup>16</sup>

The Australian Government obviously accepted the New Zealand and AG viewpoints in dispatching a cablegram in similar terms on or about 14 January 1918 to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. This was transmitted also to the Comdt AIF HQ London on 30 January 1918, indicating that consideration of the design would be expedited. The award had thus changed to one primarily recognising service in the Gallipoli campaign, regardless of year of departure from the homelands – Australia or New Zealand. However, both the New Zealand and AG recommendations had the effect of including line of communication troops who had never set foot in Gallipoli.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile the New Zealand Government was reminded on or about 15 January 1918, and again about 23 February 1918 of the Australian Government's request for views on the ribbon and medal designs.<sup>18</sup> The New Zealand Government's response regarding the colours of the ribbon and design of the star was received on 4 March 1918. That Government was prepared to leave the design of the star to the Australian Government, but preferred green and scarlet for its portion of the ribbon, 'the former to represent the fern leaf, and the latter to represent the flower of the rata, a native New Zealand tree'. This proposal was amended by a cablegram three days later, cancelling the colours notified and substituting 'silver grey with lake crimson stripe'. A letter dated 7 March 1918 followed, enclosing a sample of the proposed ribbon and giving reasons for the change. On 11 March 1918 a cablegram was dispatched asking if the Australian Government would agree to a crimson lake stripe on the yellow of the Australian 'half' of the ribbon, as well as on the silver grey of the New Zealand 'half'.<sup>19</sup>

On 16 March 1918 WO Peacock submitted his design for the Gallipoli Star, reflecting the colours for the ribbon as developed above and including light-blue as the centre colour.<sup>20</sup> On 4 April 1918 the QMG by minute provided the Secretary for Defence with detailed specifications for the ribbon and star. This detail was cabled on 19 April 1918 to the New Zealand Government for concurrence, also proposing that the star be awarded only to those who had actually landed in Gallipoli. The New Zealand Government concurred by cablegram on 29 April 1918, and on or about 9 May 1918 a cablegram was dispatched to the Secretary of State for the Colonies with the same detail recommended.<sup>21</sup> This was copied to the Comdt AIF HQ on 10 June 1918. It should be noted that, contrary to the reference *Ribbons and Medals* by H. Taprell-Dorling, the colours were chosen for their significance as follows:

- Centre stripe: light blue – the sea (Aegean)
- Intermediate stripes: crimson – flowering gum (Australia); rata flower (New Zealand)
- Outer stripes: gold, the wattle (Australia); silver-grey – fernleaf (New Zealand)

It is of interest to note a copy of a cablegram from the Comdt AIF HQ London to Defence HQ of 27 April 1918, dealing with AIF Order 1084, which amended AIF Orders 937 and 994. These orders dealt with the award and wearing of a brass letter 'A' on colour patches to indicate

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid folio 49.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid folios 61, 74.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid folios 62, 79.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid folios 81, 83, 84, 85.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid folio 91.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid folios 95, 98, 100, 101.

that the wearer had served at Anzac in Gallipoli. Order 1084 was issued by authority of a Defence HQ cable (WV430 of 9 January 1918) directing that the award of the letter 'A' on colour patches was extended to those who had served 'on the islands of Lemnos, Imbros or Tenedos, or who served on the transport or hospital ships at or off Gallipoli, or those islands, or in AIF lines of communications units from Egypt'. The reason for the inclusion of this cablegram on the subject of colour patch embellishment in the Gallipoli Star file relates to the distinction of service in Gallipoli as distinct from service 'in the campaign' (see above). Lt Gen Birdwood wished to represent the 'point of view (that) personnel who never left Egypt should not be eligible for distinction awarded for Gallipoli service', and in effect challenged the Defence HQ authority.<sup>22</sup>

At about the same time the War Office prepared an internal memorandum which noted that the award of all orders, decorations and medals was essentially a Royal prerogative and that the War Office view ought only to reflect the view previously expressed by the King against his soldiers being awarded too many different decorations for the war. Although the award of a special decoration to Empire troops who fought in the Gallipoli campaign would be contrary to the King's policy, in view of the King's original sanction of the award for Australian and New Zealand troops for Gallipoli, the Army Council considered that it was not within their province to offer any suggestions or remarks on this specific award. Nevertheless the War Office considered that such an award presented certain anomalies in that such an award would be

- unfair both to British soldiers who had fought in the same or other theatres and to other Empire troops who had fought in other theatres (the British Adjutant General had already received requests from one British division which fought in Gallipoli to be allowed to participate in the proposed Australian and New Zealand decoration); and
- inconsistent with one of the main principles which had hitherto governed the award of medals, i.e. that these are awarded only for participation in a successful campaign; (the War Office added that the Gallipoli campaign, although giving the opportunity for the troops to 'show splendid fighting attributes', could not be called successful). The recently awarded '1914 Star' was not considered to breach this latter rule as it commemorated the successful actions preventing the enemy from attaining definitive results in the First Battle of Ypres. Therefore the Army Council intended to maintain a firm attitude against any attempts to get a decoration for the British troops who served at Gallipoli and to prohibit the acceptance by British Army personnel of any dominion decoration awarded for that operation. Indeed, concerned that if the Gallipoli award went ahead 'it will become logically impossible to refuse special decorations for every kind of operation', the Army Council suggested that the criteria for awards based on service overseas within specific dates rather than participation in specific military operations would perhaps be a better solution.<sup>23</sup>

On 16 May 1918 the QMG addressed the subject of manufacture of the Gallipoli Star, in collaboration with the New Zealand Government, in a minute to the Secretary for Defence.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile action was being taken, through the Australian Prime Minister (Mr Hughes), then in London, to expedite a British Government decision. When the Imperial Conference discussed the subject on 15 July 1918, the Prime Ministers of Australia and New Zealand were insistent on a decoration purely for their men who served in Gallipoli. The British Adjutant-General then arranged a conference which resulted in an agreement, that an identical 'Imperial

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid folio 97.

<sup>23</sup> MOD HB(A)/6/3 of 28 February 1990.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid folio 104.

Decoration’ could be awarded by each dominion and Newfoundland under conditions drawn up by each dominion but as far as possible to be analogous with those of the British ‘1914 Star’, i.e. in terms of limiting the number of men who would be eligible for such an award. However Canada took the view that they wanted no special decoration; what was good enough for the bulk of the British Forces was good enough for the Canadians, a view apparently echoed by South Africa. A cablegram dated 28 July 1918 from Mr Hughes indicated ‘Re Gallipoli Medal (sic) – matter finally settled yesterday.’ This resulted in a follow-up for elaboration to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on or about 20 August 1918.<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile Lt Gen Birdwood had written to the Secretary for Defence on 12 August 1918, enclosing a copy of the draft Army Order which was proposed to be issued by the Army Council. He indicated that Newfoundland forces were now to be included with the Australian and New Zealand Forces for purposes of the award of the Gallipoli Star. Furthermore he advised a review of the conditions for the award to include

those who were employed on the lines of communication to Gallipoli outside Egypt, who were, whilst on transports, often subject to shell fire from the peninsula, to attacks from submarines and to aeroplane bombing attacks whilst on the adjacent islands. Under no circumstances however do I think the awards should be extended to those who did not embark from Egypt to take part in the Gallipoli operations.

Lt Gen Birdwood sought Defence HQ action to have the conditions of the award extended accordingly if his view was concurred in. A cablegram from Lt Gen Birdwood to Defence HQ on 17 August 1918 emphasised a degree of urgency in reaching a decision on his advice regarding extension of the award ‘as keen desire here for very early publication Order’.<sup>26</sup>

The inclusion of Newfoundland forces in the award resulted in a flurry of cablegrams in the period 13-16 August 1918 in which the Prime Minister of Newfoundland expressed a strong desire to have the central blue strip of the ribbon changed to white, then accepted the original blue.<sup>27</sup> There was a relatively quick response to Lt Gen Birdwood’s communications of 12 and 17 August 1918. On or about 21 August 1918 a cablegram was dispatched to the Secretary of State for the Colonies recommending extension of the award in terms of Lt Gen Birdwood’s advice. At the same time a further cablegram was dispatched to Mr Hughes, still in London, indicating the action taken.<sup>28</sup> The Secretary of State for the Colonies, responding on 23 August 1918 to an Australian cable of 11 May 1918, indicated that

Alternative designs for Gallipoli Star and ribbon have been submitted to His Majesty and that preferred by him has been approved by Prime Minister of the Commonwealth and Prime Minister of New Zealand ... Regulations governing award of decoration ... still under discussion.<sup>29</sup>

The apparent closeness of the decision on the award was reflected by the Comdt AIF HQ London, with a letter to Defence HQ Melbourne dated 30 August 1918, enclosing 15 yards of the ‘Gallipoli Medal ribbon’, but indicating that the authority for the issue had not at that stage been published. The ribbon was forwarded in anticipation that the order would be issued by the time the letter and enclosure reached the Secretary for Defence.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid folios 109, 111, 112; MOD HB(A)/6/3 of 28 February 1990.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid folio, 113, 119, 122; Newfoundland was a British colony until incorporated into Canada as a province on 31 March 1949.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid folios 115-118.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid folios 122, 123.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid folio 125.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid folio 126.

While negotiations between the Australian, New Zealand and British Governments had been moving towards finality regarding the design of the star and ribbon, and the conditions for award, concern had been expressed as early as 13 December 1917 in the House of Commons on the status of recognition for British troops who had also served in Gallipoli. Parliamentary Debates (*Hansard*) of the House of Commons for sessions 1917-1919 show that questions on the subject of British troops receiving the Gallipoli Star were raised on a relatively frequent basis, and a number of times in October 1918.<sup>31</sup> It is understood that similar concerns were expressed from time to time in the British press.

The Melbourne *Argus* of 6 September 1918 and the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* of 7 September 1918 both reported that the Manchester City Council had carried a resolution protesting against the 'Gallipoli Medal' not being issued to Lancashire and other British troops, when it was being given to the Anzacs. The Secretary of the NSW Branch of the (then) RSSILA wrote to the Acting Prime Minister (The Hon William Alex Watt) quoting the *Telegraph* report and seeking representations to the British authorities to remove the anomaly 'which will exist, if one section of troops merits distinction for doing what some thousands of other troops also did; that same privilege should also be accorded them'.<sup>32</sup>

On 5 November 1918, in the House of Commons, Sir H. Greenwood asked the Under-Secretary of State for War whether he was aware that Australian and New Zealand troops in France who had served in Gallipoli had expressed dissatisfaction that British troops who had served in Gallipoli were not to receive the 'Gallipoli Medal'. Further he asked whether the Under-Secretary was aware that great numbers of those troops entitled to that decoration had signified their determination not to wear it until it was extended to the British troops who had fought alongside them.<sup>33</sup>

Meanwhile, the War Cabinet agreed on 17 September 1918 to establish a committee to consider the question and to recommend a practical solution to the problem. In outline the committee considered that the award of a special decoration for the operations in Gallipoli would create serious anomalies. It proposed the creation of a '1914-15 Star' to be available to both the British Army and to the Dominion forces, which would therefore cover the greater part of the Gallipoli operation, as well as other notable operations in other theatres. Subsequent discussions with the Dominions led to the extension of the end date for the award to 31 December 1915.<sup>34</sup> On 16 October 1918 the Secretary of State for the Colonies cabled the Australian Government. The opening paragraph of the cable read:

Serious difficulties have arisen owing to strong objection taken not only by members of Parliament and Press here, but by Dominion troops themselves to the issue of decorations to the Dominion troops serving in Gallipoli which cannot be conferred on their British comrades who shared the dangers and hardships. Extension of this decoration would involve even more serious anomalies, for demands for issue of indefinite number of further campaign decorations would become irresistible.

<sup>31</sup> Parliamentary Debates (*Hansard*) House of Commons – 13 December 1917, 22 January 1918, 20 March 1918, 11 July 1918, 6 August 1918, 17 October 1918 (2), 21 October 1918, 24 October 1918. (Records Office, House of Lords); MOD HB(A)/6/3 of 28 February 1990.

<sup>32</sup> DOD File 448-6-2554 folio 131.

<sup>33</sup> Parliamentary Debates (*Hansard*) House of Commons 5 November 1918; MOD HB(A)/6/3 of 28 February 1990.

<sup>34</sup> MOD HB(A)/6/3 of 28 February 1990.

The cable went on to propose a 1914-15 Star (the 1914 Star with the same ribbon but bearing the years 1914-15 inscribed instead), describing the envisaged conditions for award and highlighting its advantages.<sup>35</sup> As a concession to the Australian and New Zealand Governments, in an awareness of the great importance attached to service in Gallipoli, it was proposed that in the event of adoption of the proposal (for a 1914-15 Star) a special clasp on that war medal should be given for Gallipoli.

On 14 November 1918 the Under-Secretary of State for War (Mr McPherson) made a statement to the House of Commons which, in essence, indicated that agreement had been reached by all governments concerned that a 1914-15 Star would be awarded to recognise service prior to 31 December 1915 at sea and in theatres of war, including Gallipoli.<sup>36</sup> The Australian Government's decision was reflected in a response to a Parliamentary question by Mr Hector Lamond, Member for Illawarra, on 10 December 1918. The Assistant Minister for Defence, Mr Wise, indicated in the House of Representatives on 16 December 1918 that the proposal, subject of the Secretary of State for the Colonies' cable of 16 October 1918, had been adopted, and elaborated on the various considerations involved.

On 8 June 1920, the Prime Minister of New Zealand wrote to the Prime Minister of Australia re-opening the question of the Gallipoli Star and seeking his views the subject. The Australian reply alluded to the special clasp offered in the Secretary of State for the Colonies' cable of 16 October 1918, and suggested that the final report of the Battle Clasps Committee, established by the British Government, be awaited and considered before taking any further action. On 2 July 1923, the Secretary of State for the Colonies informed the Governor-General of Australia that, in view of the (then) financial stringency, the Army Council had decided not to proceed with the proposal to issue battle clasps for the 'Great War'.<sup>37</sup> A specialist in decorations and service medals has advised however that the Battle Clasps Committee had determined that the introduction of battle clasps was impracticable due to the complexities of delineation of battles and units involved therein, and in effect recommended that no clasps be awarded.<sup>38</sup>

### **Turkish Award**

The Turkish Government did not issue a special Gallipoli Star to its forces involved in the Gallipoli campaign, notwithstanding the implication in the entry Serial 591 'Turkish Star for Gallipoli campaign' in *Ribbons and Medals* by Taprell-Dorling. The Turkish Embassy in Canberra has advised that the decoration referred to was in fact the 'Ottoman War Decoration', introduced by Sultan Mehmet V in 1914 for war service. Participants in the Gallipoli campaign including Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the Turkish Commander, received this award.<sup>39</sup>

### **Subsequent Action**

Since World War I a number of efforts have been made to introduce a medal or medal-ribbon clasp to commemorate the Gallipoli campaign. These included:

- in 1919 and later in 1937, as a Coronation gesture, a proposal by Mr W.C.M. Prosser, Secretary of the British Ex-Cavalrymen's Association in Sydney, for a Gallipoli medal for

<sup>35</sup> DOD File 448-6-2554 folio 152; Taprell-Dorling, op cit, p.63.

<sup>36</sup> Parliamentary Debates (*Hansard*) House of Commons 18 November 1918; Taprell-Dorling, op cit, p.63.

<sup>37</sup> DOD File 448-6-2554 folios 157, 160; DOD File 167-1-26 folio 26A (letter Secretary for the Army A81-1-628 of 10 July 1962 to Secretary for Defence).

<sup>38</sup> Mr Anthony Staunton, Research Officer, Veterans Review Board: telephone conversation of 7 March 1990.

<sup>39</sup> Taprell-Dorling, op cit, p.265; First Secretary, Turkish Embassy (Mr Arda) – telephone advice of 21 March 1990, in response to facsimile transmission DEGP 0244 of 270020Z March 1990 to Turkish Embassy.

- all British and Dominion troops;<sup>40</sup>
- many individual submissions to Federal members of Parliament, Ministers and Prime Ministers;
  - in the year leading up to Anzac Day 1950 (the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the landing), a proposal for the Gallipoli Star as designed in 1918 to be granted by the Australian Government to those Australians who had served in Gallipoli;<sup>41</sup>
  - a submission by the NSW Branch of the Gallipoli Legion of Anzacs to the Prime Minister in 1962, followed by further representations in 1964 and 1965;
  - from 1962 to 1966, increasing pressure by way of two Private Members' Bills and Parliamentary Questions for the striking of a special medal or the Gallipoli Star itself to mark the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign;<sup>42</sup> and
  - the Private Member's Bill (Member for Capricornia, Mr Gray) introduced into Parliament on 17 May 1962, causing questions to be addressed to the Head AJSS London. He was to seek reactions by the appropriate British authorities to proposals raised by the Gallipoli Legion of Anzacs on the 'Anzac Medal' (in fact the 'Gallipoli Star'), as well as the proposed clasp to the 1914-15 Star. Background information on how the British Government dealt with the 1914-18 War medal proposals and reasons for their abandonment were also to be sought. The very comprehensive reply elaborated on the reasons for abandonment of the Star and clasp discussed previously. At the same time the reaction of the New Zealand Government was sought, the reply, through the Deputy High Commissioner, supported the British, Australian and New Zealand positions taken previously.<sup>43</sup> (There is no indication on file of how the Bill was disposed of, but it was not passed.)

The Private Member's Bill (again the Member for Capricornia, Mr Gray) introduced into Parliament in March 1965 was defeated, but resulted in a range of consultations involving in the main Cabinet and a special group of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister, and the Member for Capricornia. In addition, the matter of a clasp for the 1914-15 Star was re-opened with the British authorities, through the Australian High Commissioner, to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations. No change in position resulted. Various options considered included that of the issue of a distinguishing clasp for the 1914-15 Star, and lapel badges comprising either the Australian Army Badge, or unit colour parches, both with the letter 'A' (for Anzac) superimposed. A commemorative medallion was also considered, and following New Zealand Government agreement, was finally adopted. The Prime Minister discussed likely designs with representatives of the RSL and the Gallipoli Legion of Anzacs during the latter half of 1965. As foreshadowed by the Minister for Defence in answering a question in the Parliament on 24 March 1966, the Prime Minister announced in Parliament on 16 March 1967 that the Australian Government, in consultation with the New Zealand Government, had completed arrangements for the production and issue of a Gallipoli Medallion and Badge to veterans of that campaign, and the Medallion to next of kin or other entitled persons if their relative died on active service or had since died.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> *Reveille*, November 1931; *The Melbourne Age*, 14 April 1937.

<sup>41</sup> Australian War Memorial File 449-9-16, undated/unattributed paper.

<sup>42</sup> Parliamentary Debates (*Hansard*) House of Representatives 9 May 1962, 17 May 1962, 9, 10, 19 April 1963, 14 May 1963, 18 March 1964, 23 April 1964, 5 May 1964, 23 November 1965, 24 March 1966 (2), 17 August 1966, 29/30 September 1966.

<sup>43</sup> DOD File 167-1-26, folios 20, 27A, 33A.

<sup>44</sup> DOD File 167-1-26, folios 65, 66, 88, 105, 116, 135, 138; DOD File 167-1-57 Minute – Secretary to Minister for Defence of 28 January 1966.

This action, it appears, was intended to satisfy the continuing demand for recognition of Australian and New Zealand service in Gallipoli, at the same time not conflicting directly with the concerns expressed in 1918 regarding the issue of the Gallipoli Star. It appears that even with the Gallipoli Medallion, there was still a range of opinion, through the RSL and Gallipoli Legion of Anzacs, regarding eligibility for the award. The restrictive viewpoint would have limited issue of the Medallion to those who had actually served in Gallipoli; the opposite viewpoint advocated issue to all who were qualified to wear the brass 'A' on the colour patch in terms of Defence HQ cable WV430 of 9 January 1918 (see above).

Representations for the issue of a medal for service in Gallipoli have continued since, despite the issue of the Gallipoli Medallion. In 1975, Mr A.J. Grassby wrote to the Minister for Defence, and Mr L.A. Kane of Ryde NSW wrote to the Prime Minister. In 1981, Mr C.W. Howe of Bridport NSW wrote to the Minister for Administrative Services. The responses to each of these letters, inter alia, indicated that the issue of a special medal to Australian and New Zealand troops who served would be unfair to the other Empire troops who had also served in Gallipoli, and that the issue of the 1914-15 Star to all troops who have served in Gallipoli logically precluded issue of a second medal for the purpose of recognising the same service. It was suggested that the issue of the Gallipoli Medallion and Badge in 1967 was an appropriate action to recognise participation in the campaign, given the circumstances relating to the issue of medals above.<sup>45</sup>

On 13 September 1951, the General Secretary of the (then) RSSAILA wrote to the Minister for Defence (Mr McBride) concerning an Executive resolution passed at its September meeting; it requested that Royal assent be obtained for personnel who served in Gallipoli to wear a miniature 'A' on the 1914-15 Star ribbon. The Minister's reply (of 15 November 1951) indicated that, inter alia:

- the 1914-15 Star was an Empire award, whereas the brass letter 'A' was an Australian symbol authorised for wear on the colour patches of those who had taken part in the Gallipoli operations (*see Colour Plate 7 for an example*);
- the wearing of a miniature 'A' on the 1914-15 Star would accord a special recognition to Australian troops, in relation to an Empire award which did not, by clasps, distinguish particular campaigns; and
- these matters were fully considered and determined after World War I.

This proposal was re-examined during the lead-up to the 50th anniversary of the landing in 1965. It involved semi-official enquiries through the Australian High Commissioner in London to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations (see above), and official correspondence with the New Zealand High Commissioner in Canberra. The results reaffirmed the previously advised policy.<sup>46</sup>

## Conclusion

The desire for the recognition of Australian and New Zealand volunteers of 1914 along with their British counterparts was inextricably linked with their commitment to the Gallipoli campaign and other Australian and New Zealand volunteers of 1915. Eventually, the Gallipoli campaign, of singular national importance to both Australia and New Zealand, became the focus for recognition of the troops involved by the introduction of the Gallipoli Star proposal.

<sup>45</sup> DOD File 67-1638, folios 54, 56, 58, 59A, 61, 69.

<sup>46</sup> DOD File 167-1-26 (Minister for Defence 064-1-364 of 15 Nov 51 to General Secretary RSSAILA); same file, folios 86A and 88.



This discriminated however against the British and other troops who had served alongside them during that campaign.

The issue of the 1914-15 Star overcame this discrimination and in effect precluded the issue of a second medal to recognise the same service; but this did not satisfy Australian and New Zealand desires for recognition of the Gallipoli campaign from national viewpoints. The introduction of the Gallipoli Medallion and Badge in 1967 (*see Colour Plate 6*) went as far as was practicable in redressing this situation without directly conflicting with the issues which caused the demise of the Gallipoli Star as an Australian and New Zealand Government award.

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## **ALEC WILLIAM CAMPBELL: ‘THE LAST SENTINEL OF GALLIPOLI’**

**John Meyers and Bryn Dolan**

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The last entry in the roll of honour for Gallipoli was finally made on Thursday, 16 May 2002, when Alec Campbell, the last Anzac and last surviving participant of the Gallipoli campaign, died of pneumonia, aged 103. With his loss Gallipoli ceases to be part of living memory and has truly become, as John North referred to it, ‘a country of the mind’. The flags of a nation flew at half-mast, the front pages of the major newspapers were devoted to the event, and the Prime Minister cut short a visit to China in order to attend Mr Campbell’s funeral at St David’s Anglican Cathedral in Hobart, Tasmania.

The story of the last Anzac begins in Launceston, Tasmania, on 26 February 1899, and thus spans three centuries: Alec was the son of Marian Thrower and Samuel Campbell and grandson of Donald Campbell, an immigrant from Argyllshire, Scotland. On 2 July 1915, two months after the landing at Gallipoli was reported in the Australian newspapers, he presented himself at the recruiting office where he gave his age as 18 years 4 months. He was at that time, he stated, a clerk in an insurance company, and had served three years in the Senior Cadets at Launceston’s Scotch College. He was 5 feet 5 inches tall and weighed 135 pounds. Parental consent was necessary for anyone between the ages of 18 and 21 to enlist in the AIF, which should have presented an obstacle to enlistment because Alec had in fact lied about his age, raising it a full two years above his actual 16 years and 4 months. He met the problem of how to show the authorities he had his parents’ permission head-on; he simply got it from them. On 30 June 1915 his mother and father signed a letter in which they gave their consent to his ‘enlistment for the front’, unwittingly reserving a special place in history for their son, No.2731 Private A.W. Campbell, 15<sup>th</sup> (Queensland and Tasmania) Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, Australian Imperial Force. He would be nicknamed by his comrades as ‘The Kid’.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, to which Alec was allotted, sailed from Adelaide on 16 August 1915 aboard the SS *Kyarra*, bound for Alexandria. On 18 October they and the 7<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements departed Egypt for Sarpi Camp on the island of Lemnos. A few days later they were taken on the strength of the battalion, or what was left of it. The 15<sup>th</sup> Bn was at that time resting on the island, having suffered severe losses during the savage fighting for Hill 971 and Hill 60 in

August. The battalion holds the dubious honour of having the highest casualty rate of any unit of the AIF that landed at Gallipoli, and the addition of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements could only bring its strength up to 13 officers and 453 other ranks. Mumps broke out amongst the new troops on 25 October and all reinforcements were quarantined until the 31<sup>st</sup>, when the battalion sailed back to Gallipoli aboard the *Osmanieh*. Due to exceptionally rough seas the 15<sup>th</sup> was unable to land at Anzac until the night of 2 November, at which time it marched out to Hay Valley, the southern in land arm of the Aghyl Dere. In this valley just below Bauchop's Hill was also sheltered the 4<sup>th</sup> Aust Inf Bde's headquarters and the Brigadier, Col John Monash. This was a relatively quiet area in the far north of the Anzac sector. The 15<sup>th</sup> Bn lost only one man killed in action here during the six weeks until the evacuation.

Nevertheless wounds were common and sickness was rampant; dysentery and jaundice were still prevalent in the battalion and on 28 November the troops awoke to freezing winds and a blanket of snow dumped by an overnight blizzard. By unlucky coincidence the 28<sup>th</sup> was also marked down as the battalion's bathing day, and no blizzard was going to be allowed to interfere with that occasion. The men stripped naked – though the temperature remained below zero all day – and received from the cooks a quart of thawed ice and a strip of flannel per man, with which they proceeded to wash themselves. Pte Alec Campbell was admitted to the 4<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance on 8 December suffering from influenza. Discharged to duty three days later, he could hardly have suspected that this bout of illness was to be only the first of many in the months ahead. Alec's admittance to the small Field Ambulance in Hotchkiss Gully, Anzac, would stand as a punctuation mark in the story of his life, for although unsuspected as such at the time, it marked the beginning of the end of his service as a soldier of the Great War.

Two days after his discharge from the Field Ambulance, on the night of 13 December, the 15<sup>th</sup> Bn filed out of Hay Valley and made its way to the pier on North Beach, from which it was evacuated from Gallipoli aboard SS *Carron*. There appears to have been a great deal of bitterness within the battalion that the honour of forming the Anzac rearguard fell to other units, with the 15<sup>th</sup> feeling that it had been ordered to 'fade away in the night' almost a week before the final evacuation. With the Gallipoli peninsula slipping behind him in the dark, Alec Campbell's war service was over.

The 15<sup>th</sup> Bn was disembarked once more on Lemnos and spent the next ten days in the cold and exposed Sarpi Camp. A simple Christmas dinner was organised, and the unit departed Mudros Harbour on Boxing Day 1915, aboard HMT *Ascanius*. The battalion disembarked at Moascar, Egypt, on 30 December 1915, and marched out to its new camp at Ismailia. The weather and strain had taken their toll, though, and on 3 January 1916, Pte Campbell was admitted to the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian General Hospital in Heliopolis, Cairo, suffering from acute laryngitis. It seems his health had completely broken down. Over the next few months he was afflicted at different times with jaundice, scabies, head lice, mumps, palsy and paralysis of the right side of his face. His 'War Gratuity Schedule' form records that he was admitted to this or that hospital with the simple description 'sick', possibly because there was so much going wrong. Alec spent the time around his seventeenth birthday in and out of convalescent depots, always rejoining his unit on discharge, but seemingly never able to remain with the battalion long before once again falling ill.

In the early evening of 27 April he was charged with being absent without leave and drunk, no punishment having been recorded. On 5 June 1916 he was handed over for trial by his Commanding Officer, having been charged with being absent without leave, and with 'breaking out of hospital'. Maybe it should have been foreseen that young Pte Campbell would

prove a handful for the authorities; he had after all stated on his attestation form that he had previously been in trouble with the police for ‘riding without a light’. Soon after this incident he was diagnosed with palsy and right facial paralysis, and was recommended for discharge. He would eventually lose his right eye. On 24 June 1916 he boarded the *Port Sydney* at Suez for the journey home. His service with the AIF officially ended on 22 August 1916, just over a year after his enlistment, when he was discharged as medically unfit in Tasmania. He had joined the army, travelled halfway round the world, served at Gallipoli, been discharged, and was once again living with his parents, all well before he turned eighteen.

After his service with the AIF ended, Alec’s life can best be described as full. He went bush and got work as a jackaroo in Tasmania, before undertaking carpentry training, building motor bodies, houses and boats. He took up boxing and won the Tasmanian flyweight championship. In 1924 he married his first wife, Kathleen Connolly, and started a family. He gave up boxing and eventually had seven children. In 1927 he began working for the Launceston Railway Workshop and was a staunch unionist, becoming, in 1942, president of the Tasmanian branch of the Australian Workers’ Union. During World War 2 he studied for an economics degree and met the woman who would become his second wife, Kathleen Corvan, with whom he had another two children – the second when he was 69 years old. He worked in the public service as a disabled persons’ employment officer, in which capacity he later assisted incapacitated World War 2 veterans. He learned to sail, and took part in at least six of the gruelling annual Sydney to Hobart yacht races. He worked for the Heart Foundation until his retirement at age 80, and continued to drive until he was 95.

Despite all this, it is for his special connection to Gallipoli that Alec Campbell will be most remembered, and while it is sometimes stated that he blazed away at the Turks through loopholes in the fire trenches, all evidence is against this. The 15<sup>th</sup> Bn was not in the front-line trenches after its return from rest on Lemnos, and Alec maintained, later in life, that at Gallipoli he was mainly engaged in water-carrying duties between the beach and the front lines, and believed he had never actually shot a Turkish soldier.

When discussing his status as one of the very few remaining veterans of Gallipoli, he would sometimes say, ‘It’s hard to believe – all those young men – gone.’ For his services on the Gallipoli peninsula 87 years ago, Pte Alec Campbell, 15<sup>th</sup> Bn, was awarded the 1914-15 Star, The British War Medal and the Victory Medal. In 1967 he claimed his Anzac Commemorative Medallion and lapel badge, and in 1990 he returned once again to Gallipoli, to Anzac, as part of a trip organised for veterans to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the campaign and was presented with the unofficial Gallipoli Star, which he proudly wore. In 1990 he received the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Armistice Remembrance Medal and in 2002 the Centenary Medal. He was featured on a set of stamps, *The Last Anzacs*, along with veterans Walter Parker and Roy Longmore, which Australia Post issued to mark Australia Day 2000.

He died with Kate, his wife of 44 years, by his side. His funeral was attended by the Governor General and the Governors, by the Prime Minister and his ministers and by politicians of every kind, by the Chiefs of the Defence Force, and by his family. In a break with tradition, ten of the Campbell women – great-granddaughters, granddaughters and a daughter, five on either side of the flag-draped coffin – flanked the guard of honour on Pte Campbell’s final journey. He was carried on the same gun carriage that bore Weary Dunlop, one of Australia’s greatest heroes of World War 2, to his last rest. Jo Hardy, the granddaughter who runs the nursing home where Alec lived for the last part of his life, explained, ‘Alec was not a man of tradition. After all, he was a republican. We thought this was a way of showing that, and the family readily

agreed.’ On Friday 24 May 2002, the day of the funeral, Australian flags everywhere – all around the world – flew again at half-mast, and throughout the nation a minute’s silence was observed in honour of Alec Campbell and of all the soldiers who served at Gallipoli – ‘all those young men’ who had entered into the silence before him.

He was a boy soldier: a water carrier rather than a fighter; a husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather; a champion of the worker and of the disabled. He was our last human link to Gallipoli and all that place symbolises. He was the last Anzac. Australia mourns the loss of a national treasure. He imbibed the spirit of Anzac, and he never lost it.

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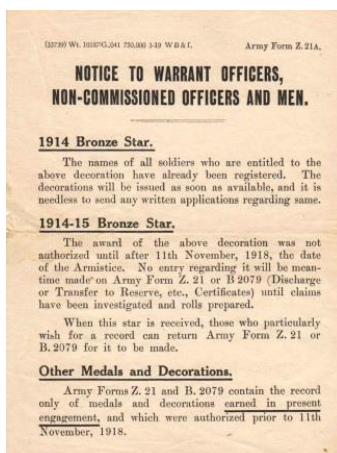
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This notice (Army Form Z.21A) was produced to guide British Army warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers regarding the 1914 Star and the 1914-15 Star. It was intended that this notice would be glued into their paybook. 1914 Star: instituted in April 1917 for issue to officers, soldiers and Royal Marines of the British Expeditionary Force who served on land in France or Belgium between the commencement of hostilities on 5 August 1914 and midnight of 22/23 November 1914 (the end of the First Battle of Ypres). Some 378,000 medals were awarded. 1914-15 Star: instituted in 1918 and awarded for operational service in any theatre of the War between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915. A total of 2,366,000 medals were awarded throughout the Commonwealth, and about 82,000 of these were to Australians. It was not possible to receive both this medal and the 1914 Star.

**Paul Rosenzweig**