(2)

PRIME MINISTER

GALLIPOLI

I attach some notes, originally intended for a speech about Gallipoli, sent to me by a Mr Peter Liddle of the University of Leeds. It occurs to me that you might like to glance at them as a source for any comments about the campaign which you may be called upon to make to the media during your visit to Gallipoli on Wednesday. There are some evocative phrases.

C.D.P.

C. D. POWELL
23 April 1990

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DRAFT NOTES FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH IN TURKEY MARKING THE SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN

We meet today in a mood of melancholy mingled with thanksgiving, and of reverence at the memory of the sacrifices of 75 years ago; a reverence which transcends the rivalries of those days, and bridges the divisions between former enemies. I know that there are many who have drawn comfort from the cemeteries so beautifully tended here.

The very word 'Gallipoli' is often used to denote heroic but pointless endeavour, or even useless sacrifice. It is not my purpose today to indulge in detailed judgements about the military events of 1915. Perhaps now that so many records have been opened up we understand better than we once did how complicated were the circumstances which Ministers and military leaders had to face, and why they were prepared to run such great risks in order to avoid what seemed likely to be an endless slogging match on the Western Front. The idea that so much treasure poured out, so many lives lost, so many acres devastated, would produce no conclusive result in France and Belgium tempted strategists and Ministers to look for a way round.

It seemed the more attractive when by the standards of the Western Front the commitment of men and materials would be relatively small. Of course, everything turned upon success in the Dardanelles being attained without undue delay; after that, so it was reasoned, it would be possible to assist Russia, as the ally of France and Britain, and to undermine Austria-Hungary, the ally of Germany. Russia appealed for help, as well she might. The purpose of the British and Commonwealth military forces dispatched after the failure of the Navy to neutralise the Turkish defence of the mines in the Dardanelles, was to take the Gallipoli Peninsula in order to open Naval passage to the Marmora and thus to the Golden Horn. The allies could place their ships there, they could

threaten the bombardment of Constantinople, and thus try to ensure Turkish withdrawal from the war.

Our relations with Turkey have been so friendly for so many years now that I hope I can say all this without giving offence. Much must be excused in the fog of war, with nations fighting for their very life. And when we look at what happened in almost another four years of warfare, the loss of many of the best of their generation in every part of Europe, we should not quickly condemn people who looked for another way of bringing war to an end. No doubt their assumptions were too optimistic; even if the local enterprise succeeded here at the Narrows, rather unlikely allies had to be found in South East Europe, a force would have to be equipped and organised to threaten Austria-Hungary by advancing up the Danube, the Germans, it was hoped, would divert a good deal of strength from the Western Front in order to help Vienna and Budapest; and thus, either Austria-Hungary would be defeated by a combination of military pressure and internal disruption, or Germany would be so weakened that Britain and France could secure victory on the Western Front.

Perhaps we shall best call it an understandable gamble. But we mark and celebrate today a different aspect of affairs, something that even an official historian of one of the participating regiments once called 'the great adventure'. That it certainly was, as an act of strategy and even more in terms of unquenchable human spirit. I pay my particular tribute to the way in which the Turkish Government has maintained the sites hallowed by memories of sacrifice in 1915, and have been moved, as many will be, to read the words which the Turkish authorities have chosen to commemorate amidst the friendships of today the sacrifices of those who fought on opposite sides long ago. I read that on one of the memorials are inscribed the lines:

'Traveller halt! The ground where you walk once witnessed the end of an era. Listen! In this quiet mound there once beat the heart of a nation.' Indeed, we may add - several nations.

So startling have been the advances of applied science in the last generation that we need to make a conscious effort of imagination if we were to understand how great were the uncertainties and novelties of the campaign fought here in 1915. It was a

Combined Operation, not only between British and French and Commonwealth forces, but between new and old arms of warfare. Less than six years had passed since Bleriot had first flown an aircraft over the twenty miles or so of sea which separate France from Britain. At the Dardanelles, not only land-based aircraft but sea planes supported no less than an Armada of vessels large and small making their way to 7 separate beaches; at a little distance from the shingle shores of the Gallipoli Peninsula and on the Asiatic side of the Narrows, at Kum Kale, naval cutters and whalers, which had been towed in by steam picket boats, cast off and were rowed in by their crews to face a resolute Turkish opposition which withstood heavy shelling from the allied ships. At one of those beaches, on the northern side of the Peninsula, a few miles from Cape Helles, Australians and New Zealanders were about to face a task of the most daunting kind. Everyone knows how they faced it, and at what a cost; and there they forged a legend which became a permanent part of their emerging nationhood, the drama of the Anzac beachhead.

Against the Turkish and German forces were arrayed nationalities, tongues, cultures, religions of the most diverse kind: the English, Scots, Welsh and Irish; Australians and New Zealanders; Newfoundlanders; Sikhs, Gurkhas and other troops from India; Palestinians, Moroccans, Algerians, Senegalese, troops from Metropolitan France. To bring such an array of forces together and then to coordinate their action must, we may say, surely have been exceptionally difficult. Perhaps in this particular enterprise launched in the way it was, 'impossible' would not be an inappropriate word. However, the testimony of those who gave their lives as well as those who survived leaves us in no doubt that the endeavour had for them all the marks of a great cause, and the exhilaration which springs from taking part in it. Amongst them were men whose diaries and letters show that they knew how historic was the ground upon which the battle was to be fought; for the scene lay within sight of Troy on the Asiatic shore.

Those eight months of campaigning brought a heavy toll; on the allied side alone, 46,000 died. Even the survivors had to confront

every sort of ordeal from dysentery to flooding and freezing temperatures. Some were convinced and in a sense troubled for the rest of their lives by the belief that success had been but one or two steps away. An awareness of a great adventure frustated, the sadness of so many fine lives lost, the constant strain of those months upon the peninsula under endless shelling, the pent up tentions associated with the evacuation - all this ensured that those who served at Gallipoli carried with them to the end an undiminished sense of the comradeship forged there, of the pride in having been there and the confidence that every man had done his best.

The conception of the campaign here in the Dardanelles, and the driving force behind its early stages sprang largely from Winston Churchill. Everyone knows that his political career was severely stricken as a result of the failure of his concept to bear early fruit. Looking back years later upon the events of 1915, Churchill said with his characteristic good humour that he had only one consolation in thinking of the series of mischances which in his view had just prevented the allied forces from getting through; and that was that God wished matters to be prolonged so that mankind should be thoroughly sickened of war. He said this only ten years before an even more destructive war broke out in the autumn of 1939; but in our generation, especially after the events of the last twelve months, we may perhaps be moving towards circumstances which render war between such great nations unnecessary and even unthinkable. Our pleasure that the enmities of the First War between Turkey and the western allies did not persist into the Second and that we have now been allied for so long, our earnest hope that the present and future generations may not have to walk through the wilderness of suffering which their grandfathers and great-grandfathers had to traverse, blend today with our respect for all those who stood to their duty in this place 75 years ago.

6.3.90

Peter H Liddle F.R.Hist.S.

University of Leeds
Liddle Collection.

DRAFT.

Draft

GALLIPOLI

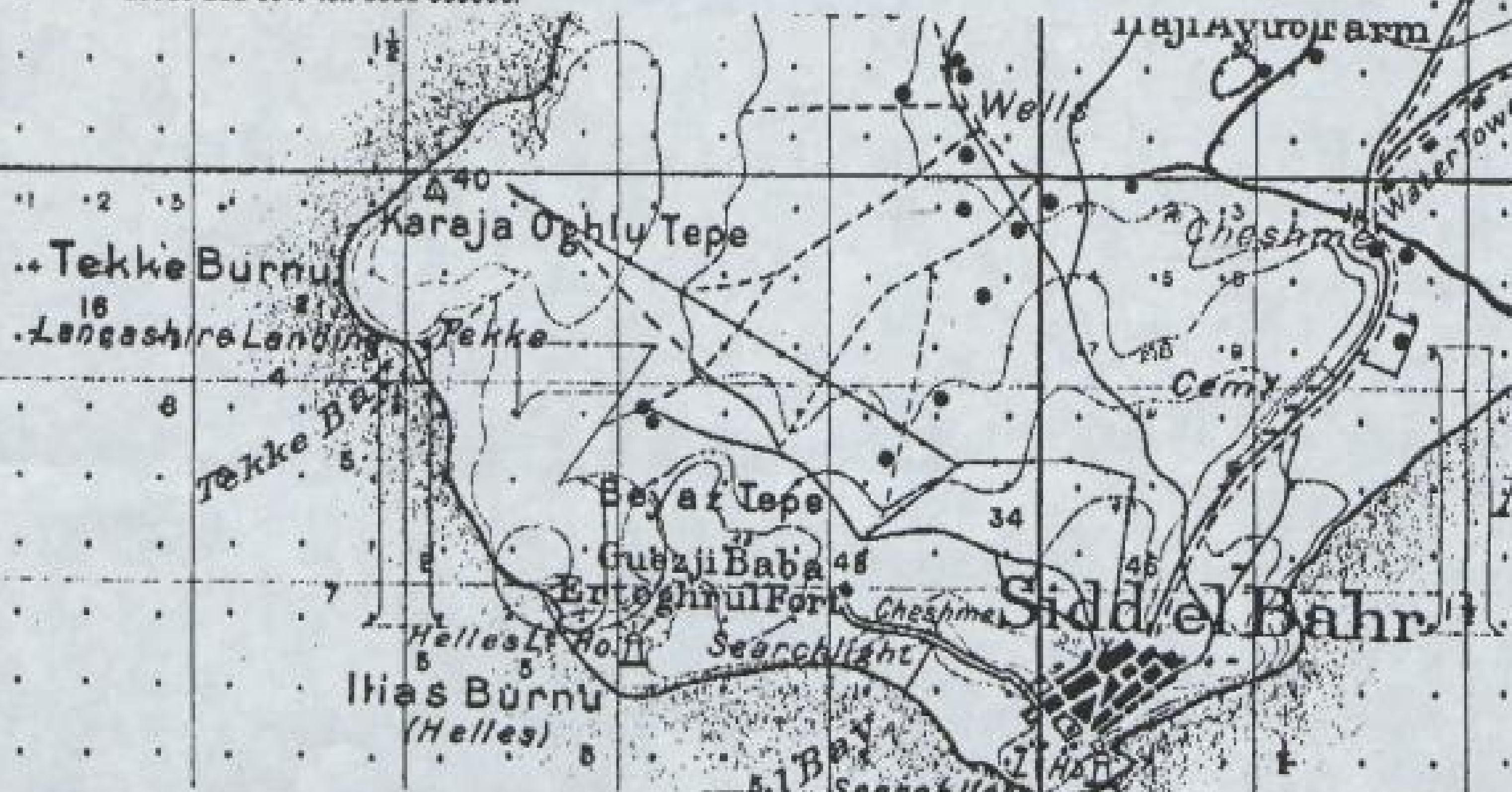
1915 - 1990

An exhibition to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Gallipoli landings on April 25 1915 and the Dardanelles/Gallipoli Campaign. April 25 to May 31, The University of Leeds (Edward Boyle Library)

The University of Leeds is mounting a major and unusual exhibition drawing upon the uniquely comprehensive and fascinating Dardanelles/Gallipoli holdings of the Liddle Collection to document Britain's first large scale, inter-allied 20th century Combined Operation of war. Imaginatively conceived and illustrating the February, March Naval bombardments and shore party demolition work, the assembling of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force and then the drama of the April landings at Cape Helles, Kum Kale and North of Gaba Tepe, the exhibition fully takes account of the undersea and air support elements in the campaign. After coverage of the May to July battles, the new landing at Suvla and the struggle for the heights above Anzac, the exhibition depicts the tribulations of dysentry and then of the extreme climatic conditions of November, till, against all the odds, the skilful carrying out of well-laid evacuation plans is successfully effected in December and then in January of the following year. In telling a tale of exceptional interest, a distinctive audio element is an integral part of the lay out of this exhibition, nicely complementing displays which make surprising use of colour.

There will always be debate over the concept, conduct and impact of this campaign but here in Leeds will be seen graphic documentation of "what it was like to be there": The spirit of Gallipoli is quite remarkably captured. Whether the visitors were to be drawn by interest in the campaign itself, the Naval or Air aspects, the service of certain regiments, the exploits of those who were to be awarded the Victoria Cross or the endeavours of unsung individuals who left letter, diary, art, photographic or three-dimensional evidence of their endeavours or whether he were to wish to see the appearance of the landscape today, it is unlikely that he will be disappointed.

If you would like more information on the exhibition (open throughout normal library hours, admission free) or on the Liddle Collection and in particular its association of "Friends" of the Collection, please write to the Hon. Sec. of the Friends: Mrs A. Artymiuk, The Liddle Collection, Edward Boyle Libary, The University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT. Tel. 0532 335566.



GALLIPOLI 1915 - 1990

THE LESSONS OF GALLIPOLI

BY

ROBERT RHODES JAMES

No single military campaign of modern times has received a literature comparable in scale and quality than the ill-fated Gallipoli Campaign of 1915. Even the British Official biographer,who had been on Sir Ian Hamilton's staff,wrote rhapsodically that "the drama of the Dardanelles campaign,by reason of the beauty of its setting,the grandeu of its theme and the unhappiness of its ending,will always rank amongst the world's classic tragedies". C.E.W.Bean's superlative Australian history is also a work of literatur in its own right. But,as Lord Grey wrote,"nothing so distorted perspective,disturbed impartial judgment,and impaired the sense of strategic values as the operations on Gallipoli",and the same can be said of much of the subsequent writing on the campaign. As John North remarked,with truth,"no battleground so easily lends itself to retrospective sentimentality",and one of the purposes of my history of the campaign,first published in 1965,translated into Turkish and Italian,and in print virtually ever since - in itself a remarkable example of the enduring fascination with Gallipoli - was to describe it very much in the contemporary accounts of the luckless participants,to whom,on both sides,it was sheer hell,with some interludes. My late uncle,badly wounded at Anzac in the August offensive,told me that his most vivd memory of Anzac was spending almost all his time in the latrine,suffering,as was virtually every other man,from virulent dysentry. He saw nothing romantic about it; nor did hardly anyone else who was actually there. And 46,000 Allied soldiers,and literally countless Turks,were killed on two small fronts in nine months.

The assumption of the Western inter-war writers was that as there would never again be a war on this scale the dominating question was who was to blame for the disaster. Was it Churchill,as Bean,and many others,claimed ? Was it Hamilton? Why were so many of the British generals so old and so useless? These,and many other issues,were furiously argued The confidential British joint Services study,which has never been published,lamely concluded that "it is essential that operations of this nature should be based on a previously well-considered estimate of the sea,land and air forces necessary to obtain the results desired". It even advised against having a single commander-in-chief for

amphibious operations of this type and scale, blithely ignoring what had been one of the most significant of all the lessons of the Allied command. Curiously enough the best and most detailed analyses were by the Turkish General Staff and in American Service journals.

The Gallipoli campaign was absolutely unique and unprecedented in modern warfare, a fact that has been often overlooked by Hamilton's critics. If the British had little experience of such operations since the occupation of Egypt in 1882, nor did anyone else. It was the first amphibious operation that involved aircraft, submarines, cable communications and armoured landing craft, and long, entirely maritime, lines of communication. German and Turkish mines and torpedoes caused havoc among the Allied naval and civilian fleets. Disease caused even more casualties than bullets or bombs. And Hamilton had less than a month in March and April 1915 to gather his disparate - and, with the exception of the magnificent 29th Divsion, which was to suffer so grievously - untried troops and to devise his strategy.

The brilliance of that strategy has also tended to be underestimated. There would be a feint attack at Bulair, on the neck of the Peninsula, where Liman Von Sanders - whose ro[le] was deliberately down-graded in the Turkish history - had concentrated his principal forces. There would be another, in strength, by the French, at Kum Kale. British submarines would be sent into the Marmara to attack Turkish ships bringing reinforcements and supplie[s]. While the main landings would be by the British at Helles, the untried Anzacs would land further north near Gaba Tepe and sweep across the Peninsula. The naval bombardment to precede the landings at Helles would be of unparallelled fury. A harmless-looking transpo[rt] ship, the River Clyde, would be a modern Trojan Horse, packed with soldiers. The purpose of this was to confuse the defenders for the first vital forty-eight hours. In this at leas[t] it succeeded totally, as Von Sanders candidly admitted.

It also tends to be forgotten that only two of the landings were opposed - at W Beach, where the Turkish resistance, although strong, was swept aside, and V Beach. The latter reverse was the most serious setback on Aopril 25th 1915, and threw the assault in[to] disarray, but by the following day had been made good, albeit at a terrible cost. Although the Anzacs had been thrown back by Kemal's division into a dangerously vulnerable perimeter, they had kept - and were to continue to keep - a disproportionate number of the Turkish forces away from the main front. When the British, now reinforced by the French after the wholly successful operation at Kum Kale, advanced at Helles on the 27th there was virtual[ly] no Turkish resistence left.

But,even by then,some grim lessons had been learned.

The first had been that no one,from Churchill down,had expected the much despised and often defeated Turkish soldier to put up so ferocious a resistance,Kemal hurling his men fanatically to certain death until the Anzacs broke under the onslaught,the machine-gunners at Sedd-el-Bahr uncowed by the massive naval bombardment. Not only had they inflicted undreamed-of casualties,and had proved that shelling has its limitations on a well dug-in unit and that there are few things more vulnerable than a heavily equipped soldier sitting helplessly in a wooden boat or struggling ashore with water up to his waist, but the psychological damage on the invaders had been immense. "I had no idea,to be frank, that they would be so good",Hamilton later told the Dardanelles Commission of the Turks. Confidently expecting a walk-over,the invaders were stunned and demoralised by the reality.

Hamilton's overall strategy,however inspired,was grievously marred by his lack of attention to logistics,and his "Q" staff had been virtually ignored in the planning. It was the collapse of logistics,combined with exhaustion and confusion,that brought the Allied advance at Helles to a halt. By the time that things had been sorted out to some reasonable extent,Von Sanders' army from Bulair had arrived. The element of surprise having been lost,the Helles sector taught the lesson that attacks in open country on trenches in the era of the machine-gun are exercises in suicide.

By making over-optimistic assumptions about the quality of the opposition and the practicalities of the operation,what had seemed to have been a successful,if costly, operation now became a near-disaster. The arrangements for the treatment of the wounded were based on the assumption that hospitals would be established ashore (not that many casualties were expected,in any event). The result was chaos,with much needless suffering and unnecesary deaths. The sight of boats of wounded men being ferried around from ship to ship seeking succour,and the lack of all but the most basic medical facilities on the Peninsula,was another deadly factor in the slump in morale. This particular lesson was never learnt throughout the campaign,especially in the planning for the August campaign. The official account of the British medical record on Gallipoli is perhaps the most chilling single document that emerged from the campaign,although it can be said that the Turks' indifference to this aspect of war was far worse. This was little consolation to their opponents.

The result was trench warfare - on the Allied side without grenades,apart from

th"jam-tin" home made variety - and,as the trenches got ever closer - without artillery. Here,apart from the warships,before they had to flee back to Mudros when the German submarines and a Turkish torpedo boat starting sinking them,ammunition and guns were so limted that the ration became only a few shells a day; only the French,with their incomparable "75"s seemed to have sufficient reserves. None of this stopped Hamilton and Hunter-Weston launching a series of set-piece attacks on the Helles front on the Flanders model - and with exactly the same terrible result. The Turk commanders,also,had not learnt the lesson,and their casualties in mad,if heroic,assaults,were horrific. One of the wonder not only of Gallipoli but of the Western Front in the First World War is how high morale remained on both sides,particularly at Anzac,where the conditions were unspeakable,and where,in that amazingly confined space,when disease came it swept through the Anzacs so devastatingly. Again,the medical services were totally at a loss.

The August offensive,the breakout at Anzac,was the result of some brilliant reconnorting by a New Zealander officer,Major Overton,and another,Corporal Denton,who had found a totally undefended route to the summit of Chunuk Bair,the key to the Anzac psotion; this discovery led to a detailed,and wholly practical,plan to capture Chunk Bair by a night march,which was the brainchild of a quiet Scots officer,a Lieutenant-Colonel Skeen. Kemal had also realised the vulnerability of the virtually undefended Chunuk Bair, but was dismissively overruled.

A night march with troops who were,most of them,seriously unwell,in such a mountainous and broken lanscape,must well have seemed madness to the German-Turkish high command,but the fact was that it came within an ace of triumph. The New Zealanders actual reached the summit,before being ordered by an exceptionally incompetent senior officer to halt,and General Walker's diversionary assault on Lone Pine was a masterpiece of preparat and ingenuity,and success. The others at Anzac,particularly the tragic slaughter of the Australian Light Horse at The Nek,were totally ineffective and bloody,but the result of local blunders.

The basic cause of the failure of the August Offensive was to make it too ambitious. Hamilton had,in the New Army Divisions,a superfluity of manpower. Anzac had been secretly reinforced until the tiny area was seriously overcrowded,and the fateful decision was taken to land the new and inexperienced divisions on the undefended Suvla Plain,to the north of the Anzac position. But this was regarded as a side[-show to the

main Anzac thrust. The British Generals responsible for Suvla were hopelessly inadequate, and,again,too old,but their instructions were simply to land their men and occupy the beaches. This,to be fair to them - which few have been - they did. After that,they did nothing,until it was too late.

In a catalogue of ineptitude in military matters,few operations of war can match the Suvla landings. Security had been so relaxed for the original landings that it now became a mania,with the result that senior officers had no idea of what was required of them and their men until hours before they landed. The logistics,particularly water supplies,were bungled again. The men were injected against cholera shortly before embarking. There were no maps,again,of any value. The only asset the New Army had were armoured landing craft, which greatly reduced their casualties against what limited resisteance they initially met. After that,it was chaos.

Both at Anzac and at Suvla,Von Sanders again had been totally outwitted by Hamilton but,again,made a fast and fierce response. Every available man was hastened to Chunuk Bai by Kemal,while Von Sanders marched his reserves to Suvla,even at the expense of the Helle front,where another British diversionary attack had ended in total failure,at a heavy cos It was this speed of assessment of the peril that marked out both Von Sanders and Kemal as far better fighting commanders than Hamilton. The August offensive,that had opened so triumphantly for the British,ended in a stalemate that was to the advantage of the Turks. Hamilton had over-reached himself. The August offensive was too clever by half. If it had been concentrated on the Anzac breakout it would have been a decisive victory,as Kema realised. His casualties were very heavy,but he drove the British and the Anzacs off Chunuk Bair,and Suvla degenerated into the Helles pattern of miserable trench warfare. It also meant the end of Hamilton's career,and,in effect,the end of the Gallipoli campaign.

There was,however,to be one singular triumph before the curtain fell - the evacuatiops of Suvla-Anzac and,subsequently,Helles. The new commander,General Monro,a particular target of Churchill's subseqwuent vituperation,brought together his staff and the Q staff for the first time. Their task at Suvla-Anzac alone was to evacuate some 80,000 men, 5,000 animals,2,000 vehicles and nearly 200 guns,literally under the eyes of the enemy,as at the end of the August fighting the Turks still commanded all the high ground. To keep the enemy deceived was crucial. Every night flotillas of small boats would creep into Anzac Cove and Suvla; by morning the seas were empty again. Nothing appeared to have changed,regular fire was maintained,and every appearance that the army remained in

strength. This time everyone was kept fully informed,and the detailed time-tables were a model of professional staff work,nothing being left to chance or improvisation. So successful was this subterfuge that,to the end,the Turks thought that the British were preparing a new assault. On the final night,when 20,000 men were evacuated,self-fiting rifles fired regularly,and a huge mine was exploded under The Nek. On the morning of December 20th the Turks discovered with stupefaction that the entire British and Dominion force had vanished,without a single death or serious injury. It was,as a leading German commentator wrote generously at the time,"a hitherto unasttained masterpiece".

What was even more remarkable was that the same tactics worked at Helles in January,when over 35,000 men and nearly 4,000 horses and quantitites of guns and stores were spirited away without the Turks ever realising what was going on.

* * *

For staff officers in the inter-war period Gallipoli was a treasure-trove of information and experience; when the Second war came,and amphibious operations planning came into its own,this proved invaluable,although,depressingly,not all the lessons had been learnt. One of the key problems was that the British (and American) soldier being a land-animal there is a natural tendency,after making the landing,to relax. A curious inertia prevails,as though the most difficult part of the operation was over. The D-Day planners,with fresh experience in the Mediterranean and the Dieppe disaster,were acutely aware of this,and great emphasis was placed on "pushing forward". But,in spite of total air superiority,the limitations of naval bombardment was demonstrated again,particularly at Omaha,but although the build-up was slow,the logistics side had been thoroughly prepared. Another factor was the psychological one; no one had any illusions that this was going to be a walk-over,or that the Germans were anything but superb soldiers. A close friend of mine who made the landing told me that he and his unit were convinced that "we would all be slaughtered". It was some time before the Allied forces could break through, but it had been a masterpiece of planning and,again of deception,the feints of Hamilton being emulated,and added to with great ingenuity and skill.

The Falklands operation presented logistical problems even greater than those that had faced Hamilton,and the amount of time available to the planners equally limited,but sheer professionalism triumphed. The lessons had been learned.

But,a footnote can be added. During the conflict I was surprised to learn that my

history of the Gallipoli campaign had suddenly sold out,and had to be reprinted. After the Argentine surrender I was invited to lunch at the Admiralty by Michael Heseltine. It was a small gathering,that included Admiral Woodward and Admiral Siur John Fieldhouse,two of the stars of the conflict. I was flattered to be in such company,but puzzled,until I found that the reason my Gallipoli had vansihed from the shelves was that the Ministry of Defence had bought every copy they could find. Also,when the army had landed,and the characteristic inertia was faithfully repeated,Fieldhouse had sent an urgent message: Remember Gallipoli ! Get going !"

There can be few such dramatic examples of the importance of studying and writing military history,and,for the professional,the importance of learning from the experience of others. When one looks at D-Day and the Falklands,one sees the reason.

ROBERT RHODES JAMES,POLITICIAN AND HISTORIAN,IS CONSERVATIVE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR CAMBRIDGE.

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"......You have drunk the wine of death"

Turquoise marks the 75th anniversary of the campaign with a special commemorative feature. DON SCURR introduces a series of articles that provide a vivid portrait of the battle, the terrain and the men who fought

GALLIPOLI

Celebrated by the Turkish Republic as the victory of Çanakkale and by the Allies as the Gallipoli campaign, the conflict lasted for almost 10 months and cost more than 150,000 lives.

Throughout the year 1915 and the early part of 1916 a bitter campaign was fought in the southernmost peninsula of Thrace in western Turkey that today unites the combatants in bonds of friendship. It led to the demise of one great empire, the Ottoman, and prefaced the beginning of the end for another, the British, which thereafter began slowly to fade away over the next 50 years. And although the strategy that created the battle is clear, the reasons for the larger conflict between the Allies and Turkey, of which it formed part, remain obscure.

This year a fellowship of nations representing the opposing sides recalls the 75th anniversary, cherishing a special relationship which was forged in the triumph and tragedy of the battle. In this commemorative feature, *Turquoise* outlines the background to the campaign, describes its progress, provides a portrait of the landscape now and places special emphasis on the recollections of some of the men who took part.

The name Gallipoli resounds with all the conflicting emotions aroused by poignant memories of the First World War: pride, rage, despair. Typical of the ultimately futile losses caused by that grim struggle, Gallipoli takes its place among the greatest battles of that world war: the Somme, Verdun, Passchendaele, Tannenburg, the Caucasus. These are the names that endure as monuments to the deaths of millions in a conflict which, from our perspective at the end of the 20th century, appears especially monstrous even by the melancholy standards of this sanguinary century.

And yet, to most of the countries taking part in the battles that were fought so savagely on the Gallipoli peninsula, memories of the campaign are mixed. Sadness at the carnage is fused with pride in its heritage — a heritage which for Turks embraces the achievements of Kemal Atatürk that led to the founding of the modern Turkish Republic; for Australians and New Zealanders the awakening of their sense of nationhood; and for British and French a watershed in their histories and an awareness that here, perhaps, was a starting point in a long and painful process which has led finally to the birth of a new Europe and progress towards an even wider community of nations.

AN EARLY REHEARSAL OF THE DISASTER

At the height of the Napoleonic Wars at the beginning of the 19th century there occurred two portents which were remarkably prophetic for the ill-fated British and French attempt to seize the Dardanelles during the Great War more than a century later. With his eye on further conquests in the East to enlarge the First Empire, Napoleon gazed at a map of the famous straits — the ancient Hellespont linking the Aegean and Marmara seas, scene of the siege of Troy — and remarked: "Who is to have Constantinople? That is always the crux of the problem."

One year later, in 1809, his enemy, Great Britain, despatched an expedition to capture Walcheren Island to block the River Scheldt in Belgium. The French had been warned by months of publicity about British intentions; medical authorities in Britain who were aware of the disease-ridden conditions in the island in midsummer were ignored; the expedition's commander did not have maps of the enemy's defences; there was scant co-operation between naval and land commanders.

The inevitable happened — British troops, afflicted with disease, ill-supplied

Right: the Secretary of State for War, Winston Churchill, on the grandstand at the Grand Place, Lille, watching the march past of the 47th division (British) on October 24, 1918. In the left foreground is the young Major B. L. Montgomery.

CIGAR-BUTT STRATEGY

> "Someone, Churchill or another, looked at a map of Europe; pointed to the spot with the end of his cigar; and said: 'Let us go there'."

and pinned down by alerted defences, made little progress inland. After weeks of vacillation, the Cabinet agreed to their evacuation. Their commander was sacked, the Government nearly fell. In every respect it was to prove an early rehearsal of the disaster at Gallipoli.

In 1915, Britain, now allied with France against Germany, Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, sought some way around the stalemate with which their armies were confronted on the entrenched and unshifting battleground of the Western Front in France. Their strategists recalled Napoleon's maxim, but forgot the lessons of Walcheren. It was decided to embark on an uncannily similar — and what was to prove an equally abortive — expedition to capture the Dardanelles. In an attempt to outflank the Germans and find a back door through which they could outmanoeuvre the Kaiser's armies by linking up with the Russians, the Allied plan was designed to avoid the necessity of battering through the German lines in France by costly frontal assault.

It was, of course, a brilliantly imaginative idea, but it demanded a level of urgency, secrecy, detailed planning and inter-service co-operation that was so signally missing in 1809. Clearly, swift and decisive action against unprepared defences might achieve success at minimal cost. Indeed, so basically sound was the concept and so potentially threatening to Germany and its allies that, when the second stage of the invasion was under way in August 1915, the German Admiral von Tirpitz warned: "Heavy fighting has been going on at the Dardanelles. . .the situation is obviously very critical. Should the Dardanelles fall, the World War has been decided against us." But like Walcheren, the project lacked preparation and vigorous generalship.

Below: (left to right) Vice-Admiral A. Boue de Lapeyrere (French Navy Commander-in-Chief, Med); General Sir Ian Hamilton (allied land commander); Vice-Admiral John M. de Robeck; and General Bailloud, G.O.C. Corps Expeditionaire d'Orient.

The two radicals in the British cabinet, David Lloyd George and Winston Churchill, dismayed at their generals' enthusiasm for confronting the formidable German defences in France head on, were anxious to discover an easier way. Churchill, in particular, seized on the Dardanelles strategy advocated by the "Easterners". Many of their schemes were clever in theory but, as historian A.J.P. Taylor has indicated, they were often "cigar butt" strategies. "Someone, Churchill or another, looked at a map of Europe; pointed to a spot with the end of his cigar; and said: 'Let us go there'." No detailed maps were consulted, local terrain and conditions were either ignored or unknown.

Britain's sea power, challenged in the eastern Mediterranean when the powerful German warships *Goeben* and *Breslau* eluded the British and French fleets to find safety in Turkish waters at Istanbul, was to be reasserted and used to force the straits.

But now there began a series of miscalculations that was to prove fatal for the Allied expedition and a vindication of the formidable qualities of Turkish generalship and valour. The troops of both sides displayed a consummate bravery and skill which has become part of the traditions of the nations that took part. The courage of Allied soldiers and sailors was matched equally by their Turkish opponents, but the ineptitude of Allied commanders — characterised by the German, General Ludendorff, when he described British soldiers on the Western Front as "lions led by donkeys", although he himself was guilty of similar mistakes — contrasted with the determination and masterly leadership of Mustafa Kemal, who was to become leader of the new Turkish Republic.

Many nations have a stake in the conflict. On the Allied side, English, Scots, Welsh, Irish, Australians, New Zealanders including Maoris, Newfoundlanders, Gurkhas, Sikhs, Palestinians, French, Algerians, Moroccans and Senegalese took part — the most richly varied ethnic mix to fight together during a First World War battle. The whole multi-ethnic blend of Ottoman Turkey, with its German advisers, opposed them. Yet today, all join in paying tribute to the courage of the participants on both sides. This rare spirit of comradeship between former enemies reflects the mutual affection, respect and sympathy felt by the descendants of the fighting men and banishes any trace of enmity. □

Don Scurr is a freelance journalist specialising in military and historical matters. He was founding editor of *Islamic World Defence* magazine.

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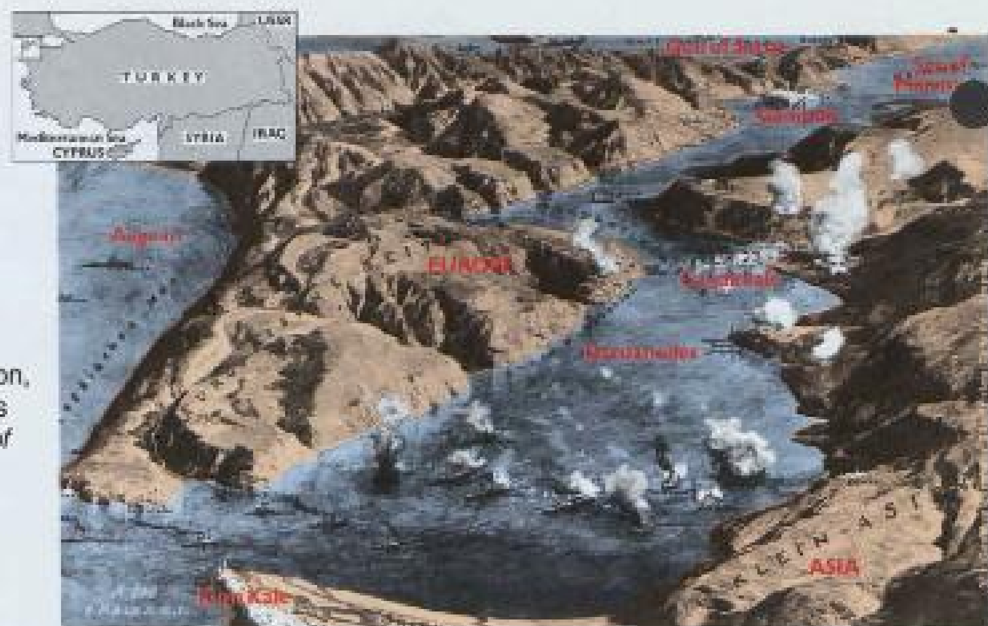
ANATOMY OF A BATTLE

Distinguished military historian, JOHN KEEGAN, Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in London, and author of the definitive studies *The Face of Battle* and *The Mask of Command*, describes the battle and its outcome



The return of the anniversary of the Gallipoli (Gelibolu) landings for the 75th time will be widely commemorated in the Anglo-Saxon world and in Turkey itself. The landings on April 25, 1915, are widely remembered by the regiments and the families of those that took part from Britain. In Australia, April 25 has become the greatest day in the national calendar, Anzac Day, when the nation rises before dawn to watch the sunrise and remember all Australian servicemen who died overseas in the two world wars, and in Korea and Vietnam.

It is March 18, the date that marks the repulse of the Allied naval expedition to force the Straits, that is remembered in Turkey. This was the moment when the long tide of defeat was stemmed which had forced back the western frontiers of the Turkish world from Tripoli and Bosnia to within 320 kilometres of Istanbul.

Gallipoli is, of course, a battle, but also the place that gives its name to the events. It is a small town on the peninsula that bounds the western shore of the Dardanelles, the passage that connects the Mediterranean to the Black Sea. Çanakkale Boğazı, or the Dardanelles, is the sea frontier between Europe and Asia and, since the rise of the Greek city states, has always been a waterway of the greatest strategic importance.

Its importance was enormously enhanced at the outbreak of the First World War when, in October 1914, the Ottoman Empire entered the war on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary. Turkey entered for a variety of reasons. Russia, who was the Germans' and Austrians' enemy, was also the traditional enemy of the Ottomans, against whom the tsars had fought a series of bitter territorial wars since the 16th century. But Austria was a traditional enemy also, while Britain, and even more so France, were traditional friends. The causes of Turkey's alliance with the Central against the Allied powers were therefore not historical but immediate.

Germany had taken the trouble to make itself the friend of the Young Turks, to provide material aid for their programme of modernising the Ottoman realm — by financing the Berlin to Baghdad railway and providing instructors for the Turkish army. On August 2, Germany had signed a secret alliance with the Ottoman government, sent the cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau* through the Mediterranean to join the Turkish fleet and appointed a German naval expert, Admiral Souchon, to command it.

Turkey shortly found itself engaged on four fronts against the Allies: in Mesopotamia, where troops of the British Indian Army landed to take control of the oilfields on November 6, 1914; in the Caucasus against Russia, where the first fighting ocurred on November 8; on the Suez Canal, which a Turkish force attacked in February, 1915; and then at Gallipoli.

The British and French decided to make a strategic thrust at Gallipoli in order to fulfil a Russian request to help them by taking pressure off the Caucasus front where the Turks had achieved an initial success. At the ou[illegible], the strategy was to use naval forces on[illegible] which it was hoped would attract Turkish army units to the shores of the channel. As it is 25 kilometres (40 miles) long, but in places only one kilometre wide, the British admiralty — which had studied the problem before the war — rightly considered that the chances of pushing a fleet through to Istanbul were slim.

A naval bombardment of the Turkish defences of the Dardanelles was begun on February 16. But on the same day, the British War Cabinet decided that a naval "demonstration" was not enough; troops would be needed after all.

During February and March the Allies had been concentrating five divisions in Egypt for a landing at Gallipoli. They were the Royal Naval Division, the 29th, two Australian and New Zealand divisions (forming a corps called Anzac), and the French First Colonial. But the Turks, now alert to the threat, had also been assembling divisions. By April 25, the day scheduled for the landing, they had six in place, under the command of the German general, Liman von Sanders. Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), a Turkish divisional commander, was to prove the most energetic and effective of his subordinates.

The British had decided to land at two points on the Gallipoli peninsula: at the tip, Cape Helles, and further north at a point to become famous as Anzac. But their landing arrangements were woefully inadequate.

On April 25, the landings brought tragedy in some places, missed opportunities at others. At Cape Helles, the troops disembarking from the *River Clyde* were caught in machine-gun crossfire with heavy losses. At three other beaches, codenamed S, X and Y, the troops got ashore with little difficulty but the local commanders decided to dig in rather than press inland. By the end of the day, therefore, the British were confined to narrow footholds, overlooked by the Turkish defenders, in which they began to suffer heavy casualities.

The Australians and New Zealanders were initially successful at Anzac, until Mustafa Kemal brought up reinforcements and hemmed them in.

General Sir Ian Hamilton, the Allied commander, supervised operations from a headquarters afloat. He had no means of communicating with his landing troops at the crucial moments — military raido had not yet been developed — and failed to exercise firm command in the days that followed. Conditions ashore rapidly became gruelling for the troops.

The Allies, nevertheless, poured in troops. By August there were 13 divisions ashore, 11 British and Anzac, two French. The Turks, however, had reinforced also and had equal numbers on the peninsula, many held in positions from which they could counter-attack if the Allies attempted to land nearer Istanbul.

On August 6, the Allies did attempt a second landing, at Sarı Bayır, codenamed Suvla, and 20 miles nearer Constantinople than Cape Helles. Two divisions, supported by two more a day later, landed, found themselves almost unopposed and then, as on the first day of the campaign at S, X and Y beaches, failed to push inland. A German officer, surveying Suvla the following day, said that it "looked as if a boy scouts' picnic was in progress".

On August 9, strong Turkish reinforcements commanded by Mustafa Kemal appeared and hemmed in the new landings. Trench warfare set in at heavy cost in casualties and disease to the attackers. The whole campaign had now become a stalemate. The Allies could not advance; the Turks were prevented from pushing the Allies into the sea by shortage of artillery ammunition.

Finally, at the beginning of December, the British Cabinet accepted the inevitable and decided to withdraw the expeditionary force. Anzac and Suvla were successfully evacuated by December 20. Finding a skill they had not shown in attack, the Allied commanders got their men away by deception at almost no cost.

The cost of the fighting had been grievously heavy to both sides. The Allies had also suffered a serious blow to their prestige and the only chance they had of opening an alternative route of supply to the hard-pressed armies of the tsar.

Gallipoli was the making of Mustafa Kemal. Thereafter he became known as one of the most energetic and successful commanders in the Turkish army. It was the unmaking of Winston Churchill, in the First World War at least, who had most vociferously and consistently supported the Dardanelles strategy in the Cabinet.

But Gallipoli was not without its point. It showed Turkey's determination to hold "the Straits" as one of its fundamental national interests and it left a memory of the dauntless courage of both sides. □

Facing page: German postcard of the period (courtesy of Taha Toros). Bottom left: Australians at Anzac, December 1915 (Imperial War Museum) and, below, a Turkish battalion advancing against the enemy (Hulton-Deutsch Collection).

John Keegan is the Defence Editor of the Daily Telegraph.

'As dangerous as the bridge to heaven'

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM, LONDON

Accounts by Turkish veterans from **Yaşayan Çanakkaleli Muharipler**, by Cahit Önder, published by Ibrahim Bodu, first edition 1981

Ali Demirel, from Biga

I was in Arıburnu in the 27th regiment. The enemy trench was very close. They threw grenades into our trenches and they also threw things like onions. Then we put nets in front of our trenches and after this the grenades did not fall into our trenches. One day we captured a gun with a mirror. I copied it and put two mirrors on our guns. Without raising your head, you could aim with the mirrors.

Later I was a prisoner of war for two years in Egypt. One day a limping British lieutenant shouted: 'Is anyone from the 27th regiment here?' They clearly weren't going to kill me, I said to myself, and stepped forward. The infidel with the walking-stick came limping over to me and shook hands. I was very comfortable thanks to him, God bless him. This infidel had also been wounded at Arıburnu, his interpreter told me later.

Mehmet Yavaş, from the village of Göle in Çan

I was born in 1891. I went to the Balkans to fight the Bulgarians and to Russia to fight the Armenians. I also fought in Çanakkale. I dug trenches for six months in Seddülbahir and Soğandere. In Soğandere I was wounded in my back and in my leg. They were bullet wounds and I still have a bullet in my back. My wounds were treated by a doctor under a bush and I went back to the trenches again. I never heard anyone crying for their father, only for their mother.

I came back from the front and found that bandits had kidnapped my wife while I was at Çanakkale. My first wife's name was Medine. Now I am married to Ayşe and we have six children. I have no pension and no medals. Because of the war we saw the world. Can't complain!

"Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives . . .
You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country therefore rest in peace . . .
Having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well!"

Ataturk's message in 1934 to visitors from Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain and France.

From an account by General Şükrü Naili in **Çanakkale Zaferinin Altın Sayfaları**, by A. Banoğlu, 1982

The Kanlıdere was under constant machine-gun fire and 10 to 15 men were killed every day.

One day I went there for an inspection and I had to cross this river. The regimental commander said it was as dangerous as the bridge to heaven. He said: 'First I'll cross it then you.' He ran the 40 paces safely and I followed him. The enemy machine-gun was firing non-stop. When I turned round I saw one soldier carrying two heavy buckets of soup, slowly crossing the river without caring about the firing. I shouted: 'Run, you'll get shot.' He didn't seem to hear me. When he finally reached us I was furious and asked him why he hadn't run. 'If I ran I would have spilt the soup and my friends would have gone hungry. You shouldn't be afraid of the enemy, commander.'

Ali Su, Gelibolu, from Canakkale 1915, by Ihsan Ilgar

On the morning of April 24, 1915, we noticed a little buoy in the sea in front of Kabatepe. We thought it was something left by the British as a marker because Kabatepe would have been the most convenient place in the peninsula to land and was close to the heights that dominated the Dardanelles. We asked our commander for permission to move it.

We chose three or four strong swimmers who removed the buoy from the sea. We loaded it on a mule and and put it into the sea a mile further north, opposite a steep hill.

And the next day the Anzac troops landed at Arıburnu. *(According to non-Turkish sources, the fatal landing of the Anzac troops at Arıburnu instead of Kabatepe, a mile to the south was caused by strong currents which made the making buoys drift.)*

An excerpt from **Birinci Dünya Savaşında Çanakkale Anıları**, 1984
From the memoirs of Sokrat Incesu who fought as an Ottoman officer in the Caucasus, Palestine and the Arabian desert, and Çanakkale.

I have one unforgettable memory. It was late in the evening; I wanted to check the situation and went down to the beach. It was very dark and it was impossible to see where I was walking. Suddenly I stepped on something soft and nervously threw myself forward, but there was no movement so I walked on. The next day our major called me and said: 'Tell your soldiers that last night while they were patrolling they stepped on General Liman von Sanders. Make sure that they walk more carefully in future'.

The cease-fire

Near Merkeztepe the trenches were just five metres apart. The soldiers could see each other clearly and started to make jokes. The Anzacs were sympathetic, cheerful people. The Turks were asking: 'Are you English?' 'No, we are not English.' 'Why are you fighting then?' 'The English are our brothers, we have the same language and past.'

They also seemed to like our soldiers. So both sides who had been trying to kill each other soon became friends. The Anzacs gave their buttons as souvenirs and the Turkish soldiers threw things like coins to the other side. The cease-fire commission was trying to stop this but both sides went on chatting. I even noticed one Australian soldier trying to measure one of our tallest soldiers with a tape-measure.

But later on, when the corpses arrived, the Turkish soldiers became silent. The chocolates were thrown back.

THE BATTLE OF BROKEN HILL

Lone Pine, the Nek, Walkers Ridge — all famous and grim encounters between Australian and Turk. But Broken Hill?

Harvey Broadbent reports

The Battle of Broken Hill, on New Year's Day 1915, was Australia's first taste of conflict, four months before the Anzac force landed at Gallipoli. But this battle was fought by two men, an ice-cream cart, and a posse of local militia. Yet it was bloody and tragic all the same.

The story starts several years before the outbreak of the war when Mohammed Gool and Mulla Abdullah arrived in Australia. It is unclear why they chose to settle there but it may have been to do with servicing the Afghani camel-train owners who operated in outback Australia. Abdullah set up a butcher's shop and Gool worked as an ice-cream vendor.

Both men suffered the difficulties of being strange easterners in a small Australian mining community. Abdullah, by his own account, had stones thrown at him by local children for wearing a turban. He also fell foul of the city elders who prosecuted him for his helal butchering.

He was still suffering from this mortification when news came in November 1914 that Britain and its allies were at war with the Ottoman Empire. As young Australians marched off, the two men must have felt very far from home.

Excerpt from *A Fortunate Life*, by A. B. Facey

The officers were called to report to the Company Commander. Now excitement ran high. A few minutes later they returned and told us that we were to land on the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey.

Our officer gave us a briefing on the proper instructions for landing. We were told that our ship would move as close as possible into the shore but would keep out of range of the enemy's shelling. He said, "A destroyer will come alongside and you will climb over the side and down the rope onto the deck of the destroyer. Close to the shore you will be met by a small motor boat towing rowing boats. There will be sailors on the rowing boats and they will take you into the beach. Now you are to get ashore as best you can and then line up on the beech and await further instructions."

This was it. We were scared stiff — I know I was — but keyed up and eager to be on our way. We thought we would tear right through the Turks and keep going to Constantinople.

All went well until we were making the change into rowing-boats. Suddenly all hell broke loose: heavy shelling and shrapnel fire commenced. Men were being hit and killed all around me.

When we were cut loose to make our way to the shore was the worst period. I was terribly frightened. The boat touched ground about thirty yards from the shore so we had to jump and wade into the beach. The water in some places was up to my shoulders.

There were many dead already when we got there. Bodies of men who had reached the beach ahead of us were lying all along the beach. The order to line up was forgotten. We ran for our lives over the strip of beach into the scrub and bush. We were stumbling over bodies — running blind.

I am sure there wouldn't have been one of us left if we had obeyed that damn fool order to line up on the beach.

By nightfall our small group had moved into a gully which later became known as Shrapnel Gully. this was one of the hottest spots we had to face. By this time we were short of ammunition and water. It seemed to me that we were only about a quarter of a mile from the beach.

We were a mixed group of troops from different states — Victorians, South Australians, New South Welshmen, Tasmanians and Western Australians. Most of us were young and in battle for the first time.

People often ask what it is like to be in war. Well I can tell you I was scared stiff. You never know when a bullet or worse is going to whack into you. A bullet is red hot when it hits you and burns like mad.

Abdullah and Gool packed two rifles, ammunition, a revolver and two daggers on to Gool's wooden ice-cream cart, raised the Turkish crescent and star flag on it and pushed it to a place by the railway line four kilometres outside Broken Hill. A train approached. The engine drivers would only have seen the unexpected sight of Gool's ice-cream cart sprouting the Turkish crescent and star. Still the train came on and as it went past they opened fire.

Within a minute, four citizens of Broken Hill were dead and several more were wounded. The police and local military reserve were called up by telegraph and a battle began in the hills outside the town. Abdullah did not last long, felled by the bullet of a civilian rifleman. Gool was wounded and died on his way to hospital.

Both men left notes to prosperity which were found among the rocks where they made their last defiant stand: Gool's motives were purest patriotism. He did it, he said, "because your people are fighting my country". Abdullah wrote, "One day I got very worried because I was summoned at the court. I asked them to forgive me, but they did not, and I have worried over it and been a very sorry man." And so ended the Battle of Broken Hill. □

Harvey Broadbent is a producer with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

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2ND INVASION

Heads of state, the top brass, diplomats, television crews and journalists will all be there. ANDREW FINKEL looks at the preparations for a major media event and (overleaf) puts the sights in perspective

PHOTOGRAPHS: BÜNYAD DINÇ

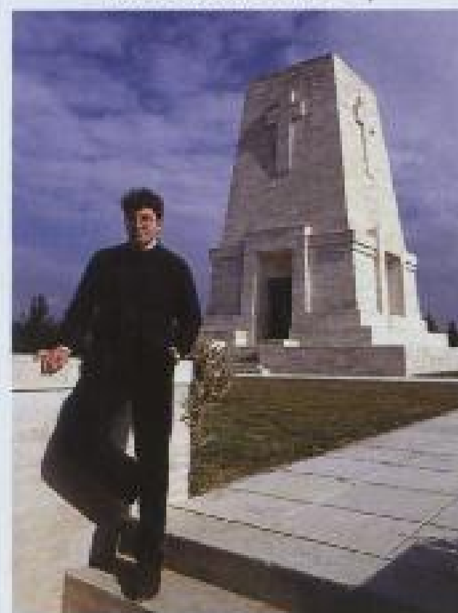
Ninety-four-year-old Adil Şahin was only 19 at the time. He was sleeping in his trench the morning of April 25. It was the look-out stationed in the advance trench who woke him. From their vantage point in the cliffs they could make out the shadows of a host of bodies moving through the water on to the beach next to Arıburnu. Şahin and his fellows had to retreat four times before they were able to hold the line. The Australians were invading.

Seventy-five years later they are invading again, "only this time," says Colonel Robert Brown, from the embassy in Ankara, "we intend to be better prepared". He and a legion of fellow Australians are planning the remembrance ceremony for the fated Gallipoli campaigns. By their own admission, the event is getting out of hand.

Şahin is only among a handful of veterans still alive in Turkey; in Australia there are about 300 survivors. Of these about 50 are fit and eager enough to make the trip back to Turkey. Through their veterans' organisation, the Return Services League, they decided that this was the last major anniversary of the landing of the Anzac troops which they could celebrate together. The Department of Veterans' Affairs drew up battle plans and the politicians set the ball rolling.

Within a short time the leaders of most of the participant countries, their ministers of defence and chiefs of defence had enlisted for the campaign. Last February, the British attaché in Ankara was churlishly refusing to confirm that Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, would be attending the ceremony, but back at the peninsula, the caretaker of the 15th-century Kilitbahar Castle was already fluffing the cushions for her expected meeting with Turgut Özal, the president of Turkey.

The Australian Prime Minister, will be in Turkey on a state visit and will be accompanied by senior members of his cabinet, the Chief of Defence, bands, guards, battleships and the Leader of the Opposition. With an Australian general



Left. Anzac Cove and David Richardson, from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

election, the celebrations have acquired a new significance.

Canada and France will be represented at a high level. A flotilla of war ships from all the participating nations (two from France which lost almost 15,000 men in the campaign, more than the Australians to whom Gallipoli means so much). Sir Paul Reeves, the Governer General of New Zealand, will also be part of the dawn landing party at what is now called Anzac Cove, the tiny beach where Antipodean troops first landed — and , of course, where the first causalties occurred, some presumably from Şahin's rifle.

The dawn ceremony is a traditional part of Anzac Day. Normally, says David Richardson of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, it is an informal ceremony. "Can you imagine 5,000 people here?" Richardson, a young horticulturist from Northern Ireland, is responsible for the upkeep of the more than 30 cemeteries and monuments in the area. "I suppose it won't be too bad," he says, with one eye on the fate of his herbaceous borders.

In Australia, the Gallipoli campaigns are famous for the folly of sending the cream of a generation into a badly conceived and executed operation. There is real concern that having survived the first campaign, the veterans (the youngest is 91 and the oldest 103) will weather the second. Advance guards of road engineers, medical personnel, diplomats and television producers have been dispatched to see that the celebrations go without a hitch.

The campaign will be run from a modest hotel in the nearby and normally sleepy town of Eceabat. "I suppose it would be tactful to call it co-ordination centre rather than command HQ," muses the Australian naval commander sent to organise radio communications.

It is March 18 that is most remembered in Turkey as the day that the Allied powers "back door" attack was repulsed and Istanbul protected from invasion. In Australia and New Zealand it is April 25 that is remembered, when young men from the southern continent first lost their lives on foreign soil.

April's battles, however, will be fought not for an inch of turf but for a spare place to stay. All the hotels in the area have been booked long ago.

Şahin, who has spent most of the intervening years in the nearby village of Büyük Anafarta, takes all the excitement in his stride. He has just seen off a visiting Turkish journalist and a few days earlier played host to a BBC film crew. Now it is the turn of the Australian ABC to book a television slot with him on April 25. And media star he is. He claims perfect recall of the events 75 years ago and of a summer spent in the trenches dreading when the wind would change and blow the smell of death in the Turkish direction.

He remembers how one of the *hocas* (holy men) who was with the men in the trenches to give spiritual encouragement spoke of how one day Turks and Australians would be close to one another. "And", says Şahin, "his words came true."

THE ANZAC CONNECTION

A personal reflection by FRANKLIN SCHWARZER, a young American student who joined relatives of Anzac servicemen on a pilgrimage to the battlefields

Churchill's plan to force the straits might have worked if the Turkish minelayer Nusret had not laid 26 mines the night before the attack. On the morning of March 18, what was described by the historian Alan Moorhead as the greatest armada in history sailed into disaster. By the time the battle was over, three battleships had been sunk and many other ships severely damaged. March 18 is as significant in Turkish history as the failure of the Spanish armada is in English history. And it is not surprising that a full-scale mock-up of the famous minelayer is one of the main attractions of Çanakkale's military museum or that the date should be emblazoned across a hillside overlooking the straits.

But anybody expecting the peninsula to be a desolate wasteland will find instead a sense of peace. This was not the case my first evening with the college students from Australia and New Zealand who, like me, had joined Huseyin Uluaslan's Troy/Anzac Tours for the April 25 anniversary tour. They were busy all night drinking beer and jumping in and out of the Dardanelles.

The next day was a very different story and they could not have been a more patriotic, respectful and polite group of people. Some had travelled eight months by yacht just to be there for the commemoration ceremony.

Our tour arrived at Anzac Cove at exactly 4.40am, the same hour the battle had begun so many years ago. A small memorial fire was built and Alan Moorhead's account of the landing was read. After a few minutes we walked down to the Ariburnu Cemetery where a dawn service was held. When the service ended, New Zealand Maoris did a traditional war chant in remembrance of the soldiers who fell at Gallipoli. The sun, just beginning to come up, outlined the promontories known as the Sphinx and Walker's Ridge.

The tour continued to the Beach Cemetery. Buried here is the famous Anzac medic, John Simpson, who bought a donkey to help transport the wounded. Before his death on May 19, 1915, Simpson and his donkey brought back scores of men from some of the worst battle zones.

We then walked to Shrapnel Valley Cemetery. In 1915, the name Shrapnel Valley said it all. Now cherry trees were in full bloom.

There are many cemeteries and memorials for Anzac, British and French troops; there are no grave sites and few memorials for the Ottoman soldiers. The one near Hellas, at the very tip of the peninsula, is dedicated to all those who died at Gallipoli.

Here, two army helicopters appeared on the horizon. They touched down near the memorial and several high-ranking officers of the Turkish, Australian and Canadian armed forces disembarked. While a bugler sounded the Last Post, the officers and visitors lined up and placed wreaths just below the epitaph.

We boarded our buses; this time for Lone Pine cemetery. Strategically, the position at Lone Pine was extremely important. It was taken on April 25, 1915, by the Anzacs only to be recaptured by the Ottomans. On August 6, the First Australian Brigade attacked and, again, after five days of bitter fighting, drove the defenders out of the area. While ceremonies took place, I wandered around the graveyard. As I read the headstones, I was startled to see two belonging to 16-year-olds.

We left Lone Pine and moved on to Conk Bayiri or, as it is known outside Turkey, Chunuk Bair. It was here that Mustafa Kemal won the battle for Turkey. By August 10, 1915, the Anzacs had gained so much ground the opposing trenches on Chunuk Bair were only 25 metres apart. In the early hours of the morning Kemal led a concerted counter attack and within six hours the Allies did not control one important height at Suvla or Anzac Cove. □

GALLIPOLI FACT FILE

Combatants' guide 1990

The main battles in Gallipoli 1990 will be fought not for the gun emplacement over the next ridge but for a spare hotel room. There are certainly none for the casual visitors who will be directed to camp sites (see below). On the morning of April 25, extra ferries will be laid on from Çanakkale to Eceabat and there will be six municipal buses donated to take visitors from Eceabat to the car park at Kabatepe. Combatants lucky enough to get a seat will probably have to make their way on foot after that to Anzac Cove (leave a good half-hour) for the 5.30 dawn ceremony.

At 9.20 there will be an international ceremony at Seddülbahir, the towering Turkish memorial that overlooks Moro Bay. From here, the nationalities will disperse — the English to the nearby Helles memorial at the south-western tip of the Gallipoli peninsula. The French cemetery is also near Helles.

Others will return to the Anzac cemeteries. The main Australian ceremony will be at Lone Pine where 5,000 of their soldiers are buried or commemorated in a field no larger than a football pitch. The pine in the centre is a direct descendant of the original from which the battlefield takes its name. There are two Australian eucalyptus trees planted at the entrance.

The main New Zealand ceremony will be at the memorial at "Chunuk Bair". This is also a spot of Turkish interest. It is here that the young commander Mustafa Kemal — later Atatürk — ordered his troops not to charge but to die, and where his own life was saved when his pocket watch deflected a piece of shrapnel. These events are recorded in Turkish memorials on the spot.

CAMPING

Camping is popular in Turkey and during June, July and August the sites can get crowded, particularly on national holidays. The choice of sites on the peninsula is neither large nor luxurious, but it is adequate. From November to April all the sites are closed but there is plenty of parking for caravans. There are several sites at the northern end between Keşan and Gelibolu (Gallipoli), but although they have the best facilities they are too far for those who want to spend time on the battlefields.

- **Cennet Camp**, south of Boncuk, is easy to find as it straddles the main road. It is a pleasant site edging on to the Dardanelles but in summer can be a little noisy with passing traffic. It has electricity and essential, if somewhat rudimentary, facilities. You can dine at the restaurant overlooking the beach, watching the ships ply their way through the Dardanelles. The food is Turkish and prices reasonable.
- At the tip of the peninsula, where the Dardanelles meet the Aegean, there are two camp sites, both attached to motels, at Abide and Seddülbahir. The latter is close to the old fortress with a nice stretch of beach, but is exposed to wind from the south.
- **Kum Camp**, further round the coast between Cape Helles and Anzac Cove, is very pleasant. Take the secondary road that leaves the main coastal road about two kilometres north of Eceabat. The road goes west and is sign-posted "Anzak Köyü" (Anzac Cove), "Gökçeada" or "Kemalyeri". This leads to the distant tree-covered ridge which marks the site of the Anzac battle line. Near the ridge on the right is Kabatepe War Museum. Turn sharp left and follow the coast road for about 10 kilometres (six miles). Kum Camp is on the right at the bottom of a steep hill between the road and the sea.

Prem 19/3/99

Profile of artist Philip O'Reilly by our arts correspondent

A SNAIL WITH A TALE IN ALI BABA'S KILIM SHOP

Things changed when Philip O'Reilly started thinking positively. He had raised a family, was teaching art and was going nowhere. But as he said to a friend who complained he could not afford a holiday: "If you don't go, you won't go." And O'Reilly is determined to go very far indeed.

The man behind his change of heart was Gurdgiev, a Caucasian-born philosopher who influenced many writers and intellectuals in Europe in the 1920s. Gurdgiev wrote a number of books, the most famous of which is *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, a fantastic tale of travels and chance conversations.

A well-intentioned critic once described Gurdgiev as "half baked: a loaf of bread removed from the oven too soon". And taken whole, his philosophy is certainly hard to digest: an esoteric collection of systems gleaned from the thousand and one religious and philosophical traditions feeding off each other in Turkey and the Caucasus.

But for O'Reilly, he offers no end of material for the thinking painter even if O'Reilly is reluctant to be labelled as a Gurdgiev follower.

It is the analytical writings of Aspenski, who was taught by Gurdgiev at Fontainbleu in the 1920s, that O'Reilly likes to think about when he is painting stacks of kilims in Ali Baba's kilim shop in Kuşadasi. And it was Gurdgiev's destiny that took him there in the first place. Until a lodger offered to take O'Reilly to Turkey in lieu of rent, he had never realised that Gurdgiev had spent much of his life there, admittedly in the distant northern town of Kars, close to the Soviet border.

A typically Gurdgiev preoccupation is with coincidences of destiny, when objects that should have no connection with each other suddenly appear side by side as if pushed by unseen currents on to the surface of the sea for an instant before sinking and being swept on their own different ways. "I can see all the regions of Turkey represented in one stack of kilims," O'Reilly says. "And when a customer comes in each one is hurled on to the floor to be inspected and then replaced in quite a different order. Sivas is suddenly next to Kayseri, Urfa is below Balikesir and Hereke has vanished altogether."

O'Reilly is working on a new composition based on sketches he made at Kaleköy near Demre, a haunting bay with a sunken city on Turkey's Lycian coast. A Lycian tomb built like a house is reflected in the water which itself partly conceals carpets being washed in the sea and a tame giant turtle. What begins as an illustration gradually dissolves into a complex group of patterns with references to different time scales.

Before O'Reilly discovered Turkey he found the same combination of objects that should never have been thrown together in his father-in-law's antique shop. His earliest Turkish connection was with a Victorian puppet of the Grand Vizier in London's puppet museum in Battersea where his wife has worked for the last 10 years. This puppet is full of Gurdgiev imagery. The head opens three times, like a Chinese puzzle, to reveal a smaller and yet smaller head.

And the most consistent Gurdgiev element is the snail. The snail has always been imbued with hidden meaning in the Anatolian psyche. Perhaps the most famous snail is in Istanbul's Church of the Chora (Kariye Camii) where it is making its way across the abyss in the famous fresco of the Resurrection. But it was Gurdgiev's snail that keeps cropping up in O'Reilly's paintings. It represents the way we live on different levels. "A snail moves forward on two dimensions in three-dimensional space".

Born in Leamington Spa on the south coast of England in 1944, O'Reilly has so far made six trips to Turkey, travelling extensively along the coast from Istanbul to Antalya, in the east from Sanliurfa to Doğubeyazit, and in central Anatolia from Cappadocia to Nemrut Dağ. And his paintings have been shown in four exhibitions in London where he has spent the last 20 years teaching art and where he makes book cover illustrations for the London publisher Weidenfeld and Nicholson.

His preoccupation with the practical details of his art lends it its richness. He always uses pure pigments in his oils and he has always been ready to start afresh with new painting techniques. In his new kilim paintings, he uses gesso described by Cinnigi in his 15th-century handbook for artists and dating back as far as the tomb paintings of the Egyptians.

West End galleries in London are wary, O'Reilly says, of artists who show too much variety of style. If Gurdgiev has influenced the way he sees things, it is his fascination with light that brings consistency to his paintings and a breath of fresh air to his work. □