

Historical Officers Report March 2019

Taken from Wikipedia

In the early 1920s North Beach rang again to the sound of work parties. Monumental stone from a Turkish quarry was off-loaded at a pier under the lee of the wreck of the *Milo*. From there it was lifted by aerial ropeway up past the Sphinx to the heights near Baby 700 and south down the ridge to the site of the great Australian monument on Gallipoli–Lone Pine.

From North Beach stone also went out to build the cemeteries of Anzac, from Hill 60 in the north to Shell Green Cemetery in the south, 21 cemeteries and three memorials in all.

The work was overseen by the Imperial (later Commonwealth) War Graves Commission's Director of Works on Gallipoli, Lieutenant-Colonel Cyril Hughes, a Tasmanian who had served on Gallipoli.

Before Hughes commenced this work of remembrance, he was visited between 15 February and 10 March 1919 by the Australian Historical Mission led by Charles Bean. The mission had come to solve, if it could, some of what Bean called 'the riddles of Anzac'. It came also to collect material for Bean's proposed war museum in Australia, a museum that was eventually to develop into the Australian War Memorial. George Lambert, the painter, accompanied the mission and Bean set him to the task of making sketches for what would become two of Australia's best known war paintings—*Anzac, the landing 1915* and *The Charge of the 3rd Light Horse Brigade at the Nek, August 1915*.



Panorama of North Beach taken from Ari Burnu in 1919, showing the slopes first rushed by Australian soldiers on the day of the landing. The first Turkish trench seized by the 11th Battalion was in the scrub half-way up towards Plugge's Plateau, on the right. The steamer *Milo*, sunk in October 1915 to form a breakwater, can be seen off-shore.

[AWM G02018]

On the morning of 16 February 1919, Bean and other mission members set out for the site of the landing of the 11th Battalion on North Beach. Their guide was Lieutenant Hedley Howe, ex-11th Battalion, who took them to

where he and his mates had come ashore and then struggled their way under fire up towards Plugge's Plateau, with the Sphinx clearly visible on their left.

From this spot, the mission photographer, Captain Hubert Wilkins, took a shot looking north towards the old steamer *Milo* and taking in the full sweep of the natural amphitheatre of cliffs at the Sphinx. Using this photograph, later reproduced in *The Story of Anzac*, Bean told visually the story of North Beach on 25 April 1915. Marked on the photograph, for those readers who would never see Gallipoli, were some of the significant sites of North Beach on that day—the landing place of the 11th Battalion; where Colonel Clarke of the 12th Battalion had come ashore; the cliff Clarke had climbed from the beach beside the Sphinx; No 1 Outpost; and Fisherman's Hut from where enemy fire had killed so many Australians of the 7th Battalion.

Today, near the spot where Clarke and men of the 12th Battalion came ashore, is the Anzac Commemorative Site designed for ceremonial events at Gallipoli.



North Beach looking towards Suvla Bay, November 1998. [Photo courtesy Office of Australian War Graves]

Over the next weeks, Bean visited all the battlegrounds of Anzac. At Hill 60, he sketched the scene looking towards the gap in the scrub-hedge from which so many men of the 18th Battalion had gone to their deaths on 22 August 1915. Their unburied remains were still strewn 'fairly thick in the stubble field they had to cross'. Doubtless, those of Lieutenant Wilfred Addison, 18th Battalion, lay among them. Here, today, is the Hill 60 Cemetery and a memorial to the missing for 183 men of the New Zealand Mounted Rifles who fought and died in this area and have no known grave. Burials at Hill 60 number 754, of whom 699 are completely unidentified. Special memorials record the names of eleven Australians, one New Zealander and one British soldier believed to be buried among the unidentified graves.

One of these eleven Australians is Lieutenant Colonel Carew Reynell who died at Hill 60 on the night of 28 August 1915 while leading his men of the 9th Australian Light Horse. Part of the cemetery register entry for Colonel

Reynell shows the impact of this one death on Gallipoli on an Australian family –‘Husband of May Reynell, of Reynella, South Australia’.



Lone Pine Memorial, Gallipoli. [Photo courtesy Office of Australian War Graves]

On a northern spur of the Sari Bair Range, Bean found evidence of the fate of one group of Australian soldiers. These men had taken part in the 4th Brigade’s attempted attack on 8 August 1915 on Hill 971–Kocacimentepe:

Here at once we came on groups of our dead, some with the colours of the 14th battalion on their sleeves. One group lay as far up the ridge as Hill 100 - Australians and Turks together; one had the badge or colour of the 14th Battalion, and one a small Bible with the name ‘H Wellington’ on the fly leaf.
[C E W Bean, *Gallipoli Mission*, Canberra, 1948, p.238]

On Chunuk Bair the relics of the desperate battle of 6-10 August 1915 affected mission members. Human remains lay everywhere around that peak and on the slopes leading to it. Bean wrote:

For some reason the dissolution of the human remains in that lofty area was not quite so complete as at Old Anzac; and the number that must have been trapped, and the hopelessness of the situation on those steep ridges when once they were caught there, did not bear thinking of.
[C E W Bean, *Gallipoli Mission*, Canberra, 1948, p.234]



The Nek Cemetery, Gallipoli, looking north to Suvla Bay. [Photo courtesy Ashley Ekins]

On Chunuk Bair today is the New Zealand National Memorial. Part of the memorial inscription remembers those who came from so far away to participate in the Gallipoli campaign but the words seem appropriate for all who fought at Anzac between April and December 1915:

FROM THE UTTERMOST ENDS OF THE EARTH.

Nearby is the New Zealand Chunuk Bair Memorial on which are recorded the names of 856 New Zealand soldiers who died, mainly in the August battles at Chunuk Bair, and who have no known grave. In the Chunuk Bair Cemetery are the remains of 677 soldiers; only ten are identified by name. Among those ten is Private Martin Persson, Wellington Infantry Battalion, killed on 8 August 1915, the day the Wellingtons captured Chunuk Bair. Persson was perhaps one of those who, in the words of the English poet John Masefield, 'beheld the Narrows from the hill':

*They came from safety of their own free will
To lay their young men's beauty, strong men's powers
Under the hard roots of the foreign flowers
Having beheld the Narrows from the hill.*

[John Masefield, 'On the Dead in Gallipoli', quoted in C Pugsley, Gallipoli – The New Zealand Story, London, 1984, p.271]

Also on the heights of Chunuk Bair is a bronze sculpture of Colonel Mustafa Kemal. On the morning of 10 August 1915, when Kemal's men drove the British from the peak, he was hit by a piece of shrapnel but a pocket watch saved him from injury. In 1923 Kemal became the first President of the Republic of Turkey and he was eventually named 'Ataturk–Father of Turkey'. On Gallipoli he is remembered for his brave and determined leadership at decisive moments, summed up in Kemal's own description of the fighting qualities of his men:

Everybody hurled himself on the enemy to kill and to die. This is no ordinary attack. Everybody was eager to succeed or go forward with the determination to die.

[Kemal, quoted in R R James, Gallipoli, London, 1999, p.168]



View of a Turkish memorial built behind the site of No 1 Outpost, looking along Ocean Beach towards Suvla Bay. [AWM G01808]

From Chunuk Bair to the south-west, the view takes in North Beach and all the slopes back towards the Australian positions at the Nek in August 1915. At the Nek, Bean was confronted again with the tragedy of the 8th and 10th Australian Light Horse Regiments on 7 August 1915:

We found the low scrub there literally strewn with their relics. When Hughes came to bury the missing in this area, he found and buried more than three hundred Australians in that strip the size of three tennis courts. Their graves today mark the site of one of the bravest actions in the history of war.

[C E W Bean, Gallipoli Mission, Canberra, 1948, p.109]

Hughes' burials were made in the Nek Cemetery. This cemetery is virtually a lawn, for by far the largest numbers buried here were never identified and no markers of any kind were placed above the plots where they were laid to rest. There are only five identified graves and five special memorials to men believed to be buried in this cemetery.

Where the Turkish trenches had stood at the Nek, Bean noticed a Turkish memorial. This memorial—and other reminders of the Turkish soldiers' sacrifice at Anzac—brought from the Australian official historian this tribute:

I saw now, with something of a shock ... a monument put up by the Turks to mark the spot [at Lone Pine] at which they had stopped the terrific August thrust. Away on the ridges nearly a mile beyond it, at The Nek were also we had been stopped, we could see another monument (and we afterwards noted a third at North Beach). Obviously the Turks were very proud of their achievement. And, we reflected, those who stopped the invading spearheads on Gallipoli well deserved commemoration as soldiers and patriots.

[C E W Bean, Gallipoli Mission, Canberra, 1948, pp.48—49]



The grave of Private John Simpson Kirkpatrick, 3rd Field Ambulance, ‘the man with the donkey’, at Beach Cemetery, Gallipoli. [Photograph: Mike Bowers, The Fairfax Photo Library]

Charles Bean left Gallipoli on 10 March 1919. He never returned. His personal memorial to those who fought, suffered and died there is *The Story of Anzac*, volumes one and two of the Australian official history of World War I. Bean’s account of the Australian Historical Mission—*Gallipoli Mission*—did not appear until 1948. By then the British Empire graveyards and memorials on Gallipoli had long been completed. The statistics of the dead of Gallipoli point up Bean’s description of Anzac as ‘one great cemetery’. Over 44 000 British Empire soldiers were either killed, died of wounds or died of disease during the eight and a half months of the Gallipoli campaign—21 200 British, 8700 Australians, 2700 New Zealanders, 1300 Indians (which includes Gurkhas), and 49 Newfoundlanders.

The French, who fought exclusively in the Helles area, suffered an estimated 10 000 dead. In the defence of their homeland at least 86 000 Turks gave their lives. Over 261 000 of all sides were wounded.

In 1948 Bean wrote of his hopes for the future of Gallipoli:

The graves of Gallipoli, exquisitely maintained, where Anzac folk can walk amid thousands of names as familiar as those along Collins or Pitt Streets, do call for visitors.

[C E W Bean, *Gallipoli Mission*, Canberra, 1948, p.346]

Today those visitors come in their thousands. They come especially around Anzac Day—25 April—to participate in the many services of remembrance held at various memorials. Australians are naturally drawn to the beach at Anzac Cove. At Beach Cemetery many discover and, like Sir Roden Cutler VC, are moved by the grave of Private John Simpson Kirkpatrick, 3rd Field Ambulance, who spent his first hours ashore on 25 April 1915 helping the wounded at North Beach:

I looked down and found myself standing at the grave of Simpson, the man with the donkey. It is a moment I will take to my grave.

[Cutler, quoted in Peter Bowers, Anzacs, Australia Post, 2000, p.38]



New Zealander Gavin Russell and Australian Scott Haywood pay their respects at the grave of Scott's great-uncle Leo Anderson of the 8th Australian Light Horse. [Photograph: Mike Bowers, The Fairfax Photo Library]

Australians generally move on to the cemeteries of what Bean called 'Old Anzac', that southern section of the Anzac position held by Australians and New Zealanders, with support from British and Indian Army units, between 25 April and 6 August 1915. At Old Anzac the most arresting monument is the memorial to the missing—those with no known grave—at Lone Pine.

As with Chunuk Bair for the New Zealanders, the choice of Lone Pine as the site for Australia's major memorial on Gallipoli was an obvious one. During the days of the Battle of Lone Pine, 6-9 August 1915, the 1st Australian Division suffered over 2000 casualties, many of whom were killed. Charles Bean estimated that the blow dealt to the Turks at Lone Pine was a 'terrible' one and that for three days the Australians had tied down enemy reserves, thus holding them back from the crucial action at Chunuk Bair.

The Lone Pine cemetery contains burials from every part of Anzac. This was a battlefield burial ground and by December 1915 there were 46 graves here. In the 1920s Colonel Hughes and his Imperial War Graves team brought in a further 940 bodies from burial sites scattered throughout the Anzac area. Of these graves, 499 are, in the words of the cemetery register, 'men whose unit in our forces could not be ascertained'—unknown soldiers in the true sense of that phrase.



Australian backpackers reading headstones at Lone Pine Cemetery.
[Photograph: Mike Bowers, The Fairfax Photo Library]

The dates on the gravestones at Lone Pine are a chronology of the Gallipoli campaign as it unfolded at Anzac. Private Henry Riekie, 11th Battalion, of Walter Street, Gosnells, Western Australia, killed on 25 April, the day of the landing, lies in Row O, Grave 14. Was he one of those who survived the 11th's scramble up to Plugge's Plateau from North Beach only to die later in the day? Many stones carry dates between 6 and 9 August 1915, the days of the terrible diversionary attack. As the cemetery register shows, the soldiers of Lone Pine were born and raised in every state in Australia. Among them also are many English, Irish and Scottish immigrants who joined the first detachments of the AIF.

The Lone Pine memorial itself is a monument to the 'missing' of Anzac. On Gallipoli there were three categories of 'missing'—those who were buried but not identified, those whose remains were never found, and those who died in the nearby hospital ships and transports and were buried at sea. On the memorial, panels list the names of the missing—4228 Australians and 708 New Zealanders. The name of Corporal Alexander Burton, 7th Battalion, of Euroa, Victoria, recalls the intense, close-quarters fighting in the trenches of Lone Pine. On 9 August 1915, during a Turkish counter-attack, Burton, assisted by Captain Fredrick Tubb and Corporal William Dunstan, constantly re-erected a barricade while the Turks attempted to destroy it with bombs. Burton was killed in this action. Along with Tubb and Dunstan, Burton gained the Victoria Cross, one of seven awarded to Australian soldiers at Lone Pine between 6 and 9 August 1915.



Ari Burnu Cemetery, located on the headland between North Beach and Anzac Cove, with the Sphinx and Plugge's Plateau in the background.

The cemetery was created under fire from Turkish outposts during the campaign and contains the graves of 251 soldiers, including 151 Australians. For many years it had been the site of the annual Dawn Service on Anzac Day, but increasing numbers of visitors have resulted in damage to the grave markers and garden. From the year 2000 onwards, services will be held at the Anzac Commemorative Site on North Beach, near where many of the Anzacs first struggled ashore on 26 April 1915. [Photo courtesy Ashley Ekins]

Considering the tragic loss of life so evident at Lone Pine, what today's visitor should remember was the point of it all—that the main attack on Chunuk Bair might succeed and the Gallipoli campaign be brought to a swift and victorious end. Other names on the memorial recall that overlooked and costly struggle between 6 and 10 August 1915 away to the north on the heights and slopes around Kocacimentepe. Here, among the missing of the 14th Battalion, is Sergeant Joseph McKinley and others who disappeared on 8 August 1915 during the 4th Australian Brigade's attack towards Kocacimentepe. Here, too, are Lieutenant Wilfred Addison, Private Joseph Walden and many others of the 18th Battalion who died at Hill 60 on 22 August 1915.

As visitors from Australia and New Zealand wander the Anzac cemeteries and gaze upon the names, they bring something of their distant homelands to those who lie there forever. As Bean well understood, for as long as they keep coming, what happened at Gallipoli in 1915 will continue to matter. Their very presence also gives continuing life and purpose to the lines of Anzac poet Lester Lawrence:

*Some flower that blooms beside the Southern foam
May blossom where our dead Australians lie,
And comfort them with whispers of their home;
And they will dream, beneath the alien sky,
Of the Pacific Sea.*