



Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Gallipoli Campaign, 1915

By early 1915 with deadlock on the Western Front and the Russian army struggling in the east, First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill became the driving force behind a grand scheme to strike at the Central Powers on a new front in south-eastern Europe, knock Turkey out of the war and open up a much needed relief route to Russia through the Dardanelles.

The campaign began with an attempt to force the Dardanelles by naval power alone but early bombardments on the coastal ports failed and on 18 March 1915, three Allied battleships were lost to Turkish mines.

In light of this failure, British Secretary of State for War, Lord Kitchener, appointed General Sir Ian Hamilton to command a 70,000 strong Mediterranean Expeditionary Force which consisted of the British 29th Division, a Newfoundland battalion, Indian troops, two divisions of the new and untried Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC), a Royal Naval Division and a French

colonial division. Its mission was to seize the Gallipoli peninsula and clear the way for the Royal Navy to capture the Turkish capital of Constantinople (now Istanbul).

The 29th Division under General Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston was to land at Cape Helles and push inland to capture Achi Baba while Lieutenant General Sir William Birdwood commanding the Anzacs would land further north at Gaba Tepe and strike the Sari Bair heights.

The attack was launched on 25 April 1915 but a combination of unexpectedly hostile terrain and ferocious Turkish defence soon stopped any potential advance and the campaign degenerated into the familiar deadlock of trench warfare. The Turks clung grimly to the high ground while the Allies below found it difficult to dig trenches which were impervious to their constant shellfire. As the deadlock continued, disease caused by extreme heat and unsanitary conditions would prove almost as deadly as the Turkish fire.



AWM ART 02931

The Taking of Lone Pine by Fred Leist



AWM G0425

Royal Irish Fusiliers, Helles

Helles

The British 29th Division landed at five beaches at Cape Helles, code-named S V W X and Y. W and V were heavily defended and troops ran into underwater wire, mines, machine gun and shell fire. At S, X and Y beaches little resistance was encountered but confusion on the part of the Allied command allowed the Turks to halt the advance.

The priority for operations at Helles was the capture of Achi Baba, the prominent hill feature giving a commanding view of the Helles beachheads. Repeated attempts to advance north, most notably at the battles of Krithia in April, May and June, all failed with heavy casualties. Allied attacks on Gully Ravine in June and Achi Baba itself in July similarly failed with huge numbers killed and wounded.

Anzac and Suvla

The Anzacs overshot their planned landing beaches at Gaba Tepe and instead came ashore at Ari Burnu, two miles to the north, a narrow beach which was swept by heavy Turkish gunfire. Instead of the low foothills they had expected they were faced with sheer cliffs. Their advance to the heights of Sari Bair was halted by a division led by Turkish Colonel Mustafa Kemal and driven back to the beach they dug in, first earning their nickname 'diggers'.



AWM G1325

The cost of battle; Stretcher bearers take away the wounded

On 19 May Commonwealth troops successfully defended their position in the face of a heavy but unsuccessful Turkish attempt to drive the invaders back into the sea. The Allies inflicted so many casualties on the attackers that a few days later a truce had to be called to allow the Turks to reclaim their dead from the battlefield.



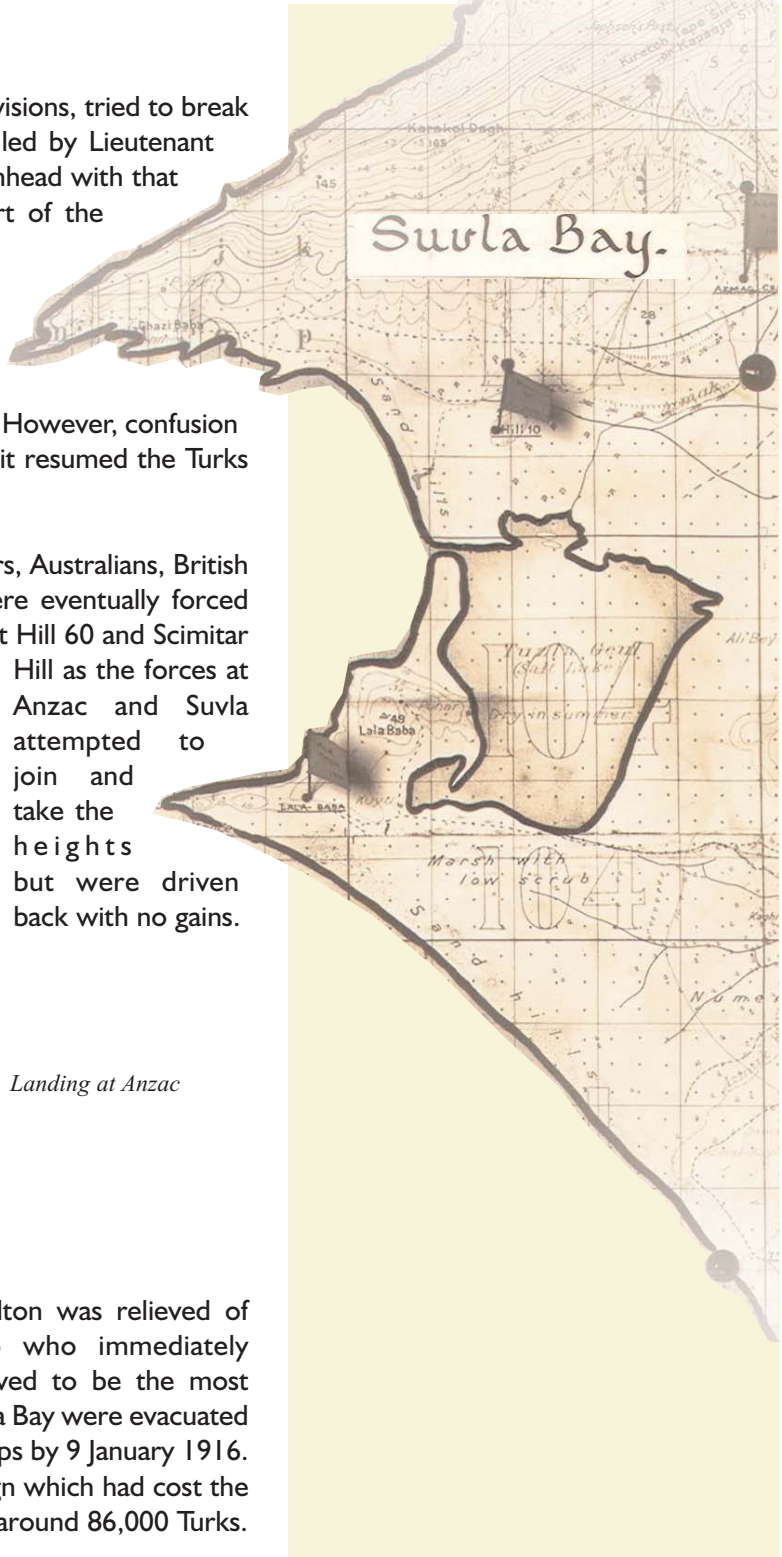
On 6 August, Hamilton, with his force doubled to eleven divisions, tried to break the deadlock with an assault on Suvla Bay. Five divisions, led by Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Stopford were to link the Suvla beachhead with that at Anzac and seize the heights at Teke Tepe at the heart of the peninsula.

A diversionary attack was launched at Helles and at Anzac two attacks took place. At Lone Pine the Anzacs were successful but unable to hold their position and at Sari Bair (The Nek) the Australians were cut down as they advanced. However, confusion led to the advance at Suvla being stopped and by the time it resumed the Turks had sent in reinforcements.

August saw further desperate actions as the New Zealanders, Australians, British and Indian forces attempted to take Chunuk Bair but were eventually forced back. The final significant actions took place on 21 August at Hill 60 and Scimitar Hill as the forces at Anzac and Suvla attempted to join and take the heights but were driven back with no gains.



AWM J03022



Landing at Anzac

Evacuation

In October, with the campaign once again stalled, Hamilton was relieved of command. He was replaced by Sir Charles Monro who immediately recommended that the Allies should evacuate. This proved to be the most successful part of the entire operation. Anzac Cove and Suvla Bay were evacuated in December 1915 and the Helles area was emptied of troops by 9 January 1916. Only a handful of lives were lost, an ironic end to a campaign which had cost the lives of almost 36,000 Commonwealth, 10,000 French and around 86,000 Turks.





AMERICAN ENGINEER CAMP, IN THE BAY OF SALLUR, 1915.

The Challenge of Commemoration

Following the evacuation of Gallipoli, Commonwealth forces were unable to revisit the peninsula until after the Armistice. By this time many of the original wooden grave markers to survive the shelling and fighting had been stolen, lost, destroyed by nature or had become illegible and the thousands of unburied dead were beyond identification.

After mammoth battlefield clearance operations 31 Commonwealth cemeteries were left containing 19,000 graves of which only 6,000 were identified. A further 2,500 of the dead believed to be buried among the unidentified are commemorated in the cemeteries by Special Memorials bearing an inscription to this effect. The remainder of those buried in unknown graves, or whose remains were never found, make up the 27,000 named on six memorials to the missing on Gallipoli.

The high proportion of unknown burials and Special Memorials give the cemeteries of Gallipoli a unique character. The burial places of unknown casualties are marked on cemetery plans but the graves are not marked on the ground, meaning that some cemeteries have wide expanses of open space dotted with just a few grave markers. Special Memorials form a regular pattern in the cemetery.

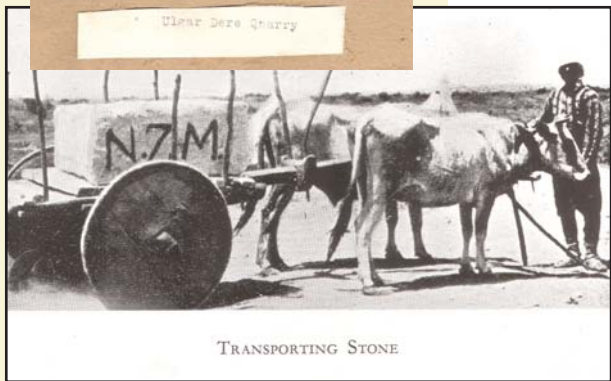
Due to the extreme weather and unstable ground the cemeteries on Gallipoli have a number of design features which distinguish them from Commonwealth cemeteries elsewhere. To prevent masonry sinking into soggy ground the Commission uses stone-faced pedestal grave markers instead of headstones and a walled cross feature instead of the free standing Cross of Sacrifice. Rubble-walled channels surround the cemeteries to take flood water away. The majority of the cemeteries and memorials on the peninsula were designed by the eminent Scottish architect, Sir John Burnet.



GALLIPOLI HEROES AT REST.



Clear Here Quarry

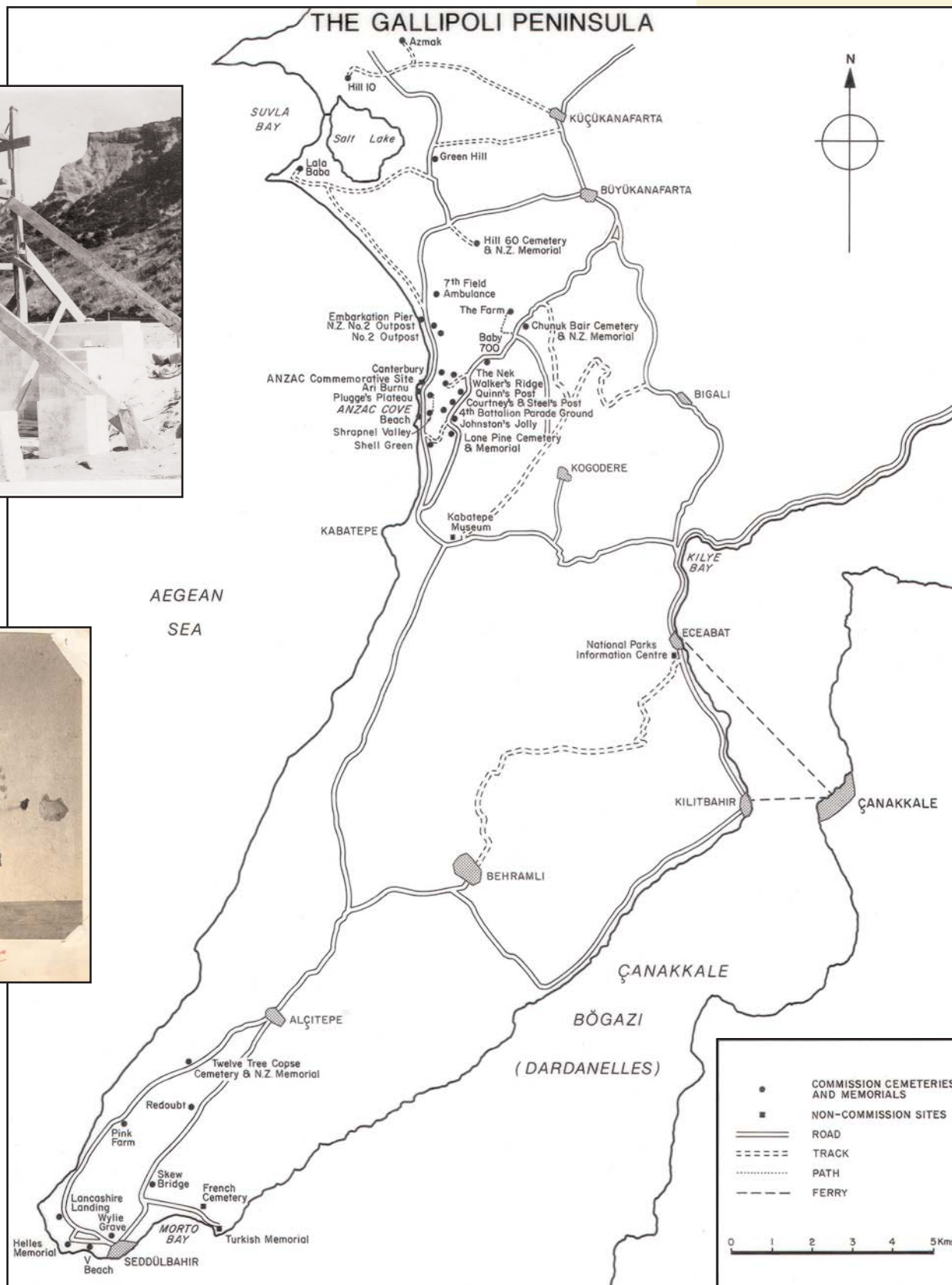


TRANSPORTING STONE



The French losses are commemorated in the French War Cemetery at Morto Bay. Some of the dead are buried in individual or mass graves whilst the remains of others are contained in ossuaries within the cemetery.

The Canakkale Martyrs Memorial is dedicated to the memory of the Turkish soldiers who died in the Gallipoli campaign. There are a number of other, smaller Turkish memorials and cemeteries on the peninsula, although the cemeteries are mostly symbolic and contain few actual graves.



Cemeteries and Memorials in Helles

V Beach Cemetery (Identified: 20, Unknown: 480, Special Memorials: 196) was begun the day after the disastrous landing at the well fortified beach and was used until May 1915 although several graves were brought in after the Armistice.

Seddel-Bahr Military Grave is the only isolated Commonwealth war grave on Gallipoli. On the morning of 26 April Lieutenant Colonel Doughty-Wylie and Captain Walford led the survivors of the V Beach landing to the village and fort of Seddel Bahr. Both won the Victoria Cross but were killed during the fight. Captain Walford lies in V Beach Cemetery, Doughty-Wylie on the spot where he fell.

The Helles Memorial stands on the tip of the peninsula. It is the battle memorial for the entire Gallipoli campaign and the place of commemoration for missing Australians who died at Helles and British and Indian servicemen who died throughout the peninsula and have no known grave. It bears over 21,000 names.

The 180 New Zealanders who died at Helles and whose places of burial are not known are commemorated on the **Twelve Tree Copse (New Zealand) Memorial** which stands in **Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery** (Identified: 477, Unknown: 2,226, Special Memorials: 657). The cemetery was made after the Armistice when graves were brought in from small burial grounds in the surrounding area.

Redoubt Cemetery (Identified: 285, Unknown: 1,393, Special Memorials: 349) was begun by the Australians in May 1915 and was used until the evacuation. It takes its name from the chain of forts made by the Turks across the southern end of the peninsula in the fighting for Krithia and the Redoubt Line on which the advance halted in May.



V Beach Cemetery



The Helles Memorial



Seddel-Bahr Military Grave



Skew Bridge Cemetery (Identified: 126, Unknown: 351, Special Memorials: 130) was named from a wooden "skew" bridge carrying the Krithia road across the Dere River, just behind the centre of the line occupied by the Allied forces on 27 April 1915. It was begun during the fighting of 6-8 May and used throughout the occupation. At the Armistice it contained only 53 graves but was greatly enlarged when further burials were brought in from the battlefields or small burial grounds in the area.

Lancashire Landing Cemetery (Identified: 1,091, Unknown: 135, Special Memorials: 10) is named after the area of W Beach on which the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers landed under sever fire and cut their way through wire entanglements and trenches to the edge of the cliff.

Most of the cemetery was created during the occupation. Row 1 contains the graves of over 80 men of the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers who died in the first two days following the landing. Further graves were brought from islands of the Aegean after the Armistice.



Lancashire Landing Cemetery

Cemeteries and Memorials in Anzac

The entire Anzac Area has been preserved as a memorial to the men who died there. It contains 21 cemeteries and three memorials. The cemeteries can be split into three main areas, the landing beaches, the front line and the valleys and slopes in between. In the area round Anzac Cove the front line was only one mile from the landing beach and the cemeteries are clearly concentrated in a very small area.

Ari Burnu Cemetery (Identified: 203, Unknown: 42, Special Memorials: 8), named from the Cape at the north end of Anzac Cove, was made in 1915 and enlarged in the 1920s when graves were brought in from other cemeteries on the peninsula.

Beach Cemetery (Identified: 357, Unknown: 22, Special Memorials: 12) is situated on what was known as Hell Spit, at the southern point of Anzac Cove. It was used from the first day of the landings until the evacuation.





Canterbury Cemetery

Canterbury Cemetery is one of the central cemeteries in Anzac and contains 27 burials, mostly of the New Zealand Mounted Rifles. Five of the burials are unidentified.

Embarkation Pier Cemetery (Identified: 20, Unknown: 662, Special Memorials: 262) is largely made up of burials brought in after the Armistice from smaller sites and from isolated graves in the area. Embarkation Pier was made for the purpose of evacuating wounded from the Battle of Sari Bair, but it came under heavy rifle and shell fire and was abandoned after just two days.



New Zealand No 2 Outpost Cemetery

No. 2 Post was the scene of heavy fighting at the end of May and it was one of the starting points for the Battle of Sari Bair. It contained the best well in Anzac and medical facilities were established close by. **No. 2 Outpost Cemetery** (Identified: 38, Unknown: 66, Special Memorials: 48) was made during the occupation. 100 metres away, **New Zealand No. 2 Outpost Cemetery** (Identified: 2, Unknown: 150, Special Memorials: 31) was created from burials carried out by the Canterbury Infantry Regiment and is in fact one long grave which was made in September 1915.

Shell Green was captured and passed by the Australians on 25 April but remained close to the Turkish front line throughout the campaign and was subject to frequent shelling. **Shell Green Cemetery** (Identified: 395, Unknown: 11) was used from May to December 1915 and enlarged further after the Armistice.

Johnston's Jolly Cemetery (Identified: 1, Unknown: 144, Special Memorials: 36) stands on the northern part of Plateau 400 and marks the position reached by the Australians on 25 April but lost the next day and never retaken. This unusual name is attributed to the



repeated saying of Colonel J L Johnston of the 11th West Australian Battalion that if he could bring Howitzers to bear on that point he would have 'a jolly good time'. The cemetery was made after the Armistice from battlefield graves. Almost all the casualties buried in this cemetery were killed in the capture of Lone Pine in August 1915.

Quinn's Post was established on the afternoon of 25 April by a New Zealand machine-gun crew and was the subject of incessant attacks and continual hand-to-hand fighting with the Turkish post opposite, who knew it as 'Bomba Sirt' (Bomb Ridge). The post was named after Major Hugh Quinn of the 15th Battalion, Australian Infantry, who was killed there during a fierce attack on 29 May. Major Quinn is buried in Shrapnel Valley Cemetery. **Quinn's Post Cemetery** (Identified: 115, Unknown: 394, Special Memorials: 64) was made after the Armistice.

The Nek Cemetery (Identified: 5, Unknown: 316, Special Memorials: 5) was made after the Armistice in what had been No Man's Land during the Battle of Sari Bair (The Nek).

7th Field Ambulance Cemetery (Identified: 157, Unknown: 276, Special Memorials: 207) was named from the 7th Australian Field Ambulance, which landed on Gallipoli in September 1915, but over 300 of the graves were brought in from earlier cemeteries after the Armistice.



Shell Green Cemetery



Quinn's Post Cemetery



Courtney's and Steel's Post Cemetery

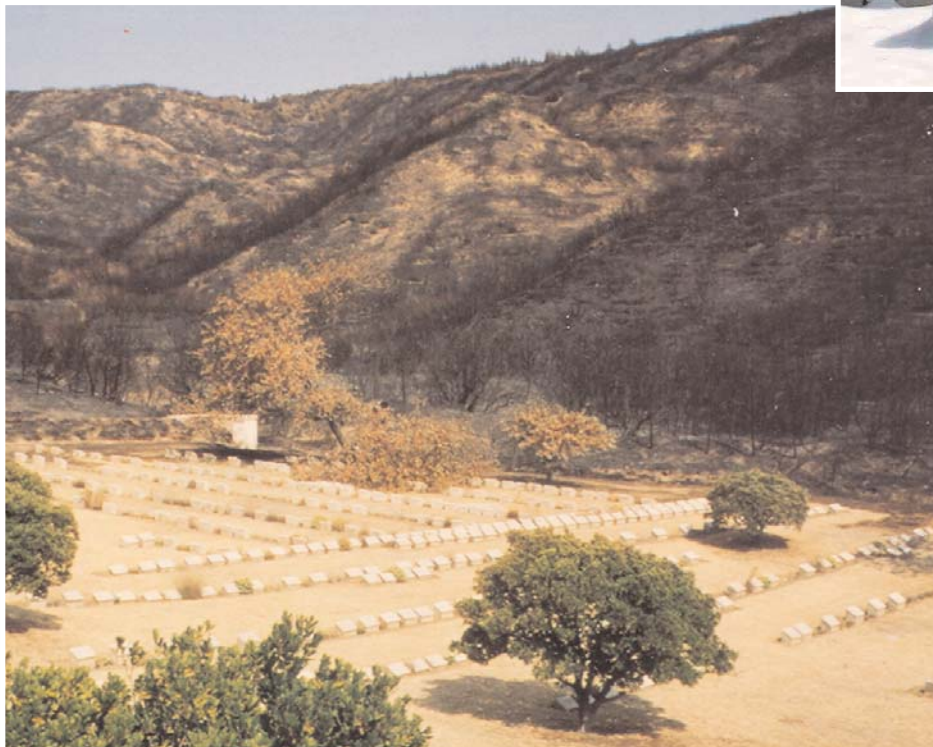
Courtney's and Steel's Post Cemetery (Identified: 7, Unknown: 160, Special Memorials: 58), named after two positions taken on the day of the landings and held until the evacuation. Courtney's Post, towards the northern end of the original Anzac line, was named after Lieut-Colonel R E Courtney, CB, VD, who brought the 14th Australian Infantry Battalion to it on 27 April 1915. Steel's Post was next to it on the south-west and was named after Major T H Steel, 14th Battalion.



Lone Pine was a strategically important plateau in the south of Anzac. It was stormed by the Australians on 6 August and held until the evacuation. The original small battle cemetery was enlarged after the Armistice and **Lone Pine Cemetery** (Identified: 482, Unknown: 504, Special Memorials: 183), contains mostly Australian casualties. Within the cemetery stands the **Lone Pine Memorial**



Lone Pine Cemetery



Shrapnel Valley Cemetery

(4,932 commemorations) which records the names of all the Australian soldiers lost in the Anzac area between April and December 1915 and New Zealanders prior to the August Offensive who have no known grave.

Plugge's Plateau Cemetery (Identified: 17, Unknown: 4) is the highest Commonwealth cemetery on Gallipoli. Plugge's Plateau was captured by the 3rd Australian Infantry Brigade on 25 April and named later from the commander of the Auckland Battalion, Colonel A Plugge, CMG. It became a

battery position, a reservoir, and a position on the 'Inner Line' of defences. The Anzac Headquarters were on its western slopes.

Shrapnel Valley Cemetery (Identified: 574, Unknown: 85, Special Memorials: 24) was made during the occupation but some isolated graves were added after the Armistice. Shrapnel Valley was an essential road from the beach up to the Anzac front and took its name from the heavy shelling it was given by the Turks on 26 April 1915.



On 25 April, Walker's Ridge was the command post of Brigadier-General Walker of the New Zealand Infantry Brigade. **Walker's Ridge Cemetery** (Identified: 49, Unknown: 16, Special Memorials: 27) was made during the occupation and consists of two plots separated by 18 metres of ground, through which a trench ran.

Chunuk Bair was one of the main objectives for the Anzacs throughout the campaign. It was captured and then lost on 6-10 August and this loss marked the end of efforts to take the central foothills. **Chunuk Bair Cemetery** (Identified: 10, Unknown: 622) was made after the Armistice on the site where the Turks had buried some Allied dead. The cemetery also contains the **Chunuk Bair (New Zealand) Memorial** which bears 850 names.

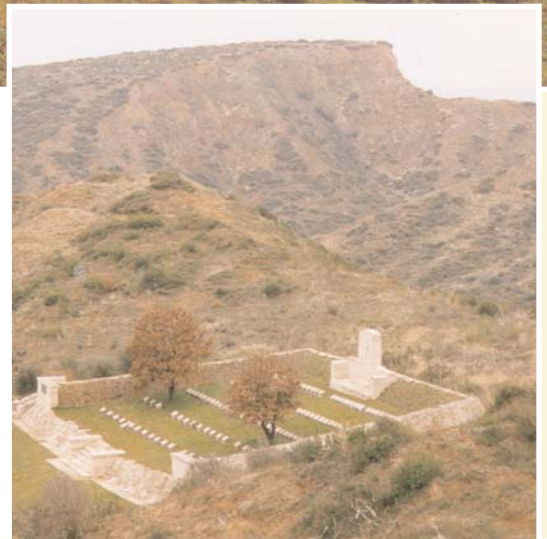
Chunuk Bair Cemetery

The fourth New Zealand memorial on the peninsula is the **Hill 60 (New Zealand) Memorial** which is situated in **Hill 60 Cemetery** (Identified: 42, Unknown: 712, Special Memorials: 34). The memorial relates to the actions at Hill 60 and bears 183 names. The cemetery lies among the trenches and was made after the battle and enlarged after the Armistice from battlefield graves.



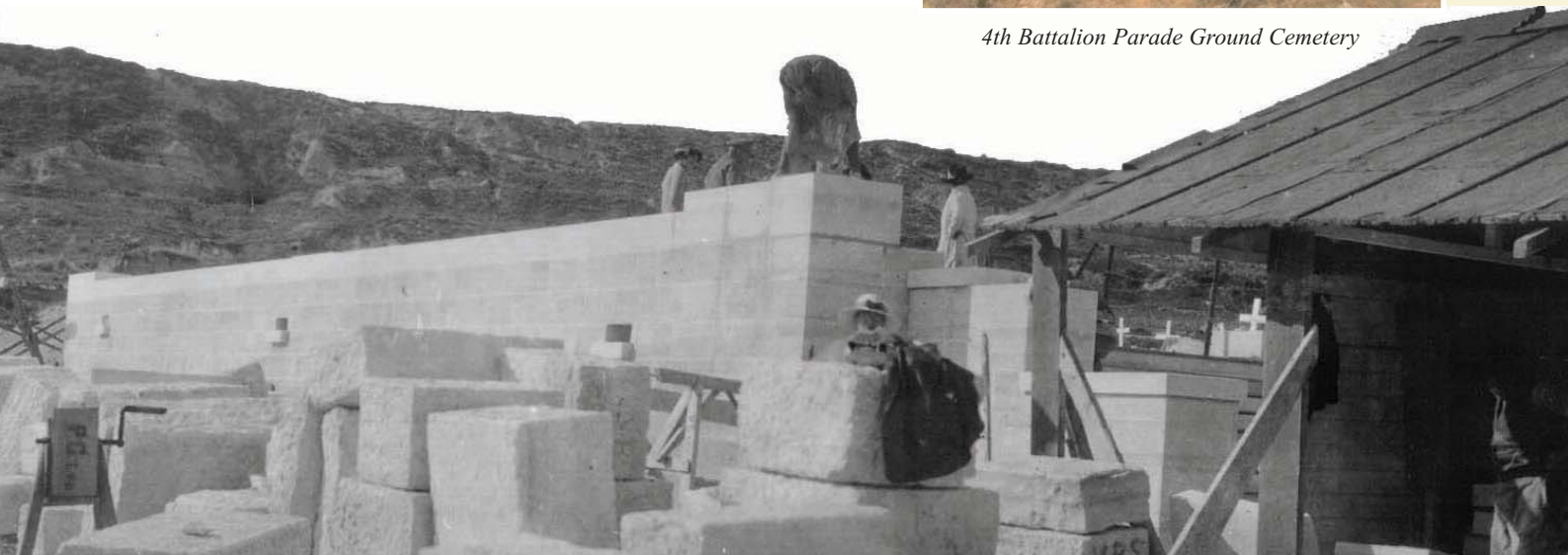
Baby 700 was a hill in the Sari Bair range and was the objective of the 3rd Australian Brigade on 25 April. **Baby 700 Cemetery** (Identified: 33, Unknown: 450, Special Memorials: 10) was created after the Armistice.

4th Battalion Parade Ground Cemetery (Identified: 109, Unknown: 7) was used by the 4th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, from the end of April to the beginning of June 1915. It was enlarged after the Armistice when graves were brought in from the battlefields and from the nearby 3rd Battalion Parade Ground and 22nd Battalion Parade Ground Cemeteries.



4th Battalion Parade Ground Cemetery

The Farm was a stone shepherd's hut on the slopes of Chunuk Bair which was passed by the troops who held Chunuk Bair on 6-10 August. **The Farm Cemetery** (Identified: 7, Unknown: 645) was made after the Armistice.





Azmak Cemetery

Mustafa Kemal later became the first president of Turkey, known as Ataturk, or father of the Turks. His words are inscribed on a memorial at Anzac Cove;

*"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.
There is no difference
between the Johnnies
and the Mehments to us
where they lie side by side
here in this country of
ours.
You, the mothers,
who sent their sons from
far away countries,
wipe away your tears;
your sons are now lying in
our bosom
and are in peace.
After having lost their lives
on this land they have
become our sons as well."*



AWM G00363

Cemeteries and Memorials in Suvla

Green Hill, to the east of Suvla Bay, was captured on 7 August but no further advance was made from this point. **Green Hill Cemetery** (Identified: 382, Unknown: 2,472, Special Memorials: 117) was made after the Armistice when isolated graves were brought in from the battlefields of August 1915 and from small burial grounds in the surrounding area. Among these was a cemetery at Scimitar Hill, containing 520 graves, almost all unidentified.

Lala Baba, a low hill between the southern side of Suvla Bay and the salt lake, was stormed by two Yorkshire regiments on the early morning of 7 August 1915. **Lala Baba Cemetery** (Identified: 147, Unknown: 53, Special Memorials: 16), situated on a low hill to the south of Suvla Bay, was formed after the Armistice from smaller cemeteries and isolated graves in the area.

Azmak Cemetery (Identified: 334, Unknown: 684, Special Memorials: 56) and **Hill 10 Cemetery** (Identified: 493, Unknown: 150, Special Memorials: 56) were both created after the Armistice from burials in small cemeteries, battlefields and isolated graves. These cemeteries result from the operations in the north of Suvla when attempts were made to take the Kiretch Tepe ridge and the high ground to the east. Among the unknowns at Azmak are 114 members of the famous Sandringham Battalion of the Norfolk Regiment, mostly employees of the Royal estate at Sandringham, who died on 12 August 1915.



Anzac Day, 1923

Contacts

The maintenance of the cemeteries is carried out by two teams of gardeners, one in Anzac, one in Helles, and one team of craftsmen. The work is controlled by a local supervisor based in Cannakale. Overall administrative control rests with the Commission's Outer Area Office which is based in the head office building in Maidenhead.

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