

WWI Primary Source

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Clerk, Green Island, Dunedin, NZ

Private Peter McLean Thompson

Service Number: 8/1039

Otago Infantry Battalion

Served: Egypt, Gallipoli

Invalided home 1915

Died 20 March 1959

Buried at Green Island, Dunedin



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Archives New Zealand (archives.govt.nz)

16. B.

Unit.	Rank.	Surname.	Authority to Headquarters: Christian Name.	No. 13-9-20
O. B.	pte	Thompson Peter McLean		8/1039

Occupation: Clerk Religion: Church of Last New Zealand address: Green Island.
 Last employer: Kempthorne Prosser Co. 9.9.90

Name, relationship, and address of next-of-kin (if not resident in New Zealand, insert also name and address of nearest relative in New Zealand):
Robert Thompson
Church of
Green Island.
father

DIED
SHOE
DISCHARGE
 Concord, Green Island
 20/3/59
 W. G. 1929
 SERVICE P.O.

No. 8/1039 Rank. Pte
 Name: Peter McLean Thompson
 Address: Concord Main St. Rd. Burnside Green Island

Periods of Service.	Theatres of Operation.
In New Zealand: <u>73</u> years <u>73</u> days.	Australasian
Overseas ... <u>331</u> years <u>331</u> days.	Egyptian 1914-1915
Total service ... <u>1</u> years <u>39</u> days.	Egyptian E.F.
Date commenced duty: <u>29.14</u>	Balkan <u>Gallipoli, Mudros 1915</u>
Date finally discharged: <u>10.10.15</u>	Western
	European
	Asiatic

Wounds ...
 Sick ...

Decorations:
 MEDAL ACTION
 1914-15 Star
 BRITISH WAR MEDAL
 VICTORY MEDAL ...
 Signature: [Signature]
 5 JUN 1924
 COMPLETE

N.B.—Do not omit to advise this office of any future change of address.
 1,000 pads, 8/20—120581
 Date commenced duty: 29.14 Western
 Date finally discharged: 10.10.15 European
 Asiatic

Killed in action ...
 Died of wounds*
 sickness*
 Missing ...
 Prisoner ...
 Injuries in or by the Service ...

Decorations:
 1914-15 Star
 26 AUG 1921
 BRITISH The foregoing particulars are correct.
 VICTORY MEDAL
 Signature: [Signature]
N.B.—Do not omit to advise this office of any future change of address.
 1,000 pads, 8/20—120581
 ENTERED ON HISTORY ...

Discharge ...
 Provisional: (Date.)
 Intended address: Church St.
 Final: 10.10.15 (Date.)
Concord, Main South Rd. Burnside, Green Island
Green Island

Pension ...
 P. No. 23.7
 8/1/21

* Strike out words not required.

Diary of

Pte. P.M. Thomson

4th Bn Otago Regt

Suez & Gallipoli

13 Aug 1914 - 15 Sep 1915

FRIDAY, December 4th, 1914

We left Alexandria for Cairo at 9.30 a.m. Before leaving the troops have three rousing cheers for Captain Clifford, the genial old skipper, who had looked after us so well on the high seas.

It took us five hours to reach Cairo. We crossed the Nile at 11.55 p.m., and subsequently crossed it and recrossed it, reaching Cairo at 2.30 p.m. By 3.30 we were at our camping ground. 'Great Scott' what a place! Foreign service is liable to land men anywhere. We certainly did expect to find some grass, but not so this time -- simply sand, sand, sand, everywhere. We are camped on the Sahara Desert. Our beds are simply sand and small stones. We have no such thing as straw to soften things. However we will get used to it alright.

Our ration for the last 24 hours has been six biscuits and 1 lb. of bully beef.

SATURDAY, December 5th, 1914

The majority of the troops were busy on fatigue duty this morning but by 11 a.m. their duties had been fulfilled and everyone made a dash for Cairo. The town is reached in ten minutes by electric car at a cost of half a Piastre (1½d). I and several others landed in the city about noon. Of course our first mission was that of dinner. It took us ever so long to get satisfaction and in the end we had to pay 10 piastres (2/-) for a meal which was worth about 6d. Cairo city gave me the impression that Egypt has been a dumping ground for all nations. People of almost every nation were in it --- French, Russia Greek, Italian, Spanish, Roumanian, in fact, almost any excepting German, and I suppose there are not a few here. We have been warned to exercise care while on leave. Veiled women must on no account be addressed. The natives were a source of annoyance to us in their endeavours to sell their goods. Their prices are simply corksers, but I have made a point of giving them one third of their own price. They generally come down after an argument. Threaten them with the use of a military boot and it works wonders.

SUNDAY, December 6th, 1914

Owing to the unsettled nature of the Camp no church parade was held today. Leave was given early in the day and we all set off for Cairo. Although it was Sunday the bustle in the streets was just the same. Every shop was open for business -- cafes and hotels were just as busy as every selling their wares.

MONDAY, December 7th, 1914

Reveille went at 5 a.m. and the battalion paraded at 9 a.m. sharp. We carried out company drill and all morning we were ankle deep in the sand. It was jolly hot work while it lasted. It certainly does not seem like midwinter. We were off duty in the afternoon.

TUESDAY, December 8th, 1914

All morning we were busy with musketry. We found it very trying in the hot sun. The days are fearfully hot, but the nights are bitterly cold. At night we find it necessary to wear our balaclavas.

We find they are very valuable to us. Troops are still pouring into Egypt and by the end of the week Egypt should be well stocked with soldiers.

WEDNESDAY, December 9th, 1914

We have had a hot day of it. The Battalion paraded at 7.30 a.m. and by 9.30 we were attacking a position miles across the desert. The hot sun made us perspire very freely and by the time the charge was delivered, there were very few who were not feeling pretty well saturated. We returned to camp at 1 p.m. and finished for the day.

THURSDAY, December 10th, 1914

Today's work has been a repetition of yesterday's, but we covered much more ground than previously and the work seemed of a more satisfactory nature. The troops are becoming fitter day by day and a few more days should find them becoming quite hardened to it. No parades are being called for the afternoons, and this is giving the troops plenty of rest.

FRIDAY, December 11th, 1914

Today has been our worst so far and I daresay we will get harder. The battalion was divided into right and left half battalion respectively. Each company had a frontage of 100 yards and in that 100 yards lay their objective. The 4th were on their right flank and seemed to do very well, but the whole thing was muddled by the charge being sounded when we were 300 yards off our objective. We are realizing every day that we have a frightful lot to learn.

SATURDAY, December 11th, 1914

Today has been review day. The whole of the New Zealand Brigade took part and presented a very fine appearance. The Brigadier took the salute. We marched past in company column and then in close company column. Massed bands played the marches. It was a hot dusty job. The whole parade was a disgraceful display and I am quite certain it will put us back considerably. So far we have heard nothing from Headquarters.

SUNDAY, December 13th, 1914

The Brigade held church parade at 9.30 a.m. all the force chaplains taking part. The Brigade was formed up in close company column. After the parade, General Godley unexpectedly took a march past in column of route. He looked pleased with the parade. Tent inspection was held before dinner and leave granted from 2 till 10p.

From MONDAY, December 14th, to SATURDAY, December 19th, 1914

The week has been spent on Battalion training. Every day the Battalion has manoeuvred far across the desert and attacked difficult positions. We always found the work trying and the intense heat had an inclination to make it doubly so. Sometimes in delivering our attack we found it necessary to dig in and, being without trenching tools, we had to do the work with the bayonet point. Every day shows a big improvement. I think our own Battalion has ventured farther across the desert sometimes as far as 10 miles and returning

under forced march conditions.

SUNDAY, December 20th, 1914

All the troops are now quite settled down. Today our most important duty was allotted to us. Cairo was fete this morning, the occasion being the accession of the new Sultan, and everyone who had been able to obtain an invitation, hastened to pay respects to the Sultan of Egypt. Cairo, I am told, has not as a rule an easily excited public, the rides abroad of Abbas Helmei were rather sad affairs as a rule, but today Cairo surpassed itself. Never has there been so great a crowd in the streets, never has it been so international, and never has it let itself run so much to enthusiasm as today, when Sultan Hussian Pasha Kamel rode from his son's house at Kasr-el-Nil to Abdin Palace. The procession followed the route Sharia Kasr-el-Nil as far as the Midan Suarss when it turned to the left as far as Sharia Maghraby, turning then down towards the Opera Square and going up Sharia Abdin to the Abden Square. The route was lined all the way from Prince Kamel Eddine's Palace to the Abdin Place by British and Colonial troops standing shoulder to shoulder. At various points military bands were posted and these played selections while the crowd was waiting for the procession to pass. The head of the procession arrived at a quarter to ten. The Sultan's six-horse carriage was preceded by British cavalry carrying carbines and followed by Egyptian cavalry, the lancers gay with their pennons. The state coach in which the Sultan was riding was driven by and mounted by a coachman and a footman in gorgeous red and gold livery. In the carriage were the Sultan with the Prime Minister sitting on his left. After an interval this was followed by another carriage containing General Sir John Maxwell, Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in Egypt. The enthusiasm was tremendous and the hand-clapping, the sign of Egyptian cheerfulness, was not restricted to the arrival of the Sultan's carriage, nor to the General's, which met with the same mood of enthusiasm. The members of the Cabinet followed and there were no fewer than two thousand provincial delegates to pay their respects to the new Sultan. Cairo does not yet seem to know which is the real official flag, as there are many red flags with one crescent and three stars, as there are colours bearing the same number of stars.

The weather is beautiful. Only the Wellington and Otago troops took part in the ceremony. All ranks were issued with 20 rounds of ball cartridge in case any sniping did take place.

From MONDAY, December 21st to THURSDAY, December 24th, 1914

We have been as busy as ever. One day is as much like another in these times. We are training hard and every day finds us becoming more reconciled to the life. On Tuesday the Australian and New Zealand Forces took a route march through Cairo. It was then the citizens of Cairo enjoyed the march through their town of the troops, which from one end of the world or another, these exciting times have summoned to meet in Egypt. The route march has already become a familiar sight to the Cairenes, though probably they assembled with redoubled interest because of the extremely friendly relations established between the Egyptians of the city and the soldiers of Australia and New Zealand. But I need not describe the procession as it was the same as the previous marches.

presents a very fine appearance with such a huge fleet of warships, destroyers, submarines and transports lying at anchor.

SATURDAY, April 17th, 1915

The usual parades have been held. A number of troops are down with pneumonia and pleurisy. Measles have also broken out on board, so we will probably be quarantined. We hope not.

SUNDAY, April 18th, 1915

Held church parade this morning at 9.30 Chaplain Major Luxford conducted the service. Captain Ross has been left at the Base and Major Luxford is now attached to the Otago Battalion. At 10 a.m. disembarkation practice was carried out and on landing we went for a route march of about five miles and returned between 4 and 5 p.m.

MONDAY, April 19th, 1915

Both the 8th and 14th Regiments went ashore today. The 4th and 10th carried out the usual parades. Cases continue to leave for the Hospital daily. Their complaints are numerous. Several men from the first line of reinforcements have come on board to make up the Battalion strength. So in all probability we will escape quarantine.

TUESDAY, April 20th, 1915

Usual parades were held. The following communication has been received from General Birdwood, O.C. Australian and New Zealand Division:-

"Officers and Men":-

"In conjunction with the Navy, we are about to commence the most difficult task any soldier can be called upon to perform and a problem which has puzzled many soldiers for years past. That we will succeed, I have no doubt, simply because I know everyone is fully determined to do so. Lord Kitchener has told us that he lays special stress on the role the army has to play in this particular operation, the success of which will mean a very severe blow to the enemy--indeed as severe as she could receive in France. The history will go down to the glory of the soldiers of Australia and New Zealand, but before setting out there are one or two points which I want every single man to take to heart. We are going to have a real hard time of it, until at all events we have turned the enemy out of our first objective. Hard, rough times none of us mind, but to get through them successfully, we must keep before us the following facts: Every possible endeavour will be made to bring up transport as often as possible, but the country whether we are bound is very difficult and we may not see our transport for days, so men must not think their wants have been neglected if they do not get all they want. On landing it will be necessary for every individual to carry with him all his requirements in food and clothing for three days. We may not see our transport till then. Remember that it is essential for everyone to take the very greatest care not only of his food, but of his ammunition, the replenishment of which will be very difficult. Men are liable to throw away their food the first day out and to finish their water bottles as soon as they start marching. If we do this now we can hardly hope for success as unified men cannot fight and we must make an endeavour to try and refra

from starting on our water bottles until quite late in the day. Once you begin drinking you cannot stop and a water bottle is soon emptied; also as regards ammunition, you must not waste it by firing indiscriminately at no target. The time will come when we will find the enemy in well entrenched positions from which we shall have to turn them out, when all our ammunition will be required and remember, concealment whenever possible. Covering fire always, Control of fire and control of your men. Communication never to be neglected. (Signed) W.E. BIRDWOOD."

WEDNESDAY, April 21st, 1915

Usual parades have been held. Bathing parades were also held. The weather is fine but cold.

The following letter has been received:-

From Lord Kitchener to Sir Ian Hamilton:

"The following extract may be of interest to you, describing the recent fighting at Basra. The Turkish troops were well disciplined well trained and brave. Their machine guns had been well concealed and were used with great effect and their trenches were admirably situated part at 1,100 yards and part at 800 yards at the foot of the slopes leading from us down to them. The Turks had no idea of being shot out of their trenches and had to be turned out by a charge of the whole line with the bayonet. If the pluck of our troops, both British and Indian, had not been of the sternest and if they had not been handled with initiative and decision, the battle would never have been won. The trenches were finally taken about 4.30 p.m. and being so well concealed the brunt of taking them fell on the infantry. The Turks were so severely handled that they retreated 19 miles during the night and late information indicates that next day they continued their retirement. 18/4/15."

THURSDAY, April 22nd, 1915

The following communication was received today:-

" General Headquarters,
21st April, 1915

Force Order -- SPECIAL
SOLDIERS OF FRANCE AND THE KING!

"Before us lies an adventure unprecedented in modern war. Together with our comrades of the fleet we are about to force a landing on an open beach in face of positions which have been vaunted by our enemies as impregnable. The landing will be made good by the help of God and the Navy; the positions will be stormed and the war brought one step nearer to a glorious close.

'Remember' said Lord Kitchener, when bidding adieu to your Commander, remember once you set foot on Gallipoli Peninsula, you must fight to a finish.

The whole world will be watching our progress. Let us prove ourselves worthy of the great feat of arms entrusted to us."

IAN HAMILTON, General

Med. Expeditionary Force,
General Headquarters.

FRIDAY, April 23rd, 1915

The usual parades were held and the standing orders of the Med. Expeditionary Force were read to all ranks.

The following is a copy of the Proclamation to be posted up throughout the Gallipoli Peninsula:-

"The Military Forces of the allied Powers have been obliged to occupy some portion of your country in order to save you from the hands of those persons who have attempted to place you under the domination of a foreign power treading under foot the honour of your country. Your forces by land are crushed; your forces by sea are imprisoned in their harbours and have been rendered useless. Your treasury is empty. The famine and destruction which reigns throughout your land has reduced you all to misery. The Governments of England and France, under whose administration millions of Moslems live, have come to your assistance in order to assure to you the prosperity and happiness which is enjoyed by your conreligionists. There is no need to fear. Your honour, lives and prosperity are safe. Everybody's religion will be respected. With this just object in view, the following proclamation has been issued:-

1. The village administrations will be in the hands of the Mukhtar as before and there will be no interference with your private affairs.
2. In order that your women may move freely about, a portion of the market place has been set aside for local inhabitation.
3. In order to avoid regrettable incidents, sentries will be posted around the Moslem quarters.
4. Women can go freely to the market place from a.m. to p.m. (Time to be stated.)
5. Nobody must leave their house between sunset and sunrise.
6. Those who wish to sell goods to the soldiers must apply to the Mukhtar who will fix the price at which goods may be sold.
7. Whoever has cause for complaint should state his case to the Mukhtar.
8. Anyone who attempts to escape from the village, or acts in any way contrary to the provisions of the Proclamation is warned that he will be severely dealt with.

ANNAEUG, 23/4/15

SATURDAY, April 24th, 1915

We still continue to lie at anchor, but the majority of the

transports have now moved to their positions and it is likely that we too shall do the same very soon now.

SUNDAY, April 25th, 1915

After a delay of a day we have received orders to continue our mission to Gallipoli. We left Mudros Bay at 6.30 a.m. The whole fleet of warships and transports is a very large one and presents a very fine appearance. We expect to come to an anchorage in about five hour's time.

The following message was received before leaving:-

General Headquarters.

General Order -- SPECIAL

"The following gracious message has been received by the General Commanding and is published for information. The King wishes you and your army every success. You are all constantly in His Majesty's thoughts and prayers.

E.M. WOODWARD, Brigade General,
Deputy Adjutant General

Med. Exped. Force

12 noon For the last two hours we have been in sight of Gallipoli. The warships are violently bombarding the Turkish positions. We are quite near to our anchorage now, but will not attempt a landing until reinforcements are called for.

We effected a landing at Gaba Tepe exactly at 5 p.m. and disembarked without a single casualty. We were under fire the whole time, and immediately on landing we were rushed to the left of the position held by the Australians. A little later, however, we were brought back and sent up a big hill to dig in, but we had no sooner got there than the Turks commenced sending shrapnel over. We got it hot and strong and suffered a few casualties, but we had to dig for our lives. That was our baptism of shell and it didn't take us long to get used to it.

"NEW ZEALANDERS IN ACTION"

I ain't much good at spelling,
And neat phrases ain't my line;
But I reckon our N.Z. Boys
Are doing rather fine.
I told you mates, the day
They marched along the city street;
That those who'd meet our men in fight
Would find them hard to beat.

And now there comes a cable,
That our men are in the fray;
Behaving as N.Z.'rs should,
Ain't that N.Z.'s way?
Now did those Turkish blighters think,
When once they'd raised our ire;
Our brave lads would turn round and flee,
Before their hellish fire.

They'll find our lads have courage,
And can keep a level head;
When shrapnel screams, and bullets sing,
And mates are lying dead.
They'll learn that when it comes to fight,
Our British blood will tell;
All honour to our khaki boys,
And to the boys who fell.

MONDAY, April 26th, 1915

We have had a very cold night to celebrate our arrival at Gallipoli. It rained practically the whole night and things grew fairly miserable towards morning. We were called to arms again and again during the night and we stood with bayonet fixed waiting to get into it, but somehow the attacks were always repulsed. At 6.20 we got a shell from the Turkish batteries, but the Indians, who had got a mountain battery into position immediately in front of our trenches during the night, opened up a rapid bombardment on the Turkish position, evidently with some effect for they (the Turks) ceased shelling us.

We have nine cruisers just behind us and these are now engaged in a very furious bombardment. Last night the Turks were sending shrapnel over at the rate of 46 per minute, so the fleet is giving them some of ours. The 'Queen Elizabeth' with her 8 15" guns is simply blowing the Turks and their trenches to pieces. A mild way of putting it. The cold is intense and writing is difficult.

5 p.m. The fleet bombarded the Turkish positions all morning, but with very little success. It was a difficult matter to pick up the exact position of the various batteries. A seaplane rose and flew over the affected area, but the Turkish gunners ceased firing and our air scouts failed to discover their positions. In the afternoon, however, we were more successful. The bombardment was continued and all the Turkish batteries on our front were silenced by our guns.

Late in the night the Turks got fresh guns into position and commenced a very heavy fusillade of shrapnel. Our trenches are under both shrapnel and rifle fire the whole time. The Turks have attempted the white flag ruse, but we have distinct orders to take no notice. Dozens have been found wearing the uniforms of Australians who have been killed in action. They have even been guilty of firing on our wounded and stretcher bearers.

TUESDAY, April 27th, 1915

Rifle fire was very pronounced during the night. Early this morning the Turkish batteries commenced to pump in shrapnel, but soon after the fleet replied, all the Turkish batteries were silenced with the exception of one on our left. This is believed to be a disappearing gun and so far all attempts to silence it have been fruitless. The Turks are making desperate attempts to prevent our reinforcements, stores, and ammunition landing, but they have had no success. The work goes on steadily the whole time. We are forging ahead slowly and by tonight should get in further. We are expecting to make a general advance all along our front very soon.

It was reported, but not confirmed, that the Australians captured two lines of trenches but were unable to occupy them on account of the Turkish dead which were piled on top of each other.

We are under orders to move forward. It is absolutely essential that our advance should be a good one and I have no doubt we will entrench in a good position.

WEDNESDAY, April 28th, 1915

We had a very hot time in our engagement. Before we were able to deliver an attack it was necessary for us to traverse "Suicide Gully", so called, because it is alive with lead and it is simply suicide to go through. However, that is the only way for us and we have to go into it. We were shelled all the way up but we were fortunate in having no casualties. We had to go through a very narrow cutting and immediately our first platoon went through, a bunch of Turkish snipers, who must have been splendidly concealed, opened fire and inflicted many casualties. Late in the night we got into position and my platoon was sent out to line a ridge, while the others entrenched. We quickly dug ourselves in, in a rough fashion and prepared to repel any attacks on our front. By and by the weird notes of a Turkish bugle reached our ears. We laughed -- it sounded very queer -- but the Turkish bugler kept up his noise and then the Turks opened with a very rapid fire away to our right. We thought that we were going to be left out but they suddenly rushed us. They came over in hordes and it required a very solid fire from our line to push them back. Then they tried a flanking movement and we were "all but". We will never go nearer to being cut off. However, one of our regiments belonging to our Battalion got into a position and punished the Turks very severely with heavy enfilade fire. About 2 a.m. or 2.30 we were ordered to retire quietly on to a ridge overlooking the position we had previously held. It was 3 a.m. when we started to entrench, so you can have some idea as to how we had to dig in order to be under ground by daylight. Everybody worked like Trojans and although we had worked hard, our trenches were not by any means safe from Shrapnel. During the day we have been under fire and we were obliged to sit down in the bottom of the trench and gradually deepen it with our small entrenching tools.

There appears to have been a lull in the fighting all

SUNDAY, May 2nd, 1915

We spent a very quiet night and so far the day has not been a heavy one. We have simply been holding the enemy off. Tonight, however we are going to advance. The Otago Battalion are going to make an endeavour to capture a position to the left of "Quinn's Post" known as "Popes Hill." The scheme laid out is as follows:- The fleet will bombard the Turkish positions for 30 minutes. At 7p.m., every gun both on sea and land will open fire and continue until 7.30 p.m. when the whole line will advance and charge the Turkish trenches. Was appointed a Lance Corporal today.

MONDAY, May 3rd, 1915

It was a very small party that returned from last night's operations. We made our charge against great odds and I fear we have suffered a very heavy toll of casualties. Promptly to time the fleet opened with a very heavy bombardment on the Turkish positions. Our way to our objective lay through the long winding gully known as "Shrapnel or Suicide Gully". All through the gully, snipers lay carefully concealed. At different points we had to rush the whole battalion past in batches of four or five men at a time. It took us some considerable time to get through and delayed us very considerably. We lost several men coming through. Before reaching the Australian trenches from where we were to advance, we had to scale a very steep face, in fact so steep, that a rope had to be employed to gain the top. Here again we were delayed and by the time we reached the trench we were an hour and three quarters late in taking up our position. Meanwhile the whole line had gone forward and gained their respective positions. Otago was thus left to carry the own objective against enormous odds. On reaching the trench we deployed to an interval of two paces and advanced on column of platoons. We gained good ground and formed mass behind a small ridge. We took a breather and charged. Up till now not a shot had stirred from the Turkish trenches, but immediately we started to go in with the bayonet, the Turks opened with a hellish storm of lead from both machine gun and rifle. The whole place was a sheet of flame. The enemy had machine gun everywhere, but our line continued to charge under this terrible fusillade. My regiment was literally cut to pieces and although we charged several times we were unable to gain any ground under such a terrible fire. It was first intended that the 4th should take the ridge while the remaining three regiments entrenched. But we had discovered to our cost the strength of the enemy's position and our Colonel, much against his will I should imagine, was reluctantly compelled to put in the remainder of the Battalion. The Turkish fire ceased and we were thus able to form up. Another charge was deliberately launched but the same thing happened with the same result, and although we held on and fought all night we were compelled, owing to enormous odds, to retire at daybreak. One awful result being that we had to leave our dead and wounded behind. Many wounded men were brought in by their mates, in fact there seems to have been nothing but gallantry all through. Many deeds of valour will go unrewarded. At the first roll call of my Regiment only 57 out of 200 odd men answered, while in my platoon 14 out of 50 answered. In my section 3 answered leaving 5 unaccounted for. From this it is quite evident that we have suffered heavy losses.

We are in rear of the firing party resting.

TUESDAY, May 4th, 1915

A number of missing men have turned up and several wounded are being accounted for. The number of casualties is, however, still very heavy and it will be some days before we know just exactly how we stand. When one looks around the lines, he cannot fail to be surprised at the number of men who came through this engagement unhurt. There were many hairbreadth escapes. Personally I never received a scratch although I had my rifle shattered. A part of 18 men returned this morning after having cleared a very tight corner. They took cover in an old trench for a time, but when they made an endeavour to retire they found that they were exposed to a very heavy enfilade fire from four points. They were under a blazing hot sun for nearly 36 hours without food or water. We are still resting.

Four Green Islanders fought in this engagement -- Sergeant McDonald, Lance Corporal McLean, Private Simpson and myself. Only three returned, Sergeant McDonald having been reported missing. I last saw him prior to charging. By a remarkable chance as we formed mass, he came and lay down on my right, and McLean lay on my left and when we started off, we were all together. That was all I saw of him. From information received from men who were with him considerably later than I was, it would seem that he was last seen going out in the face of a murderous fire to look for his Platoon-Lieutenant whom he knew to be wounded. The men in his platoon are sad at heart for they fear that their popular sergeant will never return. He was a capable and popular sergeant and nowhere will he be more missed than in his platoon. We all hope for the best and hope to see him back without injury. If he fell in action, there can be no doubt that "Wee Mac," as we all called him, fell gallantly.

Both McLean and Simpson were slightly wounded but they fought on. McLean was hit in the neck but it was not serious, while Simpson received a small flesh wound in the arm.

Neither found it necessary to leave their units.

WEDNESDAY, May 5th, 1915

A few more men, much fatigued and distressed, reported this morning, and from all accounts they have had some tight corners to clear. A voluntary rescue party, 17 all told, went out last night and successfully rescued several wounded men. We are under orders to move.

Later: We left our dug-outs about 6.30 p.m. to embark for an unknown destination. It is believed that we are going further down the coast. We were taken on board the destroyers and it is thought that the whole of the New Zealand Brigade has embarked.

THURSDAY, May 6th, 1915

After some considerable delay last night we eventually cleared Gaba Tepe and came down to Cape Helles where we arrived at 5.30 a.m. this morning and we are now in the reserve trenches. We are to take part in a big engagement on "Ache Baba".

A big battle which commenced at 11 a.m. has been raging all day, and is still raging. Both the artillery and the fleet have been furiously bombarding all day long. We have advanced $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles on our

right flank where the French are operating. The country here is beautiful land and the whole battle field is a solid mass of coloured poppies. It seems a beautiful country to see so much bloodshed in. The weather is perfect but the nights are bitterly cold. We are fortunate in having several very fine wells through our lines.

FRIDAY, May 7th, 1915

We were fortunate in getting a good night's rest, but the night was the coldest we have ever struck. We have no blankets and we simply lie down in our great coats and put on our balaclavas and gloves. The battle continued all night, the artillery and fleet having bombarded the Turkish positions incessantly. It is reported that we have made a good advance under cover of the fire of our big guns, and have inflicted very heavy loss in the enemy's lines. The Turkish dead are piled in heaps on our front. At 4 p.m. we moved to a new position on our extreme left. We advanced in diamond formation, but we did not draw fire until we had taken up our position. The enemy, who had our range to a fine thing, started putting shrapnel over. We suffered a few casualties, we had to dig for our life. While we were busy trenching, one named Lockhart was wounded, but died a few moments later. We stopped work immediately the Turks ceased firing and we dug a grave and buried him, Chaplain Major Luxford conducting a most impressive service. We had seen him wounded, dead and buried within 30 minutes. Such is the suddenness of the soldier's death.

We finished our work late in the night and we did not have any bother during the night.

SATURDAY, May 8th, 1915

We made an advance before daylight came and entrenched in a good position. We made good advances along the line yesterday. The fighting is mainly artillery duels. All the same every inch of ground we gain is taken by entrenching.

SUNDAY, May 9th, 1915

Late yesterday we again advanced and gained a considerable amount of ground. We advanced under very heavy shell, machine gun and rifle fire. We had many casualties. Our work last night was of a most unsatisfactory nature and blame is attachable in some quarter. We (I am speaking now of the New Zealand and Australian division) were pushed forward in a most disorganised state. My own regiment was led into action by one officer, Lieutenant R.M. Duthie, but he was worth a dozen. He is a great leader and always in front of his men. Our only officer of the 4th, Captain Saunders, is now attached to Battalion Headquarters and we are feeling his absence. He, too, was a fine leader, always cool and fearless and seemed to be where he could always be in the thick of it. He was wounded in our last engagement and is still hopping about with a bullet hole in his foot.

But to revert to the subject of our advance. We were given no direction or objective and all our men were not able to take a position when they got up. The position seemed too crowded, and those who could not get in had to either lie down in the open or beat a hasty retirement. The whole of the N.Z. Brigade was fearfully mixed up. We had no covering fire from either artillery or infantry, but the artillery possibly

The following narrative of the landing operations at the Dardanelles is by Captain E. Ashmead Bartlett, War Correspondent for the London Press:-

DARDANELLES, April 24th, 1915

Mudros, (Isle of Lemnos),

WEDNESDAY, May 5th, 1915

The great venture has at last been launched, and the entire fleet of warships and transports is now steaming slowly towards the shores of Gallipoli. Yesterday the weather showed signs of moderating, and at about five o'clock in the afternoon, the first of the transports slowly made its way through the maze of shipping towards the entrance of Mudros Bay. Immediately the patient apathy which has gradually overwhelmed everyone changed to the utmost enthusiasm, and as the huge liners steamed through the fleet, their decks yellow with khaki, the crews of the warships cheered them on to victory, while the bands played them out with an unending variety of popular airs.

The soldiers in the transports answered this last salutation from the Navy with deafening cheers, and no more inspiring spectacle has ever been seen than this, of the last great crusade setting forth for better or for worse. It required splendid organisation and skilled leadership to get this huge fleet clear of the bay without confusion or accidents, but not one has occurred, and the majority are now safely on the high seas steaming towards their respective destinations. The whole fleet and the transports have been divided up into five divisions and there will be three main landings. The 20th Division will disembark off the point of the Gallipoli Peninsula, near Seddul Bahi, where its operations can be covered both from the Gulf of Saros and from the Dardanelles, by the fire of the covering warships. The Australian and New Zealand contingent will disembark north of Gaba Tepe. Further north the Naval Division will make a demonstration.

DIFFICULTIES ENORMOUS

The difficulties and dangers of the enterprise are enormous and are recognised by all. Never before has the attempt been made to land so large a force in the face of an enemy who has innumerable guns and many thousand of trained infantry, and who has had months of warning in which to prepare his positions. Nevertheless, there is a great feeling of confidence throughout all ranks, and the men are delighted that at length the delays are over and the real work is about to begin. Last night the transports were merely taking up their positions, and the real exit of the armada from Mudros Bay commenced this afternoon at about 2 o'clock. The weather which was threatening at an early hour, has now become perfectly calm, and if it only lasts, the conditions will be ideal for a rapid disembarkation.

Throughout the morning transports steamed out to take up their respective divisions in the open sea, and the same enthusiastic scenes were witnessed as those of yesterday. The covering forces will be put ashore from certain battleships, while others will sweep the enemy's positions with their guns and endeavour to prevent them from

shelling the troops while disembarking. It is generally considered that the critical period of the operation will be the first 24 hours, and the success or failure of the whole enterprise will depend on whether these covering parties are able to obtain a firm foothold and seize the positions which have been assigned to them. Every detail has been worked out and rehearsed and every officer and man should now know the peculiar role which has been assigned to him. The Navy will have entire charge of the landing of these thousands of men. Beach parties will go ashore with the first of the troops and officers from the ships will direct the movements of all the boats as they bring the troops ashore.

WITH THE AUSTRALIANS

This battleship belongs to the division which will consist of the Australians, who are to land near Gaba Tepe. We are one of the landing ships, and this afternoon received on board 500 officers and men of the Australian contingent, who are to form part of the covering force. They are a magnificent body of men and full of enthusiasm for the honourable and dangerous role given.

At two o'clock the flagship of this division took up the position at the head of the line. We passed down through the long line of slowly moving transports amid tremendous cheering and were played out of the bay by the French warships. No sight could have been finer than this spectacle of long lines of warships and transports, each making for a special rendezvous without delay or confusion. At 4 o'clock this afternoon this ship's company and the troops were assembled on the quarterdeck to hear the Captain read out Admiral de Robeck's proclamation to the combined forces. This was followed by a last service before battle, in which the chaplain uttered a prayer for victory and called for the Divine blessing on the expedition, while the whole of the ship's company and troops on board stood with uncovered, bowed heads. We are steaming slowly through this momentous night towards the coast, and are due at our rendezvous at 3 a.m. tomorrow (Sunday) a day which has so often brought victory to the British flag.

April 26, 1915

After the events I have previously described the light gradually became better and we could see from the 'London' what was happening on the beach. The shore in front gradually opened up as the sun rose, although, shining as it did directly in the eyes of the ship's gunners, they were not in a position to support the attack in the early hours of the morning. It was then discovered that the boats had landed rather farther north of Gaba Tepe than was originally intended, at a point where the sandstone cliffs rose very sheer from the water's edge. As a matter of fact this error probably turned out a blessing in disguise, because there was no glacis down which the enemy's infantry could fire, and the numerous bluffs, ridges and broken ground afford good cover to troops once they have passed 40 or 50 yards of flat sandy beach.

CONFUSED TRIANGLE OF HILLS

This ridge under which the landing was made stretched due north from Gaba Tepe and culminates in the height of Coja Chemendagh which rises 950 feet above the sea level. The whole forms part of a confused triangle of hills, valleys, ridges, bluffs and dales, which stretches

right across the Gallipoli Peninsula to the Bay of Bassi Liman above the Narrows. The triangle is cut in two by the valley through which flows the stream known as Bokali Derese.

It is indeed a formidable and forbidding land. To the sea it presents a steep front broken up into innumerable ridges, bluffs, valleys and sand-pits, which rise to a height of several hundred feet. The surface is either a kind of bare yellow sandstone, very soft, which crumbles when you tread on it, or else it is covered with very thick shrubbery about six feet in height. It is, in fact, an ideal country for irregular warfare such as the Australians and New Zealanders were soon to find to their cost. You cannot see a yard in front of you, and so broken is the ground that the enemy's snipers were able to lie concealed within a few yards of the lines of infantry without it being possible to locate them.

SNIPING THE BOATS

In the early part of the day very heavy casualties were suffered in the boats which conveyed the troops from the destroyers, tugs and transports to the beach. As soon as it became light, the enemy's sharpshooters, hidden everywhere simply concentrated their fire on the boats. Then they got close in. At last three boats, having broken away from their tows, drifted down the coast under no control, sniped at the whole way and steadily losing men. All praise is due to the splendid conduct of the officers, midshipmen, and men who formed the beach parties and whose duty it was to pass backward and forwards under this terrible fusillade which it was impossible to check in the early part of the day.

The work of disembarking went on mechanically under this fire at almost point blank range. You saw the crowded pinnaces, tugs, and destroyers laboriously pulled ashore by six or eight seamen. The moment it reached the beach, the troops jumped out and doubled for cover to the foot of the bluffs over some forty yards of beach, but the gallant crews of the boats had them to pull them out under a dropping fire from a hundred points, where the enemy's marksmen lay hidden amid the sand and shrubs.

DUTY NOBLY DONE

Throughout the whole of April 25th the landing of troops, stores, and munitions had to be carried out under these conditions, but the gallant sailors never failed their equally gallant comrades ashore. Everyone from the youngest midshipman straight from Dartmouth and under fire for the first time to the senior officers in charge did their duty nobly.

When it became light, the covering warships endeavoured to support the troops on shore by a heavy fire from their secondary armament, but at this time the positions of the enemy being unknown, the support was necessarily more moral than real. When the sun had fully risen and the haze had disappeared we could see that the Australians had actually established themselves on the top of the ridge, and were evidently trying to work their way northwards along it.

INTENSE FIRE FROM THE HILLS

At 8.45 the fire from the hills became intense and lasted for

about half an hour, when it gradually died down, but only for a few minutes, when it re-opened and lasted without cessation throughout the remainder of the day. The fighting was so confused and took place among such broken ground that it is extremely difficult to follow exactly what did happen throughout the morning and afternoon of April 25th.

April 28th, 1915

Throughout the night of April 26th, the Turks harassed our lines, creeping up and endeavouring to snipe the Australians and New Zealanders in their shelter trenches, but never daring to press home an attack, though in overwhelming numbers compared with our force ashore. At one section of the line they paid dearly for their demerit for the New Zealanders charges them with the bayonet and drove them off in disorder. It was obvious on the morning of the 27th that the Turks had not recovered from the terrible hammering they had received on the previous day and had no stomach for another big attack on entrenchments now firmly established on a semicircular front which covered the whole of the foreshore used for the disembarkation of troops, supplies, guns and ammunition, and supported by the fire of many warships. Also, the position of the Colonials had been immeasurably improved by the landing of some of our field guns and several Indian mountain batteries. The Turks had evidently intended to drive us into the sea on the previous day by a great concentration of Infantry, supported by an unceasing shrapnel fire, expecting to find a line thinly held by men exhausted by their losses and exertions on the day of landing. But they were soon disillusioned for these Australians and New Zealanders were determined from the first rather to die to a man than surrender the ground so dearly won on the 25th; and every man knew that his only hope of safety lay in victory as it would have been impossible to re-embark the whole army once the ring of hills commanding the beach had been lost. On the morning and throughout the entire day of the 27th, the enemy resorted to new tactics in the forlorn hope of driving us off the shore and to prevent supplies and reinforcements from reaching the beach.

During the night he had got into fresh positions a great number of field guns, and with these he opened up a tremendous bombardment of the foreshore and sea in front, while at the same time he kept up an incessant rain of shrapnel on the trenches. The gunners tried to put a great curtain of shrapnel over the sea between the warships and the transports and the shore.

It was an amazing sight to watch the shells bursting, dozens at a time, above the water, and then the spreading bullets churning up the water as if a great hailstorm had suddenly come on. The shells concentrated near the shore made a great danger zone through which all boats and trawlers to and from the shore had to pass, but the material damage inflicted was practically nil.

Throughout the day the warships kept up an incessant fire on any of the enemy's who attempted to advance, and were also frequently directed on to guns inland by the waterplane which did excellent work.

"FOLKESTONE LEAS"

A Turkish ship with heavy guns fires three or four of her huge shells from the other side of the Peninsula right among our ships every

morning between six and seven. The scream they make passing through the air, the tremendous splash as they hit the water, and the tremendous detonation if they happened to burst, arouse everyone from their slumbers prematurely, and there is a rush to the deck to see where they have fallen. This ship is now known throughout the fleet as "Christian Arise."

The stretch of foreshore and cliffs occupied by the Australian and New Zealand troops has been named the "Folkestone Leas." and the ground certainly does bear a striking resemblance to what Folkestone must have looked like before the town was built on the cliffs.

General Birdwood has a high opinion of his troops. He told me he could not praise the courage, endurance and soldierly qualities of the Colonials enough, and he said that the manner in which they hung on to the position the first day and night was a magnificent feat, seldom if ever, surpassed, considering their very heavy losses, the shortage of water, and the incessant shrapnel fire to which they were exposed without cover, not to mention the unceasing attacks of the enemy's infantry. That night, when they were obliged to retire to a more contracted line, and when that line was reached, they set their teeth and refused to budge another foot. The whole scene on the beach irresistibly reminds you of a gigantic shipwreck. It looks as if the whole army and its stores had been washed ashore after a great gale, or had saved themselves on rafts. All their work is carried on under an incessant shrapnel fire which sweeps the trenches and hills. The shells are frequently bursting ten or twelve at the same moment, making a deafening noise and plastering the foreshore with bullets, but the work goes on just as if there was not a gun within miles. These colonials are extraordinarily cool and callous under fire, often exposing themselves rather than taking the trouble to keep in under the shelter of the cliff -- the only safe spot. One of the strangest sights of all was to see numbers of them bathing in the sea, with the shrapnel bursting all round them. These colonial divisions now occupy a position so thoroughly entrenched that all the Turks in Thrace and Gallipoli will never turn them out of it.

Having been examined by a medical board at the end of July and being quite unaware of the decision of the board, I got my baggage ready when instructions were issued. I left Alexandria at 11.30 a.m. on August 5th, for Suez, arriving there about 6 p.m. and embarked on the 'Tahiti'. We got away from Suez on August 7th and passed through Hell's Gates on the 12th. We had an ordinary passage to Albany excepting from August 20th to 26th, when we encountered rough weather and heavy seas. We sighted Australian soil on August 31st, arriving at the West Australian port at 3.30 p.m. the same day. It was raining heavily and blowing a howling gale. All ranks were led to believe that they would get ashore, for a few hours, but the Naval authorities refused to allow us ashore. Great disappointment prevailed among the troops -- also the ladies of Albany -- who had decorated the Albany drill hall and were in readiness to give us a real good welcome. However, they sent us trays of cakes and twenty-one cases of fruit and also boxes of cigarettes. The Mayor of Albany, (A splendid man) came on board and saw these goods distributed to the troops. Complaints, he said, had reached him that goods were not being distributed to troops and in fairness to the troops and the ladies of Albany, he had come on board to see these gifts distributed. He made a great speech, but became visibly overcome, when speaking of the

Australian casualties. He left us late in the night and was cheered loudly by the troops as his launch left.

SEPTEMBER 2nd

Rations on board today. The skipper would not allow dinner to be served, because he considered his ship was dirty. This created bother and he was promptly counted out and booed by the boys. Things were getting warm and fearing further trouble, he ordered dinner to be served. Good times in store for him, if he is not more careful.

We arrived at Wellington on September 10/11th and the troops were accorded a civic reception at the Town Hall on Saturday afternoon. I was boarded on the following day and was awarded fourteen days' sick leave, on the expiry of which I was to receive my discharge. Owing to trouble with the ships' crew and seeing no chance of a settlement, many of the troops came south by the ferry. I followed suit in Tuesday night and arrived in Dunedin at 9 p.m. on Wednesday, 15th September.
