

Chunuk Bair. A Turkish battery from the Anzac position started to shell the seaward slope with shrapnel. For at least two hours, salvoes perfectly timed burst over the slopes.

The Turks on the nearby slightly higher Hill Q had a clear shot along most of the NZers trenches and snipers began to pick the men off. HD Williams said in a letter home below *"It was fine to see the way our fellows stood up to it and held back thousands of the Turks, who were entrenched only seven to ten yards away, and who tried several times to . [censored] . . our fellows with the bayonet . . . bullets were rained on top of us until everything seemed to be blown away" . . . "We had three days of heavy fighting before I got bowled over, and by that time [censored]. In fact, when I went down there was only one left, and he fell a few minutes afterwards; but we managed to hold the position"*.

About 3 p.m., on the 8th August Lieutenant-Colonel Malone had despatched Captain E. S. Harston to Brigade Headquarters with a full report on the position of Chunuk Bair and with an urgent appeal for reinforcements.

Towards 5 p.m., the shelling seemed to have ceased and Lieutenant-Colonel Malone and Major Schofield stood up together in the HQ trench with the idea of looking over the ground and deciding the dispositions of the troops to be maintained during the night and where the men of the Auckland Regiment might most profitably be employed. Just at this moment, the Turk fired his last salvo and the gallant Colonel fell with a ball through the head while Colonel Schofield received a ball through the lung. A memorial gate was erected for Malone in Stratford.

The command of the Auckland Mounted Rifles then devolved upon Captain Wood. Both these officers were in the Headquarters trench and, the firing having lulled considerably, they left the trench to reconnoitre the position and fix the dispositions to be maintained during the hours of darkness. Within a few minutes of leaving the trench and while standing together discussing the positions, both Major Cunningham and Captain Wood were seriously wounded by the same bullet.

On 8th August the Otago Battalion, along with the Wellington Mounted Rifles Regiment (which had come under the orders of the Brigade) were ordered to relieve the Auckland and Wellington Battalions at dusk in the forward trenches on Chunuk Bair. By this time Wellington Battalion had been reduced to a strength which was almost negligible, and but few officers remained. The Otago's arrived at the crest at 10.15pm.

The Otago's described what they saw when they arrived on Chunuk Bair we came across an area 100 yards in width where men lay dead and dying, and equipment and rifles were strewn in all directions. The Turks lined the far ridge only some 20 yards away, and they were pouring fire into the frontline trenches at point blank range. Accompanied by the screams of Allah, Allah, some would rush forward to throw a bomb. The rear reserve trench was full of dead men, and the odd wounded man who raved in delirium for water that was not to be had. There were now a total of 583 men garrisoned on that crest. At the very most the depth of the trench was only to be 3 foot, with a few sandbags on the parapet. The earth they dug away consisted of a sticky mass of blood, soil, ammunition and gear of all sorts. They sifted through it for usable ammunition and bombs and the rest went into strengthening the parapet. All the time the shadowy outline of the enemy were popping up into view on the crest-line and for a brief moment they were a target before the bomb was hurled towards them. The Turks started to place the bombs inside socks in order to gain further throwing distance.

At night it was now decided by the Otago Battalion to extend the original line to the right. Under this arrangement the forces committed to holding the defenses of Chunuk Bair were disposed as follows: Two-thirds of the strength of Otago Battalion holding the left front of the line; Wellington Mounted Rifles next in order to the right; and one-third of Otago Battalion's strength, represented by 4th Company, occupying a flanking position on the extreme right.

A day remarkable for the fierceness of the struggle was succeeded by a night perhaps even more desperate especially for 6pm to 9pm . No food or water reached the Otago Battalion garrison; there was no possible chance of getting the wounded away and the already exhausted defenders, though constantly menaced by the enemy, were forced to exert themselves throughout the night in an endeavor to deepen the shallow trenches - a difficult business owing to the hard rock formation.

Shortly after the 4th Otago Company had taken up the position which formed a defensive right flank, Turk movement was observed to the front, but there was some doubt as to its origin. Lieut. J. E. Cuthill accordingly moved out to the front and was able to convince himself that the Turks were massing for attack. This Turk assault was eventually delivered in considerable force; but our men withheld their fire until the enemy had advanced to within 15 yards of the line, when it was so well and truly delivered that the enemy was most sanguinary repulsed. When beaten off the Turks retired behind the ridge and reformed for a further effort.

As daylight broke on the 9th considerable numbers of the enemy appeared to the right rear, and at the same time a determined attack, preceded by a storm of bombs, was delivered against our front. The enemy's apparent intention was to drive in the front and then attack the garrison in the flank as it withdrew. The first line of trenches was entered, but the enemy was subsequently driven out, and the occupants of the rear trench, temporarily changing their front, dealt with the enemy threatening the flank. This attack was thus beaten off; at all other points the enemy was equally unsuccessful.

The casualties during the night had been exceedingly heavy. Lieut. Colonel Moore, who had commanded the Battalion from its first days on the Peninsula, was wounded, as also was Major Moir, Second-in-Command. Command of the Battalion was then taken over by Major G. Mitchell.

Fighting continued for all of the 9th August.

It was then pointed out to the Commanders that two battalions would be required to hold the position on the summit with shallow trenches; and it was urged that the relief should be effected that night. The outcome was that orders for relief were issued at 8 p.m. on the 9th.

The NZ Chunuk Bair summit holders, which had been decimated by Turk fire and attacks for two days and nights were in turn fully relieved by 2am on 10th August by the 6th Battalion, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment and 5th Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment. These fresh UK troops were 3 hours later that morning at 5.30am massacred and driven off the summit on 10th August by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk)'s very large massed attack from the direction of Hill Q using 6,600 Turkish soldiers. These Turkish soldiers in some places were amassed at night in secret in trenches only 30 yards from the summit.

The NZers below Chunuk Bair at 5.30am heard a tremendous burst of fire lasting ten minutes and then a flood of c.6,600 Turks then came over the summit and down **Rhododendron Ridge** which were repulsed by the survivors of 3 NZ battalions and 10 machine guns. Only a handful of British survivors and Turks made it off the summit. The Turks held onto Chunuk Bair for the rest of the war.



Figure 95: Rhododendron Ridge looking up to the summit of Chunuk Bair (Te Rapa)

NZ 2nd Field Company outlined - *Thousands of enemy after their charge off the summit were forced to retire back up the steep slopes of Chunuk Bair in full view of every man on our side able to fire a shot, and only a mere handful ever crossed back up over the ridge. The Turks held onto Chunuk Bair for the rest of the war.*

The NZ Mounted Rifles now virtually ceased to exist as a fighting unit. The **Auckland Mounted Rifles only had sixty-six men from a strength of 311 all ranks (21%) that had started the battle.** The Canterbury Mounted Rifles lost 105 men around forty per cent of their strength. **The Wellington Mounted Rifles, had sixty-seven men left from 760 all ranks (9%).**

The Allies had to leave Gallipoli in December 1915 as it was going into winter (snowing), the Turks held the high ground, they had lost too many men and the Turks had just taken possession of the latest artillery from Germany.

At the end of Gallipoli (6 months) on a total beach head area of 400 acres the Turks put their casualties at 251k including 86k dead, the Allies had casualties of 140k with Britain 21k dead, France 10k dead, Australia 8,709 dead and NZ 2,701 dead.

The Turks during 1915 killed an estimated one million minority local Christian Albanians and Greeks by forcing them on death marches into Turkey's deserts mainly during winter.

**18
Aug
15**

Henry D Williams was admitted to hospital in Alexandria, Egypt - bomb wound to the inner thigh - this is just after the time of the large August offensive in Gallipoli (i.e. Chunuk Bair, etc above). He could no longer ride or walk properly. In the HD Williams letter in the appendices later in life he still limped as a part of his thigh was missing.

In the HD Williams letter in the appendices he said when he got to Sulva Bay after Chunuk Bair there were seventy two thousand wounded waiting to be evacuated on the beach. He had to wait for four days before he caught a 2 day ship voyage to Egypt. **Until he got to Egypt, Henry was reported as dead by the Army who had shipped all his possessions back to NZ and ceased to pay him. Henry had to send his own**

	<p>telegram to his family in NZ telling them he was still alive.</p> <p>On the 20th August 1915 Henry Williams wrote home from the Alexandra Egypt hospital, and the following was published later in the Hawera & Normanby Star, on the 13th of October 1915. He wrote:</p> <p><i>"Just a few lines to let you know that I am still alive and kicking, or, at least, I can kick with one leg. the other one got in the way of a bomb which exploded, with the result that part of my thigh is missing, and the other part is rather too stiff to do much kicking just at present.</i></p> <p><i>"The bomb suffered most though, for it was blown to pieces, so I don't mind so much. That happened ten or eleven days ago, and since then I have been gradually shifted about by boats and motor ambulances, until, at last, I was dropped here; but they don't seem to have finished with me yet, for I believe I am to be sent to England by the next hospital ship.</i></p> <p><i>"In one way I am rather pleased at that news, but I want to. go back to Gallipoli, and I am afraid that I won't be wanted there after I come back from England. However, in this game we have to go where we are told to, and that is not always the same place as we want to go to.</i></p> <p><i>"We had three days of heavy fighting before I got bowled over, and by that time [censored]. In fact, when I went down there was only one left, and he fell a few minutes afterwards; but we managed to hold the position until the rest of our regiment came up and they kept it until relieved next morning, when there were only [censored] of the whole regiment left unwounded.</i></p> <p><i>"It was fine to see the way our fellows stood up to it and held back thousands of the Turks, who were entrenched only seven to ten yards away, and who tried several times to . . . our fellows with the bayonet . . . bullets were rained on top of us until everything seemed to be blown away.</i></p> <p><i>"But we had been fighting for three days and had won a good many miles of country at a great cost, so we could not afford to give way then, and eventually the hill was won, although our chaps were not in at the last."</i></p> <p>As it was a bomb wound rather than a gunshot (as per his NZDF record) - this means Henry was probably on the top of Chunuk Bair for 2 to 3 days.</p>
22 Feb	<p>After recovering in the UK he embarked at London to rejoin his regiment in Egypt. The Williams family understands during the time he convalesced on a large Estate in Scotland near Firth Bridge owned by Mr. Montgomery (a farm owner in Hawkes Bay - who had married a cousin of General Russell). Henry told the Mrs Montgomery he wanted to go on fighting and would like to join the RAF. She gave him a letter to give to General Russell and he then sent Henry to see General Birdwood who was in charge of the British Forces in the East. Henry was the first NZ Officer allowed to join the Royal Flying Corps as an Flying Observer but to do so had to drop of rank to 2nd Lieutenant. He did is training in the Karga Oasis in Egypt in 130 degree heat next to a small hot water lake and some date palms.</p> <p>They could only fly in the morning and evening as the heat made the fabric wings too floppy to fly.</p>
May 1916	<p>Henry D Williams then rejoined the No 17 Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps as an "Observer". He completed 100hrs as an Observer and did not train in the UK to become a pilot until 15th Nov 1916.</p> <p>Out of 600 trainee pilots in his class at Oxford he was 4th in terms of marks.</p>

At the time planes had only been around for 8 years since the Wright brothers first flight. The first planes appeared in Europe in 1910. In 1916 they were called "machines" rather than planes and the average life expectancy of a new pilot over the Somme was only 21 days.



Figure 96: Henry started as a Flying Observer in the front of the B.E.2 in May 1916.

As a Flying Observer Henry would have sat in the front seat (taking photos and using a dot dash wireless to direct artillery, etc) and the pilot sat in the back. If another plane attacked from the rear he had to shoot his machine gun over the pilots head.

British ace Alan Ball summed the B.E.2 up as "a bloody awful aeroplane". The vulnerability of the B.E.2c to fighter attack became plain in late 1915, with the advent of the German Fokker Eindecker. This led the British press to dub it "Fokker Fodder", while German pilots nicknamed it Kaltes Fleisch ("cold meat"). The B.E.2 was virtually helpless against the newer German fighters of 1916-17.

The B.E.2 was a British single-engine 60HP two-seat biplane which was in service with the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) from 1912 until the end of World War I in 1918. About 3,500 were built in Detroit, USA, shipped and then assembled in France. The key problem was they were designed by the British but manufacturing was more cost effective in Detroit hence there was at least a year and a half lag period for the delivery of any new models and during this time the Germans would release more modern aircraft giving them an advantage.

Initially used as front-line reconnaissance aircraft and light bombers, variants of the type were also used as night fighters. Like many warplanes since, the B.E.2 was retained in front line service long after it had become obsolete.

May 1916	In May 1916 Harry was posted to Egypt so he embarked in London and on the 1st of June 1916 he arrived back in Alexandria, from where he joined No. 17 Squadron at Asyut for reconnaissance and bombing duties over the oasis's in the Sahara Desert, which were used by the Sensussi Tribe who were aligned with the Germans.
15 June	Two BE2c, planes sent to the Dakhilah Oasis - 40 miles west into the Sahara became lost and had to land. In the morning one of the planes would not start. The four men decide to flip a coin to see who would fly out for help. HD Williams won the toss.

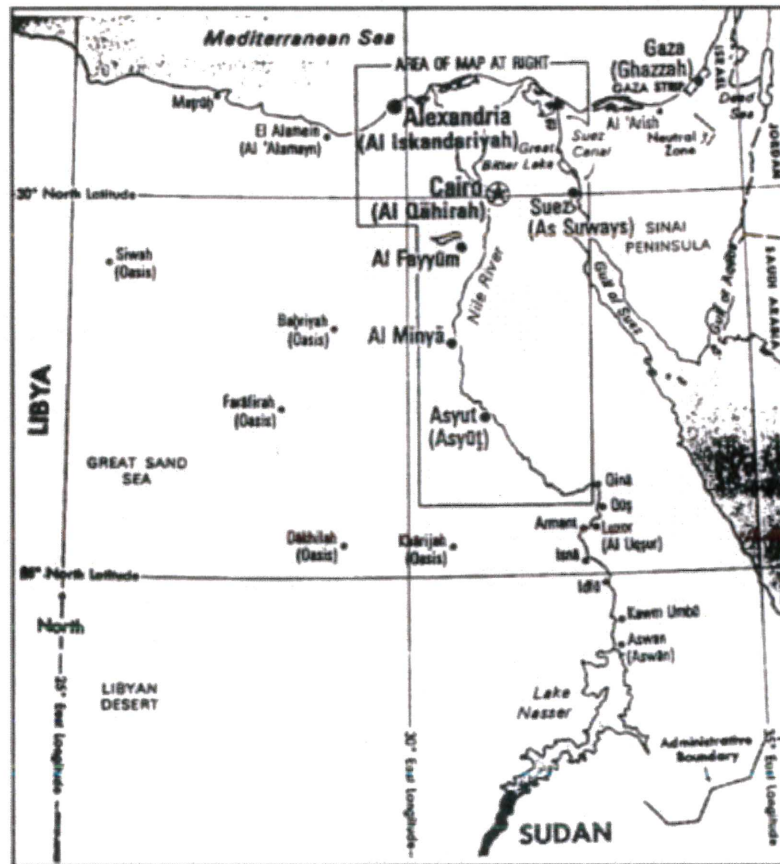


Figure 97: Asyut to Dakhilah Oasis (centre left) - Henry saved by the toss of a coin

When a rescue plane returned on the 17th June they could not find the two men who remained behind as they had managed to get the plane going temporary and had flown a short distance. On the 18th their water gone 2nd Lt Ridley shot himself while A.M Garside's back was turned. Garside died soon after smashing the planes compass for extra water. They were not found until the 20th June both dead.



Figure 98: Burial of Ridley and Garland near the Dakhilah Oasis, The Great Sand Sea