

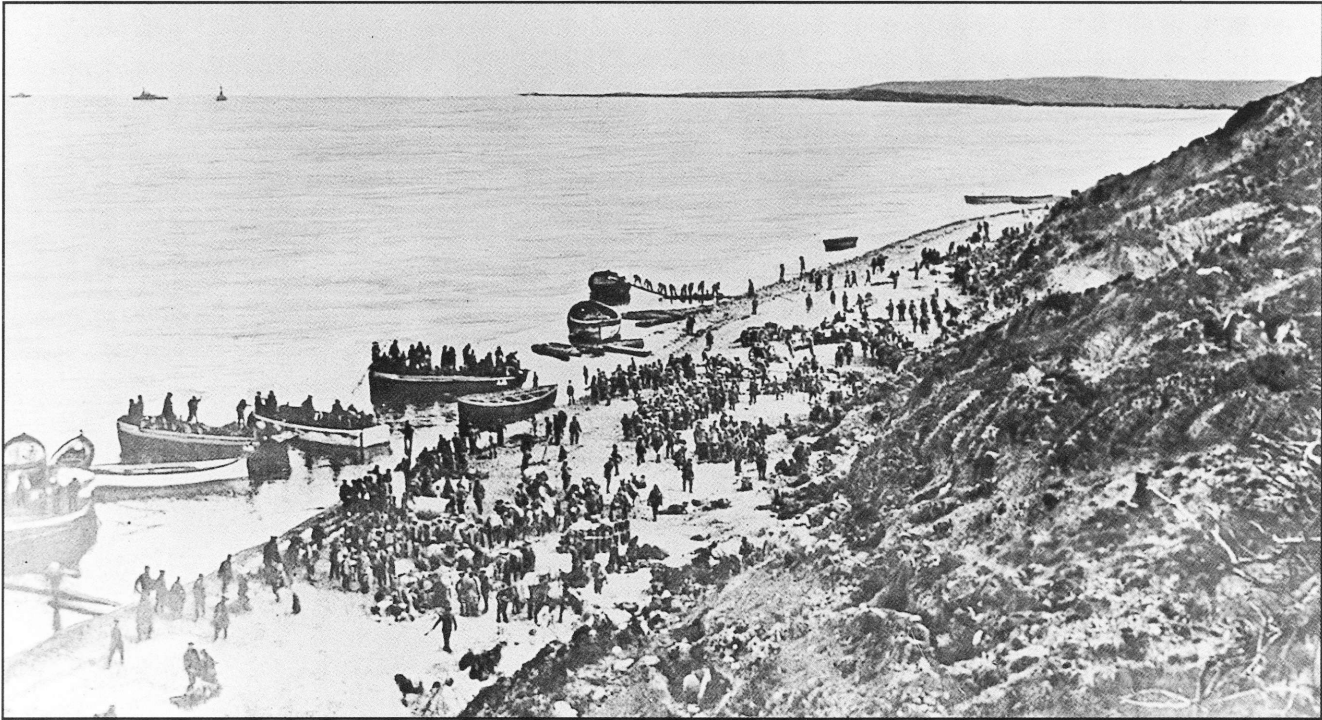
2

THE FIRST ANZAC DAY, SUNDAY 25 APRIL 1915



“Stray bullets were zipping all around but our real welcome was a field gun shell which screeched from the right just over our heads and burst at the water’s edge not more than 50 yards [46 metres] along the beach. There were no casualties from this one but it made us realise that we were now in among things and that there would be many others to come.”

Fred Senn, New Zealand Engineers



The first New Zealanders ashore.



(QEII Waikouaiti)

Hell Spit cemetery at the south end of Anzac Cove.

Twenty-one-year-old Fred Senn was one of the New Zealand soldiers who landed on Anzac Day. Like most Australians and New Zealanders this was his first experience of war. It was nothing glorious or exciting, only the confusion and fear of landing on a strange beach and being fired at by people you could not see from the scrubby hills above the beach.

The New Zealanders landed after the Australians and thought that the Turks had been driven back from the beach. Instead they found confusion and chaos ashore as the Anzacs had been landed on the wrong beach. Instead of a flat plain they faced steep cliffs and found themselves fighting to stop being driven back into the sea.

The Anzac landing was one of a number of

GABA TEPE



Gaba Tepe was the Turkish name for the peninsula south of Anzac Cove. Anzac Cove itself was an unnamed beach, the northern headland of which was called Ari Burnu. It became known as Anzac Cove in the first week after the Anzacs landed there on 25 April 1915.



(Moorehead, Gallipoli)

MUSTAFA KEMAL



Mustafa Kemal, a Turkish commander, heard of the Anzac landing and launched a counter-attack. Although he had fewer men, his troops were able to hold off the Anzac advance because they knew the land and were better organised.

landings by a large force of soldiers and sailors from France and the British Empire. The task was to capture the Gallipoli Peninsula and allow British and French warships to sail through the Dardanelles which was the narrow passage of water which joined the Aegean Sea to the Sea of Marmara.

At that time the Turkish capital was Constantinople (now Istanbul). The British Government believed if the warships threatened the Turkish capital then Turkey would surrender. Turkey was an ally of Germany and Austria-Hungary who were fighting France, Russia and Britain in the First World War or Great War which started in 1914 when Germany invaded France through the neutral country of Belgium. This was to be a short knock-out war by Germany but the power of the machine-gun and barbed wire had seen the armies of Europe bogged down for hundreds of kilometres in trenches along a battlefield that stretched from the English Channel to the Swiss frontier known as the Western Front.

The Gallipoli landings were part of a plan to find a way to break the stalemate of the Western Front in Europe by knocking Turkey out of the war and attacking Germany from the rear. Everyone thought that once ashore they would be rapidly marching on Constantinople. It did not happen. The Turkish soldiers guarding the beaches fought hard to protect their country and the invaders were pinned down within tiny footholds of Turkish land.



(Gresson Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library)

The Anzacs dug 'coffin trenches' on the hills above Anzac Cove and hung on grimly to prevent the Turks driving them back into the sea.