

Bowler of Gallipoli: Witness to the ANZAC Legend. By Frank Glen. Army History Unit/Department of Defence, Canberra, 2004. 142 pp. Australian price: \$45.00. ISBN 1-876439-82-3. *Echoes of Gallipoli: In the Words of New Zealand's Mounted Riflemen.* By Terry Kinloch. Exisle Publishing, Auckland, 2005. 320 pp. NZ price: \$49.99. ISBN 0-908988-860-5. *Gallipoli: A Guide to New Zealand Battlefields and Memorials.* By Ian McGibbon. Reed Books in association with the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Wellington, 2004. 128 pp. NZ price: \$19.99. ISBN 0-7900-0999-4.

GALLIPOLI PLAYS A PIVOTAL ROLE in antipodean constructions of national identity and national types. Ninety years since these events occurred, their importance as a marker of cultural identity for Pakeha and Maori is still growing. This fascination — some may say obsession — with Gallipoli means that, today, it is continually ‘re-staged’ and ‘re-presented’ for New Zealanders in books, films, museums, classrooms and online. Clearly, there is a market for the Gallipoli ‘product’. Three new publications are indicative of this trend. Frank Glen ponders the fate of Lieutenant-Colonel Edmund Bowler, the first ANZAC Beach Commander on Gallipoli, whose criticism of the military command’s shortcomings was to have devastating personal consequences. Terry Kinloch sets out to tell the story of the men of the New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade, unexplored territory until now. Ian McGibbon provides us with the companion piece to his *New Zealand Battlefields and Memorials of the Western Front*, a guide to the Gallipoli battlefields, cemeteries and memorials.

Bowler was the only New Zealand officer appointed to General Birdwood’s ANZAC Corps HQ; hence, Glen argues, his was a unique perspective. In Bowler’s letters to his wife and daughters in Gore, we are privy to the observations and opinions of a senior officer in the ANZAC high command, one whose enthusiastic embrace of imperial/colonial objectives prior to the war floundered as the Dardanelles campaign dragged on. In many ways Bowler was not dissimilar to William G. Malone, the hero of Chunuk Bair with whom Glen compares him. The recent publication of *No Better Death: The Great War Diaries and Letters of William G. Malone* edited by John Crawford reinforces this comparison. Both Bowler and Malone were lawyers with strong farming and community interests when war broke out. They were deeply committed to imperial objectives, hence their involvement in the Volunteer Territorial Forces. As older married men with families (Malone was 56 in 1915, Bowler 49) they were in a minority among New Zealand men who served in World War I. Both voiced their concerns about the handling of this campaign. However, Malone was given control of fighting men and died attempting to hold Chunuk Bair. Bowler’s superiors allocated him administrative responsibilities, to his disappointment. As a beach landing officer, Bowler believed he was the first New Zealander to step ashore at Gallipoli. Four weeks later he was made the first ANZAC Beach Commander, with the sole responsibility for overseeing the security of the beach perimeter. In July he was twice evacuated, the second time with dysentery, and once again on 1 September, this time to convalesce in London. There he embarked on a campaign to have the New Zealanders taken off the Gallipoli peninsula.

Bowler’s war experience culminated in near physical and emotional collapse. Excerpts from his letters home give voice to his intense anxiety and growing concern that the ANZAC troops had been wasted and that a small country could not sustain such high losses. Glen points out that Bowler was not alone in these views, but Bowler went one step further in making his views known to many well connected friends, colleagues and relatives. Indeed, he sought to petition the most highly placed politician in his world on this exact issue: his friend, the Hon. Thomas Mackenzie, the New Zealand High Commissioner. Glen observes that: ‘Bowler, the advocate in civilian life, now became the advocate for, as he understood it, the truth about the Gallipoli campaign.’ The fall out was catastrophic for Bowler. He returned to Egypt to serve in February 1916 but was

rebuffed and, instead, sent back to New Zealand and discharged by the Adjutant General of the New Zealand Forces on 13 May 1916. There is no record of this meeting. His war service over, he was overlooked for any awards and shunned by the military. Birdwood, on a visit to New Zealand in 1920, elected to avoid him. Bowler's death in 1927 was, according to his medical record, attributed to his war service.

One possibility we have to allow for is that New Zealand's most highly placed officer in the ANZAC command was, indeed, a hero in his passionate advocacy of the New Zealand cause. His unique perspective made him an 'inside' observer and critically aware of the failings of the high command. Perhaps having exhausted all the military channels available to him, he felt that it was his duty to disseminate his views. If this is the case, only now with the publication of this book can a general audience appreciate Bowler's passionate advocacy. Another possibility is that the physical and emotional impact of Gallipoli had had a deleterious effect on Bowler's political judgement. Possibly he became fixated on the withdrawal of New Zealand troops without thought to the wider military objectives. What remains inadequately accounted for is whether Bowler appreciated the cost of 'talking out of school'. After all, he did seek to be re-assigned to regimental duties.

Hero or haranguer? Bowler was only granted a meeting with Mackenzie on his eighth visit, which may point to the latter. Our evaluation of Bowler is hampered by the fact that there are no records of those critical conversations between Bowler and Mackenzie and Bowler and his military superiors. As Glen notes, any such evidence has been expunged from the official record. Nor did Bowler discuss these conversations in his correspondence. We are left to conjecture what was or was not said. Bowler returned home and retreated into silence.

This account provides a good overview of a senior officer's views of the unfolding of the Gallipoli campaign. Its shortcoming is that it does not provide a deeper insight into the culminating moments of Bowler's military career. Glen argues that Bowler's war experience gave him a unique perspective from which to observe the birth of the ANZAC legend. A more convincing case could be made that he was, like so many men of that war, regardless of place of origin or belief in the ideology of empire, one of war's casualties. Not a battlefield casualty, but a military casualty all the same. Reflecting on Bowler's wartime service reminds us of an important point: too many war histories neglect the multitude of ways in which individuals were damaged by their war experiences.

In *Echoes of Gallipoli* Terry Kinloch concentrates on the fortunes of the New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade and the Otago Mounted Rifles Regiment from their mobilization in August 1914 through their seven months fighting at Gallipoli. They had to leave their horses behind in Egypt and fight on foot in the battles for No.3 Outpost, Chunuk Bair and Hill 60, through to the final withdrawal of troops in December 1915. In that short time almost half of the 4000 mounted riflemen lost their lives or were wounded. Kinloch does not offer a new perspective on the machinations of the Gallipoli campaign. His intention is to offer a unit history. He writes well, interspersing his narrative with excerpts from a number of individual accounts in an easy-to-read journalistic style.

An epilogue notes that a reconstituted New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade became a part of the Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division, which carried the war back to the Ottoman Turkish Empire across the Sinai Desert and through Palestine over the next three years. Kinloch intends to cover this campaign. If he does so, he will be truly covering new ground.

Visiting Gallipoli is now a 'rite of passage' for New Zealanders. I made the pilgrimage along with my family in late summer 2003 and was struck by the number of Turkish, Australian and New Zealand tour groups we encountered. 2005 marked the ninetieth anniversary of the landing. The official contingent of about 130 people included the Prime Minister and other MPs, New Zealand Defence Force personnel, military veterans and

ten young people. The total number of New Zealanders and Australians attending the 2005 anniversary ceremonies was estimated at 20,000. We all wish to stand where once they stood. Battlefield tourism is big business.

Published to coincide with the ninetieth anniversary of the landing, Ian McGibbon's excellent guidebook is a great accompaniment to any trip to Gallipoli. Guidebooks need to be lightweight. It is. But it is also a substantive guide, both easy-to-read and easy-to-use. Organized in chronological order, the chapters give the history and events that unfolded, plus information on how to get there, how to travel around the sites and where to stay. A list of battlefield tour operators and guides is included in an appendix. An overview of the fighting at Gallipoli and New Zealand's role in it is provided, along with a reading list for those who want to read further. Maps, historical and contemporary photographs and excerpts from soldiers' diaries, letters and memoirs are integrated into the text. The inclusion of the studio portraits of those who died at Gallipoli helps visually anchor the text in the personal and poignant.

Casting a historian's eye view over the battlefields McGibbon endeavours to adopt a trans-national perspective. In directing our attention to the graves of a number of New Zealand men who served with Australian Expeditionary Force we are alerted to trans-Tasman mobility at the turn of the century. He suggests that New Zealanders should widen their focus and explore the Helles area where the British and French sustained huge losses. The Turkish graves and memorials are included and their significance to the Turkish understanding of nationalism is explained. Nor is the Turkish memorial on Wellington's coastline overlooked. Not all Gallipoli war casualties were buried at Gallipoli. Some lie on Lemnos Island, in Maltese graveyards and in Egyptian cemeteries. McGibbon gives the websites for those who wish to identify specific graves. If there is any irony, it is in the fact that today we can travel to Gallipoli with a firm idea of the topography and clear, easy-to-follow directions on how to get around, which was not the case for the ANZAC troops.

What can we make of the flood of books about Gallipoli? What difference does it make to our understanding of the history of this war and battlefield combat that in the New Zealand case Gallipoli is 'over-represented' and the Western Front is 'under-represented'. The risk is that in the commodification of the Gallipoli 'product' we subvert the past to mean what we want it to mean in the present. A quick glance through the populist publications suggests a demand for those narratives which seemingly offer up an unimpeded view of the subjectivity of the ANZAC soldiers. Perhaps historians need to think more critically about the staging of Gallipoli for audiences both past and present.

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No Better Death: The Great War Diaries and Letters of William G. Malone. Edited by John Crawford with Peter Cooke. Reed Books, Auckland, 2005. 375 pp. NZ price: \$49.99. ISBN 0-7900-1006-2.

THE FINAL YEAR OF LT. COL. WILLIAM GEORGE MALONE'S LIFE has aroused considerable attention amongst writers and historians over the past two decades. From August 1914 to August 1915, Malone, a farmer and high-profile public figure from the 'uttermost ends of the earth' — Stratford, Taranaki, no less — led the Wellington Infantry Battalion into battle against a Turkish army defending its homeland, which subsequently cost him his life. What has attracted people to that last year of Malone's life is its connection with Gallipoli, the mystery surrounding his death at Chunuk Bair,