

Gallipoli: A Family's History

At dawn on 25 April 1915, Allied troops landed on the Gallipoli peninsula in Ottoman Turkey. The Gallipoli campaign was the land-based element of a strategy intended to allow Allied ships to pass through the Dardanelles, capture Constantinople (now Istanbul) and ultimately knock Ottoman Turkey out of the First World War.

Allied success in the campaign could have weakened the Central Powers, allowed Britain and France to support Russia and helped to secure British strength in the Middle East. But success depended on Ottoman Turkish opposition quickly crumbling.

Gallipoli has become a defining moment in the history of both Australia and New Zealand, revealing characteristics that both countries have used to define their soldiers: endurance, determination, initiative and 'mateship'. For the Ottomans, it was a brief respite in the decline of their empire. But through the emergence of Mustafa Kemal (later known as Atatürk) as one of the campaign's leading figures, it also led to the foundation of modern Turkey.

This talk provides a fresh look at the history behind the conflict and using Australian records gives an account of one soldier's experiences. That soldier was the Great Uncle of the speaker at this talk.

The Speaker - David Roscoe

David Roscoe is President of the Athenaeum in Liverpool and Chairman of the Royal Albert Dock Liverpool and one time resident of Purley on Thames. A keen amateur historian David researched this talk as both a project to understand the origins WW1 and also a family history project. The talk has been given to many organisations since completing the research in 2011.