

BLOODY GALLIPOLI

THE NEW ZEALANDERS' STORY



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Daisy Patch

British staff, British methods and British bungling!

The general situation at Helles, at the southern tip of Gallipoli, was that Allied units including the 29th Division, 2nd Naval Brigade and the 1st French Division, had advanced north from their positions taken on 25 April, stalling at a line that came to be known as the Eski Line. This line extended straight across the peninsula from about a mile north of Point Eski Hissarlik on the southeast coast of the Dardanelles to a point halfway between Y Beach and Gully Beach at the mouth of Saghir Dere or Gully Ravine on the northwest coast of the Aegean.

The Turks attacked this line on the night of 1 May, and the Allies replied with a counter-attack the next morning, further advancing the line about another 450 yards – except for the French sector, on the very right against the Dardanelles, which failed to move forward. The kink that now existed in the front-line gave the Turks an opportunity to enfilade machine-gun fire into the British positions to the northwest, forcing them to fall back to the Eski Line.

Sir Ian Hamilton planned another attack to soak up the no-man's-land caught between the opposing lines because, as he mentioned in his later despatch dated 26 August, "several hundred yards, whatever it might mean to the enemy, was a matter of life and death to a force crowded together under gunfire on so narrow a tongue of land".

The 29th Indian Infantry Brigade, previously earmarked to complete the establishment of the New Zealand and Australian Division, landed at Helles on 1 May, followed by the Lancashire Fusilier Brigade on 5 May. Both brigades joined the 29th Division, which had suffered heavy casualties.

At Anzac, changes were being made in preparation for contributing a force to Helles. It seems the Anzac campaign was regarded by Hamilton's command as merely secondary to the British and French operations at Cape Helles. So when the major campaign ground to a hopeless halt on the shallow slopes of Achi Baba, the Anzacs were ordered to proceed to Cape Helles to take the village of Krithia, a stumbling block in the capture of Achi Baba. During daylight on 5 May the New Zealand Infantry Brigade was replaced by two battalions of the 2nd Naval Brigade, and assembled in Mule Gully, southwest of Walker's Ridge, for embarkation about 8.30pm. But a delay in the arrival of Royal Navy destroyers kept the force waiting on the beach. The destroyers eventually arrived later in the evening, whereupon the men crowded on to barges and lighters and were taken to the ships.

The New Zealand Infantry was already exhausted after ten days and nights of fighting. The rank and file and junior officers had no idea of their destination when they crowded onto barges in the darkness and were taken out to the waiting destroyers. Many thought they were being withdrawn to a neighbouring island for rest. The men fell asleep on the steel decks still hot from the day's sun. After an uneventful voyage sailors woke them on arrival off Cape Helles about 2 o'clock the following morning with "Coom up, choom. Gawd how y' snored!"

Before dawn on 6 May, the New Zealand Infantry Brigade, now with a strength of 88 officers and 2724 other ranks, landed on V Beach near the stranded SS *River Clyde*, immediately west of Sedd el Bahr village on the toe of the peninsula. After some reorganisation, the New Zealanders were issued picks and shovels intended for road building, and moved north at daybreak to their future bivouac at Stone Bridge, at the intersection of the Sedd el Bahr-Krithia road and the Kirte Dere (also known

as the Krithia Nullah), near a line of ancient ruined water towers.

Command had formed the New Zealand Infantry Brigade, the 2nd Australian Brigade and two battalions of the 2nd Naval Brigade into a composite division under the command of Major-General A Paris CB, who already commanded the Royal Naval Division.

On arrival at Stone Bridge, the New Zealanders dug shrapnel-proof trenches and rested until the afternoon of the following day. The night was cold and miserable; many

spent it walking about in an attempt to keep warm.

The tableland formed a plateau that sloped slightly to its centre, and was lined with cliffs along the sea. To the northeast of the plateau and centred between the coastlines lay the much sought after high ground of Achi Baba peak with Krithia village on its lower southwest slopes. Several deres or nullahs crossed the plateau in a northeast direction, parallel to the peninsula. Almost in the centre of the plateau ran Achi Baba Nullah (pointing to Achi Baba peak) or Maltepe Dere, with the Sedd el Bahr-Krithia road just to its west. Further towards the Aegean coast lay the larger Krithia Nullah (pointing to Krithia) or Kirte Dere. Nearer to the Aegean coastline lay Saghir Dere, a wide and deep nullah, better known as Gully Ravine. Midway between X and Y Beaches Gully Ravine tailed towards the sea, emerging at Gully Beach.

The Allies attacked in the morning on 6 May, with the 1st French Division again on the right and the 29th Division again on the left. Between them, the Plymouth and Drake Battalions of the Royal Naval Division attacked up each side of the Sedd el Bahr-Krithia road. The 29th Division attack was divided between the 29th (Indian) and 88th Brigades to the right between Krithia Nullah and Gully Ravine, and the 89th and Lancashire Fusilier Brigades to the left between Gully Ravine and the Aegean coast.

Inaccurate pre-attack naval bombardment of the deep and narrow Turkish trenches and gun positions meant the infantry attack came under heavy and accurate machine-gun and rifle fire as well as shrapnel and high explosive shells. They had little or no protection from the hail of bullets from the invisible enemy; every yard of the attack was marked by dead and wounded.

The Indians and 88th Brigade met strong resistance from Turks hidden in a large stand of fir trees near the Krithia Nullah, later known as Fir Tree Wood, about 300 yards beyond their starting line. To their left the rest of the line was checked by accurate Turkish machine-gun fire from a bluff above Y Beach, later known as Gurkha Bluff, and from riflemen and machine-guns placed along the rim of Gully Ravine.

After a day under a hot sun and with every movement fired at by the Turks, the attacking troops had come to a standstill by 4.30pm and were ordered to dig in. Only two to three hundred yards were gained beyond the Eski Line.

Throughout the day Turkish artillery, especially guns from the Asian side of the Dardanelles, lobbed long-range shrapnel rounds at British troop concentrations to the rear of the front-line. Unfortunately, the New Zealanders, although well to the rear, still took casualties: Private Carlton died of wounds he received during the day and several others were wounded, at least two mortally.

During 6 May the 3rd Reinforcement draft of the New Zealand Infantry Brigade,

numbering about 839 all ranks, arrived at Anzac and was immediately directed to Helles.

The New Zealand Infantry found conditions at Helles quite different from conditions at Anzac. The surrounding landscape was mostly flat with cultivated areas, olive groves and a few stands of stunted pines and fir trees. Wells were commonplace, unlike at Anzac where water was scarce. Their training in Egypt was more appropriate to the terrain at Helles than to the cliffs and sparse slopes of Anzac.

Helles had a cosmopolitan flavour. New Zealanders mixed with British, Frenchmen, Senegalese, Sikhs, and Australians.

On 7 May, the British attack of the previous day resumed at 10am, using the same attack plan and with the Turks again waiting, but little ground was gained. However, on the right, the 5th Royal Scots of the 88th Brigade managed to reach Fir Tree Wood, but were forced to retire early in the afternoon after encountering enfilading machine-gun and rifle fire. Beyond Gully Ravine the Lancashire Fusiliers made no further progress in the face of machine-gun fire from Gurkha Bluff.

The New Zealanders spent the morning at their bivouac listening to the battle, still unaware of any orders to move forward.

Sir Ian Hamilton wanted to try once again in the afternoon, and ordered an attack for 4.30pm. This time the New Zealanders were to be involved. Sir Ian Hamilton ordered the 87th Brigade, which up to now was held in reserve, to reinforce the 88th Brigade, with the New Zealanders in support. First a short and ineffectual softening-up by artillery, then a rush along the whole line, right across the peninsula, which included the French on the right. In the centre Fir Tree Wood was again taken and all along the line, except on the east of Gully Ravine, a further two to three hundred yards were gained and the first line of Turkish trenches overrun. The line was consolidated for the night and trenches dug. Orders were issued for a resumption of the attack the following morning.

But what had happened to the New Zealanders, the brigade in support? They left Stone Bridge at 2.45pm and, loaded down with extra ammunition, moved north towards the mouth of Gully Ravine. Near Pink Farm, just south of the ravine, they dug in. From this position they observed the attack at 4.30pm, as their help was not required. Later at 8.20pm the Auckland and Wellington Infantry Battalions moved forward again to support the 87th and 88th Brigades by occupying reserve trenches to the rear of the front-line. The Canterbury and Otago Infantry Battalions in the meantime stayed behind in their new position.

Finally, orders were received that the New Zealanders were to attack the next morning.

At about 1am, 8 May, the Wellington Infantry Battalion moved forward in the dark to occupy a reserve trench about 500 yards to the left rear of the front-line, towards Gully Ravine. The reserve trench was not large enough to take the whole unit, so the 17th Ruahine Company was sent back to the previous position.

Since the Otagos earlier took a beating on Dead Man's Ridge and were now under strength, they moved forward to a reserve position.

For the New Zealanders, the farcical order of the morning was to move forward at precisely 10.30am across the same ground taken in the 4.30pm attack of the previous day! In effect, they had to retake the several hundred yards of open ground between the two lines of trenches that was exposed to fire from Turkish positions. Why were they not ordered forward in the pre-dawn when there was a chance of minimal casualties?

The general order for the New Zealanders, which came through to Colonel Johnston at 8.30am, was to attack towards Krithia and the trenches covering it, in a repeat of the predictable battle plan of the previous days. This order was verbally

passed on to battalion commanders at 10.10am, giving 20 minutes for commanders to return to their units, brief company commanders, and for men to prepare themselves and get into position.

The Turks would have predicted this order. Just by observing the patterns of attack over the last few days, they would have known that another push was due some time during the morning. From their raised positions they would have been able to observe troop movements and build-ups.

The telltale pre-attack naval and artillery barrage was in full swing but very few of the explosions were occurring along Turkish lines. A serious shortage of artillery ammunition for the British on Gallipoli meant that softening-up barrages failed to destroy targets or cause havoc in the Turkish lines. In many cases the Turks did not even move from battle lines during barrages. Inadequate pre-battle barrages unfortunately gave full warning to the Turks of forthcoming engagements and lulled British commanders into thinking the task was made easier for the infantry.

The front-line perimeter to be covered by the New Zealanders was from Krithia Nullah on the right to the Gully Ravine on the left, a width of about 1200 yards. Inside this perimeter the Canterbury Infantry Battalion covered the right between Krithia Nullah and Fir Tree Wood, a distance of about 400 yards. Auckland Infantry Battalion covered the centre, including Fir Tree Wood, and Wellington Infantry Battalion covered the left to Gully Ravine, a total of about 800 yards. The Australians covered the perimeter to the New Zealanders' right, immediately over Krithia Nullah.

At 10.30am the whole line moved forward, only to come instantly under lethal machine-gun fire. Men dropped right down the line.

Canterbury attacked in two lines – 12th Nelson Company (right) and 2nd South Canterbury Company (left) in the front-line, and 1st Canterbury Company (right)

and 13th North Canterbury and Westland Company (left) in the reserve line. The advance trench-line was held by the 'Dubsters', an amalgamation of the depleted Royal Dublin Fusiliers and Royal Munster Fusiliers Battalions. Both units had suffered heavily in the SS *River Clyde* landing at V Beach. The attack made slow progress with survivors of two platoons of Nelson Company moving beyond the Dubsters' line by about 200 yards before halting in a small depression, unable to move forward or return. Much of the forward movement had been under cover in Krithia Nullah on their right flank. The Canterbury reserve line moved up to the rear of the original forward line and dug in.

During the attack Lieutenant Forsythe was killed, and Lieutenants Burnard¹ and Maurice² were wounded, both dying a couple of days later. Captain Gresson, later Sir Kenneth Gresson, President, New Zealand Court of Appeal, was also wounded.

In a letter home, Lieutenant Shepherd wrote: "Poor Eric [Burnard] got his commission on Friday, much to the delight of himself, and myself, and on Saturday he was killed, or rather died from his wounds. He was carried down to the beach by some men, including Wyville Rutherford,³ who told me about him. He was wounded in the back and stomach and died from the latter. He was very brave about it and was conscious right up to when Wyville left. He died before going on to the ship. I went down this morning and saw where he is buried. His name is on the cross."

Sergeant Mac Vincent⁴ later recalled, in *The Auckland Star* on 17 October 1964, his mental battle with a Turkish machine-gunner: "Our path was like a golf fairway. Someone, whom I didn't hear, must have told us to charge but not to any actual objective. 'It'll be your death, sarge,' said a Dubster, and his Irish blood getting the better of him, he scrambled out of the trench with me. I fell over him as he pitched forwards, dead or wounded. The air seemed to be vibrating. My rifle went flying. I ran back to pick it up. Passing under my armpit, a bullet had cut the swivel holding the sling. As I grabbed the rifle, a bullet plucked at my cap. I felt the zip of another as

it gashed the tip of my shoulder strap. Two thudded through tins of meat in each of my side pockets. I heard myself screaming, 'My bully beef!' The stream of machine-gun bullets moved to my left. I ran forward for about 15 yards and flung myself down. Sure enough, the gunner, tapping the gun handle, had swung the gun to my right. I made another dash and went down again. The bullets hosed the left. The gunner and I had quite a battle of wits before I got to the shelter of the [abandoned] Turkish trench."

Malone remarked in his diary: "I came through safely but had some four very narrow shaves. A shrapnel shell burst in front of me and several bullets rapped some timber close by my head on the right. I am somehow or other immune. I took Colonel Moore, Otago, along to show him the best way for two of his companies to advance. A bullet passed between our heads and went through the right lobe of his ear. I must be more careful though, as the loss of officers is getting very serious."

The Aucklanders moved up a winding creek bed just deep enough to give cover. At the end of this they still had to dash across 200 yards of open ground to reach the forward line. They did this in platoon rushes during which Lieutenant Steadman and several men were killed. By the time they reached the forward British trench, men from the four Auckland companies were all intermingled. Very few knew of the general order to move on to Achi Baba. Immediately to their front the ground sloped away slightly towards a field of beautiful wild flowers, named the Daisy Patch (now a generic name for all ground gained by New Zealanders and Australians at Helles on 8 May). This field extended to the left and right into the Canterbury and Wellington sectors. Beyond, the ground gradually rose to a scrub-covered crest-line in the middle distance, backed by Achi Baba. To their right was Fir Tree Wood. A senior Auckland officer came along. "Well, boys, the orders are to go ahead, and we have got to carry them out." The British regulars who dug the forward trench-line the previous evening exclaimed, "What! You're going to cross the Daisy Patch – God help you!" But their comments would not have been heard by the British command now far to the rear.

On a signal the first wave of Aucklanders rose over the parapet and ran down the slope. Instantly, Turkish machine-gun and rifle fire from the stunted pines to the right cut into the ranks, and artillery to the rear of Achi Baba estimated the range perfectly and dropped shrapnel on them. Most men went down, with only a few making it to the small knoll on the far side. Then the second wave jumped the parapet, and every man was cut down by the deadly fire. The third wave suffered a similar fate. The men who were not hit pinned themselves to the ground. They tried dashing a few yards then throwing themselves down again, crawling a few feet at a time using prone bodies as cover from the hail of bullets. Many wounded men were re-hit and suffered multiple wounds.

The men who did make it to the far side managed to clear the low scrub of Turks and take some pressure off the men exposed in the open. The Daisy Patch had become a killing field. The cries and yells of the wounded could be heard above the noise of the gunfire.

The Auckland Infantry Battalion officers bravely led the charge across the Daisy Patch from the front, but nearly all were shot down.

Officers killed here were Lieutenants Carpenter, Morgan, Reid and Screaton. Lieutenant Morgan was one of those who managed to get back to the trenches safely, but, on peering out, saw some wounded still under fire in the Daisy Patch. At his own risk he went out and brought one man in who had been shot in the thigh, and then started out again for an Auckland officer, whom he had passed when bringing the wounded man in. Unfortunately a sniper stopped him with a bullet through the head.

Officers wounded were Major Dawson, Captain McDonald, and Lieutenants Macfarlane¹ and West² who both led the first wave, and Lieutenants Fletcher, Weir³ and Westmacott⁴ (promoted on the day).

Captain Craig,⁵ Medical Officer of the Auckland Infantry Battalion, did excellent work in the safety of the forward trench, but next to nothing could be done for the men lying out under the sun in the Daisy Patch. Captain Craig, with the help of Private Stacey,⁶ very bravely crawled forward tending to the men as best as they could.

Many brave men tried to rescue wounded comrades: Private Heald was killed in an attempt to bring in Lieutenant Macfarlane; Corporal Cowan⁷ rescued Lance-Corporal Campbell;⁸ Sergeant-Major Leech⁹ with Private Savory¹⁰ rescued a few; Private Dalziel¹¹ with Private Donaldson¹² and Captain Craig brought in another, but Dalziel was wounded and Craig was hit in the thigh. Stacey helped to get Craig into the trench.

Majors Harrowell¹³ and Sinel and Captain Bartlett, with about 200 Aucklanders now in the advanced position beyond the Daisy Patch, managed to organise firing lines. The enfilading fire from the pines had now slackened because the Canterbury Infantry Battalion had outflanked the Turks on the far side of Fir Tree Wood and forced them to fall back. The attack continued to within 400 yards of the crest-line and the Turkish trench before the men halted from exhaustion and disorganisation.

During the early afternoon the 4th Otago and 8th Southland Companies of the Otago Infantry Battalion moved forward to support the Aucklanders.

To the left of the New Zealand perimeter lay the Wellington Infantry Battalion with the 7th Wellington West Coast Company on the right, the 9th Hawke's Bay Company in the middle and the 11th Taranaki Company to the left. The three companies spanned about 600 yards with the 7th Company in contact with the Aucklanders' left. Battalion Headquarters was established in a stone hut at the junction of the presently occupied reserve trench and Gully Ravine.

At 10.30am the three companies moved forward, allowing five paces between each

man in line and 50 paces between successive lines. As with the other New Zealand sectors, they soon came under intensive long-range machine-gun fire and shrapnel which caused some casualties. But the men kept moving forward holding their lines.

The battalion soon reached the advance trench-line and continued on through it. The left sector 11th Taranaki Company now received a vicious machine-gun crossfire from high ground situated on the far side of Gully Ravine. To avoid casualties the men of this company lay down, and their advance was brought to a standstill. This caused the left of the centre sector 9th Hawke's Bay Company to falter and bend, and eventually come to a halt as well. The right sector 7th Wellington West Coast Company made good progress until the front platoons struck the slightly sloping Daisy Patch adjacent to the Aucklanders and started taking casualties. Two sections of the leading platoon under Sergeant-Major Woodhead¹ managed to reach a knoll amongst stunted fir trees on the far side, about 400 yards beyond the advance trench-line, and decided to dig in.

The company commander, Major Cunningham, directed Lieutenants Menteath and McKinnon² to get as many men as possible across the Daisy Patch to join Woodhead. Then Cunningham led by example and started digging in. Helping Cunningham dig was Sergeant Rule,³ who received a bullet wound to the head and later died in Egypt. Menteath was badly wounded while crossing the Daisy Patch. With the help of one of his men, he started to crawl back to safety, but he was struck by a second bullet which killed him. A little later McKinnon was knocked unconscious with a severe bullet wound to the head.

Most of the casualties amongst the Wellingtons were confined to two leading platoons of the 7th Wellington West Coast Company. The Wellington's Captain Frandi was killed and Lieutenant Gray⁴ wounded. He died the next day.

The Wellington and Canterbury Infantry Battalions suffered significantly fewer casualties than the Auckland Infantry Battalion because stunted fir or pine trees provided them extra cover from machine-gun fire coming from the direction of Achi Baba.

All fighting and forward movement in the New Zealand perimeter ceased by about 1.30pm. In all three New Zealand battalions, men pinned down in exposed positions decided to lie still and wait for darkness before moving.

Progress was no better for the Australians to the right of Krithia Nullah, as they too took heavy casualties.

Had the day's attack been at a more unpredictable time than mid-morning, such as a night attack across flat ground, or had the artillery softening-up been more effective or not attempted at all, objectives might have been taken with far less loss of life. The furthest points reached during the day may have been taken without casualties by the men walking out under the cover of darkness the previous night and digging in. Had the attack started from the advance position during the night, the outcome may have been vastly different, as New Zealand and Australian forces had trained in night operations while in Egypt.

The Turks must be credited with anticipation of the attack and for their constant machine-gun and rifle fire from well-camouflaged positions. Due to the invisible Turkish positions the New Zealanders could not employ supporting machine-gun fire.

It almost seems that British commanding officers on Gallipoli took pleasure in attacking during the reassuring and familiar daylight hours. So ordinary was the British battle plan, that the Turks had predicted it days before. As in France, high body counts seemed acceptable and necessary. Anything outside the ordinary was unthinkable, and against the rules of gentlemanly warfare!

Criticism should be levelled at Sir Ian Hamilton and General Hunter-Weston and

their staff for discounting a night attack and for a total lack of reconnaissance and innovative planning.

But Sir Ian Hamilton and Hunter-Weston were not finished for the day; they wanted one more attack, one more rout. Orders were passed forward at 4.30pm for a full frontal attack with fixed bayonets starting at 5.30pm. Initially, for some reason known only by Sir Ian Hamilton and Hunter-Weston, only the New Zealanders were to advance. It is difficult to understand what was to be achieved other than more casualties. The troops in the forward positions knew nothing could be gained until the enemy machine-guns were silenced.

In the Wellington sector the 17th Ruahine Company, which had been in reserve all day, was immediately ordered forward to reinforce the 7th Wellington West Coast Company.

When the first orders to advance were passed to the battalion commanders, Lieutenant-Colonel Malone protested strongly to Colonel Johnston. Malone pointed out that different sectors of the New Zealand front were scattered and that a frontal push would further isolate the sectors. Sir Ian Hamilton's answer was to extend the order to include all units along the whole front from coast to coast. This new order was rushed forward before 5pm.

The rest of the Otago Infantry Battalion, 10th North Otago and 14th South Otago Companies, came forward from the reserve trenches to assist the Aucklanders in the attack.

In addition, many of the newly arrived 3rd Reinforcement draft of the New Zealand Infantry Brigade, under command of Captain Colquhoun,¹ took part. They had arrived at Helles during the early morning and joined their respective units during the day's fighting. The remainder joined in the late afternoon for the evening attack.

The 2nd Australian Brigade, which had suffered much the same fate as the New Zealanders earlier in the day, received orders at 4.55pm to join the advance.

Again the Turkish positions received a naval and artillery bombardment. Although the bombardment looked effective with lots of explosions all along the crest-line and on the lower slopes of Achi Baba, when the attack began at 5.30pm the Turkish machine-guns were just as furious as they were during the earlier attack. Soon there were more New Zealand casualties all along the line.

The front moved forward a few hundred yards in some places but gained no ground in others. Because pockets of troops were in isolated positions along the front-line, not all the men received the order to advance. So when the advance came, some sections of the line moved forward 100 yards or more while others stayed where they were. The advanced sections could achieve nothing so they fell back after darkness.

Among the Aucklanders, Major Sinel, Sergeant Gasparich,¹ Privates McCready,² Frank McKenzie,³ John MacKenzie,⁴ Melville,⁵ Tilsley,⁶ Tribe⁷ and some 30 others made it to just below the crest-line and the Turkish front trench. Because of their isolation they dug in and stayed low until darkness before falling back, to the protests of Sinel who finally agreed to fall back.

The Auckland Infantry war diary entry for the action is subdued: "Orders received that there would be a general advance at 5.30pm. Bayonets were fixed and punctually at 5.30pm the battalion was ordered to charge. Lieutenant-Colonel Plugge leading the battalion, which was exposed to heavy machine-gun and rifle fire and casualties were consequently heavy. ... The battalion was unable to hold the ground gained and had to return to the trenches."

Auckland officers wounded during the evening rush were Major Harrowell and Captain Bartlett. During the day, only two Auckland officers escaped becoming casualties. For the Otagos, Lieutenant Duthie⁸ was severely wounded, and died a few days later.

A section of Wellington's 17th Ruahine Company managed to get well forward up a branch of the Krithia Nullah under the command of Captain Short.⁹ However, finding themselves completely isolated and fearing being cut off, they retired after darkness.

With over 400 casualties the Auckland Infantry Battalion was in tatters. They now had only 268 fit men. Under command of Major Sinel they fell back well to the rear where Major Young was placed in command of the Battalion. The front-line vacuum left by the Auckland Infantry Battalion was conveniently filled by the Otago Infantry Battalion. Fortunately for the Aucklanders, their share of the 3rd Reinforcements increased their number to 468, but that was still only about half their original strength.

The whole brigade suffered over 835 casualties on the day, with 170 killed. More were to die later from their wounds.

Lieutenant-Colonel Malone was vehement about the day's events. In a letter to Major Hart dated 20 June he declared: "By a night advance I am quite satisfied we could have gained the same ground if not more, with probably no loss at all! Such is the scheme of war as preached by people who are supposed to know better. 'C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre.' That is my criticism of this war in these parts. I am quite satisfied that the New Zealand officer has absolutely nothing to learn

from the imported man and that active service has taught the latter nothing." The imported man Malone refers to is probably either Godley or Johnston.

During the night at Helles it was obvious there were serious weaknesses in the New Zealand lines, the result of severe casualties, inevitable disorganisation and chaos due to the darkness hampering readjustment.

The main objective for the New Zealanders during the night was the collection of all their wounded and dead. Most of the dead were buried in the field by burial parties, later to be remembered on the Twelve Tree Copse Memorial at Helles. Many wounded spent the night where they had fallen. The night was wet and, as most of the men had ditched their packs before the advance, nobody in the trenches had greatcoats.

The morning of 9 May dawned fine over Gallipoli. The day at Helles was spent improving the trenches and positioning snipers to put pressure back on the Turks. Throughout the day food and water were scarce, but the men dug shallow wells in or near their trenches as the water table was near the surface, and rations came up the following night.

Although no attack came from the Turks, New Zealand still had six men killed at Helles on 9 May. Over the next few days, many of the wounded from the Daisy Patch battle died either at Helles, or at sea.

Monday, 10 May, was another day spent in the forward trenches at Helles, and still no Turkish attack came. Sergeant Mac Vincent of the Canterburys later recalled taking a party of recently arrived 3rd Reinforcement men back into open ground under darkness to bury dead: "I was told to take a party of them out to bury dead in the open behind our [forward] trenches. A horrible job for jittery men for the first time under fire. Bullets, breaking the sound barrier, cracked as they passed. As the common grave was being dug, I pulled off equipment from the bodies and groped for identity discs. When it came for burial, the newcomers shrank from handling the bodies. It was no use pulling my lowly rank. I got my arms round a body and began to haul. Shamed, the others joined in. They had grabbed their shovels again when I said, 'Their mothers might like to know they had a bit of a prayer.' All stiffened to attention, I ran through the Lord's Prayer. All I could remember of the burial service was 'Dust to dust, ashes to ashes.' Already marsh water had soaked over the bodies. The wet clay splashed as it was frantically shovelled in."

The New Zealand Infantry spent 11 May, a wet day, stuck in the forward trenches where sniping was almost the only activity. Only one man, Company Quartermaster-Sergeant York, was killed on the day.

The New Zealand Infantry Brigade was relieved of its positions during the night of 11-12 May by the 127th Manchester Brigade of the 42nd Division. The relief was a slow process. As each company was relieved it made its own way back to Stone Bridge, the original bivouac on Helles. The night was very wet and dark, and each company had trouble locating Stone Bridge. After four days at the front and having to carry packs and wet greatcoats, the men were exhausted on arrival.

The New Zealand Infantry Brigade was now officially in reserve and was not called upon to do any more fighting at Helles.

The New Zealanders spent 12 May catching up on camp and personal activities, reorganisation, swimming at nearby beaches and refitting. It was the first of three such days. The surroundings of the bivouac were pleasant with numerous shady olive trees and carpets of wild flowers. No New Zealanders were killed on the day, but men were still being wounded, mostly by the big guns from the Asiatic coast beyond the Dardanelles.

The New Zealanders at last had a chance to 'lick their wounds' and slowly piece together the events of the previous four days. Bitterness was festering amongst the

men over the ability of their commanders, especially the Imperial officers. They believed the British officers were fighting a 'map' war, not taking into account the unique conditions and terrain of Gallipoli, and grossly underestimating the ability of the enemy; whereas the Turks were fighting a sophisticated war with modern weapons and the expertise of German officers. The British officers were unbending – an order was an order, even after repeated failures. It was always thrown in the Anzacs' faces that the 'regular' British soldier would have succeeded under the same circumstances.

The men, too, were mourning their lost comrades, confiding in their secret diaries since families were so far away on the other side of the world. It was probably the furthest distance soldiers had travelled to fight in the First World War. Men were suddenly faced with the reality of modern combat – this was not to be another Anglo-Boer War. They realised they wouldn't be going home soon, but there would be other attacks, other routs, and even death. But at least for the present they could relax in a little comfort in this horrible war.

While still resting on 13 May, Private James Carr was killed by enemy artillery fire.

From 15 May the New Zealanders at Helles were employed in road and track making, landing supplies on W Beach at the tip of the peninsula, and other fatigues. Their nights were often disturbed by Turkish shells, which killed Corporal Bradley on 17 May.

The New Zealand Infantry Brigade would sit it out for a few more days at Helles before being recalled to Anzac.

While the New Zealand Infantry was away from Anzac, the defence of the New Zealand sector at Anzac fell to the 2nd Naval Brigade and eight machine-guns under command of Captain Wallingford. General Godley was concerned about the number of men being shot by Turkish snipers, so during 5 May he ordered a search for available men on the transports anchored off Anzac which resulted in 180 men coming ashore in the evening under Lieutenant Hardie.¹ All were placed under the command of Captain Wallingford so that he could establish a specialist sniper force.

Wallingford paraded and interviewed the men and after an hour had selected 50 best shots. The remainder would still remain with the new unit, some to be used as observers. Out of the 50 best shots, 25 were selected as marksmen. These were men who were at home with firearms, having handled firearms as civilians in New Zealand, as rabbit shooters, deerstalkers or marksmen in musketry schools.

Wallingford divided his new sniper force into two watches and placed them strategically throughout the Anzac sector. Headquarters were able to tell him where casualties occurred most frequently, and Wallingford soon determined where the Turkish snipers were operating from and placed his teams accordingly. His theory was that rather than snipe at Turkish soldiers, it was better to shoot the Turkish crack snipers, taking pressure off Anzac troops going about their everyday tasks.

Many of the New Zealand snipers adapted quickly to their new task, and some were quite outstanding.

Wallingford considered newly promoted Sergeant Fish to be one of the best. He later wrote: "I cannot pass over this period without saying something about Sergeant Fish of the Auckland Regiment. He was a private on landing among the 180 but I had known him on the boat coming out as somewhat of a socialist but a good fellow. He was made Sergeant of the snipers and personal scout to myself. We had many a good bit of sport together when I found him an excellent spotter and a first rate shot himself." Fish, with the lower rank of private, later died of wounds in France on 1 February 1918.