

# REVENGE OF THE AUSTRALIANS ON TURKS

An Eye-Witness Tells the Story of a Gallant Fight for the Heights in the Dardanelles.

Dardanelles—General Liman von Sanders (the German leader of the Turks in Gallipoli) has just made another effort to carry out his threat to drive the British army into the sea with the sole result that his unfortunate dupes the Turks have received another "niding" from the Australians and New Zealanders. Their losses have been enormous, amounting at the very least to 7,000 or 8,000 killed and wounded. The cost of this most encouraging success has been trifling, amounting to some 500 colonialists killed and wounded, while the moral effect on our splendid comrades, who were becoming rather bored with sitting tight day after day in the narrow trenches, must be equivalent to the addition of nearly an army corps to their ranks.

I have already described the position in previous despatches. It is, indeed, one of the most remarkable positions ever seized and occupied by an army on a hostile coast, and the more you see of it the most extraordinary does it seem that the colonialists were ever able to climb it and afterwards hold it on that historic Sunday, April 25. It is certainly the most remarkable climb in the history of war since Wolfe stormed the heights of Quebec.

The ground occupied by the colonial corps consists roughly of two semi-circles of hills, the outer higher than the inner, and rising in places to over 600 feet. A great valley known as Shrapnel Valley runs north east up the centre of the position, roughly dividing it into a northern and southern sector, both of which are rough and broken ground consisting of lesser hills and deep gullies covered with thick shrub or earth of the color of sandstone. Every camp, hill, and gully now has a distinctive Australian or colonial name.

**Dead Man's Ridge**  
The position facing north is known as Walker's Ridge, and following the

perimeter of defence right round until it again strikes the coast to the south you are introduced in turn to Pope's Hill, Dead Man's Ridge, the Bloody Angle, Quinn's Post, Courtney's Post, McLaurin Hill, Scott's Point, Johnstone's Gully, Bolton's Hill and Point Rosenthal. Each of these names recalls some incident of the campaign or some memory of peaceful times in "down under." Within this position are many under topical designations such as Pluger's Plateau, MacLagan's Ridge, Queensland Point, Hell Spit (where the landing was very bad), Brighton Beach, Shell Green, Sappers' Post, MacCoy Hill, the Razor Back, and Monash Gully, to mention just a few.

The enemy is entrenched almost right round the position except where the ship's guns keep him off the coast. Generally speaking, to the north and northeast his trenches are on higher ground, while to the south and southeast they lie lower than ours. The distance between the two front lines varies from about a quarter of a mile to 20 yards at one point, and the average is about 200. Between Walker's Ridge and Pope's Hill the enemy is strongly entrenched. He can look right down the valley and snipe all those going up it at long range, while his guns never weary of pouring an incessant hail of shrapnel.

**Like A Mining Camp**  
But if the actual area of ground held by the Australians and New Zealanders remains the same, the general aspect has changed, and instead of resembling the temporary home of a vast number of shipwrecked mariners, the cliffs have the appearance of being a prosperous mining camp in full swing.

Good roads have been made from the foreshore up to the front lines, and in those where you are exposed to shrapnel or sniping they have been banked to give some protection. For

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although the Turks have for some time made no attacks except the one I shall describe, they have never ceased to shell the whole position not only with shrapnel but also with high-explosive shells of large caliber against which the "strongest of bomb proofs are liable to fail if there is a direct hit.

The front trenches are now very different from what they were when I last visited them. Every precaution has, in fact, been taken to render the position impregnable. Every section is self-contained and unlimited supplies of ammunition are ready at hand.

**The Australian Menace**  
The presence of the Australians and New Zealanders north of Cape Tepe (northwestern coast of Gallipoli) is a thorn in the side of the Turks which handicaps all their operations against our forces in the south of Gallipoli, for whenever he attempts an offensive movement in the south or is called upon to resist an attack in force, von Sanders is obliged to leave a very high proportion of his forces facing the colonialists, who, unless they are held in strength, might cut right across his lines of communication.

Therefore, as a preliminary measure, before attempting a further offensive against our forces at the southern end of Gallipoli von Sanders seems to have made up his mind on a final effort against this position.  
For this movement the Germans seem to have brought up from Constantinople at least five fresh regiments, including a corps d'elite of picked gendarmes, who wear a light blue uniform of much the same color as the new French cloth. Von Sanders himself directed the operations which have just ended so disastrously for his prestige. On May 18 various movements of troops were reported

by aeroplane reconnaissance by the ships observing at various points along the coast. Not only were the enemy seen to be disembarking men from steamers in the straits, but a general movement was also reported from north and east of Kritika (South west Gallipoli) towards the west.

Further evidence that some new move was indicated was the heavy bombardment opened on the position throughout the 18th, not only from field guns but also from 12-in and 9-in howitzers. Therefore a warning was sent to the trenches at 10 o'clock on the evening of the 18th for every wood to be on the qui vive. At midnight a heavy rifle and machine-gun fire broke out from the enemy's positions at the head of the Monash Gully and from Hill 700, which was chiefly directed on Quinn's post. This fire was the hottest the Australians have yet known, but the men lay low in their trenches and suffered, but few casualties.

Under cover of this fire a line of snipers crept forward from the Turkish trenches close up to our front line and attempted to snipe the defenders when they replied to this fusillade. More Turks then crept forward until a thick line was established within very close range. These groups offered a splendid target to the colonialists when they surged forward to the assault shortly after 3 a.m.

**Turk's Heavy Losses**  
This attack from the top of Monash Gully was repulsed with heavy loss by 4 a.m. A series of attacks against various points was now delivered, being directed with special severity against Quinn's and Courtney's Posts, but these faded away beneath our rifle fire delivered at close range, piles of dead being left in front of the trenches. At 5 a.m. on the 19th, as soon as it was light, the Turks opened up a very heavy bombardment of our trenches, the beach, bringing into action 12-in, 9 2-in. howitzers and field guns.

From 6 a.m. until 7.30 a.m. the Turks made a series of desperate attacks against Quinn's and Courtney's posts, but the colonial line never yielded and not a Turk ever set foot inside the trenches, although hundreds lie dead within a few yards, some even on the edge of the parapet.

By 10 a.m. the enemy began to give way and to retire under a deadly fire from our field guns and howitzers, which inflicted terrible losses, and the enemy retired to his trenches, unable to face the rifle and machine-gun fire any longer. Throughout the morning the Turks kept up their incessant bombardment and heavy rifle fire, but it was obvious at 11 a.m. that the impetus of the attack had failed.

There was never a more utter or expensive fiasco than this attack. It was supported by a very heavy artillery fire, and according to the reports of prisoners at least 30,000 men were massed against our positions. The Turks attacked bravely enough and there are signs that they were advancing more under compulsion than with any confidence of success. Our official estimate puts the Turkish losses at 7,000 killed and wounded, but judging from the enormous numbers of dead lying in front of the trenches unburied this is probably an underestimate, and probably at least one-third of the whole army was wiped out.

**Armistice Refused**  
The ground presents an extraordinary sight when viewed through the trench periscopes. Two hundred yards away, and ever closes in places are the Turkish trenches, and between them and our lines the dead line in hundreds. There are groups of 20 or 30 massed together as if for mutual protection, some lying on their faces, some killed in the act of firing, others hung up in barbed wire.

Hundreds of others lie just outside their own trenches, where they were caught by rifles and shrapnel when trying to regain them. Hundreds of wounded must have perished between the lines, for it was only on the 21st that the enemy made overtures for an armistice for burying the dead, but up to the present this has not been granted owing to the suspicious number of troops in his front trenches.

In places the Turks made four or five separate efforts to charge home using hand grenades, but they all failed miserably. The effect of this success, achieved at such small cost, on the Australians and New Zealanders has been very great. Hitherto they have been fighting under most dif-

ficult conditions against great odds, and their losses have been heavy both in the early days among the two brigades which took part in the recent attack against Grithia and Achi Baba.

**Eight Acres of Dead**  
They have seen many of their comrades fall without obtaining the results for which they hoped, and they have felt they have had many old scores to wipe out on the enemy ever since. Their revenge has exceeded their utmost expectations, for without having to expose themselves they have wiped out thousands of the enemy. After the attack General Birdwood took me all round the front lines and it at once became evident that the troops were more contented with themselves and life generally than they have been for a long time past. The men were resting after their exertions of the last few days, lying in their bomb-proofs consuming large quantities of tinned meat, biscuits, jam (of which they are extremely fond), and tea.

In reply to a question of the general, "How many did you kill?" the answer came, "That I cannot say general, but look out here. There are eight acres of them lying round." Another happy warrior remarked, "You put 'em up for us, general, and we'll shoot all you want." There are many signs that the moral effect of this repulse on the Turks has been very great. They are continually asking for armistices and are busily digging themselves in as if it were their intention to remain strictly on the defensive.

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