

TEACHERS' NOTES

Last Man Out

A personal account of
the Gallipoli Evacuation

LOUISE PARK



Blurb

The evacuation from Gallipoli of Australian and New Zealand troops was a logistically incredible undertaking. The exhausted young men were to slip away by ship in the dead of night. But someone needed to remain behind to cover for their fellow soldiers.

This was a mission that almost certainly meant death. Would it be you?

Would you volunteer to be the last man out?

From the Author

I have wanted to write this book for a long time, but until now have shied away from it. Could I do a fact-based tale of this magnitude justice? Could I convey what those men felt as they chose to put themselves on the line for tens of thousands of others, and what it took to do so? And what would my grandfather think of *my* efforts? My grandfather died long before I was born, yet this just compounded the need I felt to not let him down. As it was, he sat on my shoulder as I wrote, visited me in my dreams during the entire process, and permeated every sentence I scrawled, edited and rewrote.

So much has been written about Gallipoli, yet not a lot of attention has been focused on the evacuation, with barely any mention about the 2,000-strong rear guard of honour. These truly extraordinary men were asked to stay behind and hold the front lines while the generals – and many other senior officers – were long gone on boats or watching safely from ships sitting off the cove. This book finally shines a light on these 2,000 men. Many say too much had been asked of them. A moot point, perhaps, because it is blatantly clear that most would have taken on this job regardless of their ‘orders’.

Stories are a way to share information and make emotional connections with events and the people in them. Humans need stories. They help us understand each other and deepen our understanding of – and empathy for – other people’s experiences.

I wrote this story for the 2,000 men of the rear guard of honour and for everyone who doubts themselves. These men exemplify values and qualities we admire. Hearing their story can prompt us to consider our own moral standards, resilience, and actions in the face adversity. *Last Man Out* is for anyone who questions who they are – or might be – when push comes to shove.

My aim is to share this group of incredibly altruistic men with a generation of readers who most probably have not heard their story before. I hope the *Last Man Out* resonates with your students and they gain much from reading it.

Specifications

Author:	Louise Pak
ISBN:	9781742036427
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Extent:	80pp self-ended
Binding:	Paperback
Reading Level:	10–10 years
Interest Level:	10–10 years
Category:	Juvenile Non-fiction

National Curriculum

ENGLISH – YEAR 6

- ACELA15126 • ACELA1517 • ACELA1518
- ACEAL1522 • ACELA1526 • ACELT1613
- ACELT1615 • ACELT1617 • ACELT1800 • ACELY1709
- ACELY1710

ENGLISH – YEAR 7

- ACELA1529 • ACELA1531 • ACEAL1764 • ACELT1619
- ACELT1620 • ACELT1621 • ACELY1723
- ACPPS033 • ACPPS034 • ACPPS036
- ACPPS037 • ACPPS052 • ACPPS053
- ACPPS056 • ACPPS038

ENGLISH – YEAR 8

- ACELA1543 • ACELA1545 • ACELT1626
- ACELT1627 • ACELT1628 • ACELT1807
- ACELT1629 • ACELT1632 • ACELY1731
- ACELY1732 • ACELY1734
- ACELY1736 • ACELY1810

Themes

- **WAR** • WORLD WAR 1
- *GALLIPOLI* • COURAGE
- RESPECT • RESILIENCE
- IDENTITY • HISTORY
- GRIEF/LOSS • SACRIFICE
- LOYALTY



Before Reading

Title and Cover

As a class discuss the title and cover.

- Why might the soldier be facing away from the reader?
- Why might the front cover feature a map of Gallipoli, while the back has an image of the bay?

Read the blurb

Would it be you? Would you volunteer to be the last man out?

Discuss the blurb.

- Do you think you'd volunteer?
- Given the men are soldiers in an army where orders must be obeyed, is volunteer the right word? What word might you choose?

Dedication

Read and discuss the book's dedication:

For those who in the face of adversity discover that there exists an opportunity to help others and do so.

- Who might the author be referring to?
- Compare the different times of adversity soldiers at Gallipoli faced.
- What types of adversity today might the author be referring to?

KWL

As a class, discuss what students already know about the Gallipoli campaign. Lead them to discuss what they know of the withdrawal.

Create a KWL worksheet and ask students to fill in the columns using the following questions as guidelines.

K – What I know about Gallipoli and the withdrawal.

W – What I want to know about Gallipoli and the withdrawal.

After reading, return to the KWL Sheet to complete L – What I have learnt.

While Reading

Contents

Examine the Contents page.

- Discuss the timeframe
- What clues do they give about the story.

John Alexander Park

- Examine the photo of Park.
- What might the image show about him?

Discuss Park's quote:

"No doubt our mates on the transport cannot sleep at the moment because they all believe the rear guard is doomed."

- What clues does the quote offer about Gallipoli soldiers?
- Discuss the choice of the word 'doomed'

1915 Gallipoli

- How does the first chapter prepare you for the story?
- What does it show you about conditions, morale, and the relationship between the two sides?

The Turks

- Discuss the following text on page 6:
"...it is getting harder and harder to think of them as our enemy. We've helped each other bury the dead, traded cigarettes and bully beef, and shared a laugh, some notes, and a handshake."
- Does this description surprise you?
- How would they feeling towards the Turks affect the soldiers when it came to battle?

September 12 – Sickness, a constant companion

Examine the photo on page 8.

- What does it show you about conditions at Gallipoli?
- How does that compare to your understanding of conditions?

This chapter begins with a dream.

- What does the dream show about Park's life?
- Why might the author have chosen to include 'Ring o' Rosies'?



October 2 – A prickly affair in No Man’s Land

What do you know of No Man’s Land?

- Discuss the story shared by Park, and the two incidents of humour. “One prisoner going cheap.” “To Let. Nice dugout with valley views.”
- Discuss what you know about ‘trench humour’
- Why might the soldiers find humour in things that you may not find funny?

October 6 – Rest Gully Hospital

Examine the images on pages 13, 14 and 17.

- What medical issues might the soldiers have faced?

Mini Research project.

- In pairs, have students research one aspect of the care of injured and ill soldiers during the Gallipoli campaign. Pairs present their findings to the class.
- Topics may include: field hospitals, hospital ships, illness, disease, conditions in the trenches, the role of medics and orderlies.
- The following website contains useful information;
<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/project-result-content/39f7d30e-9ca2-48ef-a351-02131a267f33/F%209%20Medical%20care%20during%20WW1%20in%20Lemnos.pdf>

October 10 – Moments of home

When mail and packages arrive from home, Park and the other soldiers are quick to share news and gifts. Given the conditions, discuss why they may do this?

- Re read pages 20 – 21. What details does this provide about Park’s life?
- Authors choose images and describe imagery with care to provide information about characters. List the details the author has included to paint a picture of Park’s home and family. What image had the biggest emotional impact on you?
- What further information does this passage give you about Park?

October 29 – C2 mine under the enemy trenches

Discuss the courage shown by Park and Rankin in rescuing the soldiers.

- Park says ‘my lungs are cactus’. What might that mean?

November 5 – A visit from the Royal Engineers and a bit of mischief-making

At the start of this chapter, the men are discussing food. Why might they be doing so in such great detail?

- Read the opening of Mid November (page 28)
What does this suggest about food at Gallipoli?
- Research the food eaten at Gallipoli.

Mid-November – A visit from Lord Kitchener

Under the chapter name is the following text: ‘41,218 men, 2,363 animals at Galipoli.’

- What might those numbers indicate?
- Why aren’t the numbers included in previous chapter headings?
- What might the inclusion of the numbers mean?

Reread the line ‘I see the way he is weighing his thoughts, and my gut twists. He thinks we are beaten.’ (page 29)

- How might that realisation affect the Park?
Provide reasons for your answers.

November 27 – The Great Blizzard/November 30 – A guest artist on fashions of the season

Revisit the images throughout the book of the trenches.

- Discuss the impact weather might have on living and fighting conditions.
- Which season do you think would be the toughest? Why?
- Research the types of weather experienced at Gallipoli and how the soldiers were able to protect themselves.



There is not a single one among us that would walk away.

Page 32

- Discuss this statement.
- As someone who has never been involved in a war, you might expect that the men would be desperate to leave. Give reasons why you believe the men might have found it hard to leave.

December 11 – Evacuation plans & December 13 – Shrapnel Gully Cemetery

After reading this chapter return to the previous discussion. What clues does this chapter give about the reasons why men might feel reluctant to leave?

The chapter opens with the line

‘...the shock of evacuation rips through...’

- Discuss the opening line. Why would evacuation affect the soldiers in this way?

Park says ‘The rivalry begins’ page 36

- Why might soldiers want to be part of the rear guard, when it’s seen as a suicide mission?
- Why, when Park has family at home, would he be keen to be part of the rear guard?
- He mentions his damaged lungs. Discuss how that might influence his decision.

9am, December 18 – Courtney’s post – cold and cloudy with a high chance of enemy attack

Discuss the men’s ingenuity of creating a diversion using water, candles, sand and string.

Necessity is the mother of invention.

- Discuss the proverb in light of the soldier’s inventiveness.
- How great a part does the will to live play in the soldier’s ingenuity?

11pm, December 18 – Of muffled boots and more goodbyes

Now that the time has come for the men to withdraw, an overwhelming urge to go with them hits me like a dose of Gallipoli gallop.

Page 42

Up until now, Park has been adamant he wanted to stay. Why might the urge to leave have hit him so hard at this time?

Given that Park is feeling anxious about staying, why do you think he agreed to ‘..Stay to the last...’ page 42, when asked by Riddell?

After reading this chapter, what do you think is more important in Park’s decision to stay? His courage or his sense of duty?

5:45pm, December 19 – Hold fast to the end, lads –

Page 44

We’ve also been busy burying ammunition in the latrines, destroying our pickaxes, tins and cooking pots, and pouring caustic soda on the tarpaulins – a job my lungs weren’t up to. Bombs, rifles, food, clothing, boots, shoes and anything else not needed by the rear guard are gone.

- At the time of the evacuation, the war was continuing in Europe and Africa. Why do you think the men left so much equipment behind during the evacuation?

We must hold the line to the last.

page 46

- What might ‘the last’ be?
- They men vow to die before capture. Why do you think this is?

11pm, December 19 – C party, a bloomin’ picnic

What does this chapter show you about Park’s opinion of the Turks?

- What does it reveal about his personality?
- Do you think all soldiers would feel like this towards their enemy?

C party were handpicked.

Page 49

- What attributes and abilities might those chosen to stay have exhibited?

2:15am, December 20 – Approximately 100 men in the trenches and following chapters

No sleep, no water, soldiers leaving and the very real threat of a Turkish attack. What do you think kept the rear guard going?

No doubt our mates on the transport cannot sleep at this moment, waiting to see what is going to happen. They believe the rear guard is doomed.

Page 53

- Do you think the men on the transport are aware of the danger the last men face?
- What effect would knowing everyone believed they were doomed have on the final men?



Around 3:45am, December 20 - The last man out /4am, December 20 – The beach

A sight that ten days ago I could not have imagined.

Page 58

- After eight months and over 115,000 British deaths (British, Irish, Australian, India and New Zealand soldier), 40,000 troops were withdrawn in ten days without a single death. What might that say about the Gallipoli campaign.
- Why do you think Park is able to farewell the Turks with such respect? Page 59

Shall we take bets on whether a boat is waiting?

page 59

- Riddell and Park have been realistic about the possibility of dying. When do you think they really believed they had made it off the peninsula?

Dawn, December 20 – Farewell to Gallipoli

What do you make of the letter from Birdwood to Park?

- Why might Park have been searching for Riddell? What might have happened to him?
- Birdwood mentions many have claimed to be the last man out. Why might they claim that title?

Author's Note

I recall that my grandfather simply felt he was just doing his job, like everyone else, friend or foe, and that war was the greatest equaliser because in war we all bleed the same.

- Discuss how war might be the greatest equaliser.
- Organise a class debate with the topic 'War is the greatest equaliser'.

After Reading

Writing

Examine the following photos of Turk soldiers following the withdrawal.

- <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C973085>
- <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C194824>
- Write a newspaper article describing the Australian and New Zealand withdrawal from the Turkish point of view.

Letters

Write a letter from a child, parent or wife to a soldier at Gallipoli. Include details that show the soldier's personality, home life and interests.

Revisit the letters in Last Man Out, the letters attached and the letters on the following website:

<https://anzac100.initiatives.qld.gov.au/remember/letters/index.aspx>

Discuss what pictures they paint of the writer's experience of war.

Using these letters as inspiration, as well as what you have learned from reading Last Man Out to write a letter a soldier or nurse at the front.

The Gallipoli campaign was a brutal, futile exercise.

Write a text response to the statement above. Use quotes from the text to support your writing.

At the time Owen enlisted, Aboriginal people were not recognised as Australian citizens. It is estimated that between 400 to 800 Aboriginal men fought in WWI.

- In pairs, have students research the roles of Aboriginal people during WWI and write a report to present to the class.

Useful websites

- <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/serving-their-country#:~:text=of%20European%20origin.,nurse%20with%20the%20British%20Army>
- <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/wars-and-missions/ww1/personnel/indigenous-service>
- <http://qanzac100.slq.qld.gov.au/showcase/queenslands-indigenous-servicemen-of-the-first-world-war>
- <https://indigenoushistories.com/category/ww1/>

Language

The author uses many descriptive tools to tell her story, including alliteration, similes and metaphors.

Some of these include:

- A hill hollowed and honeycombed... page 6
- Swish, swish of summer dresses... page 9
- Dig, dig, digging in mines and tunnels ... page 15
- Trussed up turkey – page 13
- The sea sparkles like a jewel on this cold crisp day – page 16

Reread the text and identify descriptive tools that fit into the categories on page 6.



SIMILES	METAPHOR	SENSORY WRITING	ONOMATOPOEIA	ALLITERATION

Characters

What type of person do you think John Park was?

Write an article for a newspaper about Park. As well as Last Man out, using the following resources:

- Photograph of Park (John Park photo, copy, page 8)
- PDF JA PARK SGT honoured etc. (page 9)
- and the book to support your views.

Choose one of the following characters:

- Sapper Freddy Woods.
- Rankin
- Owen
- White
- Re read the book, taking notes about each character.
- Use this information to create a character profile of each. Focus on their personality Use quotes which give insight into their character (try to include both things they say and things other characters say about them).

Rewrite a key scene from another character's perspective. For example, the No Man's Land incident, the tunnel explosion or leaving friends who are in the rear guard,

- How does looking through the other character's eyes change your perception of the scene?
- Write a reflection about this after finishing the piece.

Create an alternate cover for Last Man Out. Present your work to the class explaining how you have used visual techniques to promote this theme.

Create a book trailer for *Last Man Out*.

Choose a key or favourite scene from the book and adapt it into a script.

- Use information from other parts of the book to make this a stand-alone piece.
- Change anything from the novel that might make it work better as a short drama/script
- Remember to include actor direction notes
- Perform the piece for the class.

Further Reading

- **Evacuation from Gallipoli**
<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/RCDIG1069751>
- **Letters from Hell**
<http://anzac100.nzherald.co.nz/>
- **Nurses and conditions of field hospitals**
emnosgallipolicc.blogspot.com/p/nurses-on-lemnos.html
- <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/wars-and-missions/ww1/military-organisation/australian-imperial-force/australian-army-nursing-service>
- <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/project-result-content/39f7d30e-9ca2-48ef-a351-02131a267f33/F%209%20Medical%20care%20during%20WW1%20in%20Lemnos.pdf>.
- <https://www.awm.gov.au/visit/exhibitions/nurses/ww1>

...ne.
...ve to be
... a whole com-
... and detonators
... flickering candles
The fatigued party are
...g the ammonal, but the
... for if he were to blow the
... could all be candidates for a trip
... idell brings the gun-cotton and more
... we fix in the heart of the charge. The
... party then passes out, while we remain
... explosives and detonators.
...combe asked me to take him out to see the crater made
... the mining activities of Abdul, our company, and others.
... nothing can be seen or heard. In a stage whisper, I
... want to go down and see what is in the bottom of it?"
... ear, "Shut up!" I surmise he had an idea that Abdul
... intention of breaking into the crater and occupying
... ready for us to leave, and now came the rivalry
... the end. Every member of the rear-guard
... th, but resolved not to be captured. Only
... healthy were chosen; for several weeks
... all men who reported sick. As the
... able. For three days before the
... with their feet wrapped
... which they would march
... ion parties took back
... ing for the beach
... Those of us
... answer, but
... has a

...ren
...e. I
... to wan
... achy Bill
... in our tro
... is exploded,
... shrinkage is still going on
... Lieut. Riddell advises that so
... two men hold the trenches. WH
... every third and fourth bay, they
... an interstate cricket match," said one o
... ade and two umpires" (one on the telepho
... ploders). The teams were spread from Wire
... ney's Post to Russell's Top, and every State
... sented in our last twenty-two men. Both fla
... we shall all go out via the gully if Abdul
... "Will he wake up?" No doubt our mates
... at this moment waiting to see what is going
... believe that the rear-guard is doomed.
"BEACHY BILL
Lieut. Riddell is on the 'phone calling
is coming out, he states. Halt them until
left. When the party from the right arr
down. Beachy Bill fires, the stell landing
Gully. The party from the left arrives,
away they all go down the track, their feet
As they go they say: "Good-night, engin
The trench is now empty except for two
myself. I close the wire in the sap, pul
road, and stand by the exploders. Looking
that I don't see Lieut. Riddell looking at
wonder what he is thinking about; my tho
boat for us?" It is getting a bit lonesom
to myself, "shadows moving about on the
its normal beating again. What a great col
at a time like this; one of the whitest, a
'phone talking to someone, and when the
intimates that we have to destroy everyth
beach. Our last group will be there by
cable from the exploders, kick some dirt
aneous fuse, take up my rifle and with
exploders, when Lieut. Riddell roars, "Don
the minute I had forgotten there were just
think it was the cooks breaking up a box
dixies.
I sling the telephone on my back and
down the track. Near the cutting going
Shrapnel Gully to the beach I stepped off
7



pro-... he no... sell... spread... covering... side and two... ploders'. The re... sented in our last... "Will he wake up?"... believe that the re-... Lieut. Riddell is on the "pho... Halt the... The party from the left ar... Gully. Beachy Bill fires, the shell... "Goodnight, their fe... away they go down the track, engi... The trench is now empty except for two... As they stand by the wire in the... wonder what he is thinking about; a... "I don't see Lieut. Riddell looking at me... that I close the whitest, a real man. He is... boat for us?" "It is getting about the... at a normal beating again. What a great... phone talking to someone, and when the... intimates that we have to destroy everything and... cable from the exploders, will be there by now. I derach... Our last group will be there so much no... explosive fuse, take up my rifle and... the minute I had forgotten there were just us two; anyhow, Jac... think it was the cooks breaking up a box to light the fire to... Those of us... Lieut. Riddell has sprained his ankle slightly so I help... he has a... down the telephone on my back and we gather our gear... on... "This way"; but I just went over to the track. Lieut. R... and suppose he had thought I was going to go by the cemetery... out... Lieut. Riddell has sprained his ankle slightly so I help... including



J. A. Park.

Sgt. John Alexander Park, D.C.M., M.M., who in this article gives his impressions of the final stages of the Gallipoli campaign, is one of the stalwarts of the P.M.G. Sub-Branch of the R.S.L. A native of Bristol (Eng.), he embarked with the 19th Bn., and subsequently transferred to the 4th F.C. Engrs., with which he served in Gallipoli and France, being wounded twice. His D.C.M. was awarded for conspicuous gallantry at Anzac, notably in the preparation of mines and in arranging barricades; and for his gallant attempts to rescue men from a mine in most trying and risky circumstances. He won the Military Medal in 1916.

MUCH has been written regarding the last days on Anzac—as to the anxiety of the staff, the misery of the men at leaving behind those hard-won trenches, and the cemeteries of brave cobbers, etc. But the valour and devoted brotherhood of the selected last few hundred—the rearguard of honour—linger longest in my memory. I did not keep a diary, but indelibly impressed on my mind are the incidents of the last days.

A keen brain was responsible for the ruses which accustomed Abdul to periods of silence. At a given time all troops would stand-to, and on the command every rifle that could be brought into action was fired at the Turkish line. Abdul would immediately man his trenches and return the fire. The uproar would last for about ten minutes, ceasing as suddenly as it began, and the usual sniping be resumed. A day or two later the same procedure would commence again. One night Abdul staged against our line a similar demonstration, which for the time being we ignored. An hour later we replied with a rapid fusillade that brought an immediate response—a sure sign that he was becoming jumpy and nervy.

Orders were now received that rifles were not to be fired for 24 hours. Silence thus reigned for a while, then hell was loosed again; another period of silence—this time for 48 hours—then more rifle-fire. The Turk could not make it out. What were those infidels contemplating? One night he sent over a patrol, consisting of an officer, an N.C.O., and two men, to investigate. They got right over to the wire in Wire Gully, the centre of the line between Lone Pine and Courtney's Post. Our party, losing a sapper shot through the head in the attempt, went out through the concealed firing-line and brought the enemy patrol in. The Turkish officer and N.C.O. were both wounded in several places, and all four were suffering from exposure.

Everything was normal during daylight. We engineers were busily engaged digging into the side of a hill, for the purpose of constructing a huge dug-out, sufficient to hold a large force. Success depended mainly on fine weather and secrecy. A lone enemy flier used to come over and remain almost stationary above Wire Gully; doubtless he appeared to be hovering over other parts of our line. From Gun Lane the troops used to have a few shots at him.

Orders were sometimes given to get under cover when he came over, but generally everybody would be working hard or walking about so as to make it appear that fresh troops had just landed.

Some weeks before this Major S. F. Newcombe, of the Royal Engineers, together with some "plain tablers" of the R.E., had arrived to do some engineering work. They were very interested in plotting three mines (C1, C2, C3) and also in the commanding view obtained from the centre of the line. Newcombe wanted a batman, so I detailed Sapper Freddy Woods from my dug-out for the job. What Freddy said about me and the job would not be printable. However, I directed his attention to the opportunities for scrounging which would be likely to present themselves. He soon discovered that the major had two bottles of aerated water, so I advised him

The Evacuation of Gallipoli Peninsula

(By J. A. Park, D.C.M., M.M., 4th Field Coy. Engrs., A.I.F.)

to confiscate one for adding to fritters of pounded biscuits that we made. Freddy very quickly received the order of the boot from this job.

Some concertina wire arriving from the dump, Major Newcombe ordered me to take out a party and put up an entanglement. The approved method was simple. According to the instructions issued, it was simply a matter of fixing one end to the ground with a staple. But when crawling about in No Man's Land it was quite a different matter. One man pulled the wire while I was in the centre fixing it down; he received a bullet from Abdul for his pains, and, of course, immediately let go the wire, and I was shut in. We found that we could do nothing with it, and as a couple of men were hit we crept back to the trench. A sniper gave us a lot of trouble in this spot. On reaching our line we found a loophole plate down. While trying to fix it in position, bits of the plate suddenly splashed about me, and I stopped a flesh wound in the arm, which resulted in two days' absence in Rest Gully Hospital.

MINE C2 TRAGEDY.

After much hard digging and carrying we prepared for a "blow." The listeners reported that the Turkish miners had passed us, so orders were issued to charge our mine. Abdul, however, on October 29, blew his first, with the result that the charge in C2 smouldered, causing gases. Word quickly passed that two officers and some sappers and infantry men were in trouble, so Sgt. Charlie Rankin and I went along with a rope to investigate. Rankin soon got into difficulties, so I put him on a rope and he was hauled to safety. Lieuts. Bowra and Thom, Sapper F. J. H. Currington, and several others were beyond human aid, twisted into fantastic shapes. I tied the rope around myself and was hauled to safety. As I neared the top the rope slipped, and I felt myself falling; a big hand grabbed me by the hair and head, but I did not mind the rough handling I received.

Colonel Moseley, now Government Medical Officer at the G.P.O., Sydney, and his field ambulance men did wonderful work to resuscitate the survivors from C2. The procedure adopted by the medico to keep them awake and breathing was rough but honest, and for some days afterwards they were sore all over from the smackings administered.

I was lately speaking to Colonel Moseley, and mentioned the blowing of C2, which he remembered only too well. When I told him that Charlie Rankin had passed away last Anzac Day, he looked across to the Cenotaph, meanwhile remarking, "What a fine lot of men they were to be sure." *Reveille* has already spoken in glowing terms regarding Sgt. C. Rankin, D.C.M., and I, as his dug-out mate and cobber, concur in the opinion that he was a fearless soldier and a man.

In mid-November Lord Kitchener visited Anzac, and, accompanied by General Birdwood, paid a visit to the front line. Upon their entering the sap, K. became very interested in a Digger pounding away with an entrench-

(Continued on page 30)

Evacuation of Gallipoli — (From page 9)

ing tool handle in a shell-case. "What is that man doing?" Kitchener asked. I explained that he was making a fritter by pounding a biscuit to flour, to which would be added some snow collected from the cemetery, as well as some condensed milk, and a little fat from a bully-beef tin. "Marvellous!" he ejaculated, as it was shown to him.

Arriving at mines C1 and C2, Lord Kitchener went down a short distance before enquiring: "How far do they go?" I told him that we were under Abdul's trench. He inspects the concealed firing line, but does not comment. Back in the trench General Birdwood asks one of the troops for the loan of his periscope. "Birdie" holds it above the trench, when "bang" comes a bullet, right through the glass. The Digger remarks to "Birdie": "That chap can shoot the eye out of a mosquito," and proceeds to raise his hat on the end of a rifle, but receives no response from the Turk. Then to Lord Kitchener he says: "If I had my head in it he would drill a hole in it!" The Digger next pulls back a slide in a loophole plate and asks "Kitch" to have a "screw" through it. "Kitch" has a look, and, before passing down the trench to C3, remarks: "Thank you very much, we can find our way now, thanks"; and off they go to Lone Pine.

At last the time arrives when the mines have to be charged. Not a nice job at all. It takes a whole company of infantry to pass the explosives and detonators along the tunnels, which are lit by flickering candles placed in niches in the walls. The fatigue party are not particularly happy handling the ammonal, but the only real danger is the Turk, for if he were to blow the end of the tunnel we would all be candidates for a trip to hell. Lieut. Riddell brings the gun-cotton and more detonators, which we fix in the heart of the charge. The infantry fatigue party then passes out, while we remain to pack the explosives and detonators.

Major Newcombe asked me to take him out to see the crater made previously by the mining activities of Abdul, our company, and others. It is pitch dark, nothing can be seen or heard. In a stage whisper, I ask, "Do you want to go down and see what is in the bottom of it?" He hisses into my ear, "Shut up!" I surmise he had an idea that Abdul was mining with the intention of breaking into the crater and occupying it.

Everything was at last ready for us to leave, and now came the rivalry as to who would stay on till the end. Every member of the rear-guard believed he was doomed to death, but resolved not to be captured. Only those men in the prime of life and healthy were chosen; for several weeks the doctors had been busy evacuating all men who reported sick. As the weather held out success seemed possible. For three days before the final night the troops were practised in walking with their feet wrapped in pieces of blanket, and also in the order in which they would march off from their respective positions. The Indian ration parties took back more than they brought up, and fatigue parties leaving for the beach would stop there. Night by night the force grew smaller. Those of us left behind kept up our usual fire and received the Turkish answer, but the thought uppermost in our minds was, "if Abdul attacks, he has a wonderful opportunity."

Sunday (Dec. 19) and Sunday night everybody was busily engaged on devices to deceive the enemy. Lieutenant Mills and another officer and men of the 4th Field Company placed these all over the trench. Lieut. Riddell amused himself by making trip-wires, to the ends of which he attached Mills grenades, sent up for use against a possible Turkish attack. Abdul himself threw over some broom-stick bombs filled with boiler punchings; one landed in a dixie of bully-beef stew and we opened it.

During the day some staff officers came along to see if there was anything further to destroy, but all they found was a good supply of empty rum-jars, for our Q.M. had learned his job properly. We had paraded with our packs and were garbed in "fighting order" equipment. The

breech-blocks had been taken from the guns in Gun Lane. I had a shave and wash in a condensed milk tin of water, which by then was as hard to procure as work.

At dusk a proportion of the garrison made its way down to the beach. Orders were issued to hold the line to the last. Hang on at all costs, and, if necessary, blow the mines to check an enemy advance. The parties on the way to the beach were not in any circumstances to return to the line to assist. As the parties leave the trenches, those remaining behind till the last yell in good old Aussie banter, "See you in Shepherds! Meet me in the Wassah?"

Turks are reported in Wire Gully. I go up to the trench to look out. It is a beautiful night. Some of our fellows fire at the Turkish party, who drop something heavy; this is a good sign, for the Turks are wiring in front of German Officers' Trench and are clearly not aware of anything untoward in our lines. From the trench I have a good look at the crater; everything is going along fine. From a loop-hole opposite a Turkish hand is waving. He seems to want a "Blighty" so that he can visit his harem, so we oblige. "Beachy Bill" disturbs the air at intervals.

There are only a hundred left in our trench now. The mine at Russell's Top to the north of us is exploded. The hundred men soon drop to sixty and the shrinkage is still going on. The men left in the trench spread out. Lieut. Riddell advises that so far things are going well.

Twenty-two men hold the trenches. Where shortly before they were covering every third and fourth bay, they now have to do six. "Just like an interstate cricket match," said one of the men. "Eleven on either side and two umpires" (one on the telephone, and the other on the exploders). The teams were spread from Wire Gully to the Pine, from Courtney's Post to Russell's Top, and every State in the Commonwealth is represented in our last twenty-two men. Both flanks are blocked with wire, and we shall all go out *via* the gully if Abdul still sleeps. The question is: "Will he wake up?" No doubt our mates on the transport cannot sleep at this moment waiting to see what is going to happen, because they all believe that the rear-guard is doomed.

"BEACHY BILL."

Lieut. Riddell is on the 'phone calling me. The party on the right is coming out, he states. Halt them until the party comes out from the left. When the party from the right arrives, I just tell them to sit down. Beachy Bill fires, the shell landing somewhere towards Shrapnel Gully. The party from the left arrives, joins the waiting men, and away they all go down the track, their feet wrapped in pieces of blanket. As they go they say: "Good-night, engineers, are you not coming?"

The trench is now empty except for two engineers, Lieut. Riddell and myself. I close the wire in the sap, pull the entanglement across the road, and stand by the exploders. Looking up to the trench, I pretend that I don't see Lieut. Riddell looking at me. I smile to myself and wonder what he is thinking about; my thoughts are, "Will they leave a boat for us?" It is getting a bit lonesome now. "Good God," I say to myself, "shadows moving about on the ridge," but my heart resumes its normal beating again. What a great cobbler is Lieut. Riddell to have at a time like this; one of the whitest, a real man. He is now on the 'phone talking to someone, and when the conversation is finished, he intimates that we have to destroy everything and make haste to the beach. Our last group will be there by now. I detach the electric cable from the exploders, kick some dirt over the ends of the instantaneous fuse, take up my rifle and with the butt start to smash the exploders, when Lieut. Riddell roars, "Don't make so much noise." For the minute I had forgotten there were just us two; anyhow, Jacko would think it was the cooks breaking up a box to light the fire to boil the dixies.

I sling the telephone on my back and we gather our gear and start down the track. Near the cutting going through from the gully to Shrapnel Gully to the beach I stepped off the track. Lieut. Riddell says, "This way"; but I just went over to the place where they had been sinking for water and dumped the gear which had to be destroyed. I suppose he had thought I was going to go by the cemetery track round to the beach.

Lieut. Riddell has sprained his ankle slightly so I help him along. We reach the beach and he reports to the staff, including Major Newcombe. Then on to the boat and out to the transport. It is now daylight, and the officers in the saloon are having something to eat. Riddell brings me out some bread and meat, and I sit down between two Diggers and go fifty-fifty with them. I ask them if they have any water in their bottles, but "not a drop" is the reply; I have only a mouthful in mine, not enough to share.



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25 Sept 33

THURLBY HALL
Lincoln.

Dear Mr. Park.

Many thanks for your letter the details of which bring back to me so vividly the happenings of that wonderful night of the Evacuation, which was so splendidly carried out by every single man ashore, & every one of whom will I am sure look back with real & justifiable pride to the part played by him & all his comrades. I wish I could help you in the matter about which you write - the more so as C.C. Riddell is a cousin of mine (my name too), but I fear I am unable to do so. I have to say this as you will probably realise I have had at least a dozen letters all on just the same lines as yours, claiming to have been the last man to leave the shore that night or later early morning, to all I have only been able to say as I do to you - I was up & down the coast all night in H.M.S. "Chatham" - the night was dark & embarkation took place simultaneously at several points along the coast. Those on our extreme left when we joined "Suvla" claim they were the last - you also do so! What I can say is that you occupied a most important position & from what you tell me you evidently carried out what was entrusted to you capitally. I only regret you had no orders to blow C.1. & C.2. also! But as you know I was in command of & responsible for both Anzac & Suvla then & naturally could not go into all details at both places. At all events I am very glad you did however come through everything as you did & it is a pleasure to see how fit you are now 18 years after & so young still! All good wishes to you -

Your old comrade.

W.R. Birdwood.

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DINANT.
Belgium.
1/1/19.

To. 4137 Sgt. J.A. PARK. D.C.M.,M.M.

It was with great regret that I learnt, upon my return from Leave, that you had left the Company without having had a chance of saying "Au Revoir" to me. At the same time I am delighted to know that you are at last on your way to Australia to enjoy the freedom and warmth of our people and land.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the splendid service you have not only rendered to our country, but more especially to our Unit, and for your unswerving loyalty to me under the most trying conditions and at all times.

It has been a real honour & pleasure to have been in command of such a fine body of men, and any little success that I have achieved has been solely through the splendid comraderie and team work that has always existed between us.

I wish you all happiness and prosperity upon your return to our sunny land, and hope that you will always make a point of looking me up whenever an opportunity presents itself.

H. Tolley. Major.
O.C. 4th Field Coy. A.E.
Actg. C.R.E. 4th AUST. DIVISION.