

Lone Pine

Chief of Navy Reading

- It is hard to imagine this beautiful place as a battlefield. The death, disease and destruction that fell upon those who served here thankfully no longer haunts this landscape.
- The sea and land around us are filled with places of great significance, to Australians, to New Zealanders, to the British and most of all, to the Turkish people; from Cape Helles to Suvla Bay, from the entrance to the Straits to the Sea of Marmara.
- In those first few days, as the Anzacs fought to establish a foothold on Gallipoli, there was another story unfolding a few miles to the east of us, as the crew of HMAS *AE2* were weaving their way through the perilous currents and minefields in the Dardanelles, becoming the first submarine to break through the Dardanelles.

- Having penetrated the Straits, *AE2* reached the Sea of Marmara on 26 April, where she patrolled the waters, harassing Turkish shipping in an attempt to deter any which might be headed to Gallipoli. The report of *AE2*'s success came at a crucial time, bolstering morale, as Allied commanders contemplated whether or not to withdraw after the hard fought landings.
- On 30 April, following an attack and damage inflicted by the Turkish torpedo boat, the *Sultanhisar*, the crew of *AE2* were forced to scuttle the boat and surrender. It was a story of great significance for our fledgling Navy and fledgling submarine force.
- While of course here, at Lone Pine, we stand at another site of great significance in the Australian story of this campaign.
- It was here, on the afternoon of 6 August Australians waited for the signal to advance, saying goodbye to mates in the trenches who they knew they might never see again.

- When the whistles blew, twenty-one year old Lieutenant Athol Burrett, of the 3rd Battalion, a bank clerk before enlistment, led his platoon to their objective, the trenches in the centre of Lone Pine. He later wrote about his experience of this charge:
- “Here – there – men staggered, crumpled, pitched forward, sagged sideways. Men shouted, men laughed. Men groaned...The slaughter commenced from the second we emerged from our trenches. Machine-gun and rifle fire came from the direct front and enfilade fire from both flanks. Men fell thickly on the way over.”
- The ordered gravestones we walk among today, give us little insight into the chaos of battle described by Burrett. But they do tell us something of the cost of the campaign and the waves of grief it caused here and at home.

Source: Lieutenant Athol Burrett, quoted in David W. Cameron, *The Battle for Lone Pine: Four Days of Hell at the Heart of Gallipoli*, Viking: Camberwell, Victoria, 2012.