

Bassett / 2
C.R.G. Bassett V.C.

N.Z. account of
Pilgrimage

C.R.C. Bassett V.C. Bassett J.

N.Z. account of

Reynolds

The Australian Delegation arrived at Karachi at approximately 9 p.m. on the 18th April, 1948, two days after my arrival there. The Australian Delegation was led by Lieut. Gen. Sir Leslie Morshead, K.C.B., K.B.E., C.M.G., D.S.O., E.D., the other members being: Brigadier F.A. Burrows, D.S.O., M.C., E.D., Brigadier A.E. Brown, Chaplain O.B. Steele, Captain J.E. McKeddie, M.C. and Bar, Captain E.T.C. Lines, M.B.E., and Frank McKechnie, Esq. Sir Leslie Morshead is one of Australia's most distinguished soldiers with an excellent and outstanding record. In World War I he served on Gallipoli in the Australian Infantry, landing on the Peninsula with the rank of Lieutenant and leaving at the evacuation with the rank of Major. He later served with distinction in France. In World War II he was in command of the Australian 9th Division which held Tobruk from April to August, 1941, being knighted for his splendid services in defence of that area.

Brigadier Burrows also a very distinguished Australian soldier, served on Gallipoli Peninsula, landing there as a private in 1915. He also gave good service in France after leaving the Peninsula and attained commissioned rank with the Australian Infantry. In World War II Brigadier Burrows distinguished himself as Commanding Officer of the 2/13th Australian Battalion which had the honour of taking part in the defence of Tobruk from April until November 1941, from the beginning to the end of the siege, and was commanding this Battalion in the Break-through, when he was severely wounded in the head.

Brigadier A.E. Brown, the manager of the Australian Delegation, also served in North Africa in World War II with the Australian Infantry, where he held commissioned rank. Brigadier Brown who was previously Director of War Graves Services, Australia, is now holding the position of Secretary General of the Anzac Agency of the Imperial War Graves Commission.

Chaplain O.B. Steele was elected as a member of the Australian Delegation by the Returned Soldiers League of Australia, "Rats of Tobruk" Association. Chaplain Steele is a Roman Catholic Padre who served with the Australian Forces in North Africa in World War II and was in Tobruk during the whole of the siege.

The Australian Delegation arrived at Karlsruhe at approximately 9 p.m. on the 10th April, 1948, two days after my arrival there.

The Australian Delegation was led by Lieut. Gen. Sir Leslie Morshead, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., D.B.O., E.D., the other members being: Brigadier F.A. Burrows, D.S.O., E.D., Brigadier A.E. Brown, Chaplain O.B. Steele, Captain J.E. McKeeble, M.C. and Bar, Captain E.T.C. Lines, M.B.E., and Frank McKeeble, Esq. Sir Leslie Morshead is one of Australia's most distinguished soldiers with an excellent and outstanding record. In World War I he served on Gallipoli in the Australian Infantry, landing on the Peninsula with the rank of Lieutenant and leaving at the evacuation with the rank of Major. He later served with distinction in France. In World War II he was in command of the Australian 7th Division which held Tobruk from April to August, 1941, being knighted for his splendid services in defence of that area.

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Captain J. E. McKenna, M.C. & B.E. aide-de-camp to Lieut. Gen. Sir Leslie Morshead, received his well-earned decorations whilst serving with the Australian Artillery in New Guinea. He also gave further distinguished Service with the Australian Forces in North Africa, where he was appointed aide-de-camp to Sir Leslie.

Captain E.T.C. Lines, M.B.E. served for seven years with the Australian Forces in North Africa and was promoted to commissioned rank by Sir Leslie Morshead in Tobruk, where he was stationed throughout the siege. Captain Lines acted as Baggage Master and Assistant Manager to the Australian party throughout the journey and was elected to the Delegation by the "Rats of Tobruk" Association, Victorian Division.

Mr Frank McKechnie, the official photographer to the Australian Delegation also served as a commissioned officer with the Australian Forces during World War II.

Whilst in Karachi the Egyptian authorities decided that all the members of the Delegation must be inoculated for black plague. This was duly carried out by an Egyptian doctor and needless to say none of the members felt too happy for a while after the operation. During our stay in this town we were given every possible attention by Mr McMillan the Australian Trade Commissioner and his wife, and were entertained at a cocktail party on the evening of the 20th April at the home of General Gawthorn, the British Military Commander in Karachi, where we met many of the local Service Leaders and also a number of leading Pakistan notabilities.

Owing to a hold-up in the Air Service from Karachi to Istanbul we did not leave Karachi until the afternoon of the 22nd April when the party embarked on a Pan American Constellation plane which duly arrived after an uneventful voyage, at Istanbul at 2 a.m. on 23rd April, after calling in for a short period for refreshments at Damascus.

In Istanbul the Delegation was met by ^{CHIEF} Air Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, one of the Commissioners of the Imperial War Graves Commission and Colonel E.A. Griffen, Chief Administrative Officer of the Eastern District for Imperial War Graves Commission, both of whom accompanied the party from then on until we reached Cairo. In Istanbul the other two members of the New Zealand Delegation, Brigadier G.B.

Parkinson, C.B.E., D.S.O. and Bar and Mr E. G. Webber, M.B.E. also joined forces with us. Brigadier Parkinson is a very distinguished New Zealand soldier who is at present holding the position of Army Liaison Officer and is a member of the New Zealand Joint Service Liaison Staff London, and Mr E. G. Webber is Press Association representative in London for New Zealand and a returned soldier of World War II in which he attained the rank of Captain.

Approximately a day and night were spent in Istanbul where the party was comfortably quartered at the "Pera Palace" Hotel. Whilst in this Turkish city General Sir Leslie Morshead received an official courtesy call from General Nuri Yamkuk, Commander of the First Turkish Army. In the morning of the 23rd April, in company with Sir Leslie, some of the Delegation, including myself, visited the National Museum, Saint Sophia (a very world-famous church built in A.D. 524) and we also visited one of the city's 500 Mosques, the city reservoir, and part of the bazaars. Some of the members also went for a trip on the Bosphorus later in the day in Mr Meek's (the British Consul) yacht, and all were entertained at his summer residence afterwards.

In the morning of the 24th April the Delegation embarked on the Turkish Mail Steamer "Guneysu" approximately 3000 tons and after a beautiful trip lasting approximately twelve hours, arrived at Chanak at about 11 p.m. At Chanak the steamer anchored, and the party was taken ashore in launches to the Chanak Services Club, where after being formally welcomed by the Turkish Commander, a ~~bar~~ room was allotted to each member of our party by the Turkish Garrison Officer who also provided a meal and made us very comfortable. We were also met here by Mr Tasman Millington an original Anzac who fought with the Australian troops at the Landing, and throughout the Gallipoli campaign, who lives in Chanak with his English wife. He holds the position of Superintendent to the Imperial War Graves Commission in Turkey and has been with the Commission in this position for 23 years.

At 4 a.m. on the morning of the 25th April the party crossed the narrows from Chanak in two launches, one provided by the Turkish military commander and the other, the "Emu", by the Imperial War Graves Commission. The "Emu" is Mr Millington's chief means of conveyance,

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and was brought from Egypt some years ago by the Commissioner for his use. With his Turkish crew of two, he uses the "Emu" to reach the peninsula from Chanak and to carry stores and equipment to his Turkish workmen at the cemeteries. Mr and Mrs Millington accompanied the Delegation on its visit to the Anzac area and the party was met at Kelia by transport consisting of cars and trucks which were provided by the Turkish Peninsula Garrison and driven by Turkish soldiers.

The journey across the peninsula from Kelia to Anzac was a very bumpy one over a rough road, and very nearly ended in disaster to one of the trucks in which Brigadiers Parkinson and Burrows and Chaplain Steele were riding. The truck ran off the road just before our destination was reached, and overturned, luckily on a very low bank, landing on the beach on soft sand. Fortunately none of its occupants or the driver were seriously injured, although they appeared to be badly shaken. In spite of this delay Anzac beach was reached before dawn, and the whole party including the Turkish Area Commander, Brigadier Yusef Eledi and his staff, was assembled at Beach Cemetery by first light.

There a very impressive and moving service was held by Sir Leslie Morshead beginning with the "Lord's Prayer" recited by Sir Leslie, followed by the "Recessional" recited by Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, and the "Anzac Dedication" recited by Brigadier F.A. Burrows. All present then repeated the words "We will remember them" and this was followed by the laying of wreaths. In his turn Brigadier Parkinson, on behalf of the New Zealand Government, laid a wreath on the Memorial and a wreath was also laid here by the Turkish Brigadier who also laid wreaths on behalf of his Government on all the main memorials later. After the laying of the wreaths there was a one minute silence, when Sir Leslie Morshead delivered a very moving address. This was followed by the Benediction recited by Brigadier A.E. Brown and the Epilogue "Anzac Day" by Brigadier Parkinson. A Firing Party was provided by the Turkish Peninsula Garrison and this was appropriately acknowledged by the General in his address when he said: "We pay tribute also to the heroic sons of Turkey who too fell here at Anzac. The presence at this service of a guard of honour from our former enemies is a gracious and chivalrous act.

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We are sincerely appreciative of it and touched by it as the whole of the Empire will be." At the conclusion of the Dawn Service Chaplain O.B. Steele of the Australian Delegation conducted Mass at Anzac Beach Memorial.

The party then proceeded to inspect Beach Cemetery and Ari Burnu Cemetery after which breakfast was provided by the Turks on the flat land situated approximately between Walker's Ridge and Fisherman's Hut. Working to a prearranged schedule, the whole party then proceeded by car and truck to inspect cemeteries at Anzac and Suvla Bay including Canterbury, Outpost No. 2 and Outpost No. 2 (N.Z.), Embarkation Pier, 7th Field Ambulance, Hill 60, Green Hill, Suvla, Shrapnel Valley, Lone Pine, Johnston's Jolly, 4th Battalion (Australian) Parade Ground, Courtenay & Steel's Posts, Quinn's Post, The Nek, and Chunuk Bair. In all 16 cemeteries were visited in the Anzac area of a total of 25 there. At Lone Pine Cemetery, the Australians' famous old battleground, wreaths were laid by British, Australian, New Zealand and Turkish officers, and Holy Communion Service was conducted in the Chapel by the Reverend C.W. Piper, Anglican Chaplain to the British Embassy in Istanbul. Slips of Roses of Remembrance brought from Australia by the Australian Delegation were also planted in the Cemetery at this point. At the Turkish Memorial wreaths were laid by representatives of all the British Commonwealth including New Zealand, after which another impressive service was held at the New Zealand Memorial on Chunuk Bair which commemorates the names of 852 New Zealand dead, including 19 Maoris. This memorial which is over 100 feet high stands a lonely sentinel on the skyline on Chunuk Bair heights, the highest part of Anzac, and can be seen clearly from most parts of Anzac and even from Chanak on clear days. This service was conducted by Brigadier Parkinson who delivered a moving address followed by the recitation of the Benediction by Lieut. Colonel Bassett and the laying of wreaths, including one by Brigadier Parkinson and one by the Turkish General Brigadier Yusef Eledi.

The cemeteries which were not visited at Anzac and Suvla Bay areas were Hill 10 Suvla, Lala Baba Suvla, Plugge's Plateau, Shell Green (Anzac), Walker's Ridge, Azmac Suvla, Baby 700 and the Farm.

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Lone Pine, Johnston's Tolly, 4th Battalion (Australian) Parade Ground,

Conventry & Steele's Posts, Quinn's Post, The Nek, and Chunuk Bair.

In all 18 cemeteries were visited in the Anzac area of a total of

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The cemeteries which were not visited at Anzac and Suvla Bay

were Hill 10 Suvla, Tala Baba Suvla, Piper's Platane, Shell

Green (Anzac), Walker's Ridge, Anzac Suvla, Baby 700 and the Farm.

After lunch which was provided by the Turks on the Summit of Chunuk Bair, the party returned by car and truck to Kelia where they were transported by launch to Chanak where a parade of Turkish soldiers led by a band was held in honour of the Delegation and marched past the General. Here at the Chanak Services Club the Governor of Chanak, His Excellency Nomen Pasha, welcomed the party and Major General Arif Tanyeri, himself a veteran of Gallipoli and Verdun, placed all facilities at our disposal, accommodation being again provided at the Club and every possible courtesy and hospitality extended to the delegates.

On the morning of the 26th April, the party left Chanak for Cape Helles by the Turkish Minelayer "Musrat", passing through the Narrows and landing at Morto Bay where wreaths were laid on the huge French Memorial which commemorates 20,000 dead of whom 12,000 unknown are in common graves set round about the main central obelisk. Approximately 8,000 crosses all of iron set in concrete are laid out in rows in the cemetery, and this is a very impressive sight. The main French memorial also commemorates the dead of the French warship "Bouvet" sunk in the early part of the Campaign. In addition to the British and Anzac cemeteries, Imperial War Graves Commission has also undertaken the responsibility for caring for that cemetery. During the 1939-43 war the French had no opportunity to do this themselves and satisfactory arrangements were therefore made whereby the French Cemetery should be maintained by the Commission and the cost met by the French Government. Altogether, including the Main British Memorial, there are 7 cemeteries at Cape Helles and after inspecting "Skew Bridge" and "Redoubt" Cemeteries, wreaths were laid on the Main British Memorial at Cape Helles, a great granite column which fronts the Aegean Sea to commemorate the 20,504 men of the British forces and Royal Navy who fell in that vicinity. A Senior Turkish officer, Brigadier General Niyazi Mumcuoglu accompanied the party to Cape Helles and together with Captain Nazim Maral the naval commander at Chanak, also laid wreaths here side by side with those laid by the Delegation's members. A wreath was also laid here on behalf of the N.Z. R.S.A. by Lt. Col. Bassett. As a matter of interest we were informed by Captain Maral that the Turkish Minelayer "Musrat" laid

After lunch which was provided by the Turks on the summit of Çanakkale, the party returned by car and truck to Kilitli where they were transported by launch to Çanakkale where a parade of Turkish soldiers led by a band was held in honor of the Delegation and marched past the General. Here at the Çanakkale Services Club the Governor of Çanakkale, His Excellency Numan Paşa, welcomed the party and Major General Arif Tanyeri, himself a veteran of Gallipoli and Verdun, placed all facilities at our disposal, accommodation being again provided at the Club and every possible courtesy and hospitality extended to the delegates.

On the morning of the 18th April, the party left Çanakkale for Cape Helles by the Turkish Mine-sweeper "Mustafa", passing through the Narrows and landing at Mordo Bay where wreaths were laid on the huge French Memorial which commemorates 20,000 dead of whom 11,000 unknown are in common graves set round about the main central obelisk. Approximately 8,000 crosses all of iron set in concrete are laid out in rows in the cemetery, and this is a very impressive sight. The main French memorial also commemorates the dead of the French warship "Bouvet" sunk in the early part of the Campaign. In addition to the British and Allied cemeteries, Imperial War Graves Commission has also undertaken the responsibility for caring for that cemetery. During the 1933-43 war the French had no opportunity to do this themselves and satisfactory arrangements were therefore made whereby the French Cemetery should be maintained by the Commission and the cost met by the French Government. Altogether, including the main British Memorial, there are 7 cemeteries at Cape Helles and after inspecting "New Bridge" and "Redoubt" Cemeteries, wreaths were laid on the main British Memorial at Cape Helles, a great granite column which fronts the Aegean Sea commemorates the 20,000 men of the British forces and Royal Navy who fell in that vicinity. A Senior Turkish officer, Brigadier General Niyazi Kuvucuglu accompanied the party to Cape Helles and together with Captain Nazim Nural the naval commander at Çanakkale, also laid wreaths here also by side with those laid by the Delegation's members. A wreath was also laid here on behalf of the N.E. R.E.A. by Lt. Col. Bassett. As a matter of interest we were informed by Captain Nural that the Turkish Mine-sweeper "Mustafa" laid

the mines during the Gallipoli Campaign which were responsible for the sinking of the "Bouvet", "Irresistible", etc.

Twenty-nine years have passed since the Imperial War Graves Commission, working with the Graves Concentration Units of the various forces engaged on the Peninsula in 1919, commenced the tremendous task of laying out these 32 war cemeteries and erecting the permanent memorials to the fallen. Today these cemeteries, standing some in quiet gullies, others on slopes fronting the sea and others on rugged ridges high above, are a monument not only to the fallen, but to the devoted work of the Graves Commission. Clipped hedges of sweet smelling rosemary surround the cemeteries, enclosing lawns that are green and fresh even on the arid ground of the Peninsula. The gravelled paths are without exception neat and trim and the dark green of cypress trees, the lighter green of oaks and the glorious purple-pink of flowering Judas Trees shade them. In the first warmth of the Aegean spring, roses are putting out their shoots above lines of white headstones, and the shrubs flanking them are green and leafy. The central point of each cemetery is its white stone memorial with the simple inscription, "Their name liveth for evermore". Fronting each cemetery entrance which is a polished teak gate bound by brass, is a stone tablet recording the number buried or commemorated therein. In detail the British and Anzac cemeteries vary according to their location and size but the general pattern is the same. Headstones are all of a type laid down by Imperial War Graves Commission and each bears only the man's name, number, unit and the date of his death.

Although the names of men from the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand predominate in sectors which they held, there is no line of demarcation. In the bitter and confused fighting, particularly during the first week after the landing, men from every corner of the home country fell among those from the Dominions and India, and men from Australia, New Zealand and India fell among the ranks of famous British regiments. There are Australians and New Zealanders buried at Cape Helles and men from the home counties at Anzac.

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and attention given to them by Mr Tasman Millington. Mr Millington who fought with the Australian troops at the Landing, returned to Gallipoli in 1919 when he joined the Graves Concentration Units then beginning the gigantic and tragic task of forming the war cemeteries on the Peninsula. Since then he has seen that work take shape, and has had a very considerable personal part in its development. He was among those who went through the heart rending experience of searching the abandoned gallies beaches and dug-outs of Anzac and Helles for the thousands of unburied dead who still lay there when the war ended and took part in designing and developing the ^{cemeteries} which today are their resting place and memorial.

Gradually the other British, Australians and New Zealanders who supervised the work returned to their countries, but Mr Millington remained to become the last British guardian of the cemeteries. He is a familiar figure, not only on the Peninsula, but in Istanbul, where one of his responsibilities is the Halida Pasha cemetery which marks the burial place of thousands of Crimean veterans, and the site of Florence Nightingale's famous hospital. Since 1939 the Millingtons have been virtually cut off from British contacts, with the exception of their occasional visits to Istanbul and its small British community there. Even these visits necessitate long and uncomfortable voyages in the small Turkish steamers which ply up and down the Straits. It is a lonely life for the solitary Australian and his wife in this remote outpost but Tasman Millington makes no secret of the fact that he has found his own compensation in it.

In the 27th Annual Report of the Imperial War Graves Commission 1947 the Deputy Controller reports on the Gallipoli area as follows: "It is unfortunate that better facilities are not available to the public to visit the cemeteries in this area. They exhibit a very high standard of neatness, and show that the closest attention is paid to every aspect of the horticultural and structural work. The gardeners under their efficient foremen work as a team and the majority of them have been in the service of the Commission for many years - some since its inception. They take a deep pride in their work and are ever anxious to preserve the high standard that is

expected of them; the Area Superintendent takes a personal interest in the welfare of every individual gardener under his control. He is watchful of any damage caused to the masonry of the memorials and cemeteries which may occur as a result of the severity of the winters. It is gratifying to report that even though last winter was severe and long, no serious damage resulted. A mason is fully employed the whole year on effecting repairs throughout the area. The stone reserves had dwindled considerably and a contract has been let for a further supply of Ulga Dere stone, which is now being delivered; this should meet the needs for the next six to ten years. The New Zealand Memorial at Chunuk Bair is frequently inspected by the Area Superintendent. A few stones have had to be replaced in the upper courses on the north face."

On our return from Cape Helles on 28th April certain members of the party visited Troy with Major General Arif Tanyeri by car, and on their return to Chanak Brigadier Parkinson on behalf of the Government of New Zealand, delivered a message of greeting and goodwill from Mr Fraser, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, to General Tanyeri for transmission to the Turkish Government. Replying to the message, Major General Tanyeri said: "Today the Turks entertained nothing but the liveliest feelings of admiration, friendship and goodwill for the soldiers and people of Australia and New Zealand."

At 9 a.m. on the morning of the 27th April the party left Chanak by the small Turkish Steamer "Saadet" enroute for Istanbul which was reached after a very rough trip of 24 hours at 8.30 a.m. on 28th. During our stay in Istanbul members of the party including myself visited the Christ Church Crimean and Memorial Church in Istanbul at the invitation of the Reverend Piper and saw the Crimean Tablet dated 1858, and at 8 a.m. on 29th April the Delegation members left Istanbul by Cyprus Airways Plane (a Dakota D.C.3) for El Adam airport en route to Tobruk. On our way to the Istanbul airport we were fortunate to pass through a gateway of the ancient wall of the City (with its moat) defended for so long against the Turks when they finally seized Constantinople in the 16th century. This wall still stands, broken and decrepit in parts but still imposing.

One of the strongest impressions felt by the Australian and New Zealand ex-servicemens' delegation to Anzac and the Gallipoli Peninsula, is of the friendliness of the Turkish Army and people, and their admiration for their old opponents. In countless ways during the Delegation's visit the Turks demonstrated that this admiration and friendliness was more than mere politeness. Indeed without their full co-operation the dawn service and inspection of war cemeteries on the Peninsula would not have been possible. The heights on both sides of the Narrows are among Turkey's most vital defence areas, and although the right of way to the war cemeteries is guaranteed by Treaty, the presence of the Anzac delegates in this area, created a number of security problems for the Turks. In spite of this however, the Turkish Army command imposed only a bare minimum of restriction, stipulating only that photography should be restricted to cemeteries and their environs, and should not include any details which might disclose defence dispositions.

The Senior Turkish officer commanding upon the Peninsula and at Chanak, Major General Arif Tanyeri, placed the full transport and accommodation facilities of his headquarters at the disposal of the delegation. Turkish transport was provided throughout the two days spent at Anzac and Cape Helles, a Turkish Minelayer carried the party to and from the Cape and a Turkish liaison officer and Interpreter was attached to the Delegation throughout its visit. The most moving demonstration of Turkish friendship however, was the immediate desire expressed by the Turks to pay their own tribute to the British and Commonwealth fallen, and in addition to providing the firing party at the dawn service, at each of the major memorials their own posies of flowers lay side by side with those laid by the Anzac delegation.

As some slight recognition of the kindness and hospitality extended to them, the members of the Anzac delegation before they left Istanbul, asked permission to present a suitably inscribed rosebowl to the Turkish officers' mess at Chanak. It was plain that the Turks had exhaustively examined the Gallipoli campaign, and some of the officers at Chanak had read not only their own commanders' accounts of the operations but also those written by British leaders. One of them mentioned with admiration Freyberg's swim to lay flares off Bulair, and confided that

the laying of these flares had delayed by 24 hours the despatch of a sorely needed division from Bulair to Anzac.

The Peninsula in spring time and peace time is a beautiful place, but is now very much overgrown. The flats at Kellia, Suvla Bay and Helles were covered with poppies, daisies, wild thyme, cornflowers and glorious Judas trees in full flower. The old land marks of Plugge's Plateau, Chunuk Bair, the Sphinx, Walker's Ridge, Fisherman's Hut, Hill 60, Lone Pine and Achi Baba still stand sentinel over Anzac Cove and Cape Helles, but prearranged schedules precluded us from having a close inspection of old haunts. There are a couple of rusty hulls of boats lying on the beach at Anzac and at Lone Pine there are still shallow trench lines (both our own and Turkish) to be seen on the ridge. When I stood on the heights of Chunuk Bair, Lone Pine and Cape Helles I marvelled that any force, however brave, could have even landed at Anzac or Helles at all, as the Turks had such a tremendous advantage both in observation and defensive positions. I also marvelled that so many thousands of our men could have lived and fought in such a confined area as Anzac.

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On the way to Tobruk the plane flew over Crete the mountains of which were covered with snow, and after a pleasant journey of approximately three and a half hours, we landed at El Adam Airport at 11.20 a.m. on the 29th April. Tobruk was reached at noon and every possible hospitality was extended to the members of the Delegations by the officers of the garrison in that area. Tobruk harbour is still littered with half submerged and rusting hulls of ships but the town is rapidly being rebuilt. Several hundred natives have returned and shops and stores have been opened. The demolition of the old perimeter defences, and the gathering of scrap and salvage is proceeding steadily under army supervision, but the minefields on either side of the tracks and roads are not yet guaranteed safe. There are several thousand German prisoners of war in Tobruk, but their repatriation is being speeded up, and it is expected that the last of them will be sent home by the end of August.

On 30th April Lieut. General Sir Leslie Morshead unveiled the Australian Memorial at Tobruk Cemetery and this also was a very well organised and moving ceremony. Guards of honour were provided by all three Services, and a band by the 13/18 Royal Hussars. Thirteen wreaths were laid on the memorial by representatives of Britain, Australia, New Zealand, the Middle East Forces, the Tobruk Garrison and the Royal Navy. His Majesty's Sloop, H.M.S. "Peacock" was anchored in the Harbour on that day, and the ceremony was attended by Major General White who represented the Commander in Chief Middle East Forces, Major General ^{Reverell} ~~Smith~~ Smith, Commander of Malta Garrison, and numerous civilians and others who came from long distances to attend.

Whilst in Tobruk the cemeteries of Acroma and Tobruk were visited, and on the morning of 1st May at 8 a.m. the Delegation set out by car on the 600 mile journey to Cairo. The night of 1st May was spent at Mersa Matruh and Cairo was reached at 4.30 p.m. on 2nd. During the journey the cemeteries at Sollum and Alamein were inspected. All four cemeteries are in very good order and

are being well looked after. They have not yet of course, attained the same permanent and excellent condition as those of World War I, but this is only a matter of time. I am satisfied that the Imperial War Graves Commission is doing a splendid job of work and its aim is to replace the present wooden crosses with permanent headstones and to erect permanent memorials with the least possible delay.

In Cairo on 3rd May the New Zealand Delegates visited Maadi Camp but found this to be practically demolished. They were able here however to see the fine Memorial erected by the New Zealanders to the people of Maadi as a mark of appreciation for the kindness extended to the 75,000 of their countrymen who had passed through this camp during the 1933-45 war.

In conclusion I may say that this has been a most inspiring and moving experience and I feel tremendously honoured to have been selected to represent the New Zealand Returned Services Association on this Delegation. I feel that the Delegation objectives were successful and that definite goodwill was achieved nationally throughout the whole of the visit.

THE ANZAC DAWN CEREMONY
OF REMEMBRANCE AT THE
BEACH CEMETERY ANZAC
GALLIPOLI

25th April, 1948.

ADDRESS BY LT. GEN. SIR LESLIE MORSHEAD
K.C.B. - K.B.E., C.M.G., D.S.O., E.D.

At this hour of dawn, on this very day 33 years ago, and on this nearby beach (where we now stand) the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Australian Division landed, followed soon afterwards by the 1st and 2nd Brigades and then by the New Zealand and Australian Composite Division.

They approached not in Assault Craft or Amphibious Tanks but in ships boats (Rowing boats) out of which they jumped on nearing the beach and waded ashore.

At once without the slightest hesitation they stormed this steep and rugged country rising abruptly, almost from the waters edge and on reaching the top continued onwards without fear or any other inhibition notwithstanding opposition of a very brave and determined foe.

It was indeed a very severe test - severe in the extreme - for hurriedly trained troops, new to war, the more so as they knew little or nothing of the terrain or of the

Turkish strength and dispositions. Yet they did not for a moment falter, but kept on advancing, undeterred by all the many difficult hazards inherent in a landing operation, - far greater then than now.

Undismayed by the thinning of their ranks through heavy casualties and never letting up in the attack they maintained this spirit, not only through the bitter and costly struggle of that long first week, but also in all the battles and actions which followed.

By their supreme valour, their resoluteness, utter disregard of death and fortitude, these men won enduring fame, and it was through their Spirit and their deeds that Australia then rose to full nationhood.

Above all others, it was they who lie in this cemetery on the beach where we now stand, and in the other cemeteries scattered on Anzac and those in unknown graves who made the

greatest and the fullest contribution.

Particularly on this occasion do we remember with unbounded admiration our comrades from New Zealand with whom we here fought side by side, and all that is claimed for my countrymen is also their due and in the fullest measure.

We recall too, that famous division, the 29th, which fought so magnificently at Helles. In Australia that division is still often spoken of and in terms of the greatest respect and regard.

We also retain a full and grateful appreciation of the work of the Royal Navy on whom we were so dependent, the gallant and efficient way in which they got us ashore, their support, and aided by the Merchant Marine their maintenance of us throughout the campaign.

Anzac Day in Australia and New Zealand is a National Day of Sacred commemoration and of proud remembrance of all who gave their lives ^{on} Gallipoli and in both wars as well. In the name of the countries we have the honour to represent, Great Britain, New Zealand and Australia, we here at Anzac itself pay reverent and abiding homage to the memory of those who lie in this land. Their names liveth for evermore.

We pay tribute also ^{to} the memory of the heroic sons of Turkey who too fell at Anzac.

The presence at this Service of a guard of honour from our former enemy is a gracious and chivalrous act. We are very sincerely appreciative of it and much touched by it as the whole of the Empire will be.

C.R.G. Bassett V.C.

Address by Lt. Gen Sir Leslie Tordoff
KCB: KBE: CMG: DSO: ED.

Tobruk. 29/4/1948

In the eventful and fluctuating campaigns in the Western Desert from the beginning of 1941 to the end of 1942, this familiar and now historic battleground of Tobruk was the scene of warfare varying in character and in effect. It saw victories and defeat, and then great victory.

In this area, during those two years, fought the forces of the Empire--of Great Britain who, as usual, bore the lion's share, of Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, India and also those of our Polish allies.

The story of Tobruk begins with the capture of it and its garrison of some 40,000 Italians by the 7th Armored Bde and 6th Australian Div. That was in January 1941, during the brilliant advance from Egypt to the border of Tripolitania.

The second chapter was the protracted siege the longest in our history, following the withdrawal from Cyrenaica, by the then newly formed 2nd Armored Division (the main component of which was 3rd Armored Bde) and five infantry battalions of 9th Australian Div, also freshly formed and only partly trained and equipped. The remaining infantry had only just arrived in Tobruk, together with the 18th bde of 7th Australian Div, the whole of the Divisional artillery being still in Palestine anxiously awaiting its equipment and transport.

The siege lasted from early April until late December 1941. Towards the end of October, the 9th Div. was relieved by the 6th British Division, afterwards known as the 70th, except for the 2/13 Australian battalion which stayed on till the end.

The third chapter was the break out, the joining up and the advance with the Western Desert Force. To the great satisfaction of the 9th Division, 2/13 Bn participated in the breakout.

Chapter four was the loss of Tobruk and the final chapter was its recapture by 8th Army in its pursuit of the retreating enemy after the great victory of Alamein.

I should like to say a further few words about the siege because it is mainly with that that the name of Tobruk is associated, and because the great majority of Australians who lie here, fell in that siege.

The perimeter measured 32 miles and therefore was only lightly manned. Each forward battalion occupied a front of over five miles. Before he thought the garrison could be effectively organised and disposed over such a wide front, and confidently counting upon a broken morale, Rommel launched his first major attack with tanks and infantry on the morning of Easter Day (April 14) just four days after our entry. The attack was utterly smashed chiefly owing to the great gallantry and proficiency of the British artillery, the 1st, 3rd 4th, 104th RHA and 51st Field Regt, with whom were also the Australian anti-tank regt and three anti-tank companies.

In all the subsequent battles and actions, both offensive and defensive, these regiments and, from early May, the 2412 Australian field regt. and later the Polish Carpathian field regt., played a very full and vital part. We have always been properly mindful of that, and to-day we again pay them the highest tribute as we do also to those courageous and ever-ready British anti-aircraft gunners. We remember, too, the bravery of the armored Bde and its share in the fight; likewise that splendid machine-gun battalion, the First Royal Northumberland Fusiliers.

Tobruk was held and could only have been held by offensive action -- by besieging the besiegers, by making no-man's land ours, and by hard work. Every night patrols sallied forth to fight, and countless raids, many of them of a large scale, were made against the Germans and Italians by day as well as by night. It was the enemy, not the defenders, who was on the defensive. Everybody contributed his full share to those continual attacks, Australians, British, Indians and Poles. But for that truly grand, that fighting garrison, Egypt would have fallen--and who can say what the course of the war would then have been?

Tobruk was held by the dauntless courage, the unbreakable spirit, the high endeavour and will to fight, and the unity and team-work of the garrison. It was held through the help and support of the Royal Navy and of the Royal Australian Navy, who guarded us and maintained us, oblivious to danger, and in that very gallant spirit traditional with the Navy.

And now let us pay homage to the memory of those stalwarts, our comrades, who fought so nobly and valiantly, even unto death. They remain here in Tobruk, not alone, but in the company of all those present who too died for their homelands and for our King and Empire. Let us who are left, see to it that the memory of them is kept ever fresh and green.

Sent by C.R.G. Bassett V.C.