

Gallipoli

Peter FitzSimons

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On 25 April 1915, Allied forces landed on the *Gallipoli* Peninsula in present-day Turkey to secure the sea route between Britain and France in the west and Russia in the east. After eight months of terrible fighting, they would fail.

Turkey regards the victory to this day as a defining moment in its history, a heroic last stand in the defence of the nation's Ottoman Empire. But, counter-intuitively, it would signify something perhaps even greater for the defeated Australians and New Zealanders involved: the birth of their countries' sense of nationhood.

Now approaching its centenary, the *Gallipoli* campaign, commemorated each year on Anzac Day, reverberates with importance as the origin and symbol of Australian and New Zealand identity. As such, the facts of the battle - which was minor against the scale of the First World War and cost less than a sixth of the Australian deaths on the Western Front - are often forgotten or obscured. Peter FitzSimons, with his trademark vibrancy and expert melding of writing and research, recreates the disaster as experienced by those who endured it or perished in the attempt.



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