



DIARY OF GARLAND OSWALD MORGAN

September 1914 to May 1915

Garland was killed at Gallipoli on 11 May 1915. His personal diary describes his journey to Egypt, time at Zeitoun Camp, his landing at Anzac Cove, and experiences during his short time at Gallipoli.

Andrew Morgan
May 2023

Transcript of Garland's Diary

Period transcribed: 3 April 1915 to 9 May 1915

Corrections, comments, or clarifications (in my words) are shown in blue box brackets [xxx].

About

On 1 May 2023 I had the privilege of viewing the personal diary of my first cousin 4/558 Sapper Garland Oswald MORGAN, New Zealand Engineers Divisional Signal Company, killed at Gallipoli on 11 May 1915. The diary is held at the Queen Elizabeth II Army Memorial Museum, Waiouru (National Army Museum of New Zealand) reference RV3281. The museum also holds his service medals¹ and memorial plaque (death penny).

His diary covers the period from 18 September 1914 to 9 May 1915, and describes his embarkation, journey to Egypt, training at Zeitoun Camp, his few days at Gallipoli including landing on 25 April 1915. Unfortunately, I was not able to document his entire diary. I have concentrated on the time leading up to his landing at Gallipoli and the entries preceding his death.

The museum provided a summary of his diary entries which I have documented below under 'Summary Notes' – September 1914 to April 1915.

Summary Notes

[Covering period 18 September 1914 to 2 April 1915].

September 1914

Left Auckland harbour and returned. Unloading 400 horses.

[The Main Body of the NZEF was scheduled to sail on 23 September 1915, with two Auckland transports² expected to meet the main convoy (departing from Wellington) in the Tasman Sea. But the departure had to be postponed avoiding the threat posed by a squadron of German warships at large in the Pacific Ocean. After a delay while a stronger naval escort could be arranged, all transports eventually departed on 16 October 1914 from Wellington to Albany, Australia, where they joined the ships carrying the Australian Imperial Force en route to Egypt].

October 1914

Troops inoculated for typhoid. [Garland's medical records verify he was inoculated on 5 October and 14 October 1914].

General Godley visited camp. [Likely the Auckland Infantry Battalion's camp at Alexandra Park].

Received orders to embark. Shipped horses on ferry at Davenport [Auckland] and transferred to *Waimana*³.

Arrival at Wellington [11-12 October 1914]. Food on board "damned rotten and fit for pigs".

¹ The ANZAC Commemorative Medallion, also called the Gallipoli Medallion, which was instituted in 1967 for Australian and New Zealand personnel who participated in the Gallipoli campaign in 1915 is not in this collection. It is unknown if this was ever claimed by Garland's family.

² HMNZT 8 *Star of India* and HMNZT 12 *Waimana*.

³ HMNZT 12 *Waimana* sailed from Auckland on 11 October 1914 with 1600 men and 500 horses, part of the Auckland contingent of the Main Body, destination Wellington.

Company went on strike at dinner time because shore leave was not granted. One man was sent to solitary confinement. Cell was “hell of a place” and “we were treated worse than prisoners”.

Described journey to and arrival at Hobart.

Burial at sea of 3/323 Lanc3 Corporal Jack Gilchrist, NZ Medical Corps. Died of disease⁴ at sea on 25 October 1914.

[Garland enlisted with the NZ Engineers Divisional Signal Company. The Divisional Signal Company were attached to most units of the NZEF and sailed with the Main Body that left New Zealand on 16 October 1914. The Divisional Signal Company served with the NZ Infantry Brigade, and a couple of the events notorised in Garland’s journal indicate that he had been attached to the Auckland Infantry Battalion, NZ Infantry Brigade.

- Garland was on *Waimana* which departed from Auckland.
- The Auckland Infantry Battalion departed on *Waimana* on 22 sept 1914, but near Cape Brett she turned around and returned to Auckland.
- For the next fortnight the Battalion lived on board the boat.
- On 11 October 1915, the *Waimana* left once more—this time for Wellington—where the whole of the Expeditionary Force assembled.
- On 25 April 1915 the Aucklanders were to be the first New Zealanders to land at Gallipoli.]

November 1914

Described journey from Albany to Colombo. On shore leave.

<https://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-WH1Auck-t1-body-d2.html>

December 1914

Described journey from Port Said to Alexandria.

Arrival at Cairo. Receives orders to disembark. All horses were aboard train. Describes the countryside, local transports, villages, and natives.

At Zeitoun Camp. Cold nights and hot days in the desert. Describes the place as “most god forsaken place I have ever seen”.

<https://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-WH1Auck-t1-body-d3.html>

Garland celebrates his 22nd birthday – 14 December 1914.

New Zealand contingent of 250 men arrive in camp from London.

Christmas Day dinner in camp. Garland lists the Christmas menu.

Boxing Day and New Year’s Day spent laying cables.

January to April 1915

No. 2 Section of Company receives orders to proceed to the front.

[On 25 January 1915, the Battalion would entrain for the Suez Canal. The New Zealand Brigade was to be held in reserve to the Indian troops, a defensive maneuver in defense of the Canal from Turkish attack. They would return to Zeitoun Camp on 26 February 1915].

⁴ Died at sea on board HMNZT No 5 'Ruapehu' at about 8:20 PM from Ptomaine poisoning.

Arrival of Māori contingent in camp.

[The Native Contingent, as they were known, departed on the *SS Warrimoo* on 14 February 1915, arriving in Egypt on 26 March].

2 April 1915. Good Friday. Riot in town by troops [Battle of the Wassah]. Four brothels burnt and others wrecked. Furniture was thrown into the street and set on fire.

Garland's Diary (transcript)

Addresses

Miss E. Richardson, 104 Oriental Bay, Wellington

Mrs T. H. Morgan, 35 Wilson St, Hawera [mother]

Miss E. Thompson, c/o Mrs Stanford, Toru St, Lyall Bay, Wellington

Mrs [or Miss] C Newman, Box 933, Christchurch

Miss E. Nuttall, Fairfax, [NZ] [Fairfax is in Southland, 40km north-west of Invercargill] [Possibly a cousin of Garland – his mother's maiden name was Nuttall].

[Garland worked both in Wellington and Christchurch prior to enlisting. In Wellington he was a member of the Lyall Bay Surf Bathing Club. These names and addresses appear in the front of Garland's diary.]

3 April 1915, Saturday

[Cairo]

Picture show in camp advertise and boxing competition. House packed, then announce no show. Refuse to refund money. Troops go mad and burn the building.

7 April 1915, [Wednesday]

[Zeitoun Camp]

All ready to leave for Dardenelles. Expect to go tonight.

9 April 1915, Friday

[Cairo]

Everybody is happy again for we have definite orders to leave Egypt. A scorching hot, but very busy day. Left camp at 7.45 PM marched to Cairo – 7 miles and arrived at 9.45 PM. Everything stowed aboard by 11:00 o'clock. We are not sorry to shake that dust of Egypt from our feet. 12.30 AM train pulls out of Cairo and I immediately settle down to sleep.

10 April 1915, Saturday

[Alexandria]

5.5 AM [5.00 AM] rudely awakened. Train off [to] Alexandria.

Awakened at 5.45 AM. We have a cup of coffee [before] embarking. Have all of our horses (69)⁵ aboard in an hour. We have now to exist on Bully Beef and Biscuits for an indefinite period. 2.30 PM had a swim in Alexandria Harbour and at 5 PM we left the wharf. Now sleep on the decks, no mattresses.

⁵ Official records refer to there being 61 horses. The horses were not landed at Gallipoli.

11 April 1915, Sunday

[Alexandria]

[Took] off as one of crew for boat in 'Collision Drill', lower boat and go for a short row for the afternoon, had to row [often]. [Slipped] round to all the transports. There are a terrible number of them in this harbor. I have so far seen: A 1 to 40, B 1 to 35, 7 1 to 25; and S 1 to 4; making a total of 104 vessels.

Transports are leaving this Port for an unknown destination every few hours. Took Colic⁶ while on boat and had to be assisted aboard again. Had most awful pain to see doctor. Downed with Chlorodene [Chlorodyne]⁷ and castor oil and sent to bed.

12 April 1925, Monday

[Alexandria]

Colic no better, am still being dosed. Sailed at 6 PM and got a great hearing as we steamed past the other transports.

13 April 1915, Tuesday

[In transit to Lemnos]

Out at sea. Living on Bully Beef and Biscuits. A storm struck us at 5 PM. Very wild night. Cargo shifted and we have a big list to starboard. [Heavy] numbers seasick. We have 1800 aboard this tub.

14 April 1915, Wednesday

[In transit to Lemnos]

Still going strong. Passed French Armed [Cruiser] and British Battle Cruiser this morning. Expect land tonight.

22 April 1915, Thursday

[Lemnos]

We have been lying in Port (M - S)⁸ for some days. Have landed several times. Great activity here; Seaplanes, Submarines, Battleships, Dreadnaughts, Predreadnaughts, Cruisers, and Torpedo Boats buzzing round [around] all day. Have been trying for several days to get a transport off the **knud** [not sure what Garland means by this reference].

23 April 1915, Friday

[Lemnos]

Am on the eve of my first battle. I am excited as can be. We weighed anchor at 4.30 PM and calmly turning around, steamed quietly past numberless transports and 'Ships of War'. We were fourth out and cheer upon cheer rang out from French, Russian, English, Australian, and New Zealand troops as we passed down the lines.

⁶ Essentially, adult colic refers to intestinal or urinary system pain.

⁷ As its principal ingredients were a mixture of laudanum (an alcoholic solution of opium), tincture of cannabis, and chloroform, it readily lived up to its claims of relieving pain, as a sedative, and for the treatment of diarrhea.

⁸ Garland used this code here, but likely to be Port of Mudros, Lemnos.

Out on the open sea now and anchored. The British ships are slipping out past us, bound ENE by E. Warships are slipping out by the dozen. We expect to [affect] a landing tomorrow. All are as excited and as happy as can be. I wonder what the morrow will bring forth.

24 April 1915, Saturday

[Open Sea – Anchored]

Nothing doing with us. Other transports moving out.

25 April 1915, Sunday

[Gallipoli]

Set sail at 1.30 AM. Awakened at 4.30 AM by strong gun fire. Left ship at 9.30 AM and landed at 10 AM under heavy shell fire. Shells falling all round. Attached to HQ. At 1 PM ordered to Brigade HQ to take charge of station in place Cpl. [Moriarty] wounded.

Very hot here, shells landing wholesale. At one time Turks got a [shell] right into our trench and gave us a hell of a time. The din is awful. Casualties heavy. Was standing next to General Walker when he fell. The shell landed so close that the wind knocked him out for a time. Returned to DHQ at 7.30 PM and had to dig a trench to sleep in. Went to bed at 8.45 PM although this battle still rages.

26 April 1915, Monday

Awakened at 4.30 AM and told to get into shelter as shrapnel was expected any moment. The battle has raged all night and continued with fury all day. New Zealand boys doing magnificently. Have been peppered with shrapnel all day. We are forcing Turks back and now penetrated three miles. Captured 9 machine guns.

Now 7 PM and fire slackening down. It has been a great sight to see the warships pounding. 15-inch shells make an awful screech when going over your heads. Casualties today not so heavy. Expect big move tonight. At 7.30 [PM] the shore batteries gave us a warm time, having got our range, and shells landing in our midst every minute or so. On duty at 12 AM tonight.

27 April 1915, Tuesday

Battle still raging. Gradually forcing the Turks back. Shrapnel has worried us all day, very hot at times.

29 April 1915, Thursday

Night alarm at 2 AM, had to turn out and entrench ourselves on the beach, but nothing came of it. A quiet day generally, last Turkish shrapnel passed over us at 10.50 AM. At 7.30 PM called out to examine our wires. Returned to camp at 9 PM.

30 April 1915, Friday

4 AM had to patrol wires again. Day very quiet here, no shells landing at all. Over wire again at 6.15 PM. Fired on by snipers while out and narrowly escaped but could not locate him to return his fire.

1 May 1915, Saturday

Ball⁹ opened by perfect hail of shrapnel from Turks, all bursting among us but doing no damage. Huge 11-inch shells dropping 100 yards beyond us. Battle now fiercer than past day. 12.5 PM, dug-out five yards from mine blown into the air and occupied by a naval man, killed. Had some narrow escapes when examining wire this morning.

2 May 1915, Sunday

Day has been exceptionally quiet. Only a few shells landing here. This morning 50 of our men left in a destroyer and landed ten miles up the coast, surprises the Turks, killed 3 wounded 4 and captured 10 men and one officer, who had been acting as observer. They blew up a wireless plant, telegraph office, and several gun emplacements.

It is a great sight to see our men swimming under fire. They are gradually becoming more and more used to fire. There has been a most terrible bombardment down the coast all day. Now 6.15 PM and the ball seems to be recommencing, as several shells have landed here, and the warships are replying. Our battery fired 5 shots this morning and this is the reply received from the observer. "Cease fire as there is now no target to fire at". They had blown the Turkish Reserve trenches into the air.

At 7 PM the warships commenced a terrific bombardment which lasted 15 minutes then New Zealand and Australia fixed bayonets and charged, capturing two lines of Turkish trenches. They [we] were driven out twice but captured them a third time and held them. Our losses were fairly heavy, but it is estimated that the Turks lost four to our one.

3 May 1915, Monday

We are still holding the trenches captured last night. The Turks made an attempt to recapture their lost trenches, but our machine guns opened fire and simply slaughtered them by the hundreds.

4 May 1916, Tuesday

Very quiet today, the Turks were assembling for the charge when the Howitzer opened fire and simply blew them to atoms. Our naval men attempted to land 4,000 yards down the coast at the site of an old fort but were repulsed with losses. So far as I can make out the attempt was only to ascertain the strength of the enemy at this point.

5 May 1915, Wednesday

Day throughout was quiet until 7 PM when by a simple ruse we gave the Turks the jumps and fearing a repetition of Sunday's our ... right throughout the night and ... wasted fully a million rounds.

6 May 1915, Thursday

We got it very hot from shrapnel at 4 PM today. They got our range to the inch and killed 3 men and 100 mules and horses.

⁹ I think 'ball' is a reference used by Garland to mean 'shelling'. The Turks used shells that were filled with ball-bearings and designed to explode in the air, raining the deadly shrapnel (ball bearings) on men below.

7 May 1915, Friday

I must here state Gen. Sir Ian Hamilton's remarks in his report:

"I have never seen such dash and courage as shown by the Colonial troops, even rivalled by the Imperial troops, let alone surpassed by them often, and ordered them to advance a mile at all costs, they advanced several miles."

General Walker's words to the New Zealand boys on being relieved of their command "Well boys, I took command of you on Sunday in fear and trembling. I have been soldiering for 14 years and been through 11 campaigns, but Sunday's fight was the hottest I have ever seen, and by your behavior that day. You'll do me."

At 4 PM a new gun of the Turks opened fire on us and gave us nothing. It was very hot for an hour or so [the shell fire]. One landed at the door of our office and burst but did nothing more than give us a fright. Another landed under a boy who was sitting down, exploded, and sending the boy head over heels. Did no more damage.

8 May 1915, Saturday

Nothing doing, beyond two hours bombardment of our positions by the Turks and the blowing up of a Turkish Battery by *HMS Triumph*. There has been heavy fighting at Achi Bobi [Achi Baba] 9 miles from here.

9 May 1915, Sunday

[This day is blank, no further entries in this journal have been made by Garland. Garland was killed while 'laying a loop on the line' at 4 AM on Tuesday, 11 May 1915].

