

# A camera on Gallipoli

The photographs of Charles Ryan



**ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCE**

*A camera on Gallipoli* has been developed by the Australian War Memorial with the support of the Australian Government's Commemorations Program.



Australian Government  
Department of Veterans' Affairs



THEIR SPIRIT  
OUR PRIDE  
2014-18

# ONLINE LEARNING RESOURCE

## *A camera on Gallipoli*

This resource has been designed for upper primary and lower secondary students and is intended to be used in conjunction with the travelling exhibition, *A camera on Gallipoli*. The background information cited in this resource has been taken from the exhibition text, written by Peter Burness.

The activities in this resource support the historical skills and content areas within the primary and secondary Australian Curriculum: History.

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# Who was Charles Ryan?

Charles Ryan's photographs form an historic record of a campaign that over the past 100 years has entered Australian legend. These images capture the mateship, the stoicism, and the dogged endurance that became the spirit of Anzac.

Charles Snodgrass Ryan, born in 1853, was the son of a Victorian pioneer. After completing medical studies in Europe, he set off in search of adventure. Before long he accepted work as a surgeon with the Turkish army in the Turko-Serbian war of 1876, and then in the Russo-Turkish campaign of 1877-78, where his experience of the siege of Plevna led to his receiving the nickname "Plevna".



Ryan returned to Australia, established a practice in Melbourne, and became a leading surgeon, a prominent citizen, and a long-serving military officer in the Victorian Medical Corps.

After returning to Australia following the Turko-Serbian War, Ryan was involved in the famous police battle with the bushranger Ned Kelly and his gang at Glenrowan, Victoria, in June 1880. He was sent to help the wounded, and treated Kelly following his capture.

When the First World War broke out, Charles Ryan was 60 years old and by then a colonel in the Australian Army Medical Corps. He was quick to offer his services and was appointed Assistant Director of AIF Medical Services. Ryan is pictured here with his camera at the ready, on the island of Lemnos in 1915.



AWM C02146



AWM P02648.001



AWM H00111

On board a troop transport, just off Gallipoli, Ryan operated on some wounded Australians who had been brought on board. Once on the beach he assisted in preparing casualties for evacuation. In the following weeks, he conducted numerous operations ashore or aboard the hospital ships shuttling between Anzac and Alexandria.

In July 1915 Ryan became very sick, and was not robust enough to continue at the front. He spent the rest of the war engaged in valuable work at the Australians' headquarters in London. He was mentioned in despatches for his work at Anzac, received the CB and CMG, and was knighted (KBE). Ryan died suddenly in 1926 at sea while returning from a private trip to Europe.

# Bound for the war

Australia in 1914 was a young nation, its colonies having federated little more than a decade earlier. Its population of almost five million was derived largely from descendants of immigrants from Britain, and was spread across the country in the handful of developing cities and in the bush. With a culture firmly rooted in British traditions, and as a member of the British Empire, Australia was still strongly tied to the mother country for trade and defence.



Norman Lindsay, Fall in!, 1918, lithograph printed in colour, 48.4 x 43.1 cm, AWM ARTV00027

When Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August, Australia quickly pledged its support. As Andrew Fisher said shortly before he was elected prime minister, “Australians will stand beside our own to help and defend [the empire] to our last man and our last shilling.”

In Australia, recruiting for what would become the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) began just five days after war was declared. The AIF was a contingent raised for overseas service for the duration of the war, and its members all volunteered to join up. Men had to be between the ages of 21 (or 18 with parental permission) and 45, with a high level of health and fitness. Women also wanted to “do their bit”, and around 3,000 nurses eventually joined the AIF as part of the Australian Army Nursing Service.

## Questions and activities

The ancient pyramids of Egypt form a backdrop to the tent city of the 1st Australian Division's camp at Mena outside of Cairo.

**Why do you think the army used tents?**



AWM C05278A



AWM REL29671.001

A decorative teaspoon featuring a hinged enameled coffin with a small gold coloured mummy figure inside. The bowl of the spoon is decorated with an enameled transfer of a scene of Egyptian ruins.

This spoon was sent to Mrs Winifred Cazneaux in 1915 by an Australian soldier, Private William Fell, who had been an associate and pupil of her husband, the noted Sydney photographer Harold Cazneaux.

**Have you got a souvenir?**

**Why do you have it?**

**Why do you think soldiers overseas posted souvenirs home to Australia?**

Australian army nurses at Luna Park, Cairo's large entertainment centre, whose buildings were taken over to handle some of the first wounded troops being brought back from Gallipoli in April 1915.

**What are the nurses wearing?**

**How is this similar to or different from nurses' uniforms today?**



AWM C05290A

# Major General William Bridges



Major General William Bridges

AWM A02867

William Throsby Bridges was born in 1861 in Scotland. As a young man he and his family moved to Canada, where he attended the Royal Military College in Ontario. Tall and slimly built, Bridges was a keen canoeist as a cadet. Although he was a good student, he became unsettled and started failing his courses after his family migrated to Australia without him. He withdrew from the Royal Military College and joined his family in Sydney, then later in Moss Vale, New South Wales. Shortly after his arrival, he began working as an Inspector for the Department of Roads and Bridges at Braidwood.

In 1885, when New South Wales raised a military contingent in response to the British crisis in Sudan, Bridges decided to return to military life. He applied too late to join the Sudan contingent, but joined the forces raised to cover the contingent's absence. He took a permanent commission in the artillery three months later.

That same year Bridges married Edith Francis and began four years' service on the staff of the School of Gunnery in Sydney. He and Edith went on to have seven children, three of whom died young.

In 1890 Bridges was promoted to captain and returned to Britain to attend gunnery courses for three years. He was then one of four New South Wales officers sent to serve with British army units during the Boer War in South Africa.



Bridges (centre) with his staff in Egypt, c. 1915.

The photograph was taken by Charles Ryan.

AWM C05276A

On his return to Australia, Bridges held a number of appointments within the army, and was known as a highly competent officer. He was the first chief of the Australian general staff in 1909 and, shortly afterwards, established Australia's first military college at Duntroon, which opened in June 1911.

Bridges had been promoted to brigadier general, and when the First World War broke out, he was given the task of raising an Australian contingent for service in Europe - it was he named it the "Australian Imperial Force" and he was appointed its commander.

Bridges's division was the very first ashore at Anzac Cove on 25 April 1915. Foreseeing disaster, he argued for immediate evacuation - but this was simply not possible. The force stayed, and Bridges began a series of routine visits to the firing line. On one such visit, on 15 May he was hit by a sniper's bullet, and died three days later on board the hospital ship, Gascon, en route to Egypt. He was buried in Egypt, but his body was exhumed on 27 July 1915 and returned to Australia. There he received a state funeral and was reinterred on Mount Pleasant overlooking the Royal Military College, Duntroon, in Canberra.



AWM P05290.001

## Questions and activities

William Bridges with his favourite horse, Sandy, who returned home in 1918 after spending time in quarantine in England. Sandy was the only AIF horse that returned to Australia.

**Why do you think no other Australian horses were returned home?**



AWM P10797.002

The burial of Major General Sir William Bridges in Canberra on 3 September 1915.

**Why do you think there are so many people present?**

On 11 November 1993, the body of an unknown Australian soldier recovered from Adelaide Cemetery near Villers-Bretonneux in France was interred in the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial.

The Unknown Australian Soldier and Major General Bridges were the only Australian First World War servicemen to have died overseas and be reinterred on Australian soil.

## Why do you think so many people today choose to visit the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier?



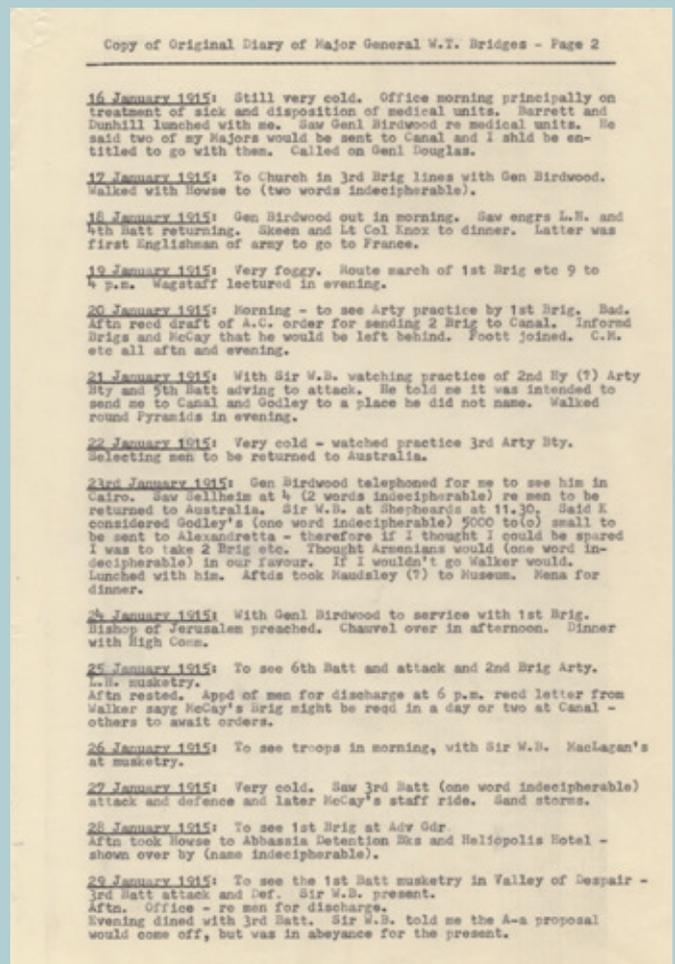
AWM PAIU1993/260.16

Look at Major General William Bridges' diary, which he kept between 1 January 1915 and 23 April 1915. In it, he details the planning for the Gallipoli campaign.

## What is the purpose of a diary?

## What sort of information is there in this diary?

## Why do you think someone like Bridges kept one?



AWM RCDIG0001020

# Life on Gallipoli for the Anzacs

On 25 April 1915 Anzac troops landed on the Turkish Gallipoli peninsula. They were set to capture the narrowest southern part of the peninsula to support British forces landing at its tip. Taking the peninsula would remove the Turks' defences and allow allied warships to reach Constantinople (Istanbul). It was hoped this would force Turkey out of the war. But the landings went astray from the beginning, and the British and empire troops only ever managed to gain a slim foothold on the Turkish shore.

All along the front line at Anzac, which was a maze of trenches and tunnels, a narrow no man's land separated the two armies. By May it was clear that the allies could not advance nor could the Turks drive them back. Stalemate had set in. The Australians, who had left home with expectations of excitement, adventure, and possibly glory, were soon engaged constantly in digging trenches and tunnelling, living in scooped-out holes and rude dug-outs. Throughout it all they faced death from disease or from enemy attacks and shelling.



AWM P02647.023

## Questions and activities

Anzac beach was a hub of activity. Here supplies are being landed from barges and men are having a swim or doing washing. The shore area was also an administrative centre, a stores area, and a place where "factories" produced periscope rifles and "jam-tin" bombs.

**Why do you think so much was done on the beach?**



AWM REL42335

Officer's service dress tunic belonging to Captain Percy Cherry, of the 26th Battalion, AIF. The tunic, made of heavy wool, was designed to be worn in all weathers. It has a colour patch on the sleeve.

**What must it have felt like to wear a uniform like this in the height of summer in the Gallipoli trenches, or in heavy rain?**

**What might the soldiers have done to their tunics to adjust them to the climate?**

**What is a colour patch? What does a colour patch tell you about the soldier?**

Remains of an entrenching tool (shovel) from Lone Pine, Gallipoli.

**What would entrenching tools have been used for on the battlefield?**



AWM RELAWMO7883



AWM REL/00915

This "hard tack" biscuit was sent from Gallipoli by Gunner Frank Lemmon to his mother in England.

**What is "hard tack"?**

**Why do you think it got that name?**

**What else might Australian soldiers have eaten on Gallipoli?**

**Why might Frank have used a biscuit to write a message to be sent home?**



AWM RELAWM00409.001

Jam tin bomb recovered from Lone Pine, Gallipoli.

**What do these weapons suggest about soldiers' ability to adapt to their surroundings?**



AWM P02648.008

Taken by Charles Ryan after the Anzacs had been at Gallipoli for about a month, this photograph shows officers and soldiers conferring in a trench on one of the ridges at Gallipoli.

**What looks like a latrine (toilet) is set into an alcove in the wall of the trench. How would the men have felt having to use this?**

**Why do you think there would be a toilet in the trench itself?**



AWM REL/14717

Periscope.

**What do you think soldiers might have used this for?**

**Have you ever used something similar?**

**How would it have helped Australian troops?**

# General Sir William Birdwood



General Sir William Birdwood, 1920. He is wearing a slouch hat, which was presented to him during a tour of Australia, where he was warmly received.

AWM P03717.009

Born in 1865 in Kirkee, India, William Birdwood was a senior officer in Britain's pre-1914 Indian Army. He was appointed in December 1914 to the command of the Australian and New Zealand forces then assembling in Egypt. These units were soon formed into a corps, the "A and NZ Army Corps", of two divisions - the 1st Australian Division, AIF, commanded by Major General William Bridges, and the New Zealand and Australian Division, commanded by Major General Sir Alexander Godley.

In the corps headquarters in Cairo in 1914, material addressed to the "A and NZ Army Corps" piled up and the title seemed very cumbersome. Demands were made for a simpler name and a British officer suggested the abbreviation "ANZAC". Birdwood approved and the word "Anzac" was born.

On Gallipoli, it was Birdwood who requested that the position held by the Australians and New Zealanders be known as Anzac and that the place where most of them had landed on 25 April be known as Anzac Cove. Soon those who fought there were themselves being called "Anzacs".

Birdwood has been described as the "Soul of Anzac". His headquarters was in the hills just behind Anzac Cove and was open to Turkish shelling. William was often to be seen walking around the Anzac positions and up along the trenches on the ridges.



Sir William Birdwood, visiting a Maxam machine-gun post near the front line on Gallipoli.

AWM P02648.010

He was even observed swimming off the beach, sharing the dangers of Turkish shelling with everyone else. Such behaviour made him, unlike many generals, very visible to his men and highly regarded. As Charles Bean, the Australian official war correspondent, later wrote in the official history: "Above all, he possessed the quality, which went straight to the heart of Australians, of extreme personal courage." For his part, "Birdie", as he was known to his close friends, greatly admired his Anzacs and claimed to have got on well with all the men, regardless of their rank.

Birdwood commanded the Anzac Corps through almost the whole Gallipoli campaign. In 1916, he went to France as the commander of I Anzac Corps, and in late 1917 he was given command of the newly formed Australian Corps, comprising all five divisions of the AIF. He handed command of the corps to Lieutenant General Sir John Monash in May 1918, but retained the overall administrative command of the AIF. After the war, he went on a highly successful tour of Australia with his wife, then returned to the Indian army.

In 1925 he was made a field marshal in the British (and hence Australian) army. It was Birdwood's great desire that he might be appointed Governor-General of Australia, but it was not to be. He died in England in 1951 and was buried with full military honours.



AWM G00401

## Questions and activities

Lieutenant General Sir William Birdwood swimming at Anzac Cove, May 1915.

**Why do you think soldiers at Anzac Cove went swimming in the sea?**

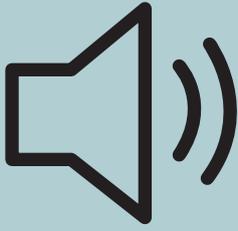
**What dangers did they face?**



AWM REL39113

This tin badge was a fund-raising badge produced to commemorate Anzac Day in 1918. Badges like this were sold on trams and buses, at railways stations and at rallies to raise money. The inclusion of Birdwood's portrait shows the high regard in which he was held by the public.

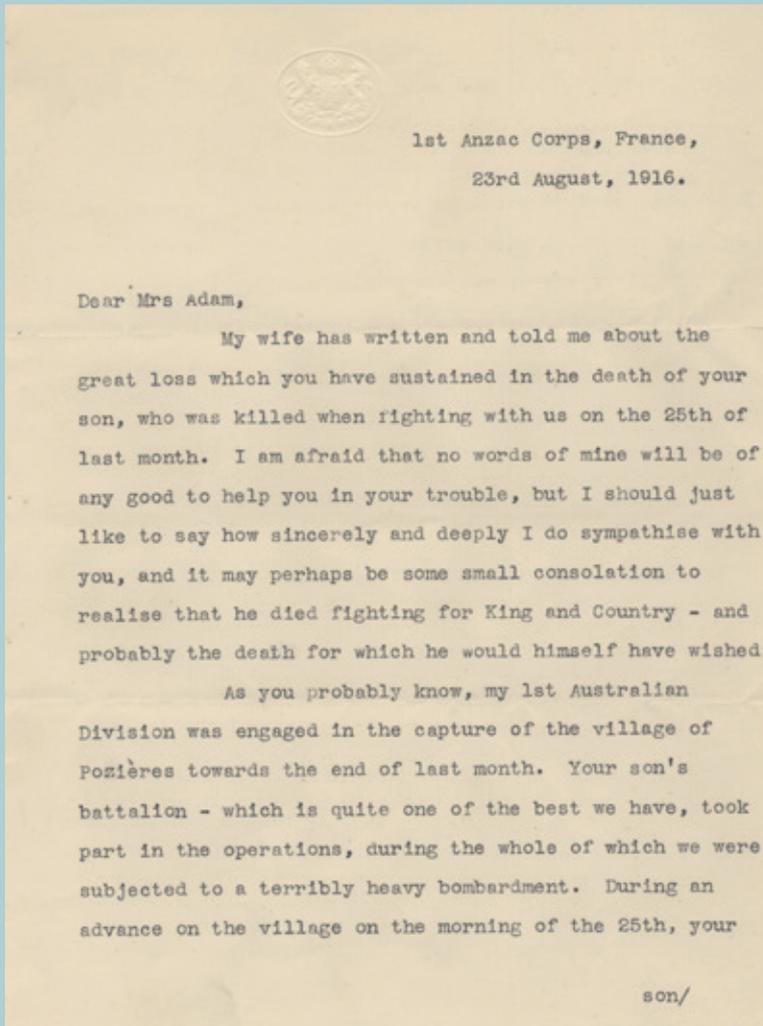
**Can you think how money is raised in similar ways these days? Why?**



<http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/S00174/> -

Listen to this sound file in which Birdwood describes his impressions of the character of Australian soldiers.

**What does Birdwood think about Australian soldiers?  
Why do you think he might feel this way?**

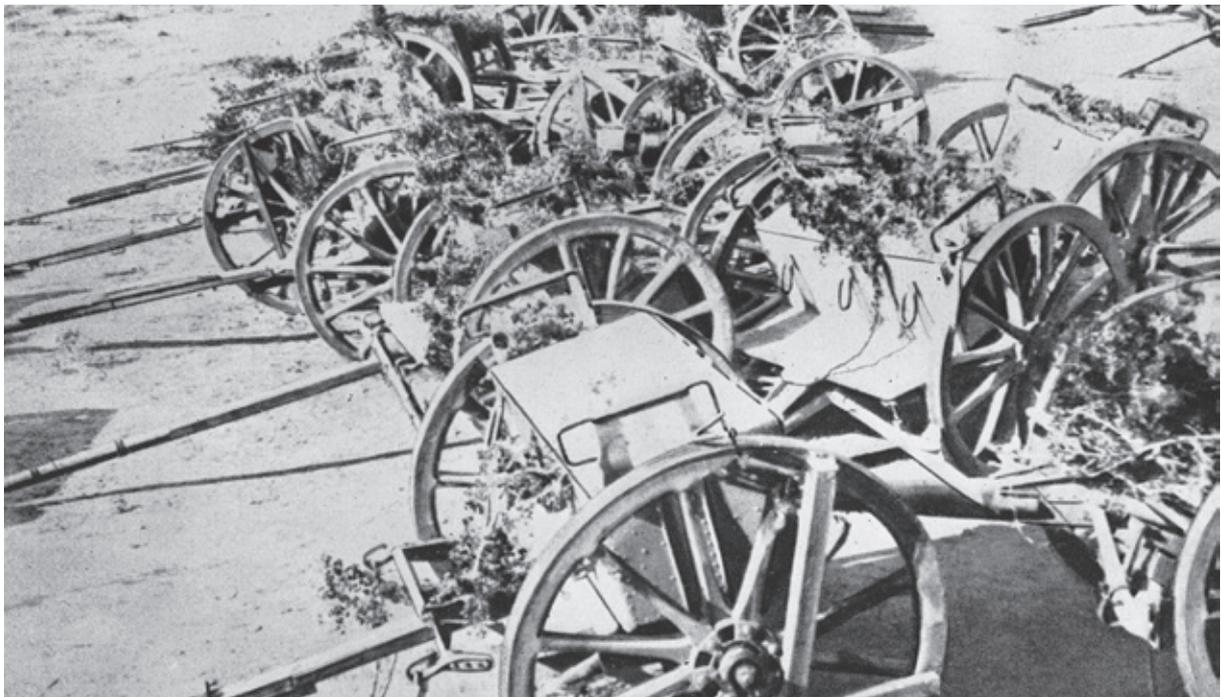


Read this letter from William to a mother who lost her son.

**Why do you think Birdwood wrote this letter?**

## No more battles

In August, the British tried unsuccessfully to revive the stalled campaign with a series of fresh attacks. Losses were heavy, and there were few gains. It soon became evident that no more was possible. Finally, it was decided to abandon the campaign, and in December the troops evacuated Anzac. By 1916 the focus for the Australians had shifted to France and Belgium, while the light horse fought on in Palestine.



Guns and ammunition limbers abandoned during the evacuation of Gallipoli.

AWM C03211

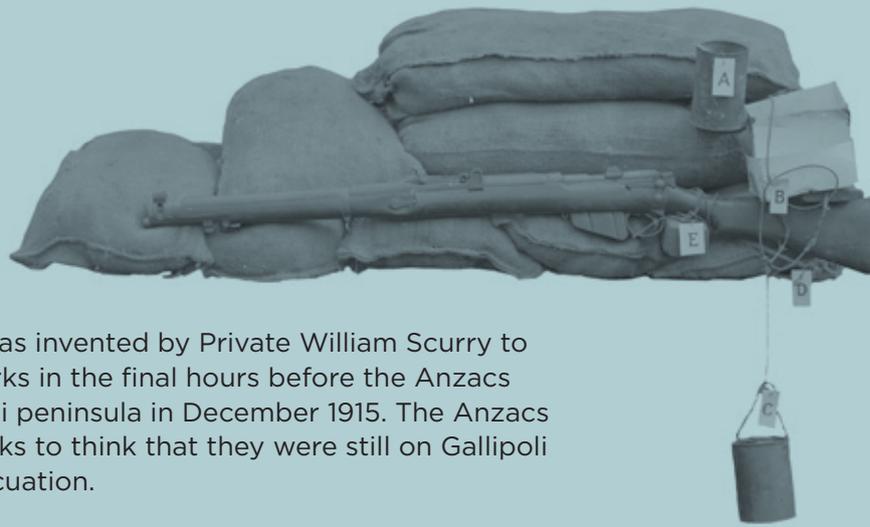
### Questions and activities

A game of cricket at Shell Green, Gallipoli, which took place while the Anzacs were secretly preparing to leave Gallipoli. Shells passed over the players' heads during this game.

**Why do you think the Anzacs played cricket during the evacuation?**



AWM G01289



AWM J00364

The drip rifle was invented by Private William Scurry to deceive the Turks in the final hours before the Anzacs left the Gallipoli peninsula in December 1915. The Anzacs wanted the Turks to think that they were still on Gallipoli during the evacuation.

**Look at the photograph.  
How do you think a drip rifle works?**



AWM C02434

Troops from the 7th Australian Infantry Brigade sailing on board HMT *Minnewaska* to Alexandria after leaving Gallipoli, 6 January 1916.

**How do you think the Anzacs felt when they saw Egypt again? Why?**

# General Sir Henry George Chauvel



Sir Harry Chauvel, c. 1918.  
AWM B01484

Charles Bean described him as a “wise, good and considerate commander”.

**Who was Charles Bean, and why would his opinion have been important?**

Born in 1865 to a New South Wales farming family, Henry “Harry” George Chauvel showed an early inclination for a military career, and as a boy joined the school cadet unit. Then, in 1886, following a move to Queensland, he and several members of his family joined the Upper Clarence Light Horse. His father was a captain; Harry, aged 21, and his brother became second lieutenants; two more of Harry’s brothers were troopers.

In 1896 Chauvel joined the Queensland Permanent Forces and the following year travelled to England for Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee. There, Chauvel wore his emu feathers, and marched through London with other troops from Britain’s colonies.

By the time the Boer War began, Chauvel had shown excellent leadership skills. He enlisted for the war and was given command of a company of the Queensland Mounted Infantry. While in South Africa, he went on to command British, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand mounted troops, who became known as “Chauvel’s Mounted Infantry”. Chauvel also took part in some major actions, was Mentioned in Despatches, and was later appointed a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George.

Remaining in the army, Chauvel went on to play a significant role in the First World War. He served on Gallipoli, overseeing a sector that was open to Turkish observation, and saw heavy fighting. In response to the threat posed by Turkish snipers, he formed special sniper groups to allow mule trains to move more freely in the area. Although pleurisy hospitalised him for six weeks, Chauvel returned to Gallipoli and ultimately led the 1st Australian Division there.

After Gallipoli, Chauvel became commander of the Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division, and then of all Australian forces in Egypt. Throughout 1916 his regiments pursued the Turks through the Sinai. The following year, Chauvel became Australia’s highest ranked soldier when he was given command of the Desert Mounted Corps, made up of British, Australian, and New Zealand units. He was also the first Australian to permanently command a corps.

Chauvel led his forces to notable feats during this period. He masterminded the first decisive British victory of the war when his forces defeated the Turks at Romani. He also played a key role in the capture of Beersheba, which involved the famous mounted charge by the 4th Light Horse Brigade. The battle for Beersheba opened the way to Palestine and the capture of Jerusalem, and on to Damascus and, ultimately, the Turkish surrender. The charge was re-enacted many years later, in 1940, by Chauvel’s film director nephew, Charles Chauvel, in the film *Forty Thousand Horsemen*.

When Chauvel returned to Australia, he was appointed Inspector-General, the army's most senior post, and in November 1929 he became a general, the first Australian to reach that rank. He retired the following year, but continued to lead Anzac Day marches in Melbourne for much of the 1930s. Though out of the services, Chauvel continued to be a man of action. In 1939, while staying with his daughter in Victoria during the Black Friday bushfires, he directed the firefighting effort when their property was threatened. At one point, he climbed a tree near the house to hack away blazing branches.

With the advent of the Second World War, Chauvel once again donned the Australian uniform. Now aged 75, Chauvel became inspector-in-chief of the Volunteer Defence Corps - the local home guard. He held this post until his death on 4 March 1945, shortly before the end of the Second World War.



Colonel Harry Chauvel outside his headquarters in Monash Valley, Gallipoli.

AWM P02648.016

## Questions and activities

**What does this painting show?**

**What is the landscape like?**

**What sorts of difficulties could mounted troopers face in this environment?**



H. Septimus Power, *Leaders of the Australian Light Horse in Palestine, 1918*  
(1926, oil on canvas, 152.2 x 243.6 cm, AWM ART09557)



AWM H16931

General Sir Harry Chauvel placing a wreath on the Amiens Memorial, France, 25 May 1937.

A horse's fly veil used by an Australian Light Horse unit in Palestine.

**Why do you think it was necessary for horses to wear these in the deserts of Sinai and Palestine?**

**Australian children often made these fly veils to be sent overseas. What else may have been sent to servicemen and women during the First World War?**



AWM RELAWM04226

# Going further

For more information and case studies relating to the First World War, go to:

**Anzac diversity:**

<http://www.awm.gov.au/education/schools/resources/anzac-diversity/>

**Diary of an Anzac:**

<http://www.awm.gov.au/education/schools/resources/diary-of-an-anzac/>

**Nurses:**

<http://www.awm.gov.au/education/schools/resources/nurses-primary/>

<http://www.awm.gov.au/education/schools/resources/nurses-secondary/>

## Reading list

Patsy Adam-Smith, *The Anzacs*, Penguin Books, Victoria, 1991

Charles Bean, *Gallipoli mission*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1948

Jean Bou, *Light Horse: a history of Australia's mounted arm*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 2010

Leslie Lloyd Robson, *The First AIF: a study of its recruitment 1914-1918*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1982

Peter Stanley and Michael McKernan, *Australians at war 1885-1972*, Collins, Sydney, 1984.

## Helpful links

**Australian War Memorial:**

*Dawn of the Legend* exhibition: Major General Sir William Bridges:

<http://www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/dawn/plan/bridges/>

People profiles: Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood:

<http://www.awm.gov.au/people/P10676233/>

*Fifty Australians* exhibition: General Sir Harry Chauvel:

<http://www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/fiftyaustralians/7.asp>.

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