

Henry Dawson Tutt and his Experience as a Digger

Soldier Background

Henry Dawson Tutt was a South Australian soldier. He was educated at Mitcham Schools from the age of 7 to 16 years. When he enlisted for the AIF on 28 November, 1914, he stated that he was a 24 year old "wood machinist", and that he'd been with the James Marshall Reliable Furniture Company for 5 years. Prior to this, he had left school at 16, and spent three years (1906-1909) completing an apprenticeship with the furniture company. In his army file, it also describes how he was a part of the Church of England, not in a relationship and that he lived on Arnold Street in Mitcham, with his large family. Henry had four sisters and two brothers- one of which went toward with him. His parents were George and Anne Tutt (nee Parkyn Dawson). Henry was also a part of the St Michaels Football Team and the Mitcham Boys' Club.¹



Henry Dawson Tutt

Describe the Gallipoli Campaign and those involved in it.

The Gallipoli Campaign was the British High Command's plan to help Russia gain control of the Eastern Front and lead the capture of the Dardanelles and Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul). This was to be achieved by the British navy attacking the Turkish forts on this peninsula. There were many benefits and purposes for this grand plan.



Firstly, once Constantinople was captured, it would be easier to focus on Germany and the Western Front. Secondly, both Britain and France agreed that they would need to support Russia, because without this gigantic nation as an ally, the war would have ultimately been lost for the British and the French. A very important part of the Eastern Front was the Dardanelles, as it was Russia's only all-weather port located in the Black Sea and without it, Russia would have had to suffer with minimal shipping movement. This meant ammunition, grains and oil always arrived sparingly. Another helpful point was that the Dardanelles meant a clear path and easy access to and from the Eastern Front.

The countries involved were the Triple Entente (UK, Russia and France), and three other nations to assist the "mother country"- India, Australia and New Zealand. The last two nations joined to make the Australia and New Zealand Army Corps: more commonly known as ANZAC.

The British and French armies were to land at Cape Helles and capture the Achi Baba range. The ANZACs's aim was to land at Gaba Tepe and capture Hill 971 on Sari Bair. Their landing was to be timed just before dawn. For both of these plans, they were hoping to capture their areas by the end of the first day.

Unfortunately, the British seamen miscalculated the ocean current and their position so the Anzacs ended up landing at Ari Burnu instead- 1km north from where they had originally

planned. At 4:30am on the 25 April 1915, this was where the Anzacs arrived. Towards the end of the day, the Anzacs had struggled forward only 500-900m, at a cost of 2000 casualties. One of the many ways these soldiers have been commemorated is the new name the beach was given: Anzac Cove.

Soldier's experience in Gallipoli.

Henry Dawson Tutt's experience as a soldier in Gallipoli was not one that lasted. To begin with, though, he trained at the Morphetville Training Camp. All the recruits there were housed in tents. Henry became a part of 10th Battalion, a "six-bob-a-day tourist". Soon after, he left with his battalion from Outer Harbour at 4:40pm on 20 October 1914 to go to Melbourne. When his short 5 week training was over, he left on the ship the *Clan McGillivray* on the 2 February 1915. To get to Gallipoli, Henry boarded the *Ionian*, a Greek Steamer, (christened the "One Onion" by the Anzacs), which travelled to the Greek Island of Lemnos. He was then allocated to the B Company of his battalion. They arrived on 24 April 1915 in the afternoon, only to be placed onto another ship: the *Prince of Wales*. This was to take them straight to Gallipoli.

Once the ship took them as close to the shore as possible, the troops were allocated into rowboats. They then rowed these to shore, and ran up the shore, not firing, but with their bayonets aimed at the enemy. As for Henry, there have been no records, official or rough, of what happened definitely happened to him. Records do say, though, that he was wounded and sent to the transport ship, the *Seang Choon*. Henry Dawson Tutt died of wounds, "for King and Country", on 27 April 1915, and was buried at sea. His brother Albert, who also fought, was killed in action (his service number was 2477). He was in France and died on 11 April, 1917, at 23 years of age.

Give your understanding of the meaning of Anzac Spirit.

As an Australian, when I hear the word Anzac, I strongly believe it is one full of history, identity, and all of the unique and "fair dinkum" qualities you would find in any Australian. Not only did it influence, fuel and inspire our soldiers in Gallipoli, it was also powerful enough to bring together and shape the nation we can proudly call our home.

As a soldier, the Anzac Spirit would have had a large part on their well-known character. A few famous traits of the typical Australian Digger were heroic, courageous, tough, disliking authority, a real man, brave, determined and a leader. Many people, even today, would still look up to those Diggers as role models and strive to have all of these qualities, too.



SOURCE 7.77 Australian War Memorial, c. 1940, from Mount Ainslie, Canberra

As we did not have the technology or transport we have today during World War One, many families and communities experiencing loss would never have been able to attend their relation's funeral, or final resting place overseas. In true Australian fashion- driven by the newly discovered Anzac Spirit- the people of Australia created the Australian War Memorial. It is one of a kind, combining understanding, with support and respect, for all of the fallen soldiers in each and every war. The Anzac Spirit is largely displayed here, too: even though Australian families were on the other side of the globe and may never see their deceased

loved ones' grave, they cherished and appreciated the insurmountable time and effort that the Australian War Memorial had dedicated into making them feel as close to them as possible.

Any True Blue Aussie would agree that the Anzac Spirit is alive and buzzing anyplace that may be associated with our Diggers, and will continue to do so in the many generations ahead.

To what extent did his service reflect the Anzac Spirit?

Henry Dawson Tutt may not have fought for very long, but that is not necessarily what the Anzac Spirit represents. Sure, if he had survived all of the battles he had been in and fought until he ached, it would have meant something. Another soldier however, may have also survived the same amount of battles as the above example of a true war hero, but may have put in minimal effort or chickened out. Like all of the other soldiers, though, Henry knew that if he was going to be knocked down, he wanted it to be for a good cause and because he was fighting his hardest.



SOURCE 7.78 Anzac Day march. Swanston Street, Melbourne, 1986

Even though Henry knew that it

was a strong possibility that he may

die, he fought for his King, his country, his family, himself, but most importantly, to protect the freedom that was worth dying for. If Germany had won the war, the majority of Europe would have been controlled by Germany and her allies. Who knows what Germany would risk in the future to gain even more power- and how many thousands upon thousands of people would lose their freedom.

Some people may decide to research Henry Dawson Tutt and assume he was a pansy or a nobody because he died after only 2 days of being at Gallipoli. Others, I hope, would recognise all of the Digger's qualities he possessed, how the Anzac Spirit burned inside of him, and how he played a part in Australia's, and the quite possibly the world's, priceless freedom.

What was the impact of their service on families and communities left behind in South Australia?

Henry Dawson Tutt's impact on South Australia may not have been extremely large or well known, but it definitely would have been acknowledged as significant in more ways than one. Firstly, Henry passed away at Gallipoli on 27 April 1915 (very soon after the first ANZAC day). In doing so, he was the first Mitcham Schools student to die in the war. To commemorate him, the Adelaide Advertiser reported on the 10 of February 1917, that the Mitcham District Council agreed to go along with the Kingswood Progress Associations proposal of changing Mecklenburg Street to Tutt Avenue.

Along with this, Mitcham Primary School has commemorated the ex-students that died in the Great War by creating a Memorial Walk leading into the school. Each of the fallen soldiers, including Henry, have their own personalised plaque. A short term impact for Henry Dawson Tutt's service in the AIF would have been the grief of his family and the community. A long term impact could be the street named after him, his name on the Roll of Honour in the Australian War Memorial, and his plaque in Mitcham Primary.

Also, the fact that he contributed to keeping Australia's freedom, that many countries envy, and the status that the Triple Entente gained from "winning" the war. Despite this, many countries agreed that neither side truly won- too many had to make the ultimate sacrifice, and those that were spared were left to suffer and grieve.

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