

= William George Malone =

Lieutenant Colonel William George Malone (24 January 1859 ? 8 August 1915) was an officer in the New Zealand Military Forces who served in the First World War . He commanded the Wellington Infantry Battalion during the Gallipoli Campaign , and was killed in action during the Battle of Chunuk Bair .

Born in England , Malone emigrated to New Zealand in 1880 and joined the New Zealand Armed Constabulary . After two years service in the Taranaki region , he worked at Opunake and later took up farming on land he bought with his brother near Stratford . He studied to become a lawyer and worked in New Plymouth in partnership with other lawyers but later set up his own practice in Stratford .

A volunteer in New Zealand 's militia , he helped raised the Stratford Rifle Volunteers . When the militia was abolished and replaced with the Territorial Force , he was made commander of 11th Regiment (Taranaki Rifles) . Following the outbreak of the First World War , he volunteered for service with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force and was appointed commander of the Wellington Infantry Battalion . He led the battalion through training in Egypt and during the Gallipoli Campaign until his death at Chunuk Bair in Gallipoli .

= = Early life = =

William George Malone was born in Lewisham , a village in Kent , England , the second of five children of Louisa and Thomas Malone . His father was a chemist who worked in London for the photography pioneer Henry Fox Talbot . Thomas Malone died in 1867 at the age of 44 , which placed his family in reduced financial circumstances .

William Malone was initially educated at St. Joseph 's College in Clapham , London before receiving further schooling at Marist boarding schools in both England and France , and becoming fluent in French . After completing his education in 1876 , he became an office worker in London . His military career began with his enlistment with the City of Westminster Rifle Volunteers , and he also served for a time in the Royal Artillery Volunteers .

= = Life in New Zealand = =

Malone immigrated to New Zealand in January 1880 . His older brother , Austin , had previously moved to New Zealand and was serving in the New Zealand Armed Constabulary . A month after his arrival , Malone joined his brother in service with the Armed Constabulary . Both brothers were based at Opunake , in the Taranaki region . Malone took part in the storming of the village of Parihaka on 5 November 1881 .

Malone left the Armed Constabulary after two years service and became involved in surfboats which unloaded cargo at Opunake . With his brother , who had left the Armed Constabulary in November 1880 , he eventually bought a large block of bush country near Stratford and took up farming . Within a few years , his land had been converted into productive farmland . By this time , his mother and two sisters had also immigrated to New Zealand to join them in Stratford . He was also involved in the local militia , the Stratford Rifles .

In 1886 , Malone married Elinor Lucy (née Penn) . The couple would eventually have five children , a daughter and four sons . As well as supporting his young family he found time to take an active role in the Stratford community . He was a member of the Hawera County Council as well as the Taranaki Hospital and Charitable Aid Board . From 1890 , in addition to his farming , Malone also worked as a land agent . Later , he helped found the Stratford County Council and served as its first clerk and treasurer from 1891 to 1900 .

Malone took up the study of law , becoming a solicitor in 1894 and a barrister five years later . In 1903 , the same year that he and his family moved to New Plymouth , he formed a partnership dealing mostly with land transactions with James McVeagh and W. D. Anderson . The partners would open several law offices around the Taranaki region .

On 18 June 1904 , Malone suffered the loss of his wife Elinor in childbirth . Their baby son also died . The following year , Malone married Ida Katharine Withers , and would go on to have three more children . Ida had been a friend of Elinor 's and had also tutored the Malone children .

Malone became politically active and unsuccessfully stood as an Independent Liberal in a by @-@ election for the Taranaki electorate in 1907 ; of the three candidates , he came last . The following year , Joseph Ward , the leader of the Liberal Party , invited Malone to be the party 's candidate in the 1908 general election . He declined ; Malone had views that in some respects were incompatible with those of the Liberal Party , and he instead stood as an independent . Although unsuccessful , he gained nearly 30 % of the electorate vote . In both 1907 and 1908 , he was defeated by the conservative politician Henry Okey , who was to hold the Taranaki electorate until his death in 1918 .

In 1911 , after selling his share of the law practice , Malone returned to Stratford . He started his own law firm in partnership with another practitioner . With a reduced work load , he began focus on his other interests , which included the military . Malone participated in New Zealand 's militia , the Volunteer Force . In 1900 , he helped raise the Stratford Rifle Volunteers , one of many units formed in the enthusiasm for the military during the Second Boer War , with himself as its captain . When he moved to New Plymouth in 1903 , he relinquished his command . As a result of a request by his Volunteer Force battalion commander , Malone was made adjutant of the 4th Battalion of the Wellington (Taranaki) Rifle Volunteers . In 1905 he was second @-@ in @-@ command and by 1910 , and now a lieutenant @-@ colonel , he was the commander of the battalion .

The following year , the Volunteer Force was abolished and replaced with the Territorial Force . Malone was placed in command of a new Territorial unit , the 11th Regiment (Taranaki Rifles) . It was during this time that he introduced the use of the " lemon squeezer " hat to the Territorial Force . By having his troops push out its crown and indenting its sides , the hat mirrored the outline of Mount Taranaki , thereby providing a link for the regiment to its parent region , and , more practically , allowed rain to easily run off the hat . In later years , the lemon squeezer hat was formally adopted by the New Zealand Military Forces .

= = First World War = =

Malone had been convinced for some time that war was on the horizon and prepared himself accordingly . He studied military history and practices intensively , and underwent a physical fitness and conditioning programme in preparation for military service . This reputedly included his sleeping on a military camp bed . Upon the outbreak of the First World War , he volunteered for service either in New Zealand or overseas . Well regarded by his superiors in the Territorial Force , he was made commander of the Wellington Infantry Battalion of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZEF) .

The battalion embarked from Wellington in October 1914 for Egypt , and upon arrival , was primarily engaged in training before it was deployed along the Suez Canal late in January 1915 to support Indian troops stationed to guard against a rumoured Turkish attack . Three weeks of sentry duty ensued for the battalion before it returned to Cairo .

= = = Gallipoli = = =

By this time , the New Zealand and Australian Division , under the command of Major General Alexander Godley , was being formed for operations in the Dardanelles , and the battalion was attached to the New Zealand Infantry Brigade , one of the two infantry brigades (the other was the Australian 4th brigade) that formed the bulk of the division . In April , the division , now part of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) embarked for Gallipoli . The Wellington Battalion was landed at Anzac Cove on the afternoon of 25 April , and made its way up to Plugge 's Plateau .

On 27 April , the battalion was called upon to reinforce positions held by the Australian 2nd Battalion along a feature that would later be known as Walker 's Ridge . A Turkish counterattack had been launched , threatening the flank of the ANZAC position . By nightfall , Malone had established

a new defensive line along the ridge although he was frustrated by the poor decisions by the commander of 2nd Battalion , Colonel George Braund . Malone believed Braund 's actions had wasted the lives of his men . He consequently made a request to the acting commander of the New Zealand Infantry Brigade , Brigadier General Harold Walker that the Wellington Battalion take sole charge of the position , a request which was approved . In the following days , Malone worked his men hard to improve the defensive positions and ensure the stability of the Walker 's Ridge positions .

In early May , the ANZAC positions had sufficiently stabilised such that the New Zealand Infantry Brigade was transferred to Cape Helles for operations there . Malone led his battalion during the Second Battle of Krithia , during which he came into conflict with his brigade commander , Colonel Francis Johnston , who had taken over command of the brigade from Walker . Johnston ordered a bayonet charge by the Wellington Battalion although Malone pointed out to Johnston the lack of flanking support for such a charge . Johnston was a British Army officer seconded to the NZEF , and in his private correspondence , Malone was beginning to express frustration at the inflexibility of such officers in the face of a fluid battlefield situation . Malone was later mentioned in dispatches for his work at Cape Helles .

By late May , the brigade was back at ANZAC Cove and in reserve . On 1 June , the Wellington Battalion moved into the front lines , taking over Courtney 's Post , previously held by the Australian 4th Brigade . Malone was post commander , and it was planned that he would stay in command at Courtney 's Post while his battalion rotated with the Otago Infantry Battalion in eight @-@ day spells . He immediately set about improving the position , which overlooked the Turkish lines . As well as rectifying the position 's neglected field works , he established a squad of snipers and this proved instrumental in gaining ascendancy over the Turks in no @-@ man 's land .

Malone had impressed his senior commanders with his efforts at Courtney 's Post and on 9 June the Wellington Battalion was tasked with holding Quinn 's Post , previously held by the Auckland and Canterbury Infantry Battalions , both of which were exhausted from offensive operations . Quinn 's was a more exposed position than Courtney 's and had been neglected defensively . With the Turkish trenches often only 10 metres (33 ft) away , Quinn 's Post was a weak spot in the ANZAC lines . Malone immediately set about rectifying this . Terraces and dugouts were built and extensive sandbagging protecting the previously exposed areas of the position were erected . He implemented measures to dominate the no @-@ man 's land between the opposing forces at Quinn 's , ordering construction of machine gun posts and loops to try and increase his men 's ability to direct firepower onto the enemy . Although he placed high demands on his men , he was well respected for he also showed concern and interest in their welfare . His efforts at Quinn 's Post did not go unrecognised . The commander of the ANZAC Corps , General William Birdwood complimented Malone on his work .

= = = Battle of Chunuk Bair = = =

In August , plans were in place for the Allied forces to break out of the ANZAC foothold . Key to this was seizing the Sari Bair Range . On 7 August , the New Zealand Infantry Brigade commenced its assault on Chunuk Bair , the crest of the range , along what was known as Rhododendron Ridge . However , delays in getting the infantry battalions to their starting positions meant that the attack was launched in daylight rather than in the planned night time attack . As a result , heavy losses were incurred amongst the Auckland Infantry Battalion . Johnston , still in command of the brigade despite being clearly unfit for it , ordered Malone to take his battalion forward . Malone refused , arguing that his battalion could take Chunuk Bair that night . His refusal to advance in daylight meant that by the end of the day , his battalion was the only intact battalion in the brigade .

In the early hours of 8 August , supported by the 7th Battalion of the Gloucesters and by extensive artillery and naval fire , the Wellington Battalion succeeded in capturing Chunuk Bair with relatively little resistance . Malone set about securing the crest of Chunuk Bair , but it proved difficult to deepen the relatively shallow Turkish trenches that had been captured by his men , and the work was made even more difficult as the sun rose , allowing the Turks on neighbouring Hill Q to focus

their gunfire on the positions occupied by the Wellingtons . The Gloucesters , also on the crest , were forced to retreat to the reverse slope . The Turkish gunfire caused heavy casualties amongst the infantry holding Chunuk Bair , but crucially also prevented substantive reinforcements from reaching the crest in daylight . Instead , those soldiers that made it up Chunuk Bair tended to be positioned on its rearward slopes and thus had difficulty observing any approaches made by the Turks . Malone continued to co-ordinate the defences but a portion of the crest was lost . He remained in constant action , and led bayonet charges to counter numerous Turkish attacks . The trenches on the crest became filled with the bodies of dead , further reducing what little cover was available .

In the early evening , at around 5 pm , Malone was killed in his headquarters trench by friendly fire , either from supporting artillery or possibly naval gunfire . Reinforcements , in the form of the Otago Battalion and two squadrons of the Wellington Mounted Rifles arrived later that evening , and the remnants of Malone 's battalion withdrew , having suffered 690 men killed or wounded of its original complement of 760 . Malone , along with 300 of his men , has no known grave . Two days later , Chunuk Bair , now held by British units , was lost to the Turks . With the battalion out of the line , a memorial service for Malone was held on 21 August . The service was attended by nearly all of the surviving men of the battalion . Malone was also mentioned in despatches for his leadership during the August offensive .

Malone was survived by his wife Ida and his eight children . Although initially well provided with income from his farming estate , the depression of the 1920s impacted on the earnings of the farmland and Ida struggled financially . She eventually moved to England with her three children and a daughter from Malone 's previous marriage and died there in 1946 . His four oldest sons all served in the NZEF , and one , Maurice , was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal during the Sinai and Palestine Campaign . Another son , Edmond , received the Military Cross while serving with the Wellington Regiment on the Western Front . He died on 6 April 1918 , a few days after being wounded .

= = Legacy = =

After the Battle of Chunuk Bair , while his bravery was not questioned , Malone initially came in for criticism of his handling of the defences , particularly the placement of his defence trenches . In the planning for the battle , and earlier in the Gallipoli Campaign , he had clashed with Major Arthur Temperley , Johnston 's brigade major . Temperley , a British Army officer like Johnston , was one of the foremost critics of Malone 's defensive arrangements and may have unduly influenced the subsequent official reports on the battle . However , recent studies have demonstrated that this criticism was misplaced and there were a number of crucial failures higher up in the chain of command . In particular , Johnston 's delay in getting reinforcements to Chunuk Bair once it was captured likely led to the failure to hold the gains made by Malone 's battalion .

In New Zealand , Malone 's death was widely reported and keenly felt , particularly in the Taranaki region . The soldiers of the Wellington Regiment held their former commander in high regard and paid for the construction of the Malone Memorial Gate , white marble gates at the entrance to King Edward Park in Stratford . The gate , one of New Zealand 's largest war memorials that commemorates an individual soldier , was officially opened on 8 August 1923 in front of a large crowd . The gate is the scene of an annual ceremony held on 8 August to commemorate the memory of Malone . A fictionalised colonel based on Malone was a major character in a 1982 play written by Maurice Shadbolt , Once on Chunuk Bair , which told the story of the Wellington Battalion 's battle of 8 August . In 1992 , the play was filmed as Chunuk Bair . A plaque in his honour was unveiled in the New Zealand Parliament 's Grand Hall in 2005 .