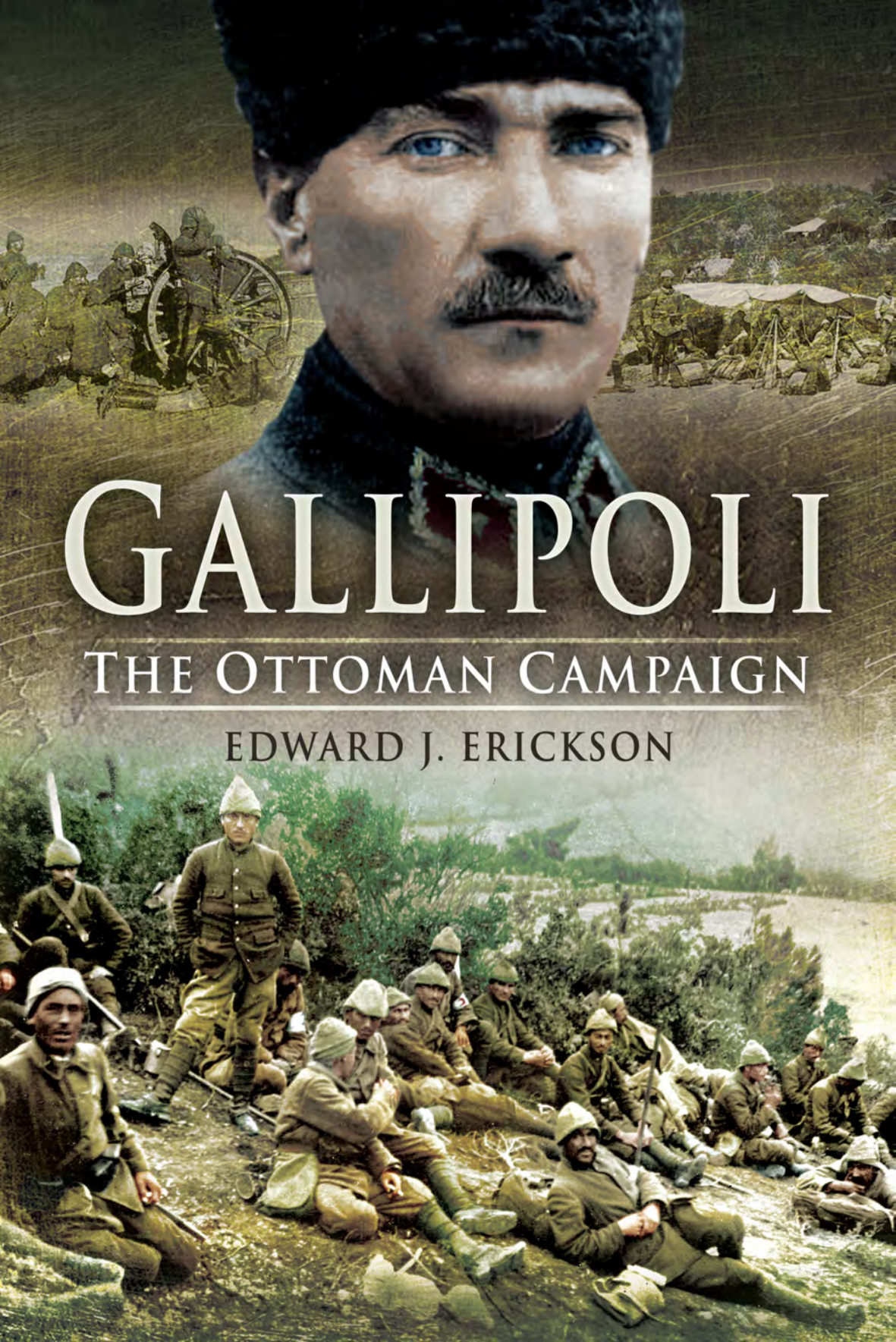

GALLIPOLI

THE OTTOMAN CAMPAIGN

EDWARD J. ERICKSON

Gallipoli
The Ottoman Campaign

Edward J. Erickson

Pen & Sword
MILITARY

First published in Great Britain in 2010 by
Pen & Sword Military
an imprint of
Pen & Sword Books Ltd
47 Church Street
Barnsley
South Yorkshire
S70 2AS

ISBN 978 1 84415 967 3

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Printed and bound in England by MPG

Pen & Sword Books Ltd incorporates the imprints of Pen & Sword Aviation, Pen & Sword Maritime, Pen & Sword Military, Wharncliffe Local History, Pen & Sword Select, Pen & Sword Military Classics and Leo Cooper.

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Dedicated to my very good friends
Stephen P. Dawkins, US Foreign Service (retired)
The Revd Dr Wayne D. Pokorny
Professor Yigal Sheffy, Tel Aviv University
Professor John Gooch, University of Leeds
Professor Keith Wilson, University of Leeds
Ms Jennifer Collins
who all encouraged me to write

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The maps in this book are copied from the 3-volume Turkish official history of the Gallipoli campaign, which contains an astonishing total of 124 colour maps. These maps are packed with graphic information, which significantly adds to our knowledge of these events. This is particularly true in comprehending which Ottoman units were involved in the fighting and where they were located. The maps also aid in the development of coherent understandings of Ottoman orders of battle. The maps, themselves, are based on Ottoman tactical maps, war diaries and situation reports from the campaign that are located in the Turkish military archives. While there are occasional errors and misprints, the maps in general are accurate. The twenty-four Turkish maps found in this study are used with the gracious permission of the Turkish General Staff's Military History and Strategic Institute in Ankara, Turkey.

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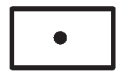
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Introduction

The Gallipoli campaign continues to generate interest around the world. Historian George H. Cassar claims that 'there are more books written about Gallipoli in the English-speaking world than on any other campaign in World War I.' [1] The Gallipoli campaign was unique among First World War battles as it combined modern amphibious joint operations with multi-national combined operations. It took place on a landscape pockmarked with classical and romantic sites and memories, just across the Dardanelles from the ruins of Homer's Troy. The name Gallipoli itself evokes controversy and the campaign is, perhaps, the greatest 'what if' of the war for two reasons. First, the concept behind it was grand strategy of the first order that might have led to conditions ending the war two years early on allied terms. This might have avoided the bloodletting of 1916–1918, saved Czarist Russia from revolution, and side-stepped the disastrous Treaty of Versailles – in effect, altering the course of the entire twentieth century. Secondly, the campaign appeared to be a near miss for Britain on at least three occasions (18 March, 25 April and 6 August 1915) and, moreover, a battle that might easily have been won. For Britain the Gallipoli campaign was a disaster. For the Australians and New Zealanders the campaign was a coming of age as these peoples entered the mainstream of the twentieth century. But, for the Turks, the Gallipoli campaign was monumentally important. For the Turks, Gallipoli marked the first time since the seventeenth century in which they were able to defeat a great European power making the campaign a threshold event in the re-emergence of a new national identity and pride.

The English-language historiography of the campaign and its battles has been constructed over the past ninety years using mostly western sources. [2] These include, for example, such familiar works as C.F. Aspinall-Oglander, *Military Operations Gallipoli*, vols 1 and 2 (1924–1930), C.E.W. Bean, *Official History of*

Australia in the War of 1914–1918: The Story of ANZAC, vol. 1–2 (1942), Alan Moorehead, *Gallipoli* (1956), Robert Rhodes James, *Gallipoli, The History of a Noble Blunder* (1965), Nigel Steel and Peter Hart, *Defeat at Gallipoli* (1994), Philip J. Haythornthwaite, *Gallipoli 1915, Frontal Assault on Turkey* (n.d.) and Michael Hickey, *Gallipoli* (1995). Much of the information contained in these works about the Ottoman side came from German participant memoirs and sources, such as Hans Kannengiesser, *The Campaign in Gallipoli* (n.d.), Carl Mühlmann, *Der Kampf um die Dardanellen 1915* (1927) and Otto Liman von Sanders, *Five Years in Turkey* (1928). Moreover, such additional information as was included in the English-language histories on Ottoman participation came mostly from partial Turkish participant memoirs or from Maurice Larcher's influential *La Guerre Turque Dans La Guerre Mondiale* (1926), which cited only 12 percent of its sources as Ottoman and the remaining 88 percent of sources as European. The result of all this is an architecture of 'history' that is built on a bed of incomplete information and understandings.

This body of Eurocentric received wisdom has led to a number of generalized beliefs about the Gallipoli campaign that are incorrect. The most commonly held western notion about the Ottoman victory is that the Turks stubbornly held on long enough for a series of allied mistakes to disable the allied plan. [3] A recent history of the tactical battles blames British command failures, friction between the army and navy and inexperienced troops and commanders as reasons for failure[4]. At the operational level, a 1995 history noted that 'the Turks always managed to concentrate more troops at the crucial points for the simple reason that they had more troops readily available on the peninsula.'[5] A third history published in 2003 found that the campaign itself, at the strategic level, was ill conceived and incompetently executed.[6] The older histories, including the Australian and British official histories, all contain variants of these themes, which are essentially apologia to explain why the allies lost the campaign.[7] Collectively, the English-language campaign historiography treats the Ottoman victory as passive rather than active.[8] As supplementary reasons explaining why the Turks won, the western histories basically advance two ideas. The first is that the Turks won because of the generalship of Liman von

Sanders and Mustafa Kemal and, secondly, because their fighting men were incredibly tough and resilient soldiers.[9]

It is only recently that western historians have begun to reassess the battles from the Ottoman perspective and it is becoming clearer that bravery and German command assistance, although important, were only components of a larger mosaic of Ottoman combat effectiveness.[10] Of note, the recent work of Tim Travers, *Gallipoli 1915* (2001), Edward Erickson, *Ottoman Combat Effective in World War I: A Comparative Study* (2007) and Robin Prior, *Gallipoli, The End of the Myth* (2009) have all sought to use the Turkish official histories and military archives more fully to achieve more nuanced understandings of the Ottoman campaign. Unfortunately, in Turkey itself, few military historians have emerged to engage the west with counterpoint analysis and arguments regarding the conduct of the campaign. There is, however, a growing interest in Ottoman military history in Turkey, which has helped open the military archives and make possible the publication of a number of diaries and memoirs from participants in the campaign. This awakening of interest has provided a deeper field of material than previously available and greatly assisted the present author in understanding what happened.

This book, *Gallipoli, The Ottoman Campaign*, presents the events of this famous First World War campaign from the Turkish 'side of the hill'. It is not designed to be a comprehensive history that tells the entire story from both sides and all perspectives in a balanced narrative. Rather, this is the campaign as the Turks understand it and it tells their story. Readers wanting the complete details of each battle from the allied side must conduct parallel readings from the exhaustive western historiography. *Gallipoli, The Ottoman Campaign* is based largely on original source documents from the Ottoman Fifth Army residing today in the Turkish general staff's archives in Ankara and from documents contained in the modern Turkish official histories of the campaign (the 3-volume basic set on the Gallipoli campaign contains 1,429 pages, 124 colour maps, 42 order of battle diagrams, 23 organizational charts, dozens of photographs and many reprinted original documents). Supplementing this are memoirs and diaries from Ottoman and German officers, who

held command and staff positions from army level down to battalion level. The author has made a concerted effort to maintain the integrity of the factual basis of this book based on materials contemporary with the campaign.

The Ottoman campaign for Gallipoli is divided into four phases based on the strategic posture of the Ottoman Fifth Army and its predecessors. These are presented as separate chapters in the book. The first phase, 'Ottoman Preparations', begins in 1912 with the fortification of the peninsula in the Balkan Wars and runs through 24 April 1915. The Ottoman army's posture in this phase is constructive and forward leaning. The chapter details the ongoing planning, fortification and garrisoning of the peninsula to repel an amphibious invasion. Particular attention is paid to the command structure, defensive planning efforts and the training of Ottoman army units sent to the peninsula. The second phase, 'the Landings', starts on 25 April and ends on 1 May 1915. This phase details the deployment of the Fifth Army and its operations in response to amphibious invasion. In this phase, the Fifth Army posture is defensive and reactive and involved divisional level battles. The third phase is titled 'Stalemate', 2 May–6 August 1915, and presents the Ottoman Fifth Army in an offensive posture and actively trying to crush the allied beachheads. This phase is characterized by the formation of group-level head - quarters to control the ever growing army on the peninsula and by large-scale Ottoman counteroffensives. The fourth and final phase of the campaign is called 'Anafarta' by the Turks themselves (and 'Suvla' by the British) and ran from 7 August until 8 January 1916. In this phase the Fifth Army returned to a defensive and reactive posture as it responded successfully to Hamilton's second amphibious invasion. The book concludes with a fifth chapter titled 'the Fifth Army Rear Area' which presents an in-depth look at the administration and logistics of the Ottoman Fifth Army.

The current author maintains that the Turks won the Gallipoli campaign because, in many ways, their army was more combat effective than the allied armies in 1915. Combat effectiveness is defined as the relative relationship between combatants in their ability to accomplish desired objectives. This is not the same as military effectiveness or military efficiency, which are termsasso-

ciated with the waging of war by nations and the extent to which resources are employed. In truth, the Turks fielded a very well-trained, well-led and highly motivated army on the Gallipoli Peninsula that met the Australians, British and French man-to-man on very even terms. Unlike the Western Front, neither side enjoyed nearly unlimited resources nor were the battles on the peninsula ones of *Materialschlacht*, as were occurring in France in the same year. Instead, the Gallipoli campaign seems to highlight the art of command as well as the criticality of effective staff work to a greater extent than other contemporary operations.

What emerges from this study of the Ottoman army at war on the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1915 are the following points about Ottoman army combat effectiveness:

- Ottoman officers led aggressively from the front and were able to operate effectively with or without German advice and assistance;
- Ottoman planning systems, for both deliberate and hasty operations, were effective;
- The Ottoman army possessed well-developed levels of mobility that enabled it to concentrate and mass at points of its choosing;
- The Ottoman reporting system enabled their army to anticipate and operate consistently inside the British decision cycle;
- The Ottoman army's triangular divisional/regimental architecture enabled it to tailor and task organize its forces effectively;
- The Ottoman army's standardized doctrines and tactics, based on the German 'way of war', enhanced inter-operability between German and Ottoman officers;
- The Ottoman command structure, particularly at corps and army level, operated at much higher levels of effectiveness than the allied command structure, especially regarding its situational and spatial awareness.

Likewise, there were dysfunctions and weaknesses in the Ottoman army during the Gallipoli campaign which reduced its capability, such as

- An over reliance on poorly supported massed night attacks leading to excessive casualties;
- An inability to mass troops without being discovered leading to a loss of surprise;
- A tendency to launch attacks without adequate preparations and without giving the troops involved enough time to ready themselves;
- Informal channels of information, both Ottoman and German, which bypassed the formal chain of command;
- Failure to reinforce the Fifth Army decisively in phase two of the campaign (a strategic mistake by Enver Pasha and the general staff rather than an operational mistake by the Fifth Army).

Finally, this work is a campaign history and focuses on the operational level of war primarily at field army and army corps level. Tactics, human-interest vignettes and cultural affairs are only briefly mentioned to support the overall narrative. The framework of *Gallipoli, The Ottoman Campaign* is designed to show how the Turks planned their operations, how they occasionally executed their plans successfully and how they adapted when their planning and execution failed. The focus is on command and control as these factors affected the conduct and course of operations. The author's purpose is to illuminate how the Ottoman Fifth Army fought a successful and prolonged campaign against an enemy that possessed greater resources, advanced technologies and command of the sea and air.

Chapter 1
Ottoman Preparations, 1912–24 April 1915

Introduction

The first phase of the Ottoman campaign for the defense of the Gallipoli Peninsula begins in 1912 with the efforts to fortify the Dardanelles strait against threats to the peninsula from the Bulgarian army and Greek navy in the Balkan Wars of 1912/13. The Dardanelles defenses consisted of fortifications dating back to the seventeenth century. Serious construction of the modern fortifications began in the late nineteenth century and consisted of a number of concrete and earth embrasured gun positions on both sides of the strait. Before 1912, these installations fell under the command of the Çanakkale Strait Forces and Fortification Command, one of a number of Ottoman fortresses defending strategic points.[1] In the winter of 1912–1913 the command was actively engaged in combat operations during the First Balkan War. In the post-war reorganization of the Ottoman army in 1913–1914, the Strait command was renamed the Çanakkale Fortified Area Command, but continued to maintain its artillery brigades and command of all of the forts on both sides of the Dardanelles. The place name Çanakkale (known to the British as Chanak in 1915) is used throughout this book as an exception to the general usage of English place names because of its significance as the Turkish name of the campaign (*Çanakkale Cephesi*)

When the Ottoman army mobilized in August 1914, its tactical units began to prepare for war under the dynamic training guidance of a revived military machine. Soon thereafter the army deployed mobile tactical ground forces to the strait and the peninsula. These units were continually reinforced after a brief Royal Navy bombardment in November and vigorously prepared the defenses to repel an allied amphibious invasion. As the Empire

entered the First World War defensive planning was modified using the plans developed in 1912, to include a larger defensive area and the reinforcement of the command by the Ottoman army's III Corps.[2] After very heavy naval attacks on the strait in February and March 1915, the Ottoman high command activated the Fifth Army on the peninsula and a new XV Corps in Asia. When the allied amphibious assault occurred on 25 April it was met by well-trained, well-led, and well-prepared infantry divisions of the Ottoman army. This came as a shock and a surprise to the allies, who had expected an easy victory over what they had perceived to be a rag-tag poorly led army. This phase ended on 25 April 1915, when the allies invaded the beaches of the Gallipoli Peninsula and Kum Kale in Asia.

The Dardanelles in the Balkan Wars[3]

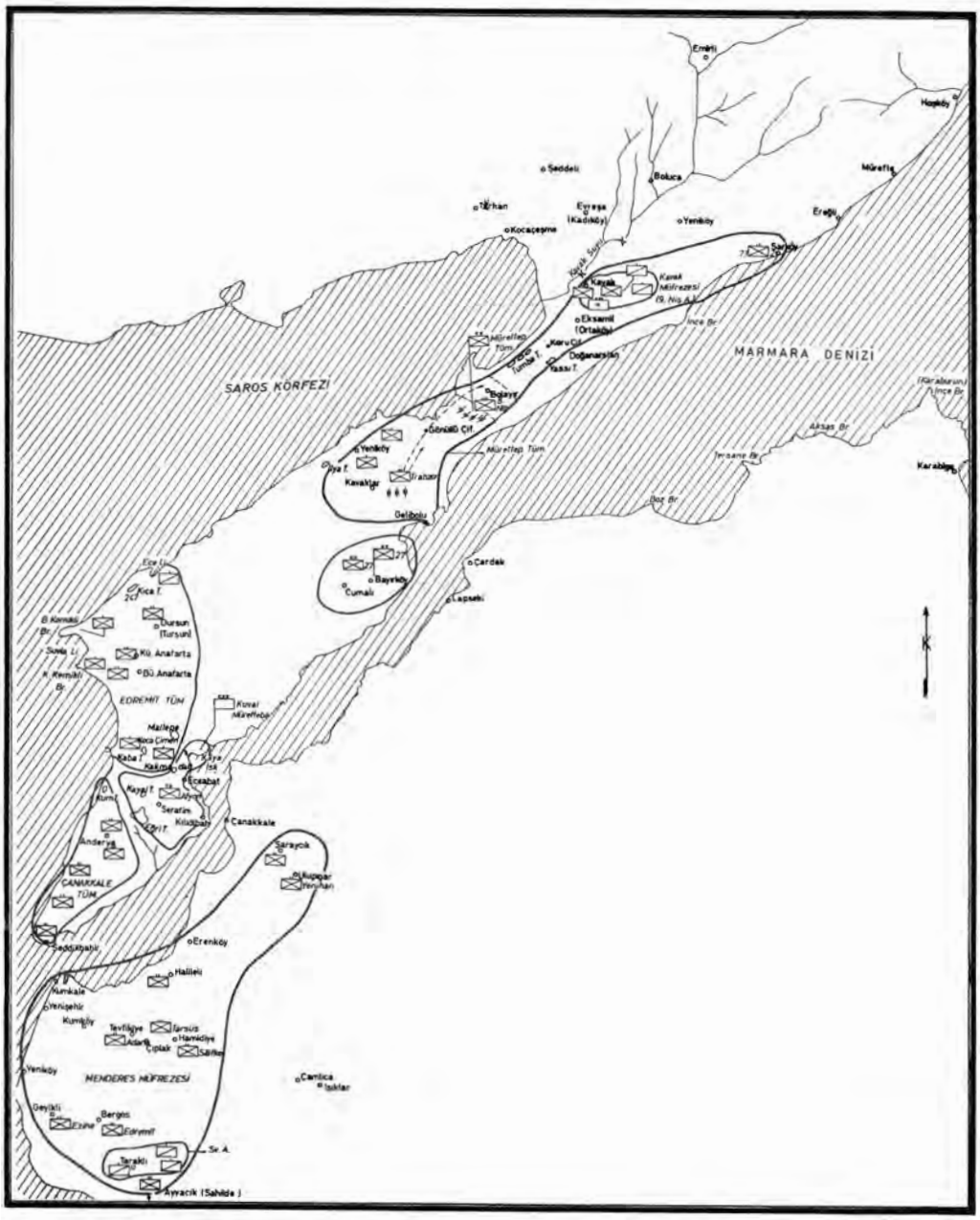
The Dardanelles strait was the most heavily fortified point in the Ottoman Empire and its defensive works dated back hundreds of years. During the 1880s work began, under mostly German direction, to modernize the fortifications against a naval attack on the strait.[4] The defenses until the Balkan Wars of 1912/13 were composed entirely of coastal defense guns, underwater minefields and searchlights oriented on the strait itself and presented a thin ribbon of forts along the water's edge. In the fall of 1912 the strategic situation changed and, against the threat of a Greek amphibious invasion, the Ottoman general staff ordered a more comprehensive fortification of the entire Gallipoli Peninsula itself. Moreover, a corps-level command was created on the peninsula to construct and occupy the defensive works that would guard the strait's fortifications against an enemy landing in their rear.[5]

The Gallipoli historiography largely ignores the fact that the Dardanelles defenses were given a thorough workout during the First Balkan War (1912–1913). In fact, it was during this war that the Ottomans put together the basic defensive plans and concepts used subsequently to defend the peninsula in 1915 against the British. Prior to the Balkan Wars the peninsula was a sleepy garrison backwater for the Ottoman army's 5th Infantry Division and Çanakkale Fortress Command. However, in the Balkan Wars the Ottomans deployed a greatly reinforced army to

defend the Gallipoli Peninsula. This was brought about when the victorious Bulgarian army reached the Sea of Marmara and cut off the peninsula on 12 October 1912. The Ottomans reorganized their forces by placing the Dardanelles strait and the peninsula under the independent command of the Çanakkale Strait Forces and Fortification Command.[6] The general staff rushed the regular 27th Infantry Division, a provisional infantry division, and the Afyon, Çanakkale, and Edremit Reserve Infantry Divisions to the peninsula. The newly organized headquarters also commanded the Menderes Detachment (*Menderes Mufrezesi*), a provisional cavalry brigade, and three independent batteries of artillery. The preexisting fortress command of three heavy coastal artillery regiments was absorbed into the new force. Altogether for the defense of the peninsula in 1912, the Ottomans had 40,000 men armed with 27,000 rifles, 38 machine-guns, and 102 cannon (not counting coastal artillery).[7]

Command of the Çanakkale Strait Forces and Fortification Command was given to Brigadier General Fahri Pasha, who quickly created the basic defensive plan and layout for the peninsula by establishing four primary defensive groups: one guarding the beaches of the lower peninsula, one guarding the narrow neck of the peninsula (at Bulair), one guarding the Asian beaches, while one remained in immediate reserve. Fahri stationed two of the three reserve infantry divisions in beach defense roles on the peninsula, placed the 27th Division at Bulair and the Menderes Detachment along the Asiatic shore. He kept his third reserve division as a general army reserve at Maidos (modern Eceabat). Thus, by the end of the year, the general configuration of the Ottoman defense was established (this general layout would be repeated in 1915). Map 1.1 shows this deployment.

Fahri assigned the Çanakkale Reserve Division, composed of men from Gallipoli, Çanakkale (Chanak) and the villages of the peninsula itself, to the southernmost tip of the peninsula (the area later known as the Cape Helles front). He stationed the Edremit Reserve Division on its right flank (covering the area later known as Anzac and Suvla Bay). The Ottoman reserve infantry divisions were much weaker than its regular infantry divisions and together were approximately same strength as the Ottoman 9th Infantry Division, which later defended the peninsula in 1915.



Map 1.1
Gallipoli defenses, 1912. The general operational configuration into a Saros Bay/isthmus group, a peninsula group and an Asian group is clearly apparent, as is the central positioning of an operational reserve at Eceabat (Maidos). In 1915, Mustafa Kemal's 19th Division would occupy the positions that the Afyon Division occupied in 1912.

These two divisions constructed battalion-sized strong points on the key terrain features overlooking the beaches. The beaches themselves were covered by company sized elements and the divisional artilleries were positioned centrally to support the divisional sectors. In reserve the Afyon Reserve Division lay in garrison at Maidos and was prepared to support either the Çanakkale or the Edremit divisions. The reserve soldiers began to dig trenches and gun pits and developed a road and communications network, and rehearsed counterattack plans. The Australians would later discover what they called 'the Balkan Pits'[8] in their sector in 1915, which were the remnants of these defensive preparations. Across the strait near the ruins of Troy in Asia, the Menderes Detachment had grown to divisional strength and began similar defensive preparations at Kum Kale and the adjacent coastlines. In the peninsula's neck the 27th Infantry Division faced the Bulgarians, who had closed on the Ottoman Bulair lines in early February 1915. Although defending the peninsula from the north, the 27th Division fulfilled a similar mission in the area, which would be defended by the 7th Infantry Division in 1915.[9] Serving on the Bulair lines as chief of operations (*1nci Şube Müdürü*) was Staff Major Mustafa Kemal (later and more famously known as Atatürk).[10] Finally, Fahri established a provisional army corps headquarters at Maidos to command and control the mobile divisions on the peninsula and the Menderes Detachment in Asia. This command arrangement was formalized as the Provisional Forces Command during the armistice that brought combat operations to a halt in December 1912. Although the anticipated amphibious invasion by the Greeks never materialized, there was a pitched battle on the neck of the peninsula during the First Balkan War.

In early 1913, the Bulgarian high command massed their Fourth Army, composed of about 92,000 officers and men, north of the Bulair lines.[11] The armistice expired at 7 pm on 3 February 1913 and the Bulgarian 7th Infantry Division moved forward the next morning closing on the Bulair lines on 6 February. The Bulgarians did not know that the Ottomans were, themselves, planning to conduct an amphibious invasion of their own in the Sea of Marmara with the objective of encircling the Fourth Army. Fahri's Gallipoli forces were ordered to conduct a supporting

attack, which would serve to distract the Bulgarians from the coast. He planned a simple and direct attack out of the Bulair lines using the 27th Division on the right and a provisional infantry division on the left. Releasing the Afyon Reserve Division from its role as the operational reserve, Fahri intended to use it as his second echelon in the attack. Altogether he could mass over 20,000 men for the attack. Planning was meticulous and Ottoman commanders down to regimental level had ample time to organize their operations. The Ottomans estimated that they would face two enemy infantry regiments supported by four artillery batteries. To better control operations Fahri positioned himself immediately behind his attacking divisions. The attacking Ottoman regiments began moving forward at 5.30 am on 8 February and the attack was launched as scheduled at 8 am.

Unfortunately the Turks faced the 2 infantry regiments of the recently arrived 1st Brigade of the Bulgarian 7th Division supported by not just 4 but 14 artillery batteries (78 guns) with 6 more batteries in general support. This was a notable intelligence failure and when 15,000 Ottoman soldiers charged across the open terrain of the narrow peninsula neck on an attack frontage of only 2,600m there were met by rifle and machine-gun fire and a terrible barrage of artillery shells. They were slaughtered in the thousands and perhaps as many as 6,000 died in the doomed attack.[12] Although some Ottomans actually punched through and reached the Bulgarian artillery batteries, the attack was both hopeless and pointless. By noon the catastrophic assault was finished as were Fahri's offensive operations for the remainder of the First Balkan War. However, in the Second Balkan War, Fahri's force, now refitted and designated as the Gallipoli Field Army broke out of the peninsula to assist in the recapture of the city of Edirne (Adrianople). Major Mustafa Kemal was active in the successful planning of these operations. After the Treaty of London ended the Second Balkan War in 1913, the troops remaining on the peninsula were sent home and it returned to its normal peacetime routines.

The Çanakkale Fortified Area Command, 1914[13]

After the Balkan Wars, the defense of the Dardanelles returned to the hands of the commander of the Çanakkale Fortified Area

Command. This was a fortress command that had control over the string of elderly forts and command of a brigade of three heavy artillery regiments. The forts and guns were clustered at the mouth of the Dardanelles and at the narrows and, in times of peace, were manned at very low levels. This would change in the summer of 1914 and, although the Ottoman Empire would not enter the war until November 1914, the army on the Gallipoli Peninsula was active much earlier.

In the spring of 1913, great tension existed between the Ottoman Empire and Greece over the status of the residual Muslim population living in newly Greek-occupied western Thrace. War seemed probable and the Ottoman III Corps was ordered to plan for movement to the peninsula while the Ottoman V Corps was ordered to occupy the famous Çatalca lines. The actual reactivation of the defensive plans for the peninsula began as early as 31 July 1914, when operations conducted by Greek warships and aircraft near the mouth of the Dardanelles alarmed the Ottoman general staff.[14] The War Ministry issued a special limited mobilization order at 11.45 am on that day that alerted the fortress commander to begin preparations for war and to expect reinforcements.[15] The III Corps chief of staff, German Lieutenant Colonel Perrinet von Thauvenay, arrived on the night of 8/9 August and began to update the defensive plans the next day. The plans called for the Ottoman III Corps to reinforce the fortress and to provide the troops to defend the peninsula.[16] They were based on the 1913 defensive plan for the peninsula but with a significant change. The northern limit of the 1913 plan was the narrow peninsula neck at Bulair (simply because of the presence of the Bulgarian army). In truth the best landing beaches in the region lay just to the north of Bulair in Saros Bay (a fact that would bedevil Liman von Sanders during the entire campaign). This vulnerability caused the Ottoman general staff to assign the entire Saros Bay coastline to the fortress command for defensive planning purposes. In early August 1914, the fortress command revised its war plan so that three major operational groups would defend the Gallipoli Peninsula: one in Asia (unchanged from 1913), one on the peninsula south of Bulair (unchanged from 1913) and one in the new Saros Bay sector.[17] On 12 August, Enver Pasha alerted the fortress that, although the Empire had

purchased the *Yavuz Sultan Selim* (ex-SMS *Goeben*) and *Midilli* (ex-SMS *Breslau*), the British might attack through the strait to get at the ships.[18]

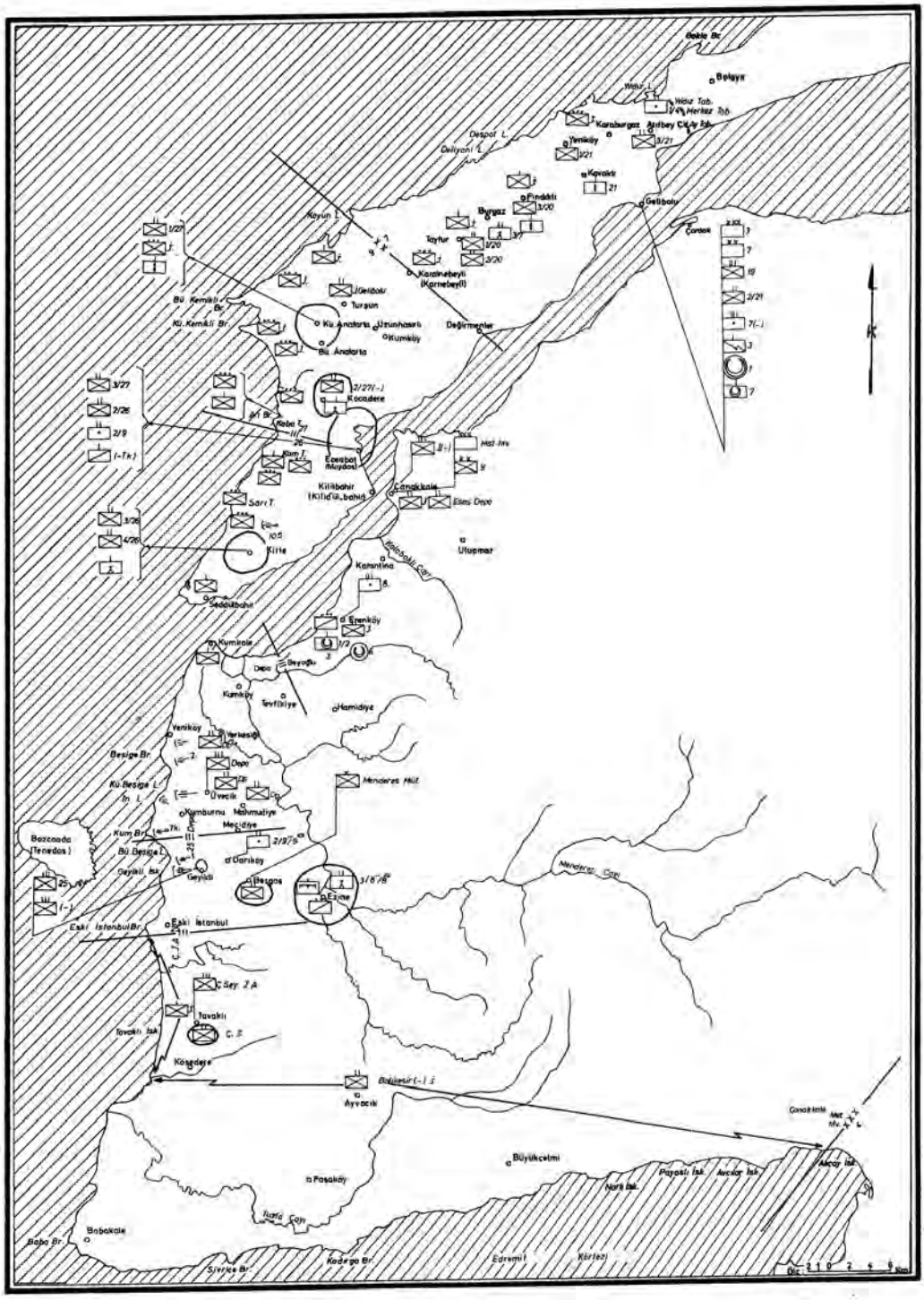
Neither the fortress nor the III Corps was ready for war in early August 1914. Nevertheless, as a result of the July crisis but separate from their concerns about Greece, the Ottoman general staff decided to conduct national military mobilization as a pre-cautionary measure, even though the Empire was not yet at war. At 1 am on 2 August 1914, the Ottoman General Staff sent mobilization orders to the commander of the III Corps in Rodosto (modern Tekirdağ).[19] The following day, which was the first numbered day of mobilization (3 August), the III Corps began its preparations for war.[20] However, its initial strength returns of about 15,000 officers and men reflected the low condition of peacetime readiness that the Ottoman army operated under.[21] Nevertheless, by 21 August the corps was at full strength with 12,937 men in the 7th Division, 13,061 men in the 8th Division and 2,907 men assigned to the corps troop units. In fact, the III Corps was the only corps of thirteen Ottoman army corps to mobilize within its time requirement of twenty days. On 22 August the regiments and battalions of the corps began to move from home garrisons to staging areas surrounding Rodosto for training and shaking out.

Upon mobilization, the plans called for the III Corps to detach the 9th Division to the Çanakkale Fortified Area Command for beach defense and mobile reserve operations. Technically, it still remained under the command of III Corps, but for all intents and purposes, the division fell under the operational control of the fortress commander. On 27 August, the 9th Infantry Division commander began conversations with the commander of the fortress concerning the deployment of his division to the Gallipoli Peninsula and by mid-September 1914, the division was moving into observation positions overlooking the peninsula's beaches. This effectively removed the division from III Corps control. After the training regime associated with mobilization the corps began to move into the peninsula. The 7th Division began to deploy there on 29 October and the III Corps headquarters moved from Rodosto to the town of Gallipoli (modern Gelibolu) itself on 4 November. The 8th Division remained, for the moment, in its

staging areas outside Rodosto. Thus, when the Empire actually entered the war and by the time of the first Royal Navy bombardment (3 November), the Ottomans had three full months of preparation time to position substantial forces for the defense of both the peninsula and the strait (a mobile army corps of two divisions).

In spite of these preparations, the defense of the Dardanelles remained weak due to the poor condition of the fortifications, the antiquity of many of the cannon, the scarcity of ammunition and supplies and the lack of good coordination between the Fortress Command and the corps headquarters. To rectify the technical deficiencies of the coastal defenses, the Germans dispatched Vice Admiral Guido von Usedom, who had expertise in coastal artillery and gunnery, to advise the Turks. Accompanying the admiral were about 500 Germans who were coastal defense experts specializing in coastal artillery, communications, military engineering and underwater mines. None of these men were assigned to the mobile Ottoman III Corps. The Germans likewise dispatched limited quanities of war material to Turkey through the neutral countries of Romania and Bulgaria. On 3 November the Royal Navy briefly bombarded the Ottoman forts at the entrance of the Dardanelles. This attack achieved no objective of military value, and indeed, only served notice on the Ottomans regarding the vulnerability of the strait. In fact, the British attack so thoroughly alarmed the Ottoman general staff that it accelerated the program of fortification and defensive improvements. However, because of an emerging plan to invade Egypt the general staff decided to detach the 8th Infantry Division from III Corps alerting it for service on the Sinai front and began preparations for its departure in late November 1914. This caused Esat Pasha, the III Corps commander, to dispatch a long report to the First Army outlining the case for more forces to defend the peninsula.[22] As a result the 19th Infantry Division was activated on 1 January 1915 to take the place of the 8th Division and assigned to the III Corps.[23]

Defensive planning and training, particularly anti-invasion drills, now began in earnest, and the troops began to improve the seaward defenses and also worked to construct additional roads and interior communications. By February 1915, the Fortress



Map 1.2
7th and 9th Infantry Division situation, 18 February 1915. The general similarities with the 1912 plan are apparent, especially the positioning of the 19th Division near Eceabat. In both cases, the defensive planning hinged on the proper positioning of reserves decisively to counterattack the invaders.

Command had (including the 9th Infantry Division) over 34,500 soldiers, armed with 25,000 rifles, 8 machine-guns and 263 cannon, on the peninsula. Moreover, the mobile III Corps (now consisting mainly of the 7th Infantry Division) had 15,000 soldiers in position, armed with 9,448 rifles, 8 machine-guns, and 50 cannon. [24] The unready 19th Infantry Division remained off the peninsula in the Rodosto garrison where it was undergoing intensive training under its new commander, the young and aggressive Lieutenant Colonel Mustafa Kemal Bey. Map 1.2 shows the peninsula defenses on 18 February 1915.

The power of the Çanakkale Fortified Area Command lay in its heavy coastal artillery, which was organized into the 2nd Artillery Brigade and concentrated in fourteen permanent forts lining the strait. There were three regiments assigned to the brigade, the 3rd, 4th and 5th Heavy Artillery Regiments (3, 4 and 5 Heavy Arty Regts). [25] The 2nd Battalion, 4th Heavy Artillery Regiment (2/4 Heavy Arty Regt) garrisoned the fortifications on the European side of the narrows around Maidos and Kalid Bahr. The 1st and 2nd Battalions, 3rd Heavy Artillery Regiment (1/3 and 2/3 Heavy Arty Regt) garrisoned the Asiatic narrows forts around Çanakkale. The 5th Heavy Artillery Regiment garrisoned the outer forts at the mouth of the Dardanelles with its 1st Battalion at Sedd el Bahr (1/5 Heavy Arty Regt) in Europe and its 2nd Battalion at Kum Kale in Asia (2/5 Heavy Arty Regts). These formations were armed with coastal defense cannon ranging in size from 87mm up to 355mm, however most of the more powerful heavy ship-killing guns were with 3 and 4 Heavy Arty Regts in the narrows. Peacetime ammunition supplies were maintained in magazines within the forts and the quantities on hand were reported to the fortress commander by type of gun (Table A.1 in Appendix A shows the quantities on hand on 14 August 1914). On mobilization the brigade's regiments stocked over 8,000 round of heavy caliber ammunition (8in up to 14in) in magazines adjacent to its guns and maintained several thousand more in its depot facilities.

The eighty-two guns in the three regiments were, by themselves, insufficient to defend the strait under full wartime conditions against a force such as Britain's Royal Navy and required heavy augmentation, therefore the Ottoman general

staff began to deploy additional cannon to the strait from less threatened areas. Throughout August 1914, a variety of cannon arrived at the Çanakkale fortress from the fortresses of Edirne (Adrianople) and Çatalca (Chatalja), as well as from the ships of the Ottoman fleet in Constantinople.[26] The first minefield was laid in the narrows on 4 August 1914. On 17 August a battery of 75mm ship's guns were sent to the peninsula and on 23 August the first six 120mm howitzers arrived. Alert to the increased dangers posed by the allies, the Ottoman general staff ordered further artillery reinforcements to the area from the Bosphorus fortresses area on 19 September 1914, in the form of the 8th Heavy Artillery Regiment (8 Heavy Arty Regt).[27] This formation was armed with twenty-two 150mm howitzers (later this would rise to a total of thirty-two) and was later augmented by fourteen 120mm howitzers. The regiment began to arrive on 25 September and was assigned kill zones to augment the intermediate defenses in an anti-ship role. Lieutenant Colonel Mehmet Zekerriya commanded the 8 Heavy Arty Regt. On 4 and 7 November six heavy 210mm mortars made their way to the rapidly growing defenses. So many howitzers arrived that Lieutenant Colonel Mehmet Zekerriya was able to form a third battalion (the standard in the Ottoman army at that time was two battalions in artillery regiments). A variety of smaller field and mountain artillery batteries were also added to the defenses.

Additional Ottoman artillery officers and NCOs were assigned from Constantinople to the staff of the fortress commander. On 1 September, German Admiral Schack arrived to assess the defenses and render a report to the general staff. His report noted deficiencies in ammunition quantities, the deteriorated condition of the fortifications, and an absence of funds for repair parts and upgrades. He was especially concerned with the torpedo batteries and he judged the fortress unready for combat.[28] Schack's report along with the increasingly complex problems involving integrating the tactical deployment of the incoming mobile artillery battalions with the static heavy artillery regiments caused concern in Constantinople. The Ottoman general staff sent a directive to the fortress on 22 October 1914 to develop a new plan for the defense of the strait.[29] To assist the fortress staff, Enver sent German Lieutenant General Merten as his personal

delegate, who with German Lieutenant Colonel Wasillo and fortress chief of staff Lieutenant Colonel Salahattin formed a planning group to study the problem. On 8 November, the group issued its revised plan, which became the basis for the defense of the strait against enemy ships.[30] The plan organized the fortress into four defensive areas, the first or entry area (the outer defenses), the second area (the howitzer zone), the third area (the intermediate defenses: Kepez–Soganlı) and the fourth area (the inner defenses: Çanakkale–Kilid Bahr). The new howitzer zone was a major change in the defensive plan and was to be responsible for the delivery of plunging fires on the enemy ships, which had relatively thin horizontal deck armor compared to their vertical side armor. The incoming 8 Heavy Arty Regt was ordered to provide forces, command and control for the howitzer zone, which was put under the overall command of German artillery specialist Lieutenant Colonel Wehrle. The creation of the howitzer zone allowed the Turks to integrate effectively the reinforcing artillery with the fortress artillery as well as coordinate procedures for the centralized delivery of fires. Crew training for the men manning the coastal artillery pieces had been ongoing since mobilization but a high percentage of the men were newly conscripted and untrained. To rectify this Merten assigned German noncommissioned officers directly into the Ottoman gun crews.

Additional guns arrived throughout December and January, including more 120mm howitzers; 37mm anti-aircraft guns; and 47mm and 75mm ship's guns. By 18 February 1915, there were a total of 235 cannon operational in the 4 artillery regiments assigned to defend the Dardanelles.[31] The outer defenses were in the hands of 5 Heavy Arty Regt, the mobile 8 Heavy Arty Regt lay in the howitzer zone, and 3 and 4 Heavy Arty Regts manned the guns assigned to the intermediate and inner defenses. Ammunition for most of the newly arriving howitzers and guns was fairly plentiful. The artillery situation report of 26 February 1915 shows 8 Heavy Arty Regt was particularly well stocked with 8,229 shells for its howitzers (see Appendix A, Table A.2). Map 1.3 shows the coastal defences for the strait on 18 March 1915.

Altogether, by the time of the allied naval attack of 18 March 1915, the Ottomans had 82 guns operational in fixed positions

Map 1.3
Çanakkale Fortress artillery positions, 18 March 1915. The positioning of the howitzer battalions to deliver plunging fires in the waters below the narrows is apparent. These weapons played a key role in the allied defeat on 18 March.