The Gallipoli Campaign was intended to deliver a potential knockout blow to Germany’s ally, the Ottoman Empire. If successful it would have opened up supply routes through the Dardenelles to Britain’s ally Russia, would have assisted in diminishing a potential threat to British & French possessions and protectorates in the area and would have assisted in opening up another front.

Both the British & French had a low opinion of the Ottoman military. There were those, including Winston Churchill (then First Lord of the Admiralty) who thought the objective of taking the Gallipoli Peninsula, and thus threatening Constantinople (present day Istanbul), could be achieved by a naval campaign.
The 25th April 2015 sees the 100th anniversary of the commencement of the Gallipoli landings. A naval campaign, designed to weaken enemy fortifications had commenced in February 1915. This had been curtailed in March, without its objectives being achieved.

The soldiers landing in April had a formidable task. Lack of planning and use of local intelligence was to overshadow the whole campaign. The Ottoman forces against them were better organised and motivated than many had thought. The campaign soon turned into a war of attrition.

It was a campaign that saw soldiers from around the world serve. From Britain and France, from the Commonwealth (particularly Australia, New Zealand, India and Newfoundland), from French Africa and elsewhere.

Whilst the campaign was over by January 1916, tens of thousands had died from both fighting and disease. The death toll was high on both sides.

The campaign is often cited as being a milestone on establishing the national identity of Australia and New Zealand, but also of the modern state of Turkey.

Below are some links to websites that tell the story of the campaign. A relatively short campaign, but one whose ramifications are still appreciated today.

http://www.iwm.org.uk/learning/resources/the-gallipoli-campaign

http://www.1914-1918.net/Gallipoli.htm


http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/war/the-gallipoli-campaign/introduction


(Please note that these are external websites. Corby Borough Council do not accept responsibility for their content)
Ladies and Gentlemen

Today we are gathered here to commemorate and remember those who fought and died in the Gallipoli campaign.

The Gallipoli Campaign is one of the most controversial episodes of the First World War. It courted controversy even before it began, with many senior politicians and military personnel against the campaign, seeing it as an unnecessary distraction from the battle raging on the Western Front. It ended in controversy, with the final withdrawal of troops from the Dardenelles in January 1916.

It was a campaign of “what if’s”.

What if, the naval bombardment of defences which had commenced in February 1915 had continued longer, prior to the launch of the landings on 25th April? Would the British, French and Commonwealth forces have made greater inroads instead of becoming bogged-down in a war of attrition and trench warfare akin to that in Western Europe.

What if, the British High Command had not underestimated both the ability and resources of the Ottoman forces and more detailed preparation been undertaken, would the outcome have been different?

What if, the views of the opponents of the campaign, such as Lord Kitchener, held sway would the men and resources channeled into the campaign have been diverted to Western Europe made a difference to the course of the War there?

It is a campaign that even today courts controversy, however all are agreed that the bravery and sacrifice of the troops involved cannot be diminished. By the end of the campaign tens of thousands had died, been wounded or succumbed to disease. Thankfully the eventual withdrawal of troops was properly planned and executed to minimise further tragedy.

The bravery of men from Britain, France, India, Australia, New Zealand, French Africa, Canada and others should not be forgotten.

Perhaps one of the most poignant expressions relating to the Gallipoli campaign was made by one of our then enemies. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey and a military commander in the Ottoman forces during the campaign, later said:-
Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives...you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours...You, the mothers, who sent their sons from far away countries wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.

Two of those sons were from this Borough. Private Samuel Ernest Tansley of Cottingham, serving with the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment) was killed during the campaign on 10th August 1915.

The following month, Private Harry Austin, born in Corby, serving with the Northamptonshire Regiment was killed on 5th September 1915. He was only 17 years of age. Harry was one of three Austin brothers to be killed in the War.

In remembrance of Samuel, of Harry and the thousands of others killed during the campaign, we shall not forget their sacrifice.

They shall all be remembered.

Councillor Anthony Dady
Mayor of Corby Borough
25th April 2015
Details of the two known fatalities from the Borough who fought in the Gallipoli Campaign are given below:

**Samuel Ernest Tansley**

Samuel Ernest Tansley was born in Cottingham in 1894. His father was Samuel Tansley of Cottingham and Mary Joyce Tansley (nee Alenson) of Lincolnshire. The couple were married in 1889.

**The Family**

In 1891, Samuel & Mary are living in Cottingham with their young daughter, Elizabeth Alice. Samuel's occupation is farmer.

By 1901, the family has relocated to London, living in Wembley. Samuel is employed in the coal trade. Samuel Jnr. is 8 years of age.

Samuel’s mother, Mary dies in 1901.
By 1911, Elizabeth Alice is living in Leicester, working as a servant for the Beasley family. Samuel Jnr. is listed as a “visitor” at Amber Hill, near Boston with George & Ada Proctor. Samuel’s occupation is listed as shop assistant.

**Military Service**

Samuel Ernest Tansley’s service record has not survived. It is known that he served as a Private (G/3156) with the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment). He enlisted at Mill Hill. He was resident in Harlesdon at the time of his enlistment.

Private Tansley served in Gallipoli. Records show that he disembarked 16th June 1915. Private Tansley died of wounds on 10th August 1915.

He is buried at the Lancashire Landing Cemetery.

The eight month campaign in Gallipoli was fought by Commonwealth and French forces in an attempt to force Turkey out of the war, to relieve the deadlock of the Western Front in France and Belgium, and to open a supply route to Russia through the Dardanelles and the Black Sea.

The Allies landed on the peninsula on 25-26 April 1915; the 29th Division at Cape Helles in the south and the Australian and New Zealand Corps north of Gaba Tepe on the west coast, an area soon known as Anzac.

At Helles, the 29th Division landed troops at 'S,' 'V,' 'W,' 'X' and 'Y' Beaches, five small coves at or near the southern end of the peninsula. The landing at 'Y' Beach (Gurkha Bluffs) was carried out by the 1st King's Own Scottish Borderers and the Plymouth Battalion of the Royal Naval Division, but these troops were forced to re-embark on the following day. The 2nd Royal Fusiliers landed at 'X' Beach, followed by the rest of the 87th Brigade. Under very severe fire, the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers landed on 'W' Beach and cut their way through wire entanglements and trenches to the edge of the cliff. They and the other battalions of the 88th Brigade established themselves on the hills of Tekke Burnu and Helles Burnu. The beach became known as Lancashire Landing.

The greater part of the cemetery (Rows A to J and part of Row L) was made between the landing in April 1915 and the evacuation of the peninsula in January 1916. Row I contains the graves of over 80 men of the 1st Lancashire Fusiliers who died in the first two days following the landing. The 97 graves in Row K and graves 31 to 83 in Row L were brought in after the Armistice from the following Aegean islands cemeteries:-
Kephalos British Cemetery, on the island of Imbros (Imbroz), was 640 metres inland from Kephalos Pier. There were buried in it 84 British, Australian and New Zealand sailors and soldiers, three Greeks, and one German prisoner.

Kusu Bay Cemetery, on the island of Imbros (Imbroz), contained the graves of 45 officers and men (14 of them unidentified) of the monitors Raglan and M28, which were sunk by the German battle cruiser Goeben and cruiser Breslau as they attempted to break out into the Mediterranean from the Black Sea on 20 January 1918 (both the Breslau and the Goeben later struck mines, off Cape Kephalos, which resulted in the Breslau sinking and the Goeben being grounded of Chanak).

Panaghia Churchyard, on the island of Imbros (Imbroz), contained the graves of one officer and five men from the monitors and four airmen of the 62nd Wing, Royal Air Force.

Paraskevi Cemetery, near the South-West shore of the island of Tenedos (Bozcaada), contained the graves of four sailors, one soldier and one marine. There are now 1,237 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 135 of the burials are unidentified but special memorials commemorate ten casualties who are known to be buried among them. The cemetery also contains 17 Greek war graves.

Reference
Commonwealth War Graves Commission

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*Lest We Forget*

**Samuel Ernest Tansley**
Of the Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)

*d. 10th August 1915*
Harry Austin

Harry Austin was born in Corby in 1892. His parents were John Thomas Austin and Alice Austin (nee Silsby).

The Family

John Thomas Austin was born in Burton Latimer in 1861. In 1886, he married Alice Silsby from Bozeat.

They had a son Percy (b. Burton Latimer 1884) and daughter Mary (born Burton Latimer 1888).

The family is living in Corby when Eliza (b.1891), (Harry (b.1892), Thomas Silsby (b.1896), Alfred (b.1898) and James (b.1899) are born.

In 1901, they were living in Main Street, Corby. John was working as an “ironstone labourer”.
The children resident were Percy, Harriet, Eliza, Harry, George, Thomas Silsby, Alfred & James.

George (b.1894) died in 1902. Another son, Joseph was born in 1902 and it is recorded that Alice & Lucy Austin were born in 1904.

Percy Austin joined the army in 1907. His occupation was listed as “labourer”. There is reference in Percy Austin’s Service Record, to a daughter, Ellen Stretton of Cottingham being born in 1906.

Prior to 1911, daughter Harriet had taken the position of cook at the Old Radford Vicarage, Nottingham.

By 1911, the family is living in Thorngate Street, Kettering. John Thomas Austin is still employed as an “ironstone labourer”. Daughter, Mary Austin is recorded as having returned home.

Harry Austin is working as an “ironstone labourer”, whilst Alfred Austin’s entry in the 1911 Census is “rough stuff hand”. Their sister Eliza is working in a clothing factory, whilst brother Thomas is a “shoe finisher”.

There is reference to Harry Austin residing in Sheep Street, Kettering in 1915.

Military Service

Harry Austin enlisted in Kettering, serving as a Private in the Northamptonshire Regiment 1/4th Battalion (3826). He had been in the 3rd Battalion, Special Reserve Northamptonshire Regiment. He was mobilised 27th January 1915.

According to his medal record, he disembarked in Turkey on 29th July 1915.

It is recorded that Private Harry Austin was killed in action in Gallipoli on 22nd September 1915.

He is buried at the 7th Field Ambulance Cemetery and commemorated on the Kettering War Memorial.

The eight month campaign in Gallipoli was fought by Commonwealth and French forces in an attempt to force Turkey out of the war, to relieve the deadlock of the Western Front in France and Belgium, and to open a supply route to Russia through the Dardanelles and the Black Sea.
The Allies landed on the peninsula on 25-26 April 1915; the 29th Division at Cape Helles in the south and the Australian and New Zealand Corps north of Gaba Tepe on the west coast, an area soon known as Anzac. On 6 August, further landings were made at Suvla, just north of Anzac, and the climax of the campaign came in early August when simultaneous assaults were launched on all three fronts.

The cemetery was named from the 7th Australian Field Ambulance, which landed on Gallipoli in September 1915, but over 350 of the graves were brought in from earlier cemeteries after the Armistice (the majority of the casualties are therefore not Australian, but mainly 54th (East Anglian) Division). These smaller burial grounds were known as Bedford Ridge, West Ham Gully, Waldron's Point, Essex, Aghyl Dere, Eastern Mounted Brigade, Suffolk, Hampshire Lane Nos. 1 and 2, Australia Valley, 116th Essex, 1/8th Hants, Norfolk, Junction, and 1/4th Northants.

There are now 640 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in this cemetery. 276 of the burials are unidentified but special memorials commemorate 207 casualties known or believed to be buried among them.

Reference

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

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**Lest We Forget**

**Harry Austin**

Of the Northamptonshire Regiment

d. 22nd September 1915

Two of Harry’s brothers were also to be killed during the War.

**Alfred G Austin**

Served as a Private in The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment) 10th Battalion (39397). He served in France/Flanders. Private Alfred Austin was killed on 4th August 1917. He is remembered on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial.
Percy Austin

Percy Austin joined the Northamptonshire Regiment in 1907. He served in the 3rd Battalion (8638) before transferring to the 2nd Battalion. He was promoted to Corporal. Corporal Percy Austin was killed whilst serving in France/Flanders on 14th March 1915. He is remembered on the Le Touret Memorial and the Corby War Memorial.

Another brother, Thomas Silsby Austin (b. Corby 1896) was firstly in the Royal Fusiliers in 1916 then the 18th Battalion, Machine Gun Corps (52998). Thomas served overseas in Mesopotamia. At time of mobilisation he was living in Burton Latimer, occupation “finisher boot trade”.

*Photographs courtesy of the Imperial War Museum*