Queensland Rifle Association
ROLL of HONOUR TRIBUTE



Queensland Riflemen of Quinn's Post

ANZAC Day 2025

Soldier and Rifleman in the
Great War 1914 - 1918

The Queensland Riflemen of Quinn’s Post

The ANZAC position at Gallipoli which would become known as Quinn's Post was crucial for the Allies’ defence of the Gallipoli peninsula. It was a key to Monash and Shrapnel Valleys and was the only possible defence of the main supply route from the beach. If it had fallen, the Turks could have broken into the heart of the ANZAC position. It was a dangerous position as it was exposed on two sides, a portion of its rear was open to aimed fire, and in some places the front lines were only 9 m apart.

Quinn’s Post was established during the afternoon of April 25, 1915, as a New Zealand machine gun position. The next day the position was taken over by Australians who were mainly engaged in digging a communication trench up the valley.

On April 29, Captain Hugh Quinn, a member of the Kennedy Regiment Rifle Club in North Queensland, serving with the 15th Battalion AIF was commanded to hold the position at all costs. The Turks not only had absolute superiority of fire but had extensive supplies of hand grenades. It was known among Turkish soldiers as Bomba Sirt or Bomb Ridge.



Major Hugh Quinn MID

On May 1 the Turks mounted an attack with heavy fighting, but they were driven off by the defenders' rifles. However, that day Lance Corporal Henry Foot, aged 31, was killed in action at Quinn's Post. He had enlisted in Townsville and had been a member of the Townsville Rifle Club.



Lance Corporal Henry Foot



Lieutenant Francis Armstrong MID



Lieutenant Hutton Armstrong

On May 10, Quinn's company suffered further heavy casualties in a reconnaissance in front of the post; the initial assault was successful, but the Turks' counterattack could not be withstood. Killed in action in this battle were Lieutenant Francis Armstrong and Lieutenant Hutton Armstrong, while 2nd Lieutenant Harold Smith was severely wounded and died later that day on the hospital ship and was buried at sea.

Francis Armstrong had enlisted in Brisbane where he had been a member of the Queensland Volunteer Rifles, while Hutton Armstrong enlisted in Townsville and had been a member of the Townsville Rifle Club in North Queensland. He represented Australia at Bisley in 1913 with Arthur Halliday when they won the MacKinnon Cup.



2nd Lieutenant Harold Smith

Harold Smith had enlisted in Townsville and had been an excellent rifle shot who had won many medals and prizes in competitions in the region.

On the May 13, the Australian 2nd Light Horse Regiment was charged with the defence of Quinn's Post where heavy fighting continued. The position was gradually made safer by extensive sandbagging, roofing and bomb proofing of parts of the post, and digging of support trenches; the first jam-tin bombs and periscopes became available and periscope rifles eventually allowed accurate fire to be directed towards the Turkish trenches.

On May 18, during the build up to a major attach, Lance Corporal William Brennan was killed in action. He had enlisted in Brisbane where he had been a member of the English Rifle Club.



Lance Corporal William Brennan



There was a major Turkish assault on May 19, when Private Frederick Swain was killed in action. He had also enlisted at Enoggera and had been a member of the Yungaburra Rifle Club.

Private Frederick Swain

Tunnels were dug out from the post to intercept and destroy Turkish tunnels, but at 3.30 am on May 29, an enemy mine exploded under a section of Quinn's Post and the Turks rushed into the Post. A counter assault by the Australian's cleared out the Turks from some of their positions then a further charge was ordered. By then it was daylight and Quinn, along with other officers believed the Turks could best be removed by infiltration. He decided to go himself, but on reaching the trenches he was shot dead. The eventual charge was successful with the capture of 17 prisoners. Captain Quinn had been promoted to Major in the field on May 1 and was also Mentioned in Dispatches.

These casualties at Quinn's Post were all part of the 15th Infantry Battalion and had left Australia on the troop ship, Ceramic from Melbourne on December 22, 1914, then spent time training in Egypt before arriving at Gallipoli in the early landings on the peninsular.

In June 1915, Quinn's Post was taken over by a New Zealand Battalion and gradually was protected with chicken-wire to stop the grenades bouncing down into the trenches. In the end it was the Turks who feared coming into the line at Quinn's Post. It became a very impressive stronghold, where both improvisation and professional skill turned it from the most dangerous post into one of the strongest. However, lives were still lost in action.

On August 7, Lieutenant Herbert Hinton of the 2nd Light Horse Regiment was killed, aged 36 years. He had military service prior to his enlistment in the AIF in Brisbane where he had been a member of the Queensland Field Artillery Rifle Club and the Queensland Volunteer Rifles.



Lieutenant Herbert Hinton

Charles Bean, the Official Military Historian during WWI, described the holding of Quinn's Post as among the Australian Imperial Force finest feats.

Henry Foot, Francis Armstrong, Hutton Armstrong, Harold Smith, William Brennan, Frederick Swain, Hugh Quinn, Herbert Hinton.

We will remember them.