Firsthand accounts of war offer perspectives, feelings, and reactions to events too often missing in the official ledgers written after the fact. Scholarly treatments of campaigns are free from the constraints of official history, although not necessarily better renditions. Later historians do not always have access to the range of government records official chroniclers possessed, while testimony from participants long since dead limits our understanding of events because context, assumptions, and perspectives vary with time. Of firsthand accounts, some written contemporaneously, such as letters, were subject to military censorship while diaries—whether unit or personal—are not necessarily as they appear. The press of events often required that what was registered was a recounting written days after the time nominally indicated. Oral histories or remembrances written years afterwards by principals suffer even more in this regard, as postwar influences alter understanding of things directly experienced. This is why the best history remains a synthesis of primary and secondary sources and why judgment is so important on the part of the chronicler.

In this regard, the Dardanelles-Gallipoli campaign of the First World War offers a salutary lesson. Controversial in its time, the crafting of the British official history is a story in itself that awaits its Boswell to tell. Others, though, have built on the official record of Julian Corbett, Cecil Aspinall-Oglander, and Charles Bean, the latter writing from the Australian perspective, such that understanding of the Dardanelles-Gallipoli campaign has not lacked from want of effort. Thus, any new treatment of necessity must offer insight, judgment, and an accounting of a high order. Enter Gardens of Hell, which follows the time-tested manner of Defeat at Gallipoli (1995) by Nigel Steel and Peter Hart, in which the words of the combatants take center stage in the narrative. This approach necessarily paints matters in the starkest of terms as the horror and the terror that is war becomes the overriding theme. This makes for compelling storytelling, but as history rather less so as the background, context, and broader pur-
pose of the campaign are treated cursorily or not at all.

War is a ghastly, brutish affair and often futile, but seldom does it lack purpose. One would hardly sense this in Gardens of Hell and the problem is compounded as the work is presented posthumously and incompletely. Thus, some footnotes offer insufficient data to trace the provenance of material cited. This is especially so for material drawn from the Internet with no universal resource locator link provided. Other passages reference a personal diary that unfortunately is not recorded in the bibliography; meanwhile, other direct quotations lack a footnote whatsoever. Here, perhaps the most egregious example is the sinking of the transport Royal Edward, ably and amply recounted by Dr. Richard Neagle. At three pages in length (pp. 176-179), this direct quote appears without either footnote or bibliographical reference.

To the general reader, the previous is not necessarily fatal, but such cannot be said of the lack of maps for what, at the end of the day, remains an operational history. Their absence is the more surprising as the author takes the British to task for failing to have the same when directing many of the failed attacks. This does not mean that Gardens of Hell is not worth reading, but it is a work with serious defects. Academics, for one, will find it frustrating as will most military professionals. Such is the plight of the independent historian who succumbs before completing their work. In this case, it is a pity that the editor chose not to engage a researcher to bring the monograph to a proper conclusion to round out the twenty-six years of effort pursued by Patrick Gariepy in documenting the battle.

Gariepy recounts the evolution of the campaign from a purely naval operation against the forts controlling access to the Turkish Straits initiated in February 1915 to its denouement in January 1916. At that moment, the military force was finally evacuated from the hotly contested European toehold first established the previous April. The narrative is sequential rather than thematic, save that a separate chapter treats the continuing naval operations that continued in tandem with the military campaign. Gardens of Hell affords the reader a glimpse into the particular hell the Gallipoli experience proved for the British and Commonwealth junior officer and soldier who fought it. It does not attempt to weigh how those in London, Delhi, and Cairo viewed matters as the battle unfolded.

This is unfortunate for the Dardanelles-Gallipoli campaign was always secondary to the operations waged on the western front and many of the operational shortcomings experienced and related by the author were directly attributable to the greater Allied strategy followed. Limited forces were committed at Gallipoli, supported by even more limited stocks of ammunition, artillery, and reserves. Thus, the shell scandal of March 1915 which rocked Parliament following the attack of Aubers Ridge in France was mirrored in the eastern Mediterranean. How closely the two problems were related is never addressed, as the work never looks beyond the parapet. Gariepy further laments the lack of combat experience by many of the senior British officers, seeing it as a primary reason for the failures occurring. This is surely a generalization. Many officers, including Frederick Stopford, had a wealth of combat experience; they just did not have it from the present war. Perhaps understandable when it is remembered that the campaign was initiated in the first year of war.

Ultimately, a work must be judged on the results achieved rather than the aspirations intended. Written primarily for an American audience, Gardens of Hell offers the general reader a hint of the difficulties of executing an amphibious operation in the early twentieth century, employing the testimony of those who fought. For those more attuned to the campaign, and owing to the limita-
tions already cited, *Gardens of Hell* will prove a
disappointment and may be safely overlooked.

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