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# Gallipoli

## Alan Moorehead

The Gallipoli expedition was the bold and audacious plan of Winston Churchill, amongst others, to force the Dardanelles narrows, by sea and by land, to capture Constantinople from the Turks and to open the Black Sea to ships taking supplies and arms for the Russians on their immense German front.

The campaign failed with catastrophic loss of life on all sides, but again and again, unbeknown to the Allies, they came close to achieving a goal that might have led to victory overall.

This book, first published in 1956, is still regarded as the best and definitive account of the campaign. It won the *Sunday Times* Best Book of the Year Award as well as the inaugural Duff Cooper prize when the winner could choose who would present the award. Appropriately enough, Moorehead chose Churchill to make the presentation because the book demonstrated that the faults were not in the conception of the plan. Indeed, long after Churchill had resigned in disgrace, a new fleet was being assembled to again attempt to force the Dardanelles in 1919, which was cancelled when the war ceased and the Armistice was signed.

Seen in the new light that Moorehead revealed, the Gallipoli campaign was no longer regarded as a blunder or a reckless gamble; it was the most imaginative conception of the war, and its potentialities were almost beyond reckoning. Certainly in its strictly military aspect its influence was enormous. It was the greatest amphibious operation which mankind had known up till then, and it took place in circumstances in which nearly everything was experimental: in the use of submarines and aircraft, in the trial of modern naval guns against artillery on the shore, in the manoeuvre of landing armies in small boats on a hostile coast, in the use of radio, or the aerial bomb, the landmine, and many other novel devices. These things lead on through Dunkirk and the Mediterranean landings to the invasion of Normandy in the Second World War. In 1940 there was very little the Allied commanders could learn from the long struggle against the Kaiser's armies in the trenches in France. But Gallipoli was a mine of information about the complexities of the modern war of manoeuvre, of the combined operation by land and sea and sky; and the correction of the errors made then was the basis of the victory of 1945.

"the story of one of the great military tragedies of the twentieth century, which no writer has described better than Alan Moorehead."  
Sir Max Hastings.

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## Author Information

Alan Moorehead was lionised as the literary man of action: the most celebrated war correspondent of World War II; author of award winning books; star travel writer of *The New Yorker*; pioneer publicist of wildlife conservation. His fame as a writer gave him the friendship of Ernest Hemingway, George Bernard Shaw and Field Marshall Montgomery and the courtship and marriage of his beautiful wife Lucy Milner.

## Quotes and Reviews

Germaine Greer, *The New Statesman*: "... masterful Gallipoli, first published in 1956, now republished with a thoughtful introduction by Max Hastings. Alan Moorehead's account of Gallipoli is still the best written."

Peter Parker, *The Spectator*: "Moorehead's beautifully written, even-handed and panoptic account of the campaign remains a model of military history."

Sir Basil Liddell Hart: "Gallipoli is a masterpiece ... superbly re-creating the scene, the atmosphere, and the drama."

Sir Compton Mackenzie (who served in the Gallipoli campaign): "To Mr Morehead belongs the honour of being the first writer to present Gallipoli in historical perspective, and I find it difficult to express, in the hackneyed superlatives of literary criticism, my admiration for his accomplishment."

Lieutenant-General Lord Freyberg VC (who served in the Gallipoli campaign): "This is a book of outstanding interest. Alan Morehead's achievement is a remarkable one in that ... he has recaptured so much of the atmosphere and of the spirit of those adventurous months ... I confidently recommend Moorehead's Gallipoli as an absorbing contribution to the history of our times."

John Connell, *Time and Tide*: "Mr Morehead deserves many congratulations and high praise. He has written a most valuable book on a magnificent theme."

Sir Max Hastings: "The story of one of the great military tragedies of the 20th century, which no writer has described better than Alan Morehead ... Between 1939 and 1945 he not only became the finest war correspondent of his generation but was twice mentioned in dispatches and received a military OBE, having displayed extraordinary courage on the battlefield ... More than a few of us rank Gallipoli as his best book. Though it was first published half a century ago, and many other accounts have appeared in the interim, none has either challenged Morehead's narrative and principal conclusions or improved on his marvellously elegant narrative of one of the great catastrophes of that supreme catastrophe, the First World War... To visit the battlefield is to make a pilgrimage to one of the most terrible conflicts of history, of which Alan Morehead remains perhaps the most vivid chronicler."

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