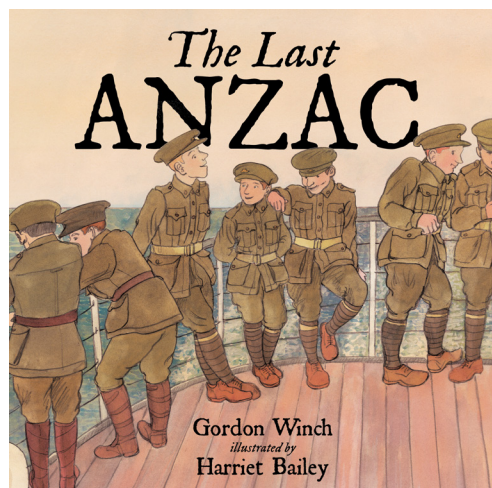


# TEACHERS' NOTES

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## THE LAST ANZAC

Written by Gordon Winch

Illustrated by Harriet Bailey

### ABOUT THE BOOK

*This book is based on the true story of a small boy's visit to meet Alec Campbell in the year 2001.*

To James, Alec Campbell was a hero. He was right. The old man, the last living ANZAC, and all of the Australian and New Zealand soldiers who fought at Gallipoli, were heroes – everyone's heroes.

Alec, who died in May 2002 at the age of 103, enlisted in 1915 when he was just 16. He had put his age up to 18 in order to be accepted by the army and agreed to fight at the front, wherever he was needed. Heroic indeed!

James was very fortunate to meet Alec Campbell and find out about his experiences. He gives us a special view of this humble and remarkable man, the year before he died.

### AUTHOR BACKGROUND

Gordon Winch has written widely for 30 years in a variety of genres. His work ranges from stories and poetry for children to tertiary publications in the field of literacy. Gordon is best known for *Samantha Seagull's Sandals* and *Enoch the Emu*.

### ILLUSTRATOR BACKGROUND

Harriet is a designer and illustrator based in Wellington, New Zealand. She began her career as a graphic designer and in the last few years has been reacquainting herself with the world of children's picture books. In 2010 Harriet was the inaugural recipient of The Storylines Gavin Bishop Award and since then has illustrated *Hester & Lester* (Random House, 2011) and *Out of Bed, Fred!* (Scholastic, 2011), both books awarded the Storylines Notable Books List 2012 Picture Book list. Harriet finds inspiration from her youngest friends and the fresh new world they inhabit. In 2012/13 she produced a series of wall graphics for children covering the alphabet, counting and a height chart.

Harriet's profile is listed with The Storylines Children's Literature Charitable Trust, New Zealand. Her work can be seen at [www.harrietbailey.com](http://www.harrietbailey.com)



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Suite 3, Level 2, 18 Aquatic Drive, Frenchs Forest, NSW 2086 Australia

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## EDUCATIONAL APPLICABILITY

Due for release in time for the 100th Anniversary of the Gallipoli Landing, *The Last Anzac* is based on a true encounter, and beautifully tells the personal experiences of a young Australian soldier in World War I.

Suitable for ages 5-10, *The Last Anzac* has essential historical value, and brings the account of WWI veteran Alec Campbell into relatable terms for early primary students, with historical advice from the Australian War Memorial.

## HISTORY

- The book's context is divided between the 21st century of young interviewer James, and the 1915 Gallipoli experiences of teenager Alec Campbell.
- The illustrations depict both eras, and include many visual references to the Australian participation at war at the time.

## DISCUSSION TOPICS

### Before and during reading the book

1. Discuss the word 'ANZAC'. What is this an acronym for and why were Australia and New Zealand fighting together?
2. Talk about the fact that this is based on a true meeting between the boy and veteran Alec Campbell
3. Discuss veteran Alec Campbell's age as a soldier at 16; why do the children think he said he was 18, and do they think the government authorities believed him at the time?

### After reading the book

#### Illustrations and Context

1. What about the illustrations tells us where in time the events are taking place?
2. How do the illustrations show the difference between the two timelines?
3. Clothing: Talk about the different clothes worn between the early 20th century and the 21st century, including both war uniform and civilian clothing
4. 'Khaki': Why do the children think that the soldiers wore the dark murky green colour as uniform?

#### Language

1. Look at the attached copy of the letter that Alec sent to his mother from Gallipoli. Can the children identify the date and location written there? Can they find the letter in the book?
2. As a class (depending on the age of the students, the writing may be difficult to read), read aloud the letter. What words does Alec use that may be different to the way Australians talk nowadays (e.g. 'fellow', addressing his mother as 'darling')?
3. Alec writes quite formally in style, despite the smudges and corrections. Discuss the context of his letter; the style of his handwriting, the circumstances he was probably writing in and the reason for his corrections.
4. The ANZACs were called 'diggers', which has become a general term for soldiers of the Australian army. Where did this word come from?

## ACTIVITIES

- Creative writing: assign the children the task of writing their own letter home from Gallipoli. Outline how they can use sensory language to show what they have 'experienced': the heat, the cold, the smells, sounds and feeling of stomach sickness



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Gallipoli  
5 Nov 1915

Dear Mother

All last we have reached our destination. We landed about 3 days ago under fairly safe conditions all except one poor fellow who got shot through the head. We are dug in to the side of a gully just @ the bottom of the big hill 9.70 which I suppose you are reading a lot about in paper. The Turks shot a few shrapnel shells out into our valley but luckily nobody was hit. We were digging a new trench yesterday & there was a young New Zealander in charge of us he was talking to me, when he lifted his head up above the trench and a few inches of a ~~shell~~ ~~came~~ through the ~~trench~~ after seeing that I can tell you I kept my own head pretty low.

I have not had a letter for quite a long time now old darling, but I know you are writing every week so I will have a bunch of letters to get sometime. don't worry about my safety darling as it is quite safe as long as you don't hope your heart up over the trench top. I suppose you are all getting on alright but I wish they could arrange a better mail system. We are treated fairly well out here considering the crowds of troops there are here to face. Tell Angus that I met Frank Watch's big brother out here the one in the red cross the other one is in England on a holiday. And tell dad that a lot of fellows say Billy Hinman is in England too, but other say he is dead so you don't know which is right.

Loads of love old Darling  
Your loving son Alec

- For older classes, research the common sicknesses of the time; what were common illnesses here and how did it affect the soldiers?
- Badges: Australian WWI badges are illustrated on page 24. Allow the class research time to discover the meaning of each badge (The 1914-1915 Star; the British Medal; the Victory Medal; Gallipoli Medallion etc).
- Ask the children to go home and ask their families if any of their great-great-grandparents were involved in the First World War, or any other war in the world.
- Take a look at the completed interview attached. James's class mates gave him the questions to take to Tasmania. What other questions would you have asked?

**MARKETING AND SELLING POINTS**

- Based on a true encounter
- Will be released in time for the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landing
- Beautifully celebrates the Anzac Centenary
- Harriet Bailey is a winner of the Storylines Gavin Bishop Award for Illustration



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INTERVIEW WITH MR ALEC CAMPBELL  
Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2001

1. **Did you get injured at any time during the war?**

*No*

2. **How bad were the war conditions?**

*Bad and Good are relative terms.*

3. **Do you have any lasting affects from the war?**

*No*

4. **How old were you when you signed?**

*I was 16; no one worried about my age.*

5. **What was you're rank in the war?**

*I was a full-blown private. 1 year as a Jackaroo.*

6. **Where did you go to school?**

*Scotch College, Launceston.*

7. **What was your work after the war?**

*I was sick in Egypt for six months with*

8. **What part of the army, navy or airforce were you in?**

*I was in the army.*

9. **Were you nervous? The first time you landed or started?**

*I should think I was. You had to be alert.*

10. **What weapons did you have?**

*303 Rifle bayonet.*

11. **During the war what entertainment was there?**

*I can't remember.*

12. **Did Gallipoli have any entertainment?**

*Lord no except Turks fire.*

13. **How did you protect yourself?**

*Ran for cover. Saps and Trenches.*

14. **How did you know an enemy was coming?**

*You took it for granted. The rifle fire was very constant.*

13. **Who were your best friends in the war?**

*I had many friends.*

14. **Did you write to your family?**

*Occasionally*

15. **What did you eat?**

*Bully Beef.*

16. **What was your greatest moment?**

*Eating oranges when we got off Gallipoli.*

17. **Do you have any scars?**

*Because of the sickness of the war I got many infections.*

*I got Bell's palsy.*

18. **Do you have any children or grand children?**

*I have nine children. Seven from my first marriage and two from my second. Two great great grand children.*

19. **Did anyone throw any bombs?**

*Yes. Trenches were very close. Close enough to throw grenades form one to the other*

20. **How long were you in the war?**

*Can't remember but Mr. Campbell's wife said it was about six weeks.*

Mr. Campbell used to go down to the beach to get water. He saw Lord Kitchen (A British Officer) standing on the beach. Troops withdrew from Gallipoli after Lord Kitchner visited the site.

Mr. Alec Campbell retired at 80 at the request of his eldest son.

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