



## Walter CROXFORD

**Bombardier, Royal Horse Artillery**

### **At KES:**

Walter was born in 1891 in Bow London His father died in 1898 and came to KES in 1902 from Forest Gate where his mother and family were living. He was described as a "good engineer" so, when he left in 1905, he went to work as an engineer with his brother. By the time of the 1911 Census he was a Gunner in the R H A.

**Date of Death: 19<sup>th</sup> December 1915**

**Place: Turkey**

**Buried: Twelve Tree Copse 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.

**Walter wrote to KES just before he died. He recounted an incident:**

*Yesterday morning two Turkish officers attempted to surrender; one arrived safely into our trenches, but the other was wounded before doing so. Our infantry fed him all day by throwing bread to him over the trench parapet, and rescued him when it was dusk.*

It is probable that Walter died during or just before the evacuation of Suvla 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> December. The landing at Suvla Bay was made on the Aegean coast of the Gallipoli Peninsula as part of the final British attempt to break the deadlock of the Battle of Gallipoli. The landing, which commenced on the night of 6 August 1915, was intended to support a breakout from the Anzac sector, five miles (8 km) to the south. Conditions on Gallipoli defy description. The terrain and close fighting did not allow for the dead to be buried. Flies and other vermin flourished in the heat, which caused epidemic sickness. In October 1915, winter storms caused much damage and human hardship, and in December, a great blizzard - followed by cataclysmic thaw - caused casualties of 10% (15,000 men) throughout the British contingent, and no doubt something similar on the Turkish side.