

B.R. DIONYSIUS

*Lance Corporal Leonard Maurice Keysor**

7-8 August 1915, Lone Pine trenches, Gallipoli peninsula, Turkey

When the pale dust cleared & his numbed mind retreated into his own body after fifty hours of non-stop bombing, his right arm burned like a fire-hollowed tree branch where the embers of fatigue still glowed with hot dark matter. His muscles bunched like sausage meat packed tightly into their stomach lining, cells straining. Gravity took him then like no Turk bullet could. His shoulder joint slithered crazily to the trench floor like the broken chain of his old bike. Hands clapped him on his volcanic shoulder as though he'd just taken five wickets. They felt like railway spikes hammered into his flesh. They said he'd even caught some bombs in mid-air; a true athlete.

*Corporal Alexander Stewart Burton**

9 August 1915, Lone Pine trenches, Gallipoli peninsula, Turkey

When he was a child, on those rare occasions, the sea would dissolve his sandcastles in its vortex field, the wet, grey molecules giving the beach back its high degree of entropy. Its grains pressing flat as buried bones at every high tide. Here, a khaki ocean surged forward, again with the hope of speeding up

his decay; he stacked & restacked the sandbag wall,
their levee against death. Turkish Pioneers moved
in unison like a patrol of Clubbies; when they paused
he knew they were igniting their cricket ball shaped
bombs. They were as accurate as an A grade bowler,
pinpointing the stumps. Five seconds later, there was
a flash like the dying rays of the sun reflecting off water.
A wave of earth dumped him & his body drowned.

*From *Lone Pine Sonnets* (Valour)