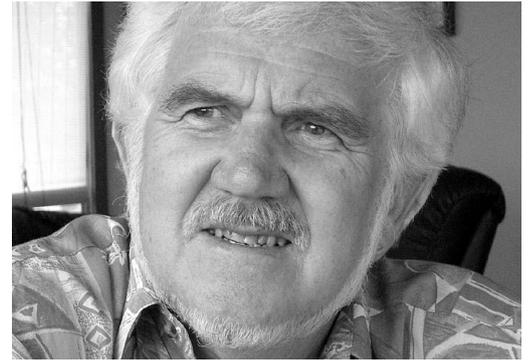


## Geoff Page: Christ at Gallipoli

Australian poet, novelist, editor, and biographer Geoff Page was born in Grafton, on the north coast of New South Wales, and educated at the University of New England. His poems frequently make use of rhyme and meter as they explore faith and cultural memory. Page is the author of more than a dozen poetry collections, including *Small Town Memorials* (1975), *Selected Poems* (1991), and *Seriatim* (2007). He is the author of the novels *Benton's Conviction* (1985), *Winter Vision* (1989), and *The Scarring* (1999) and the biography *Bernie McGann: A Life in Jazz* (1997). With Loredana Nardi-Ford and R.F. Brissenden, he translated a selection of poems in Italian poet Salvatore Quasimodo's *Day After Day: Selected Poems* (2002). Page has edited several anthologies, including *The Indigo Book of Modern Australian Sonnets* (2003), *80 Great Poems from Chaucer to Now* (2006), and *60 Classic Australian Poems* (2009). He is also the author of *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Australian Poetry* (1995). His honors include the ACT Poetry Prize, the Robert Harris Poetry Prize, the Christopher Brennan Award, the Grace Leven Prize for Poetry, the Patrick White Award, and the Queensland Premier's Prize for Poetry. In 2001 Page retired from Narrabundah College, where he had taught since 1974.



## Christ at Gallipoli

This synod is convinced that the forces of the Allies are being used of God to vindicate the rights of the weak and to maintain the moral order of the world. *Anglican Synod, Melbourne, 1916.*

Bit weird at first,  
That starey look in the eyes,  
The hair down past his shoulders,  
But after a go with the ship's barber,  
A sea-water shower and the old slouch hat  
Across his ears, he started to look the part.  
Took him a while to get the way  
A bayonet fits the old Lee-Enfield,  
But going in on the boats  
He looked calmer than any of us,  
Just gazing in over the swell  
Where the cliffs looked black against the sky.  
When we hit he fairly raced in through the waves,  
Then up the beach, swerving like a full-back at the end  
When the Turks'd really got on to us.  
Time we all caught up,  
He was off like a flash, up the cliffs,  
After his first machine gun.  
He'd done for three Turks when we got there,  
The fourth was a gibbering mess.  
Seeing him wave that blood-red bayonet,  
I reckoned we were glad  
To have him on the side.

Geoff Page, *Christ at Gallipoli* text from *Small Town Memorials*, University of Queensland Press, 1975; <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/242962>

- See more at: <http://voiceseducation.org/content/geoff-page-christ-gallipoli#sthash.iLbnRbKc.dpuf>