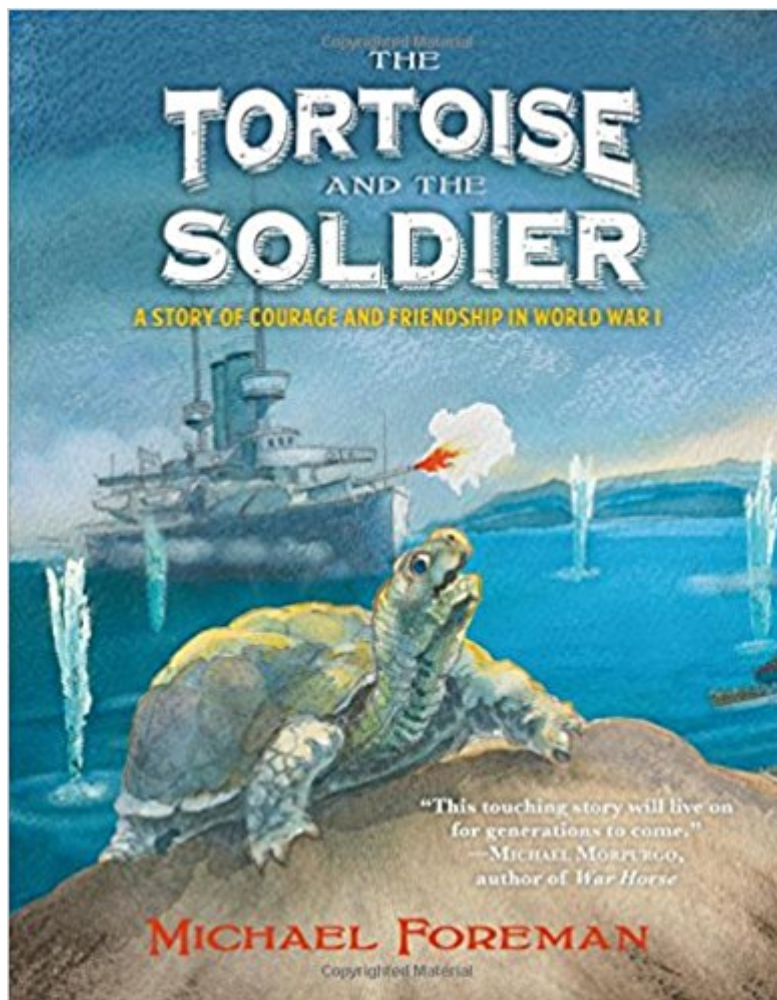




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# The Tortoise And The Soldier: A Story Of Courage And Friendship In World War I



## Synopsis

As a boy, Henry Friston dreamed of traveling the world. He thought he was signing up for a lifetime of adventure when he joined the Royal Navy. But when World War I begins, it launches the world, and Henry, into turmoil. While facing enemy fire at Gallipoli, Henry discovers the strength he needs to survive in an unexpected source: a tortoise. And so begins the friendship of a lifetime. Based on true events, and with charming illustrations, this story of war, courage, and friendship will win the hearts of readers.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 128 pages

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Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #740,762 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #71 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > European](#) #187 in [Books > Children's Books > Animals > Turtles](#) #469 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Military & Wars](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Gr 3-7 Based on a true story, this book opens with a young reporter for a British newspaper interviewing veteran Henry Friston about the pet tortoise he obtained when he served as a sailor in World War I. Friston relates his life story and shares his diary, describing his childhood as a poor student who daydreamed about traveling the world. As a young man, he joins the Royal Navy on the eve of the war. He rescues the wounded on Gallipoli, where he encounters the tortoise, names it Ali Pasha, and brings it aboard his ship. Ali becomes a mascot for the gun crew. After witnessing more action, Friston returns to England with Ali Pasha to live out the rest of his days as a gardener, with Ali becoming a local tourist attraction. This is an intriguing story that provides vivid accounts of battles and insight into one who fought. Haunting drawings convey the grimness of war in a way that children will find relatable, while maps and a few photographs flesh out the events. The

title is somewhat misleading, as the tortoise is a fairly minor character (the bulk of the story focuses on Friston's war experiences). The book lacks a glossary for those not versed in Britishisms. Minor criticisms aside, this is a captivating story that will be read in one sitting. VERDICT An enticing and well-written tale that will be relished by those who enjoyed Michael Morpurgo's *War Horse* (Scholastic, 2007).

“This touching story will live on for generations to come.”  
Michael Morpurgo, author of *War Horse* “Foreman is that rare artist who writes as well as he illustrates. . . . An original middle-grade novella with unusual richness and depth.”  
Kirkus Reviews, starred review “A good choice for independent readers who want war stories but may not be ready for more horrific accounts, this beautifully illustrated book also reads aloud well. . . . A memorable story of war, growing up, and yes, a tortoise.”  
Booklist, starred review “The multilayered storytelling, Foreman's dramatic watercolor illustrations, and reproductions of period mementos provide a nuanced portrait of the bonds between Friston and Ali Pasha, as well as between the older man and a curious journalist-in-training.”  
Publishers Weekly “the war account is compelling and Foreman's art enhances the storytelling.”  
The Bulletin

I believe in all my years of working in children's literature, this is the first book I have seen about the battle of Gallipoli geared towards young adults. Done in diary format, it will grab the attention of a reluctant readers - esp of the male gender.

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