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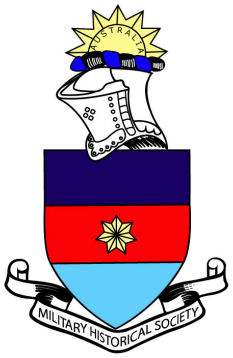

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ORDERS, DECORATIONS AND MEDALS OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

PART 1: CITATION RIBBONS AND HIGHER DECORATIONS

Paul A Rosenzweig[1]

Philippine decorations and medals may not figure prominently in many collections, but there are a few Australian connections that make them an interesting series to consider. The Philippine Legion of Honor and the Outstanding Achievement Medal have both been awarded to members of the Australian Defence Force. Australia played a significant role in the liberation of the Philippines in 1944-45, and Australian naval and air force personnel have been awarded the Philippine Liberation Medal. A total of 92 Australian Service personnel were recorded as missing or killed during operations in the Philippines[2]. In addition, 785 Australians died when the Japanese freighter *Montevideo Maru* was sunk by a US submarine 70 nautical miles northwest of Cape Bojeado at the northernmost tip of the Philippine island of Luzon on 1 July 19423: she remains submerged northwest of Luzon, a war grave for members of Lark Force (the 2/22nd Battalion Group AIF) and the 1st Independent Company. In more recent years, Filipinos and Australians served side-by-side in Korea, Vietnam and on various peace-keeping operations, and some 500 Filipinos earned the INTERFET Medal, the first award within the Australian Honours System to be issued to foreign nations. This paper reviews the citation ribbons and the higher decorations available to members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines

The history of the modern Republic of the Philippines is deeply rooted in some three centuries of Spanish domination from 1565 and almost a half century of American occupation. The Philippine Islands became the 'Commonwealth of the Philippines' in 19354 and gained its independence in 19465. The modern Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)6 has its origins in an army which was founded on 22 March 1897, at the height of the Philippine Revolution against Spain – the first revolt against western colonial rule in Asia.

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2 Two Australian Army personnel were killed in 1943 (escaped prisoners who joined the guerrilla force in the southern Philippines); twelve RAAF members were killed or recorded as missing, and 76 officers and men from HMAS *Australia* and HMAS *Arunta* were buried at sea or recorded as missing.

3 She was carrying 1,053 prisoners to Hainan Island, China, including 30 Scandinavian seamen from the MV *Herstein* and 208 civilians and missionaries. Refer: "Rabaul 1942: the Sacrifice of John Eshott Carr (1922-1942)". *Sabretache, XLV* (April-June 2004): 11-18.

4 President Manuel L Quezon, first President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines (15 Nov 35 to 1 Aug 44); President Sergio Osmena Sr, second President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines (1 Aug 44 to 28 May 46); Manuel A Roxas, third and last President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines (28 May to 4 Jul 46).

5 The US granted independence on 4 July 1946, with Manuel A Roxas as the first President of the Republic of the Philippines (4 Jul 46 to 15 Apr 48). Later, the Philippines adopted 12 June as its Independence Day, reflecting the date in 1898 on which independence from Spain was proclaimed by Aguinaldo – the Philippines choosing to celebrate their independence on the day a Filipino declared it, rather than on the day it was imposed upon them by the Americans.

6 Pobre, C P (2000) *History of the Armed Forces of the Filipino People*. New Day Publishers, Quezon City: among the many available references, this is the definitive history of the AFP.

The Philippine independence movement itself began as early as 7 July 1892 when the Katipunan[7] was established by Andres Bonifacio and his associates, as an 'Association of the Sons of the Country'. The title 'Katipunan' was represented by the alibata character 'K' [from the native Filipino alphabet], and this symbol is today widely used in Philippine military insignia and decorations. Similarly, the image of a golden sun with eight sunbursts appears on the Philippine national flag and many insignia, decorations and medals. The sun symbolises liberty, and the eight rays represents the eight provinces of the Philippines who led the revolution against Spanish rule in 1898 leading to independence. This image appears on insignia (such as the rank insignia of field grade officers), on decorations (including the Medal for Valor, the Legion of Honour, and the Military Merit Medal) and medals (such as the Jolo Campaign Medal 1972-77).

After the writer and nationalist Dr José Rizal was banished by the Spanish authorities into internal exile in Mindanao (1892-96), the Katipuñeros became more powerful and their influence became more widespread: by August 1896, membership had reached about 30,000. On 23 August 1896, the Katipuñeros tore up their cedulas [identification receipts issued for payment of taxes] as a symbol of their determination to take up arms against Spain. Andres Bonifacio was appointed Supremo ['President'] of the Katipunan in January 1895 and led the revolution in its early stages: military action commenced in Manila on 29 August 1896. To preserve operational security, Bonifacio was known by the code-name *Maypagasa* ['With hope']. The Spanish authorities imposed a reign of terror to frighten the population into submission and prominent Katipuñeros were shipped into exile; many others, including José Rizal, were executed.

At the Tejeros Convention in 1897, the Katipunan was dissolved and the revolutionary government of General Emilio Aguinaldo created the 'Republica Filipina', with the various revolutionary units as its army under the command of Bonifacio. The Spanish Guardia Civil pursued the Republica Filipina: Bonifacio was captured and charged with sedition and treason, and was executed by the Spanish in May 1897. The date of the Tejeros Convention – 22 March 1897 – is today marked as the date of the establishment of the Philippine Army, and the Philippine Army's barracks in Manila was subsequently named in honour of its founder – Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City (FBTC).

Leadership of the Revolution passed to Emilio Aguinaldo, who had distinguished himself in the battlefields in Cavite, at that time the heartland of the revolution. Aguinaldo was known by the code-name *Magdalo* (after Santa Magdalena, the patron saint of his home-town of Kawit in Cavite). The first phase of the revolution, from the declaration of defiance against Spanish rule on 23 August 1896, ended inconclusively with both Filipino and Spanish forces unable to pursue hostilities to a successful conclusion. Consequently, between 18 November and 15 December 1897, a truce was concluded between the two sides which resulted in a temporary cessation of hostilities. Aguinaldo agreed to go on temporary exile to Hong Kong after the Spanish government compensated him and his revolutionary junta with 400,000 Pesos.

The Spanish-American War of 1898 was fought to expand American colonialism, through the conquest of Cuba and the Philippines. The excuse for entering the war was the rebellion by the Cubans against Spanish rule and the explosion of the American battleship USS *Maine* in Havana. On 11 April 1898, President McKinley asked Congress to declare war on Spain, and the war commenced on 22 April; Spain then declared war on the United States on 24 April. US ships under Commodore George E Dewey were sent from Hong Kong to the Philippines, and they

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7 The organisation's full title was *Kataas-taasan Kagalang-galang na Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan* ['The Most Exulted and Most Honourable Association of the Sons of the Country']. It was known in short as '*Katipunan*', the Tagalog word for 'Association', and also by the abbreviation 'KKK'.

sank the Spanish Fleet in Manila Bay on the morning of 1 May 1898. On 6 June, US military forces landed at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, on 25 July the US Army invaded Puerto Rico, and on 13 August 1898 US troops took Manila in the Philippines. The war finished on 10 December 1898 with the Treaty of Paris, with the United States as a global colonial power, holding former Spanish territories in Latin America, the Pacific Ocean and eastern Asia, as well as the formerly independent nation of Hawaii.

The truce between the Spanish and the 'Republica Filipina' failed and, from his home in Cavite, on 12 June 1898 General Emilio Aguinaldo proclaimed Philippine independence from Spain. By the end of the year, a Revolutionary Congress was established in Bulacan and, in early 1899, General Aguinaldo was sworn in as President of the First Philippines Republic. The Armed Forces of the Philippines barracks in Quezon City, Manila, housing General Headquarters of the AFP, was subsequently named in Aguinaldo's honour – Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo (CGEA).

Meanwhile, on 4 February 1899, America launched a protracted 'pacification' campaign against the Filipino guerrillas and freedom fighters. General Aguinaldo was captured by the US in 1901, at which time General Arthur MacArthur was Military Governor of the Philippines. The Americans established an occupation government in 1901, and President Roosevelt declared the Philippines pacified in 1902. On 25 September 1903 the last of the Filipino Generals, General Simeon Ola, surrendered to the Americans, but the campaign actually lasted until 1906 costing the lives of over 4,000 US and 16,000 Filipino troops. The Philippine Islands was then administered by the US Bureau of Insular Affairs for the next four decades.

The *National Defense Act*, 1935 created the Philippine Army, with the off-shore patrol and Army Air Corps as its major components; the Philippine Constabulary existed under the Department of Interior. The Philippine Army adopted an insignia based on the badge of the United States Army; this insignia was still used long after the Philippine Army was reorganised following World War 2. The Philippine Army subsequently became the Armed Forces of the Philippines on 23 December 1950, with four major services: Philippine Army, Philippine Air Force, Philippine Navy and the Philippine Constabulary (subsequently Philippine National Police).

Military awards

Philippine military doctrine states that "awards and decorations are tangible proofs of meritorious service and achievement, heroic acts, display of skills and efficiency, competence and excellence. They serve as memorabilia and inspiration to the recipients". The objective of such awards and decorations is to provide recognition for acts of valour and heroism, exceptional and meritorious service or achievement, acts of heroism not involving actual combat, and special skills and qualifications. Awards can be made to any individual who distinguishes themselves with outstanding achievements or service in pursuit of the objectives of national security and development. Awards can also be made to a unit or organisation (either military or civilian, local and foreign) for the same reasons.

At the top of the Philippine honours and awards hierarchy are a number of orders, based on the European structure and clearly drawn from the country's Spanish past. For military personnel, there are available a number of higher decorations to reward courage and gallantry in the face of an armed enemy, as well as operational and administrative merit. Following the American model, decorations, medals and ribbons are worn on the uniform shirt or jacket above the left breast pocket. As per usual convention, the highest ranking award is worn to the wearer's right in the upper row (ie: nearest the centre of the chest). A service ribbon is worn in lieu of an authorised decoration or service medal, with up to three ribbons per row. One ribbon for each decoration or medal is authorised for wear, although an 'appurtenance' (ribbon device) can be awarded for

each succeeding act or period of service that justifies the award of the same decoration. All multi-coloured ribbons are worn with the blue placed towards the wearer's right (nearest the centre of the chest).

Miniature replicas of decorations and medals, one quarter of the actual size, are authorised for wear on the mess jacket, Barong Filipino or evening dress; the wearing of miniatures on civilian clothes is limited to ceremonial occasions only. All Philippine medals are accompanied by an enamelled lapel badge for wear in civilian dress.

Not more than one award of the same decoration can be made to one person. For each succeeding act or period of qualifying service, an 'appurtenance' is awarded. An appurtenance is a device added or attached to the ribbon of the basic decoration to distinguish each deed and succeeding deeds of achievements falling under the same category of the decoration. There are four different types of appurtenances (each of which can be awarded in bronze, silver or gold):

Anahaw Leaf: A Bronze Anahaw Leaf (BAL) is awarded for the first, second, third and fourth succeeding deeds in lieu of the Medal for Valor, Distinguished Conduct Star, Distinguished Service Star, Gold Cross, Philippine Legion of Honor, Outstanding Achievement Medal, Distinguished Aviation Cross, Distinguished Navy Cross, Bronze Cross, Silver Wings Medal or Wounded Personnel Medal. The BAL is also awarded for the second, third and fourth succeeding deeds in lieu of the Military Merit Medal when it is awarded for meritorious achievement not involving participation in combat, in connection with military operations against an enemy of the Philippines, or for a single act of meritorious service either in a duty of responsibility or in direct support of military operations. A Silver Anahaw Leaf is awarded in lieu of the fifth succeeding Bronze Anahaw Leaf, and a Gold Anahaw Leaf is awarded in lieu of the fifth Silver Anahaw Leaf.

Equilateral Triangle: A Bronze Equilateral Triangle is awarded for the first, second, third and fourth succeeding deeds in lieu of the Military Commendation Medal. A Silver Equilateral Triangle is awarded in lieu of the fifth succeeding Bronze Equilateral Triangle, and a Gold Equilateral Triangle is awarded in lieu of the fifth Silver Equilateral Triangle awarded to the Military Commendation Medal.

Service Star: A Bronze Service Star is awarded for each succeeding campaign or major battle engagement, or for participation in unit massive operations. A Silver Service Star is awarded in lieu of the fifth Bronze Service Star, and a Gold Service Star is awarded in lieu of the fifth Silver Service Star awarded to a particular campaign or service medal.

Spearhead Device: A Bronze Spearhead Device (BSD) is awarded for the second, third and fourth succeeding deeds in lieu of the Military Merit Medal when it is awarded for heroic achievement in combat. A Silver Spearhead Device is awarded in lieu of the fifth succeeding Bronze Spearhead Device, and a Gold Spearhead Device is awarded in lieu of the fifth succeeding Silver Spearhead Device awarded to the Military Merit Medal for heroic achievement.

Citations

There are currently four Philippine citation ribbons which may be awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines[8]. Unlike citation insignia awarded to Australians, a Philippine citation is considered an 'individual decoration', and is worn as a permanent award only by those who were assigned to the unit at the time of the action for which the citation was granted. The citation ribbon is not worn by members subsequently serving in the cited unit. In common with the US method of wearing, citation ribbons are worn on the uniform shirt or jacket above the right breast pocket. The four Philippine citation ribbons are as follows:

The Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Citation Badge.

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8 Foreign citations (such as the South Korean Presidential Unit Citation and the Republic of Vietnam Presidential Unit Citation) are not discussed here.

Martial Law Citation Ribbon (1972-1981).
EDSA 1 Citation Ribbon (22-25 February 1986).
EDSA 2 Citation Ribbon (January 2001).

Presidential Unit Citation

The Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Citation Badge (PRPUCB) was created in 1946, and may be awarded by the President of the Philippines to the following personnel or units:

a. Any member of the AFP (including the Philippine Merchant Marine), and any member of the armed forces of the US and allied nations involved in the war against the Japanese Empire during the period 7 December 1941 to 10 May 1942 inclusive, or during the Philippine Campaign of Liberation between 17 October 1944 and 4 July 1945 inclusive.

b. Any unit of the AFP that distinguishes itself with exceptional loyalty and fidelity, or extraordinary accomplishment in the field of law enforcement in maintaining the security of the land, participation in relief and rehabilitation activities, and for advancement of socio-economic and political goals.

c. Any member of the AFP (including the Philippine Merchant Marine) for participation in campaigns against an enemy of the Philippines, or participation in unit massive operations within a defined period of time.

d. Units of friendly foreign nations for humanitarian service to the Filipino people.

The Presidential Unit Citation Badge comprises stripes of ultramarine blue, white and 'Old Glory' red (drawn from the Philippine National Flag): the blue represents nobility and patriotism; the white represents sincerity, purity and peace; and the red represents bravery. The citation is worn on the right breast, with the blue to the wearer's left. The insignia was originally bordered with a gilt metal frame of palm leaves: the gold represented honour and prestige, and the palm leaves signified triumph and glory. Philippine Air Force and Philippine Marine Corps members still wear gilt-metal framed citation ribbons. Some notable awards of the Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Citation Badge are as follows:

14BCT, 1954. The PRPUCB was awarded in 1954 to the 14th Battalion Combat Team ('Avengers') – the fourth contingent of the 'Philippine Expeditionary Force to Korea' (PEFTOK) – which deployed to the Korean War from March 1953 to April 1954. This contingent also received the South Korean Presidential Unit Citation in December 1953.

PhilCAGV, 1967. On 30 November 1967, the Philippine Ambassador to South Vietnam Luis Moreno-Salcedo presented the PRPUCB to the Philippine Civic Action Group, Vietnam in appreciation of its civic action work in South Vietnam. In the same ceremony, the South Vietnamese Defence Minister Nguyen Van Vy presented the Republic of Vietnam Presidential Unit Citation.

FSRR, 1988. The First Scout Ranger Regiment of the Philippine Army's Special Operations Command was awarded the PRPUCB in December 1988, and the Presidential Streamer in 2000. Headquarters First Scout Ranger Regiment is located at Camp Tecson, San Miguel, Bulacan in North Luzon; its mission is to neutralise enemy forces by counter-guerrilla and other special operations. The regimental insignia is the 'Musang' badge featuring a black panther and lightning bolt, and their motto is "We Strike".

Martial Law Citation Ribbon (1972-1981)

This citation was awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines for loyalty and service during the period following the imposition of Martial Law on 21 September 1972. In early 1970, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) launched its 'First-Quarter Storm', followed by a number of insurrections and public demonstrations during 1970 and 1971. On 21 August 1971, a Liberal Party rally at Plaza Miranda in the Quiapo district of Manila was attacked with hand-grenades (the Liberal Party, headed by former Senator Benigno Aquino Jr,

was the strongest rival of the Nacionalista Party of President Ferdinand Marcos[9], but Aquino was late for the rally and was uninjured). The bombing had been planned by the CPP's Jose Maria Sison, to divide and weaken the rival political parties. In response to the developing activity of the CPP, and the ongoing Moslem secessionist movement in the southern Philippines, President Marcos imposed Martial Law on 23 September 1972 by Proclamation number 1081 (signed on 21 September 1972, as provided for by Article VII of the 1935 Constitution). Martial Law was eventually lifted on 17 January 1981.

EDSA 1 Citation Ribbon (22-25 February 1986)

This citation was awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines for loyalty and service during the 'February Uprising' in February 1986. Former Senator Benigno Aquino Jr was assassinated at Manila International Airport on 21 August 1983. In consequence, there were many demonstrations and rallies; meanwhile, a group of military officers calling themselves the 'Reform the Armed Forces Movement' (RAM) had begun planning the overthrow of President Marcos. Marcos called a snap presidential election in February 1986, and was opposed by Aquino's widow Mrs Corazon Aquino. Marcos declared himself victorious on 15 February, despite Aquino clearly leading throughout the tally count. Aquino also declared victory and launched a civil disobedience campaign on 16 February. Major-General Fidel V Ramos, commander of the Philippine Constabulary and Vice Chief of Staff of the AFP, led a movement which withdrew support for Marcos and mutinied in Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo. The defection of a squadron of PAF Sikorsky gunships tilted the balance irreversibly against the dictatorship.

On 22 February 1986, Cardinal Jaime Sin called for the public to gather at Epifanio de los Santos Avenue ('EDSA') near the military barracks as a sign of support for the military breakaway group. The size of the gathering prevented Marcos from dispelling the crowd by force. On 24 February, 'rebel' air force elements fired warning shots at Malacañang Palace and neutralised 'loyalist' air assets, precluding any air attack against the rebel soldiers and civilians massed on EDSA. On 25 February 1986, the Marcos family retired from Malacañang Palace by US helicopters to Clark Air Base and thence by US aircraft to Hawaii, and Corazon Aquino was sworn in as the seventh President of the Philippines[10]. General Ramos became Chief of Staff AFP, was subsequently Secretary of National Defense under President Aquino, and was inaugurated as the eighth President of the Philippines on 1 July 1992[11]. The 'February Uprising' later became known as the 'EDSA People Power Revolution' (and after a similar event in 2001, became simply known as 'EDSA 1').

EDSA 2 Citation Ribbon (January 2001)

This citation was awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines for loyalty and service during the period following the second popular uprising in 2001 (known as 'EDSA 2'). In January 2001, the Chief of Staff AFP, General Angelo Reyes, withdrew the AFP's support for President Estrada[12]. After the removal of Estrada on corruption charges, Vice-President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo assumed the presidency for the remainder of Estrada's six-year term; she then assumed her own six-year term as President following elections in 2004.

ORDERS AND DECORATIONS

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9 Ferdinand E Marcos, sixth President of the Republic of the Philippines (30 Dec 65 to 25 Feb 86).
10 Corazon C Aquino, seventh President of the Republic of the Philippines (25 Feb 86 to 1 Jul 92).
11 General Fidel V Ramos, 20th Chief of Staff of the AFP (26 Feb 86 to 22 Jun 88); eighth President of the Republic of the Philippines (1 Jul 92 to 30 Jun 98).
12 Joseph Ejercito Estrada, ninth President of the Republic of the Philippines (30 Jun 98 to 20 Jan 01).

A limited number of awards are personally conferred by the President, including three national orders, which are of the same status and rank:

- Order of Lakandula (established in 2003): the national order of civic and political merit.
- Order of Sikatuna (established in 1951): the national order of diplomatic merit.
- Philippine Legion of Honor (established in 1947): the national order for military and security merit (discussed below).

Among the many other orders available to prominent Filipinos, the orders of significance include:

- Order of Gabriela Silang (established in 1969 in a single grade, equivalent to Grand Cross): conferred on the spouses of Heads of State or Heads of Government.
- Order of Mabini (established in 1975): a secondary order of diplomatic merit.
- Presidential Medal of Merit (established in 1947 in a single grade, worn as a neck decoration): awarded for service to the President or for achievements that in the President's judgement bring honour and prestige to the Philippines.

There are six senior awards available to members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and in certain occasions to foreigners, listed below according to the order of precedence13:

- Medal for Valor
- Distinguished Conduct Star
- Distinguished Service Star
- Gold Cross
- Philippine Legion of Honor
- Outstanding Achievement Medal

Medal for Valor

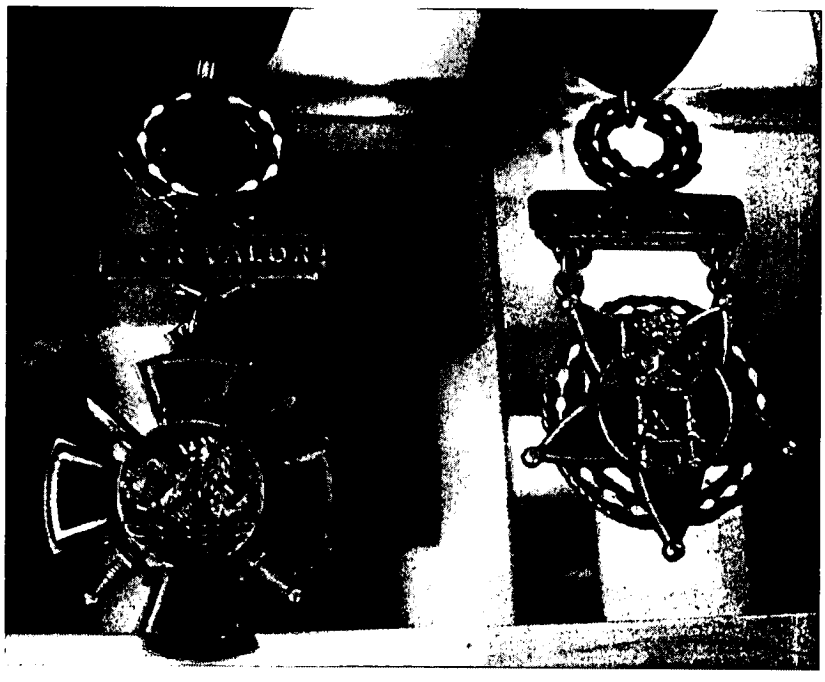
The origins of the Medal for Valor are traced to the Philippine Constabulary Medal of Valor, which was established by Instruction of the President of the United States of America, to be awarded by the Chief of the Constabulary Corps, with the approval of the Governor-General of the Philippine Islands.

The Medal for Valor was established by President of the Philippines Manuel L Quezon through Executive Order No. 251 dated 17 January 1940, and is awarded by the President to military personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, including recognised guerrilla forces, for conspicuous gallantry at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty. To earn this award, the nominee must have been involved in actual conflict with an armed enemy, and performed a deed of personal bravery or self-sacrifice so conspicuous as to distinguish him above his comrades.

The medal is struck in the form of a four-armed cross in gold with red enamelled arms (signifying bravery). It is suspended from a golden sampaguita wreath comprising 26 dark green leaves and 10 white buds (signifying the glory of the gallantry displayed). A suspension bar in gold connects the medal to the wreath, bearing the embossed phrase "FOR VALOR". The upper arm of the cross contains three gold five-pointed stars arranged symmetrically as an equilateral triangle (representing the three major island groups of the nation – Luzon, the Visayas and

13 http://www.army.mil.ph/About_the_army/army/history/Medal_Awards_Decorations.html; http://www.paf.mil.ph/GALLERY1/gallery1.html; http://www.pn.mil.ph

Mindanao). A pair of crossed swords in gold between the arms represents armed conflict with an enemy in the defence of the nation.



The Medal for Valor (left) and Distinguished Conduct Star (right) awarded to Colonel Jesus Antonio Villamor, Philippine Air Force.

The obverse features a central disc bearing a golden sea lion sitting upon the water, with a portion of the body submerged in the water, holding the Philippine sun. The sea lion represents the awarding authority, the President of the Republic of the Philippines (signifying eminently meritorious and valuable service to the nation). The sun represents the eight original provinces of the Philippines that revolted against Spain. The water is composed of four blue enamelled ripples, representing General Headquarters Armed Forces of the Philippines and the three Major Services.

The original wartime insignia had the seal of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in the centre in red, white and blue enamel, surrounded by a laurel wreath. On the reverse were the words "The president to", with a space for the name, grade and organisation of the recipient and the place and date of the act of valour to be engraved.

The Medal for Valor is worn as a neck decoration; the ribbon is 34 mm in width, in crimson with four golden stars arranged in a diamond pattern on either side. The service ribbon has eight golden stars, arranged horizontally forming two lines (five in the upper line and three in the lower).

Many of the awards of the Medal for Valor have been posthumous. Living recipients receive a monthly gratuity, and they or their heirs are entitled to receive any scholarship in any educational institution and for any level of education. When Medal for Valor recipients die, their remains are interred in a specially prepared area of the national war cemetery, *Limbingan ng mga Bayani*, at

Fort Bonifacio in Taguig City, Manila. It is here that the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is located, which has been the site of the annual Anzac Day commemorative service jointly hosted by the Australian and New Zealand Embassies. The Medal for Valor is such a prestigious award that even the President of the Republic of the Philippines must salute the medal and its wearer[14].

One of the notable personalities among the 21 Philippine Army recipients is Major Ferdinand E Marcos[15], the second Medal for Valor awardee, who received the decoration for, "extraordinary gallantry and intrepidity in a suicidal action against overwhelming enemy forces ... on or about 22 January 1942". His hastily organised company-sized blocking force positioned against 2,000 highly-trained and well-equipped Japanese troops prevented the possible decimation of the withdrawing US and Filipino defenders of the of the United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE), and delayed the inevitable fall of Bataan Peninsula. Marcos was subsequently the sixth President of the Republic of the Philippines, from 1965 to 1986.

The third Philippine Army Medal for Valor was awarded to Colonel Jesus Antonio Villamor, Philippine Air Force. After the Japanese attacks on Clark Field north of Manila wiped out practically all USAFFE aircraft. Captain Jesus Villamor's 6th Pursuit Squadron, Philippine Army Air Corps was the only air unit to respond to the Japanese attacks. Flying six obsolete Boeing P-26 fighters and overwhelmed in number, speed and firepower, Villamor's squadron managed to stall the Japanese air offensive in two famous dogfights over Manila and Batangas. Villamor actually won the Medal for Valor later in the war for "conspicuous courage and extraordinary heroism" during the period from 27 December 1942 to November 1943 when he led the first allied intelligence bureau division to the Philippines[16]. He eluded the Japanese Navy in 1942 and established a chain of direct communication from the Philippines to General McArthur in Australia. He coordinated guerrilla movement activities, developed an organisation for subversive propaganda and led resistance efforts against the Japanese. His medals and insignia are displayed at the Philippine Air Force Museum within the PAF base in Pasay City, Manila which was named in this Philippine hero's honour – Colonel Jesus Villamor Air Base (CJVAB).

A more recent recipient, the fourteenth from the Philippine Army, was Lieutenant Bartolome Vicente Bacarro PA[17], a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy's Class of 1988. The Medal for Valor was awarded for "conspicuous courage, gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty" whilst Commanding Officer of the 6th CAFGU Active Auxiliary Company, 21st Infantry Battalion, 5th Infantry Division (equivalent to an Australian Army Reserve company), during a ten-hour encounter with about 150 fully armed communist terrorists who attacked the town of Maconacon, Isabela on 26 February 1991. Lacking air or artillery support against an overwhelming number of armed insurgents, and disregarding a significant wound to his left thigh, Bacarro entered a communist-terrorist compound where his soldiers were pinned down by the enemy, commandeered a dump truck and rammed the fence providing an entry point for his men. Lieutenant Colonel Bob Bacarro is now the Philippine Army Spokesman, and can be regularly seen in Philippine news media as the 'face' of the Philippine Army.

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14 Max V. Soliven, "Not all men of valor got a medal: We must honor those who did". *Philippine Star*, 25 August 2005.

15 http://www.army.mil.ph/miscellaneous/valor_awardees.html; Hamilton-Paterson, J (1998) *America's Boy*. Granta Publications, London.

16 *Ibid.*

17 *Philippine Military Academy Alumni Register 2004*, PMA Alumni Association Inc; http://www.army.mil.ph/miscellaneous/valor_awardees.html

Distinguished Conduct Star

The Distinguished Conduct Star is awarded by the Chief of Staff Armed Forces of the Philippines to military personnel of the AFP and friendly allied armed forces for conspicuous courage and gallantry in the face of an armed enemy. To warrant this award, a person must perform an act of heroism so notable and involving risk of life so extraordinary as to set him apart from his comrades.

The medal is struck in the form of a five-armed star in gold, with red enamelled arms (signifying heroism and gallantry). The medal is suspended from a golden sampaguita wreath comprising 26 dark green leaves and 10 white buds (signifying the glory of the courage and gallantry displayed). The two upper arms of the star connect the medal to a suspension bar in gold, bearing the embossed phrase "FOR GALLANTRY", which in turn connects the medal to the wreath. The star is superimposed upon a circular wreath of green enamelled laurel leaves (signifying glorious victory). The obverse features a large central disc bearing a golden sea lion holding a dagger in its left hand (representing the President of the Republic of the Philippines), sitting upon a display of arms (cannons, bows, arrows and a spear), signifying a strong defence of the Republic of the Philippines by the recipient. The Distinguished Conduct Star is worn as a neck decoration; the ribbon is 34 mm in width, in red with a central blue stripe.

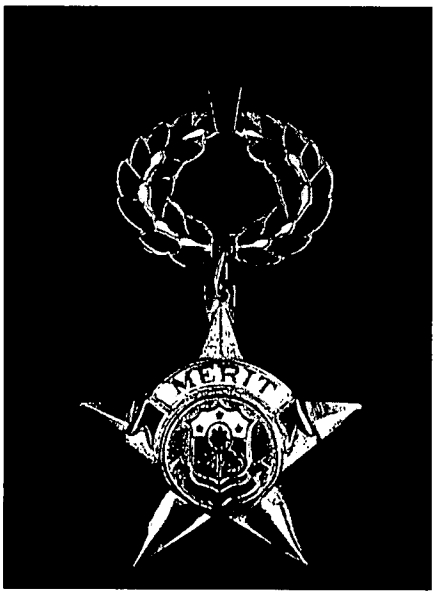
Distinguished Service Star

The Distinguished Service Star is awarded by the Chief of Staff to AFP officers for eminently meritorious and exceptionally valuable service rendered in a position of major responsibility. The medal is struck in the form of a gold five-pointed star (symbolising conspicuously meritorious achievement), and is suspended from a golden wreath comprising 26 dark green sampaguita leaves and 10 white buds (signifying the glory of such a great endeavour). The obverse features a central disc bearing the enamelled seal of the Republic of the Philippines (signifying eminently meritorious and valuable service to the nation). Above this is a golden scroll in an arc bearing the word "MERIT". The reverse is plain, although early versions have the phrase "FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE" embossed in a circular pattern. The Distinguished Service Star is worn as a neck decoration; the ribbon is 34 mm in width, in dark blue with a red stripe in the centre.

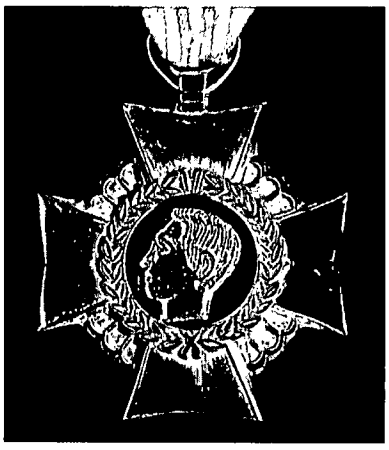
Gold Cross

The Gold Cross is awarded by the Chief of Staff, Area and Unified Commanders and Major Service Commanders to military personnel of the AFP for gallantry in action not warranting the award of the Distinguished Conduct Star. Originally titled as the "Gold Cross for Gallantry", this award dates back to the pre-war days of the Commonwealth of the Philippines and the Government in Exile during the Japanese occupation.

The medal is struck in the form of a golden cross (symbolising sacrifice and the risk of life). The obverse bears the profile of the wartime President Manuel L Quezon in relief in the centre of a depressed blue disc which is encircled by a garland of laurel leaves in gold. The head of Quezon stands for achievement worthy of a presidential endeavour, the blue background represents sincerity and devotion to duty, and the garland stands for honour. The reverse is plain. The suspension ribbon is 34 mm in width, in light blue (representing sincerity and devotion to duty) with three narrow white stripes in the centre (representing the three major island groups of the Philippines – Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao). A Bronze Service Star ribbon device ('appurtenance') is worn to denote each succeeding award.



The Distinguished Service Star



This Gold Cross was awarded to a Philippine Army Second Lieutenant on 9 July 1998 for gallantry in combat operations, as a squad leader in Bravo Company of the 17th Infantry Battalion, 5th Infantry Division during a raid and hostage rescue operation at Barangay Maligaya in Isabela on 26 June 1998. This officer had enlisted as a soldier in the Philippine Army in 1992 and graduated as a Second Lieutenant in 1994; he was then selected to attend the Royal Military College–Duntroon, and graduated on 12 December 1995.

Philippine Legion of Honor

The Philippine Legion of Honor (PLOH) was established in 1947 to reward meritorious and valuable service to the Philippines rendered in a position of major responsibility that merits official recognition by the government. It comprises four grades or 'Degrees': Chief Commander, Commander, Officer and Legionnaire. The insignia of the higher grades can be conferred by the President, but more commonly the insignia is bestowed by the Secretary of National Defense (SND).

The key features of the insignia of the Philippine Legion of Honor, common to all grades, are as follows:

- The medal is struck in the form of a golden disc comprising the Philippine sun (representing the eight original provinces of the Philippines that revolted against Spain) upon a circular green laurel wreath. The rays of the sun are edged in red, representing bravery and courage in the execution of duty. The laurel wreath signifies high honour.
- The obverse bears a central disc featuring a golden sea lion holding a dagger in its left hand. This sea lion represents the awarding authority, the President of the Republic of the Philippines (signifying outstanding achievement or service to the nation).
- The suspension ribbon is 34 mm in width, in red, white and blue (the national colours of the Republic of the Philippines).

The PLOH in the Degree of Chief Commander is awarded by the President of the Republic of the Philippines to high-ranking military officers, civilian dignitaries including the Chief of State, Prime Minister or Head of Government, and other persons holding high and respectable positions whose accomplishments can seldom be surpassed such as jurist, parliamentarian, statesman, diplomat, journalist and scientist. This grade of the award is granted in recognition of eminently meritorious and valuable service rendered in a position of major responsibility. For civilian awardees, it rewards eminently meritorious and valuable service rendered to the

Philippines that merits official recognition by the government. The insignia is a pin back medal worn affixed to a sash. On the service ribbon, a miniature of the insignia is worn at the centre of a rectangular golden bar; when awarded to civilians, a silk rosette is placed in the centre of the ribbon.

The PLOH in the Degree of Commander is awarded by the President of the Republic of the Philippines to the Chief of Staff Armed Forces of the Philippines, Vice Chief of Staff and Major Service Commanders, or their equivalent in the armed forces of friendly foreign nations[1]; and to civilians, such as the President of the Senate, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and the Heads of Department or their equivalent in friendly foreign nations, for eminently meritorious and valuable service in a position of major responsibility. The insignia is worn as a neck decoration; the medal has a green enamelled laurel wreath fixed to the uppermost ray of the sun attached to a large gold suspension loop. On the service ribbon, a miniature of the insignia in gold is worn at the centre of a rectangular silver bar; when awarded to civilians, a miniature of the insignia in gold is placed in the centre of a small enamelled bar.

The PLOH in the Degree of Officer is awarded to military personnel for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service, and to civilians for outstanding service to the Philippines that merits official recognition by the government. The insignia is worn as a neck decoration; the medal has a small green enamelled laurel wreath fixed to the uppermost ray of the sun attached to a small suspension ring. On the service ribbon, a miniature of the insignia in gold is worn in the centre.

The PLOH in the Degree of Legionnaire is awarded to military personnel for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service or for meritorious service, and to civilians for outstanding service to the Philippines that merits official recognition by the government. The insignia is worn as a normal medal, with a small suspension ring attached to the uppermost ray of the sun. No insignia is worn on the service ribbon.

At least one award of the Philippine Legion of Honor in the Degree of Officer has been made to an officer of the Australian Defence Force (upgraded from an initial award of the Outstanding Achievement Medal), and one to a New Zealand officer.

Outstanding Achievement Medal

The Outstanding Achievement Medal (OAM) was created in 1986; it is awarded by the Secretary of National Defense to military personnel of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and citizens of the Republic of the Philippines for distinguished or extraordinary achievement or service in the advancement of science or in socio-economic, technical or military fields related to national defense, or for public service of the highest order. The OAM may also be awarded to civilians and members of the Armed Forces of friendly foreign nations. At least five Outstanding Achievement Medals are known to have been awarded to officers of the Australian Defence Force (one of which was subsequently upgraded to the PLOH).

The medal is struck in the form of a golden five-pointed star within a wreath of green enamelled leaves, symbolising outstanding achievement and honour, respectively. The two arms of the wreath join at a fixed loop, which bears a broad gold ring to connect the insignia to the suspension ribbon; this ring may be plain or quite ornate. The reverse is plain, or it may contain an inscription. The insignia is worn as a neck decoration; the ribbon is 34 mm in width, in crimson with a golden central stripe.

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1 A recent recipient, for example, was Admiral Thomas Fargo USN, the outgoing Commander of US Pacific Command who was awarded the PLOH in the Degree of Commander on 9 February 2005.

The Outstanding Achievement Medal (OAM).

Table of Equivalents

Philippine designation	Australian equivalent
Secretary of National Defense (SND)	Minister for Defence
Department of National Defense (DND)	Department of Defence
Chief of Staff Armed Forces of the Philippines (CSAFP)	Chief of the Defence Force (CDF)
Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)	Australian Defence Force (ADF)
Major Service Commanders: Flag Officer in Command Philippine Navy (FOIC); Commanding General Philippine Army (CGPA); Commanding General Philippine Air Force (CGPAF)	Service Chiefs: Chief of Navy (CN), Chief of Army (CA), Chief of Air Force (CAF)

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THE CAVALRY DISASTERS

Max Chamberlain*

It is perhaps ironic, in view of the War Office statement on accepting Australian contingents, 'Infantry most, cavalry least preferred', that two serious incidents involved the cavalry units, the New South Wales Lancers and the 1st Australian Horse, attached to the Inniskilling Dragoons and the Scots Greys respectively. The first disaster occurred at Slingersfontein, Cape Colony, when in one action a patrol lost 17 men out of a total of 20. Three men from the party had been sent to examine a farmhouse on 16 January 1900, and when he did not hear from them Lieutenant Dowling led his men to investigate.

They were ambushed and cut off. When the Boers found the range someone put up a white flag and surrendered. Sergeant-Major Griffin of the Australian Horse and Corporal Kilpatrick of the Lancers were killed, Lieutenant Dowling was wounded and the rest taken prisoner. It was suggested that they did not make as good a stand as they could have because in their haste to dismount they had not taken their carbines from their buckets. The prisoners were sent to Waterval, north of Pretoria, where two Lancers, Troopers Ford and Whittington, managed to cover themselves with earth in a hole until safe to make a break, then, travelling by night, they boarded a freight train and escaped to Delagoa Bay.

The next disaster took place at Kaalong ('bare hill'), near Zand River, in the Orange Free State on 10 May 1900. General French and his cavalry brigade were ordered to the west of the main army, which was crossing the Zand at a drift near the railway bridge, to effect a turning movement on the Boer right flank. The Carbineers ran into the Boers and retreated under cover of the New South Wales Lancers. Relieved by the mounted infantry, the cavalry pushed on further but the Boers cut across their front.

French decided to occupy a bare hill, the key to the position, but when a gun fired from a range of three miles and made off, Captain Thompson and two troops of Australian Horse pursued until ordered to make for the bare hill, which was assumed to be deserted. It was, however, occupied by the Boers and in the sudden burst of fire the men took cover in a cattle kraal. The Boers stampeded their horses and turned on the men. Ordered to retire, the men scrambled out, each attempting to mount the first horse he could-catch, and the Boers followed, shooting and capturing many of them. The Inniskillings and Carbineers lost 14 killed and 21 wounded, including two officers. The Australian Horse lost two wounded and seven prisoners.

The mounted infantry had also been directed to the western flank and arrived to save the situation. The New South Wales Army Medical Corps, on their way from Welgelegen to join Hutton's Mounted Infantry Brigade, managed to convert a kaffir kraal into a makeshift hospital and tended every case and saw them to hospital at Ventersburg Road before moving on. The cavalry retirement in disorder had been due, surprisingly, to a failure to scout.

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* Max Chamberlain. *Australian tales of the Boer War*, papers presented to the Anglo-Boer War Study Group of Australia since 1997.

Sabretache Vol L No. 1 — March 2009

FIRST VICTORIA CROSS FOR AUSTRALIA

Anthony Staunton

Trooper Mark Donaldson, has been awarded the first Victoria Cross for Australia. He has been decorated for gallantry under heavy fire in Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan where he rescued a coalition forces interpreter. The award was announced at the same time that Trooper Donaldson was invested with the Victoria Cross for Australia at Government House by the Governor-General Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce on Friday, 16 January 2009. The following Thursday, Trooper Donaldson lent his award to the Australian War Memorial where it is now on display.

Mark Donaldson was born in Waratah, Newcastle, on 2 April 1979. He grew up in northern NSW where he graduated from high school in 1996. He enlisted in the Australian Army on 18 June 2002 and did recruit training at the Army Recruit Training Centre, Kapooka, NSW. Trooper Donaldson demonstrated an early aptitude for soldiering and was awarded prizes for best shot and best at physical training in his platoon. He was allocated to the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and posted to the School of Infantry at Singleton, NSW, where he excelled in his initial employment training. At the completion of this training Trooper Donaldson was again awarded best shot and best at physical training, as well as the award for the most outstanding soldier in his platoon. He was posted to 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, Townsville, in November 2002. In February 2004, he successfully completed the Special Air Service Regiment selection course and in May 2004 was posted to I Troop, 3 Special Air Service Squadron. Since that time he has been deployed on operations to East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq. On 12 August 2008, Trooper Donaldson was wounded in action whilst conducting night time operations in Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan. He recovered from his minor wounds and continued on the deployment. Trooper Donaldson is married to Emma and has a daughter Kaylee. His parents are deceased.

Trooper Donaldson will be generally accepted in Australia as the 97th Australian awarded the Victoria Cross or the Victoria Cross for Australia. He is the 92nd member of the Australian Defence Force to be decorated with his country's highest award for gallantry. Five recipients, James Rogers with the South African Constabulary, William Dartnell, Arthur Sullivan and Samuel Pearse with the British Army and Hughie Edwards with the Royal Air Force are considered in Australia as Australian recipients. These five, prior to receiving the Victoria Cross, had served in the Australian forces. Four of the five were born in Australia.

There are some historical similarities in the first award of the Victoria Cross to an Australian and the first award of the Victoria Cross for Australia. Captain Neville Howse in South Africa went out under extremely heavy fire to rescue a British Army trumpeter who was lying wounded on exposed ground. Trooper Donaldson went out under extremely heavy fire to rescue a coalition force interpreter who was lying wounded on exposed ground. All six Australians who received the Victoria Cross in the Boer War received their awards for rescuing wounded men under enemy fire. Another similarly is that the recipients in the first public presentation of a Victoria Cross in Australia and the first public presentation of the Victoria Cross for Australia were invested in the award by females. The first public presentation of a Victoria Cross was made to Private Frederick Whirlpool of the Hawthorn and East Kew Rifles for gallantry with the 3rd Bombay European Fusiliers at Jhansi, India on 2 May 1858. The medal was presented by Lady Barkly, the wife of Sir Henry Barkly, KCB, the Governor of Victoria, at Albert Park, Melbourne, on 20 June 1861. Trooper Donaldson received his award from the first female Governor General of Australia.

VICTORIA CROSS STATISTICS[1]

	1854-1904	1914-1919	1919-1935	1940-1945	1950-2006	Total
Royal Navy	39	44		22		105
Royal Marines	4	5		1		10
British Army	345	408	1	61	9	824
Royal Air Force		18		22		40
Great Britain Total	**388**	**475**	**1**	**106**	**9**	**979**
Australia	5	63		19	4	91
Canada	4	61		13		78
New Zealand	2	11		9		22
South Africa	22	4		3		29
Newfoundland		1				1
Fiji				1		1
King's African Rifles				1		1
Honourable East Indies Co	63					63
Indian Army	33	18	4	30		85
Civilian	5					5
American Unknown		1				1
	522	**634**	**5**	**182**	**13**	**1356**

This is based on tables from the War Office *Alphabetical list of Victoria Cross recipients* (Jan 1953) and *The Story of the Victoria Cross* by Sir John Smyth Bt VC MC (1963). The most recent award in 2006 is included. The awards of the 'Victoria Cross for Australia' and the 'Victoria Cross for New Zealand' under the Australian and New Zealand honours systems are mentioned in the notes to the statistics.

1914-1919 Includes the ungazetted American Unknown Warrior and the three Royal Navy and two British Army awards for North Russia since service in North Russia attracted the British War Medal 1914-1920 (but not the Victory Medal).

1919-1935 Includes one 1919 award for Waziristan. Service in Waziristan attracted Indian General Service Medal but not the British War Medal 1914-1920.

Royal Navy Mayo (Indian Naval Brigade) allotted to HEIC, Warneford and Davies (RNAS) allotted to RAF. Gray (RCN attached FAA) included in the Canadian total and Esmonde (FAA) is included in the RN total.

British Army 1914-1919 total includes bars to Martin-Leake and Chavasse.

Royal Air Force All 12 RFC and both RNAS awards are included in RAF total.

Australia Only includes awards to Australian forces. Rogers listed with South Africa, Dartnell, Sullivan and Pearse with British Army and Edwards with RAF. Does not include the "Victoria Cross to Australia" announced on 16 Jan 2009 to Trooper Mark Donaldson.

Canada Smyth's 1914-1919 total has counted a New Zealand award as Canadian

New Zealand 1940-1945 total includes bar to Upham. Does not include the "Victoria Cross for New Zealand" announced on 2 July 2007 to Corporal Willy Apiata.

South Africa The War Office and Smyth counted Lt W J English of the 2nd Scottish Horse, Boer War, as British Army. I consider the Scottish Horse was a South African unit.

Civilian It is now generally recognised that George Bell Chicken a volunteer with the Indian Naval Brigade in the Indian Mutiny and should be listed as a civilian.

1 Earlier versions of the table see in *Sabretache* Vol XLVI, No. 2 p. 49 and Vol XLVIII, No. 3, p. 47.

Victoria Cross for Australia

8248070 Trooper Mark Gregor Donaldson

For most conspicuous acts of gallantry in action in a circumstance of great peril in Afghanistan as part of the Special Operations Task Group during Operation Slipper, Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan.

Trooper Mark Gregor Donaldson enlisted into the Australian Army on 18 June 2002. After completing Recruit and Initial and Employment Training he was posted to the 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment. Having successfully completed the Special Air Service Selection Course in April 2004, Trooper Donaldson was posted to Special Air Service Regiment in May 2004.

On 2 September 2008, during the conduct of a fighting patrol, Trooper Donaldson was travelling in a combined Afghan, US and Australian vehicle convoy that was engaged by a numerically superior, entrenched and coordinated enemy ambush. The ambush was initiated by a high volume of sustained machine gun fire coupled with the effective use of rocket propelled grenades. Such was the effect of the initiation that the combined patrol suffered numerous casualties, completely lost the initiative and became immediately suppressed. It was over 2 hours before the convoy was able to establish a clean break and move to an area free of enemy fire.

In the early stages of the ambush, Trooper Donaldson reacted spontaneously to regain the initiative. He moved rapidly between alternate positions of cover engaging the enemy with 66 mm and 84 mm anti-armour weapons as well as his M4 rifle. During an early stage of the enemy ambush, he deliberately exposed himself to enemy fire in order to draw attention to himself and thus away from wounded soldiers. This selfless act alone bought enough time for those wounded to be moved to relative safety.

As the enemy had employed the tactic of a rolling ambush, the patrol was forced to conduct numerous vehicle manoeuvres, under intense enemy fire, over a distance of approximately four kilometres to extract the convoy from the engagement area. Compounding the extraction was the fact that casualties had consumed all available space within the vehicles. Those who had not been wounded, including Trooper Donaldson, were left with no option but to run beside the vehicles throughout. During the conduct of this vehicle manoeuvre to extract the convoy from the engagement area, a severely wounded coalition force interpreter was inadvertently left behind. Of his own volition and displaying complete disregard for his own safety, Trooper Donaldson moved alone, on foot, across approximately 80 metres of exposed ground to recover the wounded interpreter. His movement, once identified by the enemy, drew intense and accurate machine gun fire from entrenched positions. Upon reaching the wounded coalition force interpreter, Trooper Donaldson picked him up and carried him back to the relative safety of the vehicles then provided immediate first aid before returning to the fight. On subsequent occasions during the battle, Trooper Donaldson administered medical care to other wounded soldiers, whilst continually engaging the enemy. Trooper Donaldson's acts of exceptional gallantry in the face of accurate and sustained enemy fire ultimately saved the life of a coalition force interpreter and ensured the safety of the other members of the combined Afghan, US and Australian force. Trooper Donaldson's actions on this day displayed exceptional courage in circumstances of great peril. His actions are of the highest accord and are in keeping with the finest traditions of the Special Operations Command, the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force.

The Victoria Cross for Australia is the highest award of the Australian honours system. The Australian honours system commenced in 1975 with the creation of the Order of Australia, the Australian Bravery Decorations and the National Medal. Since then, Australia has created additional awards to completely replace those areas of service previously recognised in the Imperial honours system and to recognise additional areas of service valued by Australians. Imperial honours are no longer recommended by the Australian Government. All Imperial awards (except for a few which are in the personal gift of the Queen) made to Australian citizens after 5 October 1992 are foreign awards and are worn accordingly.

The Australian Bravery Decorations which was established in February 1975 with the introduction of the Australian honours system replaced the awards of the George Cross (GC), the George Medal (GM), the Queen's Gallantry Medal (QGM) and the Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct with the Cross of Valour (CV), the Star of Courage (SC), the Bravery Medal (BM) and Commendation for Brave Conduct. There have been five awards of the Cross of Valour that replaced the George Cross. The first award was in 1989 and the most recent were in 2003 for gallantry during the Bali bombing in 2002. The five recipients are:

TREE, Darrell James	9 August 1989	Rescue, live electricity lines
BOSCOE, Victor Alan	11 October 1995	Apprehended armed robbers
SPARKES, Allan	29 April 1998	Rescue, flooded underground storm water drain
BRITTEN, Timothy Ian	17 October 2003	Bali Bombing
JOYES, Richard John	17 October 2003	Bali Bombing

The Victoria Cross for Australia and the Australian Gallantry Decorations were introduced into the Australian honours system on 15 January 1991. Unlike New Zealand where the Victoria Cross for New Zealand is part of the New Zealand Gallantry Awards the Victoria Cross for Australia is separate from the Australian Gallantry Decorations which includes the Star of Gallantry (SG), Medal for Gallantry (MG) and the Commendation for Gallantry.

There have been two awards of the Star of Gallantry. Only one award has been gazetted and that was the exchange award for Vietnam to Major Harry Smith in February 2008. A Defence media release dated 26 November 2006 announced that a soldier identified as Sergeant A from 4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment had become the first recipient of the Star of Gallantry. Sergeant A was awarded the Star of Gallantry for his actions whilst assisting with the extraction of threatened coalition forces in Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan. The medal was presented to Sergeant A by then Governor General Major General Michael Jeffery, AC CVO MC (retd).

The 'Its an Honour' website'2 of the Awards and Culture Branch, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet states that 38 Medals for Gallantry have been awarded. The first awards of the Australian Gallantry Decorations were announced in November 1996 when four members of the Australian contingent to Rwanda received the Medal for Gallantry. In 1998, 13 officers and in 1999, six other ranks received belated awards of the Medal for Gallantry for Vietnam. A further two awards for Vietnam were granted to David Sabben and Geoff Kendall in 2008.

There was one Medal for Gallantry for East Timor and four awards have been gazetted for the Global War on Terrorism. The recipients of one of these four awards was only identified as Trooper S. He was awarded the Medal for Gallantry for the same action on 2 September 2008 in which Trooper Donaldson was awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia. If 38 Medals for Gallantry have been issued that suggests eight secret awards for Iraq and Afghanistan. There are some details on two of these awards. An unidentified corporal was awarded the Medal for Gallantry in November 2006 in the same ceremony in which the first Star of Gallantry was

2 http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/honours/awards/statistics.cfm

presented anonymously. We know that Sergeant Matthew Locke was awarded the Medal for Gallantry in December 2006 because of the Defence media release of Friday, 26 October 2007 that sadly advised that he had been killed by small arms fire in Afghanistan the previous day.

First Medal for Gallantry to RAN

As well as the first Victoria Cross for Australia, January 2009 saw the first award of the Medal for Gallantry to the Navy. The Medal for Gallantry to Leading Seaman (now Petty Officer) Benjamin Sime3 was published in the Australia Day Honours List:

> **Petty Officer Benjamin James Sime, Royal Australian Navy**
>
> For gallantry in action in hazardous circumstances during a waterborne terrorist attack in the North Persian Gulf, Iraq, during Operation Catalyst.
>
> Petty Officer Sime gave a selfless and spontaneous display of gallantry on 24 April 2004 under the most hazardous operational circumstances following a coordinated terrorist attack against Iraqi oil terminals, during which sailors from USS *Firebolt* were critically injured. Petty Officer Sime showed outstanding courage and remained dedicated to supporting a sailor in his care without regard to his own safety. His efforts and his achievements were of the highest order and were in the finest traditions of the Royal Australian Navy and the Australian Defence Force.

Department of Defence Media Mail List

The Army biography for Trooper Donaldson VC states that he was lightly wounded on 12 August 2008. The following Defence media release suggests that the incident occurred on 11 August 2008.

> **Defence Media release date Tuesday, 12 August 2008**
>
> Two Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) soldiers are receiving specialist medical care for wounds suffered in an improvised explosive device (IED) blast in Oruzgan province early yesterday morning.
>
> The soldiers were travelling in a SOTG Bushmaster vehicle at the time of the incident. Defence spokesperson Brigadier Brian Dawson said one soldier was seriously wounded in the attack while the other suffered only slight wounds as a result of the IED blast. Neither of the soldiers suffered life-threatening wounds. "The soldiers were provided with combat first aid by other members of the SOTG to stabilise their condition and the area surrounding the blast site was secured in preparation for a helicopter casualty evacuation," Brigadier Dawson said. "On arrival at the site, an ISAF MEDEVAC helicopter was damaged in a 'hard landing' rendering it incapable of completing its casualty evacuation task."
>
> Brigadier Dawson said a second stand-by MEDEVAC helicopter based in Kandahar was unable to launch due to bad weather conditions. The Australian casualties were evacuated to a nearby ISAF medical centre in a helicopter that had been retasked to support the incident. An Australian soldier travelling in the initial MEDEVAC helicopter suffered slight injuries as a result of the hard landing and is also receiving medical treatment.
>
> The damaged helicopter was secured by the Australian force until it was extracted from the incident site by an ISAF CH-47 Chinook. The damaged Bushmaster has also been recovered safely to Tarin Kowt. There is no indication that the initial helicopter was attacked by Taliban extremists. The two wounded soldiers and the soldier injured in the helicopter 'hard landing' have informed their families of their condition.

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3 see 'Terror in the gulf', by Corporal Damian Shovell, *Navy News*, Volume 47, No. 10, 17 June 2004 at http://www.defence.gov.au/news/navynews/editions/4710/feature/feature01.htm

Three Defence media release mention the action on 2 September 2008 in which Trooper Donaldson was awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia and Trooper S was awarded the Medal for Gallantry.

Wednesday, 3 September 2008, MSPA 284/08

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK GROUP SOLDIERS WOUNDED IN AFGHANISTAN

Nine Australian Special Forces soldiers have been wounded in action during an overnight battle with the Taliban in Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan. The soldiers were part of an ongoing Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) operation to disrupt Taliban command and control networks at the time of the incident. Initial reporting indicates that one SOTG soldier suffered life-threatening wounds, five suffered serious wounds and three suffered slight wounds in the contact. Defence spokesperson Brigadier Brian Dawson said the wounded soldiers were provided immediate first aid by fellow members of their patrol at the scene of the contact and evacuated by helicopter to ISAF medical facilities. "All nine soldiers have been evacuated from the area of the contact and are receiving the best possible medical care at present," Brigadier Dawson said. "The SOTG operation is ongoing and elements of the task group remain on the operation so we are unable to provide further detail on the incident at this time. "Our concern remains with the soldiers in the field and ensuring we do not jeopardise them through the release of information that could be exploited by our adversary." Several Taliban extremists were killed in the contact. Further details about the incident will be provided when confirmed facts are available and the operational situation allows. The soldiers' families have been informed.

Friday, 5 September 2008, MSPA 290/08

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK GROUP SOLDIERS WOUNDED IN AFGHANISTAN - UPDATE

An Australian Special Forces soldier who suffered life-threatening wounds in a recent (2 September) battle with the Taliban remains in a critical condition and continues to receive specialist medical care in Afghanistan prior to being moved to a US medical facility in Germany. Defence spokesperson Brigadier Brian Dawson said the soldier left Tarin Kowt on route to Germany yesterday. During the first leg of the flight his condition was assessed as being too unstable to continue to Germany. He received further surgery at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan and it is planned that he will continue to Germany tonight. "Our priority at every step of this process is the soldier's well-being, and that will dictate the pace of the AME. The Commanding Officer of the Special Operations Task Group has met with the other wounded soldiers and reports they are fairing well and morale is high," Brigadier Dawson said. The ADF continues to work closely with the families of the wounded soldiers and provide them with additional support that they may require at this most difficult time. Defence will not be releasing personal details of the wounded soldiers and requests that the media respect the privacy of their families.

Wednesday, 10 September 2008, MSPA 295/08

SPECIAL OPERATIONS TASK GROUP SOLDIERS WOUNDED IN AFGHANISTAN - UPDATE

An Australian Special Forces soldier who suffered life-threatening wounds in a recent battle (2 September) with the Taliban continues to improve at a US medical facility in Germany. Defence spokesperson Brigadier Brian Dawson said he was encouraged by reports that the soldier's condition has improved. "The soldier is responding well to treatment and now has his partner with him in Germany. We expect he will remain in Germany for the foreseeable future undergoing care," Brigadier Dawson said. "Three of the nine wounded Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) soldiers have now returned to Australia since the incident and continue to undergo treatment for their wounds. "The other five soldiers have either returned, or will soon return to duty and remain in Southern Afghanistan. "It is important to note that the incident has not affected the operational tempo of the SOTG which continues to be extremely effective in its ability to disrupt Taliban extremist command and control processes and support structures."

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Sabretache Vol L No. 1 — March 2009

PRIVATE RONALD CRANK DCM 53RD BATTALION AIF

Darryl Kelly[1]

The young Digger pondered the situation. If the massing enemy could attack and gain the upper hand, the Battalion could be in danger of being cut-off and annihilated. Now was the time to act ...

Ron Crank was born in Manchester, England and was a teenager when he travelled to Australia with his parents Arthur and Clara, older brother Norman who had served in the Territorial Forces in England and younger brothers Gordon and John. The family settled on a leased property, 'Brandon Farm' in the southern New South Wales town of Exeter. Times were hard but they loved life in Australia and were determined to make a go of it.

With the onset of war in 1914, the Crank family was still working the land. In 1915, Norman enlisted in the AIF and sailed as a member of the 19th Battalion bound for Egypt.[2] Ron continued to help on the farm but the family was struggling to make ends meet. His parents decided to move to Sydney with the younger children and rented a house in the inner suburb of Petersham. Ron remained on the farm. He read and re-read the letters from his brother who had reached Gallipoli on 16 August 1915. He craved to do his bit and struggled with his conscience as to what to do to help his family.

In January 1916, Ron travelled to Sydney to see his parents. He caught the train to Campsie where his father managed he popular Ideal Refreshment Rooms.

Ron sat opposite his father and stirred the steaming cup of tea in front of him. He chatted with his dad, when suddenly his father said 'What's the matter lad, you look like you've got the weight of the world on your shoulders?'

'Dad I want to enlist, I know you're worried about the farm, but it's what I want to do. I've got to do my bit!'

His father pondered the situation. 'You bloody well keep your head down, young fella'. A smile came across Ron's face as he raised the tea cup in a salute to his father.

Ron tidied up his affairs in Exeter and travelled to Bathurst where he enlisted in the AIF on the 15 February 1916.3

Gallipoli was now a memory and the growing Australian force now centred their focus on a new foe – the German Army.

Following his initial training Ron was allocated as a reinforcement to the 53rd Battalion, which would later get the nickname 'The Whale Oil Guards'. It was part of the 5th Division's, 14th Brigade. He embarked on 11 July aboard the troopship *Vestalia* bound for England.4

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1 Major Darryl Kelly OAM is a professional soldier with over 30 year's service in the Australian Army. He has served on a number of operations, mainly in the Middle East. He is a keen military historian specialising in the 1st AIF. He authored the critically acclaimed book 'Just Soldiers' which deals with little known soldiers of the First World War. He is currently researching Australians recommended for the Victoria Cross but not awarded. This will eventually form the basis of a book entitled 'Close but not close enough' which is expected to be released in late 2009.

2 AWM 8, Unit Embarkation Rolls, 19th Battalion, 1914-1918 War

3 National Achieves of Australia: B2445, WW1 Service Records, 2153 Private Ronald Crank DCM

4 AWM 8, Unit Embarkation Rolls, 53rd Battalion, 1914-1918 War

As he underwent training at the AIF Training Camp at Salisbury Plains, Ron came down with a severe case of tonsillitis, which had him hospitalised on 31 October 1916. On his release from hospital he rejoined his mates in their final preparations for deployment to France.

On 23 December 1916, Ron was officially taken on strength of the 53rd Battalion. He settled quickly into life in the front line and was soon to prove himself a keen and competent soldier.

In February 1917, Ron was chosen to become a battalion signaller and was sent to the Signal School for a three week course.

The 53rd Battalion was in and out of action in early 1917. Ron adapted well to his new job. He was active at running out the vital telephone lines and repairing and maintaining them when they were damaged during action. On more than one occasion Ron went out under intense enemy fire to repair a severed line. He knew that signallers were a prime target for the German snipers but he also knew that the importance of communications, especially at the height of battle and went about his duties with cool calm efficiency.

In May, Ron was sitting in the battalion command post when a runner arrived and handed over a satchel to the adjutant. As the officer read through the various papers and dispatches, he then read one particular dispatch, paused and glanced at Ron. He stood up and went over to the commanding officer who was busy studying the nearby map-board. The adjutant showed the commanding officer the dispatch. The commanding officer took the dispatch and approached the young signaller. 'Ron, can you come outside for a minute!' The commanding officer handed the dispatch to Ron 'I'm sorry mate!' the commanding officer said walking away. Ron looked at the paper and grimaced, it told him that his brother Norman had been killed in the Second Battle of Bullecourt. Ron sat down on the nearby sandbags and took out his note pad. With tears screaming down his cheeks he wrote 'Dearest Mother and Father... I have just learnt terrible news ...'

The 53rd enjoyed a well earned break at the Third Army Rest Camp in late June/early July. They were in the thick of it at Polygon Wood in September where they were to gain as much ground as possible before the onset of the winter rains, which would turn the battlefield into a bog.

Ron received a letter from home informing him that his younger brother Gordon had enlisted in the Camel Corps and was on his way to the Middle East.5 'Take care young fella' Ron said under his breath as he folded the letter and placed it into his journal.

Ron celebrated his first anniversary with the battalion during two weeks leave in England

In April 1918, the 53rd was deployed in and around the village of Villers Bretonneux. It was like living in the lap of luxury. The village, which had been evacuated, was brimming with food, clothes, wine and other luxuries. The troops were billeted in warm surroundings.

It was the calm before the storm, within weeks Villers Bretonneux would be the vital hinge in turning back the final German attempt at capturing Amiens and cutting the British Army supply lifeline.6

By mid year the Germans were suffering from the peaceful penetration tactics of the Australians and were being slowly pushed back. By early August, the allies were ready to launch a decisive attack from the Australian lines east of Villers Bretonneux. The attack on 8 August 1918 by the Australian, III British and Canadian Corps saw advances of eight kilometres in a day, something

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5 AWM 8, Unit Embarkation Rolls, Camel Corps Reinforcements, 1914-1918 War

6 Bean, CEW, *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918, Volume V* Australian War Memorial, 1936

that was unheard of in earlier battles. The German commander, Erich Ludendorff described 8 August 1918 as the 'Black Day of the German Army'.7

On 1 September 1918, the 53rd Battalion was pushing hard against an area known as Anvil Wood near the village of Peronne. Ron was with the forward elements running out a telephone cable. The diggers were forced to fire to their left rear at a group of Germans moving near the southern edge of the village. Just alongside the road was an abandoned German 77 mm field gun, which had been captured earlier in the battle. Stacked near the gun was a generous amount of ammunition.8

The diggers were trying to direct their fire across a broad front and moved forward to a better position. Ron was setting up communications when, through the drizzle, he saw the Germans massing for a possible counter-attack against the vulnerable left flank of the battalion. Noticing the field gun he rushed over to it. Lance Corporal Cecil Weatherby, a storeman with the 53rd was bringing up some rifle ammunition at the time when he heard 'Cec, over here mate, quick!'

There was no time to stand on ceremony as Ron ordered 'Help me turn this bloody gun around'.

'What's your plan Ron?' Weatherby asked.

'We're going to use it on those buggers forming up down there!' Ron replied.

The pair had no idea of how to operate the gun but they were going to learn in a hurry. As they struggled to move the gun in the general direction Ron would occasionally look down the barrel to see if it was trained on the enemy. Once there, Ron quickly familiarised himself with the elevating and traversing wheels. He didn't have time to figure out the sights, so he decided to aim by eye by looking through the barrel.

'Right, we're on!' Ron snapped. 'Load a round, Cec!'

Cec slammed a high explosive round into the breech. 'Stand Clear!' Ron yelled.

Ron crouched as he fired the gun, then immediately popped up to see where the round had landed. It was well over, so he rotated the elevation wheel down a bit – looked through the barrel saw he was near to on and ordered 'Load'. Cec Weatherby again slammed another round into the breech. Ron again fired, this time the projectile exploded just short. Again he went through his sighting process and again they loaded, 'Stand Clear' and he fired. This time the round was spot on, exploding amongst the massing enemy troops. The diggers of the 53rd and the other nearby troops raised a cheer at the success of the would-be gunners.

Suddenly Ron and Cec heard the tell-tale whistle of incoming artillery rounds. The rounds impacted around the gun, coupled with the spurts of ricocheting machine gun fire striking both the gun itself and the surrounding area. Again, he ordered the gun to be loaded and as he fired the round again found its mark. 'Load'. The pair kept this up for some minutes, reaping a terrible toll on the enemy. The enemy artillery continued to impact around the gun but somehow it never found its mark. Then the enemy broke ranks and began to scatter. Ron breathed a sigh of relief and took a swig of water from his water bottle and then offered it to his mate.

'Good on you, Cec!' Ron said. 'Happy to help, mate but I tell ya – you're a mad bastard!' Cec replied 'Well I'd better get this ammo back up to the blokes!' he said and he was off.

Ron needed to get back to his task as well and picked up his cable reel and started off towards his company, playing out the telephone cable as he went.

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7 Bean, CEW, *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918, Volume VI*, Australian War Memorial, 1942.
8 AWM 28, Recommendation Files for Honours and Awards, AIF, 1914-1918 War

He spent the rest of the morning laying and maintaining a vital telephone line to the forward battalion headquarters. The ground which the telephone wire was laid was under direct observation of the enemy and was swept with heavy artillery and machine-gun fire. But the telephone line was vital and had to be laid and more importantly maintained and repaired.

Later in the day, the enemy again massed for a counter attack as they did in the morning. Lieutenant Waite 'borrowed' Ron to again man the gun and use it to break up the massing enemy. Again he rushed to the gun, this time with Private Arthur Hopkins (Cec Weatherby had been wounded during the day). The amateur gunners set about their task and poured round after round into the enemy. They again attracted severe enemy artillery and machine gun fire none of which hit found its mark. But a new hazard now faced Ron and his mate. The gun had fired a significant number of rounds and as they had no means of cleaning the barrel the 'gunners' faced the risk that any round they fired could hit an obstruction in the barrel and explode whilst still in the gun, killing them instantly. Disregarding the dangers Ron and his mate fired over 90 rounds at the enemy again forcing them to flee.

Ron was recommended for the award of the Victoria Cross, but was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, as was Lance Corporal Cecil Weatherby, Private Arthur Hopkins was awarded the Military Medal for his part in the action. Ron was promoted Temporary Corporal on the night following the action and was granted a two week leave to Paris on 25 September.

Following the war, Ron remained in France and England until September 1919 before returning to Australia. He was promoted to Lance Sergeant on the 1 May and then to Temporary Sergeant the next day. His time waiting to go home was not wasted though, as he was able to travel to his native Manchester to visit relatives.

On his return to Australia, Ron picked up the pieces and planned to resume his life. He married Laurie Amos in 1920.9 and his discharge from the AIF occurred on 7 May of that year.

Ron was very active in the establishment of the 53rd Battalion Association, and was a frequent contributor to the RSL magazine *Reveille*. With the onset of the Second World War, the association organised comfort parcels for those from the old 53rd who were serving overseas.

The Crank family were again represented in the war when Ron's son Norman (whom he named after his late brother) served in the 2nd AIF and his younger brother Gordon who'd served in the Middle East in WW1 enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy while his youngest brother John served in the Volunteer Defence Corps.10

Ron Crank DCM, a soldier who showed such courage and determination, died on 22 May 1955. He was cremated and is commemorated at Sydney's Rookwood Cemetery.11.

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9 NSW Births, Deaths and Marriages
10 *Reveille*, November 1941, p. 23.
11 AWM Biographical cards.

Sabretache Vol L No. 1 — March 2009

MELBOURNE'S PEACE DAY RIOTS, JULY 1919

Peter Hopper

The Peace Settlement to end World War 1 was signed at Versailles on 28 June 1919. Throughout the British Empire there was great jubilation at this event and plans were made for formal functions to celebrate peace. In Australia and Britain 19 July was set aside for Peace Day celebrations. In all state capitals huge victory parades of returned servicemen and nurses were held. One of the largest was held in Melbourne concluding at the site of the Federal Parliament House.

By 10 am on Saturday 19 July the procession route through the cold, wet streets of Melbourne was already heavily packed with enthusiastic crowds. Buildings were covered with bunting and flags and great excitement was generated by the crowds who cheered on the marchers. Five aircraft from Point Cook flew over the city and at 11 am two-minutes silence was observed. The procession totalled about 7000 and took 45 minutes to reach its destination. At this point there was no indication of anything untoward. During the afternoon an element of horseplay developed among groups of returned soldiers and sailors, youths and girls. Attempts were made to commandeer tram cars and lift them off their lines. It soon got out of control and police were used to disperse the mobs. Motor vehicles were also targeted and at the Tivoli Theatre in Bourke Street 700 returned servicemen and their supporters rushed into the theatre without paying to watch a performance that was intended as a fund-raiser for the chorus girls.1

By nightfall the police had already arrested several returned servicemen for unruly behaviour. This action actually inflamed the situation as groups of returned servicemen then decided to physically obtain their release at the Town Hall. Bottles and stones were hurled at the mounted and foot police who resorted to using their batons to clear the streets. Shop windows were broken by the pressure against them of the crowds when being pushed back by the police. It was not until after midnight that some semblance of order was restored to the city streets. Worse was to follow. The following day a group of about 60 returned soldiers and sailors marched along St Kilda Road towards Victoria Barracks around 8 pm. Their intention was unclear at the time but many suspected they planned to rush the armoury.2

A large number of civilian police were also housed in the barracks and this may well have been the target for the rioters. When they attempted to break through the sentry's post at the gate a melee developed when one of the rioters was knocked to the ground by the sentry. The crowd surged forward prompting the sentry to fire a shot into the air. Someone in the crowd then fired back and Private James O'Connor, one of the rioters, was shot just below the heart. He died in hospital a few hours later.3

Mounted and foot soldiers then dispersed the rioters who scattered into the nearby gardens. The police did however manage to arrest several of them. Further rioting broke out again in the city streets later that evening. On Monday, 21 July, matters came to a head following a meeting of 300 to 400 members of the Victorian Returned Sailors and Soldiers League of Australia (RSSLA). They assembled outside League HQs in the morning demanding the dismissal of Senior Constable Scanlon who it was allegedly had ordered his fellow police to 'deal it out to those in khaki and the men with badges' during the disturbances on Saturday night. Women and

1 *The Age*, 21 July 1919.
2 *West Australian*, 21 July 1919.
3 A post-mortem proved he was shot by a revolver. It was not fired by the sentry who was armed with a rifle.

children had also been run down by the police in their efforts to disperse the returned servicemen. This action incensed the men. They decided to meet with the Commissioner of Police, Sir George Steward, requesting that he immediately dismiss Scanlon.[4] He promised that he would hold an inquiry into the matter but this did not satisfy the men who were also calling for an immediate release of all returned servicemen who had been arrested on Saturday and Sunday and a remission of fines inflicted.[5]

By the afternoon the angry crowd had grown to about 2000 and a decision was made to go to Steward's office to see him in person. He addressed the men from a buggy and told them that he had nothing to do with the arrests. This prompted the men to go to the top, so to speak. They then marched to the Treasury Gardens to see the Premier, Harry Lawson, in person. He was in a Cabinet meeting at the time but decided to address the crowd from a balcony. He was unable to pacify them. It was obvious at this point that non ex-servicemen had infiltrated the rioters and were encouraging them to become very aggressive. A group of men then broke into the building and invaded the Premier's office. A scuffle ensured and an inkwell was hurled at the Premier inflicting a nasty wound to his head.[6] Many other offices were also invaded and the contents were strewn around or carried off. Fortunately foot police soon arrived and attempted to disperse the crowd. Windows were smashed in the process and missiles were thrown at the police.[7] Eventually peace returned but to many the happenings that afternoon were incomprehensible. The editor of *The Age* made the following observation the next day:

> There is no gap wider than between the gallant charges of Gallipoli, Villers-Bretonneux or Pozieres and the surging of a howling, stone throwing mob through the public offices of Melbourne.[8]

This was not the end of the day's rioting. A group of rioters then moved towards the Police Station in Russell Street to demand the release of the arrested ex-servicemen. When this was rejected another round of missiles was hurled at the police. Fourteen persons were injured this time and one policeman was seriously injured. From here the rioters moved to the police station at the Town Hall where another angry demonstration took place resulting in one arrest.[9]

Day Four of the rioting began with the funeral procession of the late Private O'Connor. On Tuesday 22 July about 400-500 discharged soldiers joined this procession. Before it reached Coburg Cemetery many men returned to the city to meet outside Cathedral Hotel. A fight broke out between two civilians which prompted the intervention of the mourners.[10] A mounted constable was knocked from his horse trying to disperse the rioters. He was forced to draw his revolver at this point and this action scattered the crowd.[11]

It was now time for those in responsible positions to act quickly to prevent any further unrest. Captain J G Dyett, the Federal President of the RSSLA and the committee of the Victorian Branch issued statements expressing their deep regret at the incident towards the Premier.[12] They assured him they would do everything in their powers to convince the rioters to obey constituted authority.

The State Commandant, Brigadier General Brand then called on the disgruntled ex-servicemen to a Soldiers' Meeting at the Kings Domain Camp the following day (Wednesday) at 11 am to

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4 *West Australian*, 27 July 1919.
5 *The Age*, 22 July 1919.
6 The wound was two inches long but it did not prevent him from performing his duties.
7 *West Australian*, 27 July 1919.
8 *The Age*, 22 July 1919.
9 Ibid.
10 *West Australian*, 23 July 1919.
11 *The Age*, 23 July 1919.
12 Ibid.

discuss the disturbances.[13] About 400 soldiers assembled there the next morning and heard an impressive array of speakers including two Brigadier Generals, six Colonels, three Lieutenant-Colonels, two Captains and one Corporal. They all pleaded with them to stop the acts of violence that had been so prevalent in Melbourne over the last four days. Captain GA Burkett, a member of the executive of the RSSLA told the men that 'anyone could see the soldiers would be a power in the land as long as they did not let those silly red-ragging Bolsheviks get in among them'.[14] Brigadier-General H E Elliott CB CMG DCM (Commanding, 15th Infantry Brigade) was given a rousing reception. The men gave three cheers for 'Good old Pompey' and this seemed to turn the tide.[15] This marked the end of the rioting. It was a clever tactic by the military authorities in an attempt to recover the lost prestige of the AIF. Pompey had been a popular and well-respected general and he spoke to the men as one who had shown bravery under fire in France.

On Thursday 24 July, the inquiry into the allegations made against Senior Constable J Scanlon commenced at the Russell Street Police Barracks. He was accused of having used objectionable language in Swanston Street during the disturbances on Saturday night. A civilian witness gave damning evidence against Scanlon.[16] The inquiry was then adjourned until the following Thursday. Scanlon testified vigorously against this charge. He maintained that he had gone to great lengths to refrain from taking strong action against the returned servicemen. Three constables and a civilian witness supported this claim and the charge was subsequently dropped.[17] Scanlon then faced a second charge in that he had failed to act on a serious complaint against one of his policemen who had allegedly knocked down a woman that same evening. The inquiry dragged on until 8 August when this second charge was also dismissed.[18] By then tempers had cooled somewhat and the streets of Melbourne had returned to normal.

Now, what can we make of those four riotous days in Melbourne ? The conservative press came down heavily against the rioters and insisted that undesirable elements had infiltrated the ranks of the returned servicemen. There may be some truth in that but of the ten men arrested after the attack on Victoria Barracks, only two were civilians.[19] Admittedly some civilians were arrested during those four days but they were hardly Bolsheviks. Most just came to join in the fun, so to speak. You must also remember there had been a long history of ill-feeling between the soldiers and the police in Melbourne during the war years. In 1916 and 1917 there had been numerous clashes between the two parties.[20] The arrest of servicemen by the civilian or military police often provoked an immediate response from the diggers and civilian onlookers. To the participating returned servicemen, Peace Day 1919, belonged to them. They claimed they had earned the right to rejoice, even if they got a little out of control. The sight of mounted police knocking over innocent civilians with their batons on the footpaths of Melbourne proved too much for many of them. They maintained they had fought and won a war to protect their women and children. To see them ill-treated by the police was the last straw. They retaliated with force – the prime weapon of a soldier.

The shooting of Private O'Connor had added fuel to the fire. Although he had not been shot by the sentry outside Victoria Barracks, the rioters used his death to promote sympathy for their

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13 *The Age*, 23 July 1919.
14 *The Age*, 24 July 1919.
15 Ibid.
16 Evidence of James Joseph Fawcett, a returned soldier, employed at Her Majesty's Theatre.
17 The Age, 1 August 1919.
18 The Argus, 11 August 1919.
19 One was a discharged soldier and the other seven were naval men.
20 See unpublished papers by P. Hopper (2005) 'Digger unrest in Melbourne, January 1916' and 'The Women's Peace Army and the food riot of September 1917'.

cause. As his funeral procession made its way to the cemetery the mourners were quick to demand that flags be flown at half-mast as they passed. The death of one of their comrades was not to be taken lightly.

Did the servicemen view the police as shirkers? There may be an element of truth in this also. During the war the military police were often abused by civilians whenever they arrested drunken servicemen. 'Why aren't you over there helping our men instead of arresting them?' was the cry directed against them. The civilian police fell into the same basket. In the eyes of the servicemen they had no right to arrest men who had volunteered to fight overseas.

We also need also to take into account the impact of the maritime strike[21] that was still in progress throughout the riots and the success of the Bolsheviks in Russia who were consolidating their seizure of power in 1919. It was easy but incorrect to associate the riotous behaviour of the troops with those events. Newspaper editors and officials tried to convince the public that 'genuine diggers' could not have been involved in the riots.[22] To them the civil unrest must be due to the work of undesirables and revolutionaries. However, there is good reason to believe that unruly behaviour was the norm for many of the returned servicemen. On the returning troop-ships overcrowding, bad food and inadequate entertainment promoted unrest. A returning nurse, Angela Thirkell, claimed that the diggers were riotous and virtually uncontrollable throughout the voyage back home on her ship.[23]

The four days of rioting in Melbourne in July 1919 does not fit well alongside the image of the happy, heroic returning serviceman. War had changed many of these men. They had been away for many years and wartime codes of behaviour did not conform to the accepted codes of domestic manhood.[24] The male comradeship of drinking, swearing, gambling and horseplay continued well after the last shot had been fired. Melbourne got a taste of that in July 1919.[25]

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21 Mr Tom Walsh, Secretary of the Seamen's Union was arrested and fined in Melbourne on 21 July 1919.

22 *The Herald*, 22 July 1919; *The Argus*, 22 July 1919; *The Weekly Times*, 22 July 1919; *Brunswick and Coburg Leader*, 25 July 1919 and 1 August 1919.

23 Gough. *The Repatriation of the First AIF*, p. 62 ; Leslie Parker [Angela Thirkell]. *Trooper to the Southern Cross*, Faber & Faber, London, 1934, pp. 228-9.

24 There were similar riots at Bilston in South Staffordshire (UK) on 22 July 1919. A police station was wrecked by soldiers.

25 Serious industrial unrest also broke out in Liverpool (UK) on 3 August 1919 involving soldiers and looters.

Sabretache Vol L No. 1 — March 2009

PLASTIC (NOT SO) FANTASTIC BRITISH ARMY ECONOMY ISSUE PLASTIC CAP BADGES OF WORLD WAR 2

Graham Wilson

At the outbreak of the Second World War the British Army's cap badges were made of various traditional metals, including brass, bronze, silver and gilding metal. Wars, however, are incredibly expensive undertakings, and one of the commodities most in demand to support war is metal in all its forms. As early as 1940, Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of Aircraft Production in Churchill's government, launched a scrap metal drive exhorting British homes and towns to hand in all scrap metal to assist in the building of aircraft. Beaverbrook continued this campaign when he was appointed Minister of Supply in 1941 and then Minister of War Production in 1942. The success of Beaverbrook's campaign, both in its usefulness to the war effort (which actually continues to be debated to this day) and its effect on civil life and morale can perhaps best be summed up in a verse from a popular ditty of the time, which went:

My saucepans have all been surrendered
the teapot is gone from the hob;
the colander's leaving the cabbage
for a very much different job.
So now when I hear on the wireless
of Hurricanes showing their mettle,
I see in a vision before me
a Dornier chased by my kettle.

With government urging the civil population to sacrifice their pots and pans and other metal items, and with local communities stripping parks and public places of railing, gates, bollards, etc, to support the war effort, the armed forces could not be seen not to be doing their part. While the forces could not get by with non-metal weapons, aircraft, ships, tanks, etc, one area at least in which they could economise was badges.

Unlike many armies around the world, the British Army does not use a single or just a handful of generic cap badges. In a reflection of the regimental 'tribalism' of the British military tradition, every separate corps and regiment of the British Army has its own cap badge, sometimes more than one, and up until 1939 these had all been made of various metals. While a single cap badge does not use a lot of metal, in 1939 there were 22 separate cavalry regiments (plus the Royal Tank Regiment – 8 battalion sized regular units) and 69 infantry regiments in the British Army (each with at least two battalions), not counting the part time yeomanry regiments (all of whom had their own distinct cap badge), the part time units of the Royal Tank Regiment (12 units) and infantry regiments (many of whom had their own distinct badges) of the Territorial Army. Add to this the various other corps of the Army – artillery (Royal Artillery, Royal Horse Artillery, Honourable Artillery Company and Royal Malta Artillery, all with their own separate badges), engineers, signals, chaplains (both Christian and Jewish), service corps, medical corps, ordnance corps, military police, pay corps, veterinary corps, education corps, dental corps, etc, all of which had both full time and part time units or components – and the weight of metal begins to add up. The problem would be compounded by the fact that all infantry regiments expanded during the war as numerous hostilities only battalions (every member of which needed a regimental cap badge to wear) were formed. To add to the problem, six additional cavalry regiments (22nd Dragoons, 23rd Hussars, 24th Lancers, 25th Dragoons, 26th Hussars and 27th Lancers) and the Reconnaissance Corps, along with four new regiments of infantry (Glider Pilot

Regiment, Parachute Regiment, Lowland Regiment and Highland Regiment), and several new technical and support corps (Royal Corps of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Pioneer Corps, Intelligence Corps, Army Physical Training Corps, Army Catering Corps, General Service Corps, Auxiliary Territorial Service) were raised during the war, and each of these had its own badge as well.

So, the amount of metal required to 'badge' the war time British Army was actually quite substantial. The impetus for the production of plastic cap badges seems to have been an approach to the Ministry of Supply in May 1941 by a plastic moulding company, Alfred Stanley & Sons, based in Walsall in the Midlands. Stanley wrote to the Ministry of Supply with the suggestion of issuing badges made from cellulose acetate in place of metal as a means of conserving metal and provided a sample of a prototype Royal Army Ordnance Corps cap badge for consideration. The suggestion struck a huge chord with the conservation conscious Ministry of Supply and the Ministry immediately began to examine the proposal in detail. In July 1941, a Ministry report on the proposal estimated that by producing cap badges in plastic for just seven corps of the British Army (Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, Royal Corps of Signals, Royal Army Service Corps, Royal Army Ordnance Corps, Royal Army Medical Corps and Auxiliary Territorial Service), the government could save a staggering 19.25 tons of brass in a six months period.

Whether or not the British Army itself actually saw the need to economise in the use of metal for cap badges, or the decision was forced on it by the government, the army did decide to utilise a non-metallic material for cap badges and the material decided on was plastic. Army Council Instruction (ACI) No. 2594 of 27 December 1941 directed that the badges of 'certain corps of the Army' would be made in plastic because of the national metal shortage. Badges were to be manufactured in four colours designed to replicate, as far as possible, the colour of their metallic equivalents: grey (for silver badges), pale fawn (for brass badges), chocolate brown (for bronze badges) and black (only the cap badges of the King's Royal Rifle Corps, the Buckinghamshire Battalion and the Royal Marines were made in black). The instruction directed that metal and plastic badges were to be allowed to worn concurrently within any one unit and also that quartermasters were not to indent for plastic badges 'in bulk' merely to ensure uniformity.

The original list of badges to be manufactured in plastic specified by ACI 2594/41 consisted of:

Royal Artillery
Royal Engineers
Royal Corps of Signals
Royal Army Service Corps
Corps of Military Police
Royal Army Pay Corps (never produced – see below)
Army Educational Corps
Army Dental Corps (never produced – see below)
Pioneer Corps
Intelligence Corps
Reconnaissance Corps
Army Catering Corps
Army Physical Training Corps

This list seems to indicate that originally the Army was only interested in producing plastic badges for the largest corps, obviously concentrating on getting the most 'bang for their buck'. This does not really explain why two of the smallest corps in the army (Royal Army Pay Corps and Army Physical Training Corps), were also chosen for inclusion in the list. However, it is possible that it was the very 'smallness' of these two corps, with a probable concurrent tiny existing stock of metal badges, that saw them included.

ACI No.2594/41 was hugely unpopular, just about everyone hating the plastic badges. However, the original instruction was followed in June 1942 by ACI 1337/42, which directed that in order to make more savings of metal **ALL** cap badges, both regimental and corps, would now be made in plastic. In the end, as will be seen, this did not quite work out as directed. By the end of the war, the known list of regiments and corps to have been issued plastic badges included (in order of seniority):

Royal Armoured Corps
Royal Tank Regiment
Reconnaissance Corps
Royal Artillery (gun badge)
Royal Artillery (grenade badge)
Royal Engineers
Royal Signals
Grenadier Guards
Coldstream Guards
Scots Guards
The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment)
The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey)
The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment)
The King's Own Royal Regiment (Lancaster)
The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers
The Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment)
The King's Royal Regiment (Liverpool)
The Lincolnshire Regiment
The Devonshire Regiment
The Suffolk Regiment
The West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Own)
The East Yorkshire Regiment (The Duke of York's Own)
The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment
The Leicestershire Regiment
The Green Howards (Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment)
The Lancashire Fusiliers
The Cheshire Regiment
The Royal Welch Fusiliers
The South Wales Borderers
The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers
The Gloucestershire Regiment
The Gloucestershire Regiment (back badge)
The East Lancashire Regiment
The East Surrey Regiment
The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry
The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding)
The Border Regiment
The Royal Sussex Regiment
The Hampshire Regiment (other ranks pattern)
The South Staffordshire Regiment
The Dorsetshire Regiment
The South Lancashire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Volunteers)
The Welch Regiment
The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment)
The Essex Regiment
The Sherwood Foresters (Nottingham and Derbyshire Regiment)
The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire)
The Northamptonshire Regiment
The Royal Marines
The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment
The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry
The Middlesex Regiment (The Duke of Cambridge's Own)
The Kings Royal Rifle Corps
The Wiltshire Regiment (Duke of Edinburgh's)
The Manchester Regiment
The North Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's)
The York and Lancaster Regiment
The Durham Light Infantry
The Highland Light Infantry (City of Glasgow Regiment)
The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders
The Royal Ulster Rifles
The Royal Irish Fusiliers (Princess Victoria's)
The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's)
The Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own)
The Parachute Regiment
Army Air Corps
The Highland Regiment
The Cambridgeshire Regiment
The Buckinghamshire Battalion
Royal Army Service Corps
Royal Army Medical Corps
Royal Army Ordnance Corps
Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
Corps of Military Police
Army Educational Corps
Pioneer Corps
Intelligence Corps
Army Physical Training Corps
Army Catering Corps
General Service Corps
Auxiliary Territorial Service

Plastic badges were, apparently, made from moulds created from exiting metal badges and oddly enough many of the badges are not unattractive, with very crisp and clear detail. Others,

however, are just downright ugly, although, in defence of the medium used, generally the more unattractive plastic badges (e.g. Royal Corps of Signals and Royal Corps of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers) were relatively unpleasing to look at even in metal.

The method of attaching the badge to the hat or cap was via two flimsy metal strips designed to be pushed through slots cut in the hat or cap material and then bent over. As the badges required no cleaning they did not have to be removed from the cap once affixed. The only badges known to have a standard single slider for affixing the badge to the cap or hat were the Royal Artillery (gun pattern) and the Army Physical Training Corps.

Known manufacturers were:

A.Stanley & Sons, Walsall
Combined Optical Industries
Fraser & Glass ('F&G')
Hopf Products Ltd
Jarret, Rainsford & Laughton Ltd
London Association for the Blind
MentMore Manufacturing Co Ltd. ('MMMC')
Plastic Fashions
Roanoid Plastics (Birmingham) Ltd
W.H. Hassler Ltd

Not all badges carried a maker's mark, the only marks known being:

A.STANLEY&SONS WALSALL
F&G
JRL LTD BHAM
MMMC

Note from the list of badges produced that no cavalry regiments appear to have been issued with plastic badges. In addition, the following other regiments and corps do not seem to have had plastic badges:

Royal Horse Artillery
Honourable Artillery Company
Honourable Artillery Company (infantry battalion)
Royal Malta Artillery
Irish Guards
Welsh Guards
The Royal Warwickshire Regiment
The Royal Norfolk Regiment
The Somerset Light Infantry (Prince Albert's)
The Royal Scots Fusiliers
The King's Own Scottish Borderers
The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)
The Worcestershire Regiment
The Hampshire Regiment (officer pattern)
The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry
The Royal Berkshire Regiment (Princess Charlotte of Wales's) (officer pattern)
The Royal Berkshire Regiment (Princess Charlotte of Wales's) (other rank pattern)
The King's Shropshire Light Infantry
The Seaforth Highlanders (Ross-Shire Buffs, The Duke of Albany's)
The Gordon Highlanders
The Glider Pilot Regiment
The Lowland Regiment
Royal Army Chaplains' Department (Christian)
Royal Army Chaplains' Department (Jewish)
Royal Army Pay Corps
Royal Army Veterinary Corps
Small Arms School Corps
Military Provost Staff Corps
Army Dental Corps
Royal Military Academy Woolwich
Royal Military College Sandhurst

The usual reason given for a regiment or corps not having been issued with a plastic badge is that the design of the original metal badge was such that a plastic version would be far too flimsy. This, however, does not make logical sense in a great number of cases. For example, while it is undeniable that the badge of the Welsh Guards, a Welsh leek, in plastic would probably have been extremely flimsy, the same cannot be said of the badge of the Irish Guards, the star of the Order of St Patrick, which would have been exactly as durable as the badges of the Coldstream

Guards and the Scots Guards, which consist of the stars of the Order of the Garter and the Order of the Thistle, respectively. While the badge of the Army Physical Training Corps (crossed swords surmounted by a crown) was an undeniably fragile design even in metal, it was produced in plastic, yet the badge of the Royal Scots Fusiliers, which was of a very robust design, was not produced in plastic. Similarly, if we follow the stated logic, it is difficult to see why a plastic version of the cap badge of The Buffs (a dragon above a scroll inscribed 'THE BUFFS') would be manufactured but a plastic version of the OR pattern of The Royal Berkshire Regiment (a Chinese dragon above a scroll inscribed 'ROYAL BERKSHIRE') would not. The design of the two badges is so similar as to call the theory into question.

One reason why a number of corps badges were never manufactured in plastic is obviously the small demand. The Royal Army Chaplains' Department, Royal Army Pay Corps, Royal Army Veterinary Corps, Small Arms School Corps, Military Provost Staff Corps and Army Dental Corps were all so small that it is probable that sufficient stocks of metal badges remained in store to see to the needs of the corps for the duration of the war. For its part, the officer pattern of the Hampshire Regiment badge was not an issue item, newly commissioned officers being required to provide cap badges at their own expense, so there was no need for the Army to produce a plastic version.

It has not proved possible to find a reason why the cavalry regiments were not issued with plastic badges, although the smaller size of both the parent corps and its constituent units again could have meant, as with the smaller technical corps, that sufficient stocks of pre-war issue badges remained on hand for the duration of the war to see to the needs of the regiments. As for the Yeomanry regiments, as with the officer pattern badge of the Hampshire Regiment, the cap badges were not paid for by the government and so regiments would have continued to use pre-war stocks or even possibly paid out of unit funds for replacement metal badges to be made.

The various Territorial infantry regiments that wore their own distinctive badge did not, apart from The Cambridgeshire Regiment and The Buckinghamshire Battalion, receive plastic badges. Many TA infantry regiments had been converted to an artillery or engineer role pre-war and thus, while retaining historical links to their prior service as infantry units, wore the badge of their new parent corps. For example, the 6th (Duke of Connaught's Own) Battalion The Hampshire Regiment (which wore officer and OR pattern cap badges markedly different from the parent regular regiment) became the 59th Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Artillery in 1937 and the 7th (Robin Hoods) Battalion The Sherwood Foresters became the 42nd (Robin Hoods, Sherwood Foresters) Anti-Aircraft Battalion, Royal Engineers in 1936, the regiments wearing Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers badges respectively, which were of course issued in plastic.

A special case is that of The London Regiment, the 24 battalions of which each wore a separate cap badge. In the case of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions, the cap badge worn was that of The Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment), which was issued in plastic. The 4th Battalion had previously worn the same badge but had adopted the cap badge of the Royal Artillery in 1936 when it became 60th (City of London) Anti-Aircraft Brigade, Royal Artillery. The 22nd and 24th Battalions both wore the badge of The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey) and this was also produced in plastic. The 6th, 7th/8th, 11th, 19th, 20th and 21st Battalions had all been converted to either Royal Artillery or Royal Engineers units in the 1930s and wore the appropriate badges (which were available in plastic). The 5th (London Rifle Brigade), 9th (Queen Victoria's Rifles), 12th (The Rangers), 13th (Princess Louise's Kensington Regiment), 14th (London Scottish), 15th/16th (The Queen's Westminster's), 17th (Tower Hamlets Rifles) and 18th (London Irish Rifles) Battalions all wore their own badges, which do not appear to have been produced in plastic. The 10th (Hackney) Battalion wore the badge of The Royal Berkshire Regiment, which

was not produced in plastic, while the 23rd Battalion wore the badge of The East Surrey Regiment, which was produced in plastic.

Some badges were produced in large numbers, but others less so. The commonest badge known to have been issued in plastic was that of the Royal Army Service Corps, of which 912,752 were produced (917,752 by A.Stanley & Sons and 65,000 by Fraser & Glass). I say 'commonest badge known' as it has proved impossible to locate figures for the Royal Artillery and I suspect that the numbers of RA badges produced was probably more than for the RASC. The next commonest known badge seems to have been the General Service Corps, with 376,351 produced, all by Stanley. A total of 307,253 Royal Corps of Signals badges were produced in plastic, again, all by Stanley. The Reconnaissance Corps badge was produced to a total of 129,464, with Stanley producing 99,416 and W.H. Hassler 30,048.

While the thought was definitely there, it is difficult, in fact probably impossible, to say just how much metal the issue of plastic badges saved. While the badges were produced in vast numbers, they were universally hated and every soldier issued with a plastic badge ditched it as soon as possible and replaced it with a metal one and so, in the end, the whole thing probably didn't save all that much metal at all.

From a collector's point of view, the very disdain in which the plastic badges were originally held has contributed to their relative scarcity. Despised by the troops at the time and largely ignored by collectors until quite recent times, World War 2 plastic British Army cap badges were thrown away by the thousand and are now quite rare. In addition, the material used while reasonably robust, was still more perishable than metal and many badges that were not originally disposed of would have become warped, cracked and discoloured over time and thus more or less worthless. This scarcity means that the plastic badges are now eagerly sought by collectors and command high prices. For example, in 2004, a plastic Intelligence Corps cap badge sold at auction for UK£125! Admittedly, with only 11,232 specimens of this badge known to have been produced in plastic (by the London Association for the Blind) they are rarer than, say, the RASC badge, however, the price paid is indicative of how keenly World War 2 'plastics' are now sought by collectors.

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Sabretache Vol L No. 1 — March 2009

THE MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE

Rohan Goyne

> Nor must Uncle Sam's web feet be forgotten. At all the watery margins they have been present. Not only on the deep sea, the broad bay and the rapid river, but also up the muddy bayou and wherever the ground was a little damp they have been and made their tracks.
>
> Abraham Lincoln on the contribution of the Union Navy during the Civil War

The words of Abraham Lincoln on US Navy riverine operations during the Civil War could also be applied to the US Navy riverine operations in Vietnam. In Vietnam, Taskforce 117 was the naval element of the combined US Navy and US Army force, the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF).

Origins

The MRF operated in the Mekong Delta. The delta is bordered by the South China Sea to the south, the Gulf of Thailand to the west and Cambodia to the north. It contained not only the Mekong River and its tributaries, but also a myriad of waterways, canals and streams. Although conventional forces could operate in the northern and eastern sectors, much of the delta was waterlogged and there were few dry land areas suitable to base combat troops.

The American response to the waterlogged conditions was to exploit the very nature of the region by creating a joint Navy-Army riverine force, located on a floating base that could be easily moved along the river system from one trouble spot to another. By March 1966, General Westmoreland had accepted the idea of riverine operations and four months later, a brigade of the newly arrived US 9th Infantry Division was earmarked for deployment in the delta. Colonel William B Fulton, commanding the 2nd Brigade, 9th Division with three infantry battalions and support units was given the riverine task.

The plan was for American forces to be stationed aboard US Navy barracks ships at a specially constructed base Dong Tam, five miles west of My Tho on the Mekong. The force was carried into combat on river assault boats, armoured landing craft (armoured troop carriers) backed by monitors equipped with 20 mm or 40 mm guns or 81 mm mortars.

This combined force was called the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF) and at full strength comprised more than 5,000 men.

A newspaper article of the period describes the new force as 'the first American assault force specifically designed for river operations since the Civil War'.

Doctrine of River Warfare

The creation of a modern river force involved innumerable problems of organisation and equipment. Each of these was complicated by the novelty of the operational concept and the lack of experience. It was true that the French and Vietnamese had established the essential elements of a valid concept of river warfare. However, the scale they had used was conditioned by limited resources and was more modest in scope than what the Americans envisaged. A further complication was the absence of a doctrine for river warfare that was agreed by the parties soon to be engaged in the endeavour.

The French has handled matters informally. The French Navy had ran the boats and the Expeditionary Corps HQ decided where they would be used. The same attitude and acceptance of operational realities were adopted by the American at the field operational level. At the higher echelons, however, the absence of prescribed relationships and responsibilities was troublesome. One of the more important differences was that the army viewed the MRF as an extension of 9th

Division responsibilities. The navy, on the contrary, believed the afloat force should be fully independent and able to deploy as the situation required.

This issue was softened when on 31 January 1968 the MRF was placed under the operational control of the senior American advisor in IV Corps. The US Marines had published an interim doctrine for riverine operations (FMFM 8-4 Tentative) in April 1966 which only addressed Marine Corps organisation and equipment. It did not apply in the situation under consideration where the navy was to play a role equal to that of the ground force. The US Navy had no published guidance on the subject and neither did the US Army. However, Lieutenant General Victor Krulak, commanding the Fleet Marine Force Pacific (FMFPAC) had foreseen that an analysis of the French experience in Indochina could well serve to guide a future American involvement in such operations. A study responding to that view was prepared and published in March 1966. Its contents specifically addressed the conduct of joint riverine operations in terms of existing amphibious warfare doctrine and it strongly influenced the army's publication on 'Riverine Operations' published in 1967. This document while not approved by the US Navy was the only official guidance available when the MRF became operational. Indeed the US Navy's own doctrine for riverine operations did not appear until 1969 when the MRF was about to be disestablished. The MRF existed from June 1967 to June 1969.

MRF Equipment

The fleet of US river assault craft with the exception of the assault support patrol boats were modified LCM–6's. These were 17.5 metre boats designed for amphibious assault operations and could be loaded with one tank or other combat vehicles and equipment or up to 120 troops. For brown water operations they had to be heavily armed and armoured.

The battleship of the river forces was the monitor. In this type of craft the forward ramp was replaced by a rounded bow behind which a 40 mm cannon was mounted in a turret; some later models mounted a 105 mm howitzer instead. The other monitor armament included one 20 mm cannon and two .50 calibre machine guns aft and two .30 calibre machine guns midships, where was also located an 81 mm mortar. A number of these boats had their forward armament replaced by a flame thrower. These boats retained two 20 mm cannons and had a flame device able to project up to 1000 litres of napalm to a range of 150 metres. All monitors had an eleven man crew.

The command and communications boat also had an 11 man crew and resembled the monitor. The main visible difference was the number of antennae that covered the boat and in lieu of a mortar pit, a communications centre to provide for added accommodation for electronic equipment.

The armoured troop carriers with a seven man crew retained their bow ramp. They were armed with one 20 mm cannon and two .50 calibre machine guns aft. Some later versions also carried a 40 mm grenade launcher. In time most armoured troop carriers were also fitted with a helicopter platform that enabled them to serve as floating medical aid and evacuation stations. In its tactical transport role an armoured troop carriers normally embarked a reinforced infantry platoon of 40 men.

The 15.4 metre assault support patrol boat was specifically designed for riverine operations. With its five man crew and speed of 16 knots, it was the scouting element of the river force. Its forward 20 mm cannon, midships .50 calibre machine gun and aft mortar enabled the assault support patrol boats to also provide fire support. Finally, it was equipped with minesweeping gear to add further to its capabilities.

The mobile river base initially comprised two barracks ships, one repair ship, two supply LST's and a small salvage force. The barracks and repair ships were modified LST's whose shallow draft and general configuration were well suited to the brown water environment. The afloat base also made use of pontoons to facilitate boat operations. These were later adapted as artillery platforms and to provide base facilities in areas where larger ships could not operate.

Mobile Riverine Force Landing Operations

MRF landing operations were similar to those of the French but differed vastly in the means used. The Americans made regular use of artillery, rotary and fixed wing aircraft. The French had no helicopters for such purposes and few fixed wing aircraft. French air strength in 1954 was three squadrons of B-26 and four fighter/attack squadrons. Their artillery was equally limited: out of 683 pieces in Indochina in 1954; half were in fixed positions and the remainder heavily committed.

In American MRF operations, three sections each with one monitor and three armoured troop carriers were used to embark the assault platoons of an infantry company. The movement to the landing area was made in column; boats in a section kept 5-10 metres apart while 150-300 metres was maintained between each section.

The formation was preceded by assault support patrol boat minesweepers immediately followed by a command boat with the senior naval commander and the landing force commander. When the formation approached to within 500 metres of the landing area any artillery or air strikes were lifted. The assault support patrol boats and monitors picked up the responsibility for continuing the preparation, while the assault support patrol boats took position on the flanks of the landing area. The armoured troop carriers would then execute a turn into the shore and land the assault platoons which promptly moved inland. As soon as the assault troops made contact with the enemy ashore, the landing force commander manoeuvred his uncommitted forces into blocking positions by boat and helicopter and took the enemy positions under heavy fire by all means available. Once the operation was concluded the troops would re-embark in the same boats and return to base.

Effectiveness of the MRF

From its inception the MRF borrowed heavily from the French experience of riverine warfare in Indochina but added its own innovations in due course.

The MRF was conceived of as comprising a landing force of boats to move, protect and support it. The French had advanced such a concept but had not been able to implement it. The Americans, allocated the 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division together with two river assault squadrons of the US Navy's River Flotilla One.

The US river assault squadrons were several generations later than the French dinassauts. However, in common to both was the LCM as the basic craft. The American versions were more elaborate than their French predecessors but their functional break-up remained common.

The French used paratrooper units in conjunction with river force operations. This required the coordinated actions of separate elements moving by different means and was difficult to execute successfully. The Americans did the same thing but using helicopters, they were able to plan and execute tactical engagements of water and airborne units under more favourable conditions. Indeed the availability of large numbers of helicopters in the Vietnam War raises the threshold issue as to whether the MRF was really necessary. Since helicopters can swiftly deploy and support a force independently of the intervening terrain, why did the Americans accept an eight knot rate of advance in arguably clumsy boats. It is interesting to note that during the riverine

assault operations during 1967-1970 American forces utilised helicopters with great effect for the manoeuvre of troops, emergency re-supply and medical evacuations.

The one major conceptual difference which arguably gave the MRF greater effectiveness than its French predecessor was the matter of basing. The French has their dinassauts based separately along waterways. This required them to use ground units for base defence. French records indicate their river forces suffered greater losses when at anchor than when underway. In contrast, the American based their river force afloat. This provided ground troops with better amenities and greatly facilitated the servicing and maintenance of boats. Further the base ships usually LST's had substantial firepower lessening the need for elaborate defences ashore. Finally the whole base could move made it easier to shift operations from one trouble spot to another.

The French had a good start toward meeting brown water warfare requirement when they deployed their naval brigade with the first elements of the Expeditionary Corps that landed in Saigon. The Americans had marines but they were wholly engaged in the northernmost part of South Vietnam. The marines brown water experience, other than that acquired through their participation in the ship to shore operations of the Seventh Fleet was limited to using amphibian tractors to move and support troops operating in the restricted waterways of the Annam. Had the marines been available for redeployment to the Mekong Delta they would still have had to undergo specialized training to prepare them for an unfamiliar type of warfare. At least they had amphibious experience and a relationship with the US Navy.

Conclusion

The MRF ceased in June 1969 with the implementation of the Vietnamization policy that sought to transfer responsibility to the South Vietnamese forces. In 1954, the French turned over their brown water resources to the South Vietnamese and departed. Fifteen years later the Americans did the same and military history repeated itself. All the remains of these brown water navies rests in the military archives of France and America.

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MEMBERS INFORMATION

The Bisley Boys - researcher Andrew Kilsby has just published his history of the Victorian Rifle Team which went to Bisley in 1897 and won the Kolapore Cup against the best in the Empire. It follows his *Lions of the day* history of the South Australian Contingent to Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. *The Bisley Boys* (180 pages, endnotes and index) has full biographies on each of the team members, details of the Bisley program for that year plus dozens of rare photographs. Andrew can be contacted at kilsbya@optusnet.com.au

Australian Defence and the Rifle Club Movement 1860-1920 - researcher Andrew Kilsby has begun his PhD at UNSW@ADFA exploring the history of the rifle club movement in Australia and its influence on and links with Australian Defence policy and doctrine. He is keen to hear from anyone who may have information about specific rifle clubs with detailed history from around Australia, their State Associations and the links with Defence. He will be looking at the Volunteer rifle movement and the formation of the colonial rifle associations in Australia from 1860, the structure of clubs and colonial/State associations, links with the British NRA in particular, the impact of the Boer War and WWI on the movement and the social and sporting aspects of the movement as well as key personalities. In short, just about everything! Andrew can be contacted on kilsbya@optusnet.com.au

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Sabretache Vol L No. 1 — March 2009

HARRY BEAUCHAMP LASSETTER: AN AUSTRALIAN IN THE BRITISH ARMY

Les Hetherington

For many years in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the colonial precursors of the Australian Military Forces, and the Australian units themselves, were heavily dependent for leadership on British personnel such as General Sir Edward Hutton, an England-born product of the British Army's colonial experience in the last decades of the nineteenth century, at one time head of the New South Wales military and the first Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth Military Forces. But one prominent officer at least in part reversed this trend. He was Harry Beauchamp Lassetter, the first commander of the New South Wales Mounted Infantry, a Boer War veteran and a leading peace-time Australian military officer who rose to the rank of Brigadier-General in the British Army in World War I.

Harry Beauchamp Lassetter was born at 'Redleaf', his parents' home in Sydney's Edgecliffe, on 19 March 1860. The same year English-born Frederic Lassetter, Harry's father, took over sole control of the hardware and general retail business founded in 1820 by his uncle and father-in-law, Lancelot Iredale. In 1863 he changed its name to F. Lassetter and Co., and, an innovative and successful businessman, made it one of the largest firms in Sydney, employing nearly 1000 staff in 1910. This prosperity allowed Frederic to educate his sons in England, the young Harry attending both Eton and Cheltenham College before entering the Royal Military College, Sandhurst.

Harry Lassetter was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the 38th (First Staffordshire) Regiment of Foot in January 1880. In April 1881 he was promoted to Lieutenant in the 80th (Staffordshire Volunteers) Regiment of Foot, which became the 2nd Battalion of the South Staffordshire Regiment in a re-organisation a few months later, the 38th Regiment becoming the 1st Battalion. With two fellow 2nd Battalion lieutenants he was sent to join the 1st Battalion in Egypt in December 1884, and so took part in the unsuccessful campaign the following year to relieve Khartoum and save General Gordon. For his part in the campaign Lassetter was awarded the Egypt Medal 1882-1889 with the clasp The Nile 1884-85 and the Khedive's Star. Lassetter was promoted to Captain in August 1887 but remained with the regiment only a short time more. In November 1888 he was seconded for service with the New South Wales Colonial Forces with the local rank of major.

Lassetter returned to New South Wales to help establish a mounted infantry detachment, a task he took up in early 1889. He was subsequently for several years Major Commanding Mounted Infantry in the New South Wales forces. In late 1892 he appears to have resigned his position, but remained a Captain on the South Staffordshire Regiment's Reserve of Officers. This was shortly after his 1891 marriage to Elizabeth Ann Antill of Picton, and also shortly after he began a more active involvement in the operations of F Lassetter and Co, of which ultimately he became managing director and chairman of directors. But in April 1895 he was again commanding what was now the New South Wales Mounted Rifles - motto 'Toujours pret' ('always ready'). He remained active in the New South Wales military and as a Lieutenant-Colonel commanded the colony's detachment attending Queen Victoria's 1897 jubilee celebrations in London, riding at the head of the Australian detachments in the Jubilee Procession.

At the turn of the century Lassetter was sufficiently confident in his two careers to contemplate a third, when he stood unsuccessfully as a Senate candidate in the first Commonwealth election.

However, he was also planning his departure from Australia for the war in South Africa, as Lieutenant-Colonel of the 2nd New South Wales Mounted Rifles. Despite controversy over the conduct of troops under his command on the troopship returning to Australia in June 1902, his service in South Africa was personally successful. He was mentioned in dispatches and created a Companion of the Order of the Bath in October 1902. His former commanding officer, Major-General Fetherstonhaugh, wrote to Hutton of Lassetter's men 'how much I appreciate their good and gallant services during the past year', and of 'the very high regard I have of them'. Lassetter, the General said, was a 'most pleasant officer' with which to deal.

As Colonel commanding the 2nd Brigade of the Australian Light Horse Regiment from December 1902, Lassetter continued his military service after his return from South Africa. He moved to the unattached list in July 1906, again perhaps because of the pressure of business. He was still listed on the South Staffordshire Regiment Reserve of Officers, however, and when World War I broke out in September 1914 he brought forward a planned business trip to England. His son, Frederick Macquarie Lassetter, was at the time a law student at Cambridge but soon joined the London Scottish Regiment as a private and was wounded in action. When he arrived in London Lassetter volunteered for service and on 6 January 1915 was appointed a Temporary Brigade Commander. His military service was again creditable: in January 1917 he was appointed a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George and the following August promoted to honorary Brigadier-General.

While Lassetter and his son could expect to be in danger while in uniform, they might have expected Mrs Lassetter to have been safe from the war. However, this was not the case. While convalescing after being wounded, Frederick accompanied his mother to the United States, from which, on the return journey, they embarked from New York on 1 May bound for Liverpool aboard RMS *Lusitania*. The ship was torpedoed off the coast of Ireland on 7 May and sank in 18 minutes. Among the minority of passengers who survived, Frederick and his mother had leapt into the sea and clung to a floating box for several hours before being rescued. According to newspaper reports, Mrs Lassetter 'was covered with black smuts from the explosion' and received 'a blow from the propeller' while in the water. Frederick recovered to serve later as a temporary Captain in the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. After the war he returned to the law and was admitted to the bar in England and New South Wales.

Harry Beauchamp Lassetter was demobilised in 1920 and, after a brief trip home, lived in London until 1924. He then returned permanently to Sydney, where he was residing when he died on 17 February 1926 as a result of complications after an operation for appendicitis. He was buried at Sydney's South Head Cemetery after a 'semi-military' funeral attended by the band of the Royal Australian Artillery. Business and other military representatives also attended, as did 600 employees of F Lassetter and Co.

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Sabretache Vol L No. 1 — March 2009

JULIAN CORBETT AND MARITIME VERSUS CONTINENTAL STRATEGY

Justin Rawardl

In 1911, Sir Julian Corbett published *Some principles of maritime strategy* in which he detailed his views on the strategic use of maritime power, which included his thoughts for the maritime use of limited war. In 1983, Sir Michael Howard published *The British way in warfare: A reappraisal*, in which he contradicts Corbett's and others interpretation for the maritime use of the limited method in war. This essay examines how convincing Corbett's historical case for the strategic potential of maritime warfare is in light of Sir Michael Howard's criticism in The British way in warfare.

Although the concept of Limited War was proposed by Clausewitz, Corbett extended its application as a maritime strategy.2 The concept of the Limited Method allows a belligerent to employ a limited use of their force to achieve a distinctly limited objective. The opposite of this, the Unlimited Form, is where belligerents employ an unlimited use of force to achieve a much broader objective.3 What Corbett identifies as a Limited Object is that, "Firstly, it must be not merely limited in area, but of really limited political importance; and secondly, it must be so situated as to be strategically isolated or to be capable of being reduced to practical isolation by strategical operations. Unless this condition exists, it is in the power of either belligerent, as Clausewitz himself saw, to pass to unlimited war...."4 The strategic isolation of the object, whether geographically or through operations, is a key concept when comparing the potential of a continental versus maritime strategy utilising the Limited Method, particularly if a belligerent can only apply a limited amount of force or is restricted in the amount of force they can apply. What Corbett therefore alludes to is that "[A Limited war] in the continental form seldom or never differs generically from unlimited war, for the conditions required by limited war are seldom or never present."5 Reasoning for this can be understood that in continental strategy Limited War is unlikely to be achieved, as there are few areas that can be strategically isolated and retained with only a limited force. Furthermore it is then still well within the enemy's capacity to counter utilising the Unlimited Form forcing the belligerent then into an Unlimited War, lest they give up their position. The strategic potential therefore of a maritime strategy rests in its ability to manoeuvre and isolate an objective and then retain that objective with only a limited use of the belligerent's forces and denying the enemy's capacity to counter with the Unlimited Method.6 Although this rests on the varying degrees in which a belligerent has command of the sea, its potential to support the overall objective can be recognised through the use of strategies such as blockade or of amphibious operations.

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1 Acting Sub Lieutenant Justin Raward, RAN, was the 2008 recipient of the Military Historical Society of Australia prize awarded for the best military history essay at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA). He is in his third year of an Arts Degree at ADFA majoring in History and Politics. The essay was part of a major piece of assessment for the course 'The Rise of Modern Navies and Sea power' lectured by Dr John Reeve at the ADFA.

2 J S Corbett, *Principles of Maritime Strategy*, Dover Publications, London, 2004, p. 38.

3 ibid., pp. 42-43.

4 Corbett, op cit., p. 52.

5 ibid., p. 63.

6 ibid., p. 54.

Through analysing Corbett's maritime use of blockade the potential of the Limited Method in a maritime strategy is brought to light. Blockade of either an enemy's Naval or Military force or of their commerce in either the Closed or Open methods, can be recognised as an operation which supports the Limited Method. In any of these blockades there is a distinct and limited objective, either securing of command of the sea in the restriction or eventual destruction of the enemy's forces or exercising control of the sea by denying the enemy the use of trade and commerce.7 Furthermore blockade can also be strategically isolated to a particular area and can be constrained, depending on the situation, to varying amounts of limited force. For example a commercial blockade of an enemy's trade and commerce would place a wider strain on their ability to obtain the lost source of goods or revenue affecting the wider economy. The effect in which a naval blockade can support the employment of the Limited Method can be identified in the British blockade off Brest during the Seven Years War.

During the Seven Years War Britain's key objective under the Duke of Newcastle and William Pitt was to gain territorial advances in the colonies particularly in North America, the West Indies and the East Indies.8 This was chiefly employed using a combination of methods which included real and deceptive blockades and amphibious expeditions, to occupy France's attention in the continental theatre whilst gaining territory overseas.9 During the Seven Years War Britain had maintained when possible and to varying degrees of success a blockade off Brest and at times the rest of the Bay of Biscay, to interrupt commerce entering France and to disrupt French support to its colonies across the Atlantic. Then in 1759 a decisive blow was struck by Britain by means of this blockade. Under threat of invasion, Britain strengthened its blockade off France and had stationed several squadrons under command of Admiral Edward Hawke in key locations either to intercept or contain the French troop transports and their fleet.10 In August the British squadron operating out of Gibraltar under Admiral Edward Boscawen defeated the French Mediterranean fleet at Lagos, which was intending to join with the French Atlantic Fleet.11 Moreover despite Hawke getting blown off station, which allowed the French West Indies squadron to join the Atlantic and together leave Brest, he was able to intercept the French fleet as they rendezvoused with the troop transports in Quiberon Bay, which was already under blockade by Robert Duff.12 The ensuing battle resulted in a British victory which decimated the French fleet.13

The loss of the French fleet was a decisive victory for Britain whose objectives lay in the taking of French overseas colonies, which were now both geographically and strategically isolated from France. Therefore the blockading of Brest and the Bay of Biscay supported Britain's grand strategy, and reinforced its ability to use the Limited Method in North America and the West Indies. According to Corbett in a Limited War ".... a phase must be reached sooner or later in which one party begins to predominate in the limited area-that is, the area of the special object."14 Britain had ensured that it was able to supply and reinforce its overseas forces whilst denying the French this ability lest they take the risk of

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7 ibid., p. 185.
8 J S Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War: A Study in Combined Strategy*, Vol. 1, Longmans Green & Co., London, 1907, p. 28.
9 D French, *The British Way in Warfare 1688-2000*, Unwin Hyman, Sydney, 1990, pp. 51-52.
10 French, op cit., p. 53.
11 Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War: A Study in Combined Strategy*, Vol. 2, op cit., pp. 37-39.
12 ibid., pp. 59-60.
13 French, op cit., pp. 53-54.
14 Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War: A Study in Combined Strategy*, Vol. 2, op cit., p. 1.

being intercepted by the Royal Navy. Consequently the French were then defeated in Canada and the West Indies which in turn denied them the commercial support that these colonies provided.15 Corbett identifies these aspects, noting that "With the naval force of France destroyed, the destruction of her power of attack and resistance across the ocean could only be a question of a few months. The utmost the Canadian forces could do was to prolong the transition...."16 and in France "The financiers saw too well that the pressure which England would now bring to bear would be mainly against her trade and against the Colonies, from which her resources could no longer be replenished."17

The potential of maritime strategy's ability to exercise the Limited Method can also be recognised through the conduct of amphibious operations, or as Corbett identifies it 'The Attack Defence and Support of Military Expeditions'.18 However it must be noted that some but not all amphibious strategies are forms of the Limited Method. For an amphibious expedition to be executed utilising the Limited Method, it requires not only the strategic isolation of the maritime area but the geographic isolation of the land area as well, to prevent an enemy's unlimited counter-stroke. Corbett denotes in 'Principles of Maritime Strategy' how the conduct of such operations is to be carried out.19 Moreover in his account of England in the Seven Years' War, Corbett identifies the effect amphibious operations can have in a Limited War. In the Seven Years War Britain used amphibious landings as a means of deception to keep France focused on the Continent, in addition to securing France's colonial territories. As with blockade, amphibious operations can be utilised to support further continental or political objectives in a grand strategy, particularly where both the navy and the military share a combined but limited objective, such as the capture and holding of a particular area of land either island or coastal. This can be recognised in Britain's campaign on the Iberian Peninsula during the Napoleonic wars.

The employment of an amphibious expedition in the Limited Method can be recognised in Britain's restitution of Portugal from France. The Iberian Peninsula, Portugal in particular, had a number of conditions that enabled the British to employ the Limited Method.20 The objective in the case of Portugal and subsequently the Peninsula as a whole was to enable Britain to gain a continental foothold from which she could fight and to free up Portuguese and Spanish forces to fight the greater war against France.21 The French occupation was constantly beset by resistance fighting from within the local population, as well as thousands of Portuguese troops who were willing to become British auxiliaries. According to Hall, "Such an ally was a huge asset to a Britain willing to commit her own limited number of soldiers to the theatre."22 The local forces were able to tie down French forces in their local garrisons keeping them separated, as well as disrupting the French lines of communication between these forces, keeping them starved of information and intelligence. The mountainous terrain of Portugal also constrained French logistics and manoeuvrability.23 Moreover, after the battle of Trafalgar Britain had gained maritime superiority over France, allowing Britain freedom to manoeuvre and support her military

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15 R Ranger, 'The Anglo-French Wars 1689-1815', in C S Gray & R W Barnett (eds), *Seapower and Strategy*, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, 1989, pp. 176-177.
16 Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War: A Study in Combined Strategy*, Vol. 2, op cit., p. 72.
17 ibid.
18 Corbett, *Principles of Maritime Strategy*, *op cit.*, p. 285.
19 ibid.
20 Corbett, *Principles of Maritime Strategy*, *op cit.*, p. 62.
21 C D Hall, *Wellington's Navy: Sea Power and the Peninsular War 1807-1814*, Chatham Publishing, London, 2004, pp. 28-29.
22 ibid., p. 3.
23 ibid., pp. 4-5.

forces securely about the Peninsula from the sea. Therefore for the British it can thus far be recognised that there was a limited political objective, the restitution of Portugal and then Spain from France, with the objective area being effectively either geographically or strategically isolated. These conditions led to the British being able to land their forces securely and defeat General Andoche Junot at Vimiero in Portugal.

For the first seven months of 1808 the Royal Navy under command of Vice Admiral Charles Cotton had maintained a blockade that had isolated Junot from the sea, whilst the Spanish rebellion had created similar conditions over land.24 On the 1st August 1808 Lt.General Arthur Wellesley began landing his troops at Mondego Bay. By the 9th August 14,000 men were Ashore in Mondego Bay. Further to the South at Maceira 5,000 British soldiers had landed by the 21st August and a further 11,000 troops were disembarked by September. 25 Within five weeks the British had been able to insert amphibiously across wider Portugal around 30,000 troops and the necessary supplies to sustain them.26 Wellesley went on to defeat Junot at Vimiero, where Junot then presented the terms of his surrender and the complete French evacuation of Portugal under the Convention of Cintra.27 The manner in which the British were able to expel the French from Portugal is a clear example of the strategic potential of maritime warfare when exercised utilising the Limited Method. Although some may argue that the restitution of Portugal was not a decisive campaign that led to the defeat of Napoleon, it was nevertheless essential in the support of grand strategy. Thus far the employment of the Limited Method has been illustrated and placed in historical contexts to demonstrate not only the employment of the strategy from a maritime standpoint but to give credence to Corbett and others who have recognised the historical case for the strategic potential of maritime warfare. This then leads to Sir Michael Howard's critique of Corbett and others in the effectiveness of maritime strategy.

Throughout Howard's The British Way in Warfare examples are given as to how the use of a maritime strategy does not lead to a decisive victory in the main theatre of war, the Continent. Howard concludes finally with the suggestion that the maritime employment of the Limited Method cannot be used in a protracted and unlimited war.28 Yet within his arguments Howard evades the fact that Britain would not have been able to employ a purely continental strategy in the Limited Method. Therefore the potential of Britain's maritime strategy rested in its ability to support continental and grand strategy through the Limited Method. Howard identifies that, "The effectiveness of Britain's maritime power still depended on the fighting capacity of Britain's Continental allies, East and West."29 Although in both the Seven Years War and Napoleonic Wars Britain relied on continental allies for the execution of its grand strategy, their presence did not impinge on the effectiveness of Britain's maritime power, nor does it conclusively rebuke the potential effects that a maritime strategy can have when exercising the Limited Method.

Focusing first on the Seven Years War, Howard notes how "France was worn down not by the economic pressures of blockade, by the interruption of her trade with the West Indies,

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24 Hall, op cit., p. 34.
25 ibid., pp. 30-31.
26 ibid., p. 34.
27 W H Fitchett, *How England Saved Europe: The Story of the Great War 1793-1815*, Vol. 3: The War in the Peninsula, George Bell & Sons, London, 1900, pp. 56-57.
28 M Howard, 'The British Way in Warfare: A Reappraisal', in *The Causes of Wars and Other Essays*, 2nd edn, Unwin Paperbacks, London, 1983, p. 206.
29 Howard, op cit., p. 205.

but by the crushing expense of continual war against Continental adversaries."30 However should France have had access to the wealth of her colonies what then? Was the "crushing expense" for France only exacerbated because of the loss of income from her colonies as a means of funding the war? Corbett identifies how the outcome of Hawke's defeat of the French fleet resulted in the collapse of French credit as, "The financiers saw too well that the pressure which England would now bring to bear would be mainly against her trade and against the Colonies, from which her resources could no longer be replenished."31 Moreover during the Seven Years War Britain's principle object was the gaining of colonial territory, to which this objective was achieved. France's financial pressures could have only been made worse once they were taken away from her completely. Therefore any gains that Britain received due to Prussia's military pressure in the continental theatre can be considered as much a diversion for France away from the main theatre, North America, as were Britain's amphibious landings in France to divert French forces away from Prussia.

Secondly in regards to Britain's campaign on the Iberian Peninsula Howard is critical of the British Campaign suggesting that it was no more than a strategy of diversion and that "it was the only place they could fight."32 Yet the restitution of Portugal and Spain supported the overall objective of removing France's hold over Europe. It freed Spanish and Portuguese troops and resources to fight France, placing direct pressure back on to France's own border. If it were not for certain aspects of a maritime strategy, then fighting on the Peninsula would not have been possible at all. Without a sound maritime strategy and capability, Britain would not have been able to support let alone conduct the widespread landings in Portugal or the rest of the Iberian Peninsula. Due to its geography the Iberian Peninsula offers a maritime power such as Britain the ability to manoeuvre with ease over the sea and strike on three sides of the landmass, whilst France - confined to the land - was adversely restricted in terms of its manoeuvrability and its ability to supply its forces due to the Peninsula's mountainous terrain and poor road network.33 According to Hall, "In a purely military sense it is hard to conceive of any area of Europe that was better suited for Britain to maintain a protracted land campaign against the Napoleonic Empire than the Iberian Peninsula."34 Therefore the means in which Britain employed the Limited Method on the Peninsula is described by Corbett; "But what may be called the British or maritime form is in fact the application of the limited method to the unlimited form, as ancillary to the larger operation of our allies – a method which has usually been open to us because the control of the sea has enabled us to select a theatre in effect truly limited."35 Consequently for a Britain which could only commit limited resources to the campaign, the employment of a maritime strategy can be recognised as sound, as it enabled her to apply aptly the Limited Method and combined with manoeuvrability gain an advantage over France on the Peninsula.

In conclusion despite Sir Michael Howard's criticism of 'The British Way in Warfare,' historical cases which demonstrate the strategic potential of maritime warfare such as Corbett's still remain convincing, as they have a depth and scope which recognises that although continental wars may not be decisively won through a maritime strategy, their outcomes most certainly are influenced by it. Further the potential influence which a maritime strategy can exert on continental wars is demonstrated through its ability to more

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30 ibid., p. 203.
31 Corbett, *England in the Seven Years' War: A Study in Combined Strategy*, Vol. 2, op cit., p. 72.
32 Howard, op cit., p. 200.
33 Hall, op cit., pp. 4-5.
34 Hall, op cit., p. 3.
35 Corbett, *Principles of Maritime Strategy*, *op cit.*, p. 63.

aptly apply the Limited Method than that of a continental based strategy. Although the Limited Method may not always result in an overall decisive victory, it does enable a maritime power to achieve objectives that support a continental or grand strategy. It has been identified how the execution of the Limited Method through a maritime strategy enabled Britain to achieve its objectives in the Seven Years War, by focusing France's attention on the Continent in a war with Prussia and with a number of real and deceptive amphibious assaults, culminating in the successful use of blockade which rendered France impotent in the main area of the object, North America and the colonies of the West and East Indies. Furthermore though it can be argued that Britain's campaign in Portugal and on the Iberian Peninsula did not result in the decisive defeat of Napoleonic France, the execution and outcome of the Peninsula campaign, particularly the Portuguese component, revolved around a maritime based strategy and can clearly be recognised as supporting Britain's wider strategic objectives of the war. Therefore though there is some element of truth in Michael Howard's arguments', they are limited in scope as he does not clearly acknowledge the wider implications that a maritime strategy can have for continental wars, nor does he recognise that some elements of strategy are more aptly executed through a maritime policy over that of a continental one.

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REMEMBERING A GIANT: FIELD MARSHAL ('UNCLE BILL') SLIM

Robert Lyman[1]

The readers of *Sabretache* share at least one advantage over the majority of Australians today, namely that they know and respect the name of that great man who led the 14th Army to victory in India and Burma in 1944 and 1945. Many will have read his own magisterial account of the war in the Far East, *Defeat into Victory*, and most will accept that by some fluke of history Slim's name seems to have been all but eclipsed by that of the other great British general of World War Two, Montgomery of Alamein. Slim's achievements as the leader of this great army have largely been forgotten.

That the name of Field Marshal Sir William Slim is remembered by only a few old soldiers and interested military buffs today is a tragedy of enormous proportions, when one assesses in the great weighing scales of history his contribution to Britain's success in the Second World War and his more longer lasting contribution to the art and science of war as a whole. Over the past couple of years I have, with the help of many members of the Burma Star Association who have been generous with their memories of those tumultuous times, written a reappraisal of Slim's achievements in Burma between 1942 and 1945. The title of the book – *Slim, Master of War* – should say it all. The greatness of 'Uncle Bill' as a leader of men (and women indeed) goes without saying to readers of this magazine, and is a theme that emerges strongly from my book. Given the pattern of British misfortune in 1942 and in 1943 I do not think it fanciful to believe that without Slim neither the safety of India (in 1942 as well as in 1944), nor the recovery of Burma in 1945, would ever have been possible. But the other virtually forgotten element of Slim's legacy is that his style of war fighting in Burma served as a pattern for modern British military doctrine. As a consequence, his legacy to the art and science of war- something quite obvious to readers of *Defeat into Victory*- outshines in my view even that of Montgomery. Space here does not allow me to explain further - I will have to leave you to read the book. In short, however, modern British military doctrine is based on the 'manoeuvrist approach to war', which is described as 'the means of concentrating force to achieve surprise, psychological shock, physical momentum and moral dominance... (it) seeks to do nothing less than unhinge the entire basis of the enemy's operational plan.' In my view Slim's exercise of command in Burma makes him not merely a fine *example* of a 'manoeuvrist' commander but in actuality the *template* for modern manoeuvrist command.

Mountbatten claimed that despite the reputation of others, such as the renowned self-publicist, Montgomery of Alamein, it was Slim who should rightly be regarded as the greatest British general of the Second World War. The Head of War Studies at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, Duncan Anderson, argues that Slim was in 'the same class as Guderian, Manstein and Patton as an offensive commander.' I agree, as I am sure most of you do too. Antony Brett-James once wrote that he hoped Slim's name would 'descend into history as a badge of honour as great as that of the "Old Contemptibles." Sadly, it has not done so as widely as it deserves. It is my earnest hope that my book will provide an opportunity for a new generation to understand and appreciate the achievements of this giant among men.

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1 Robert Lyman is the author of *Slim, Master of War: Burma and the Birth of Modern Warfare*, Constable, ISBN 1-84119-811-0, 2004, xvii + 327 pages.