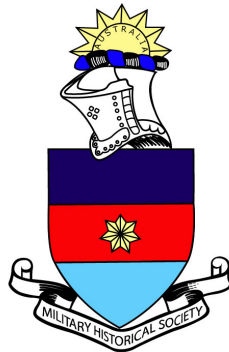


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DIE KOLONIAL-DENKMÜNZE: EINE DEUTSCHE VERBINDUNG MIT AUSTRALISCHER MILITÄRGESCHICHTE.

THE GERMAN COLONIAL MEDAL AND ITS LINK WITH AUSTRALIAN MILITARY HISTORY¹

Graham Wilson

Two of my interests are medals of colonial campaigns – anyone’s colonies and any medals – and the history, especially the military history, of Papua New Guinea. These two interests came together recently when I added to my collection a set of pre-First World War Imperial German medals. This pair of medals, which are shown in Figure 1, consists of the:

Prussian Militär-Ehrenzeichen zweite Klasse

Kolonial-Denkmünze und spange Deutsch-Neuguinea 1913/14

That is, the Prussian Military Honour Order, 2nd Class, and the Colonial Service Medal with clasp ‘German New guinea 1913/14’.



Figure 1

Prussian Military Honour Order 2nd Class (L) and Imperial Colonial Service Medal with clasp DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1913/14 (R)
(Medals in author’s collection)

In this article I will give an introduction to the military history of the German colonial empire, introduce and describe the Prussian Colonial Medal or *Kolonial-Denkmünze*, and link that medal

¹ This article has been adapted from a paper presented to the ACT Branch of the MHSA on 25 January 2010.

with Australian military history. As a necessary part of the article I will also touch on several other German medals established to recognise service in colonial or imperial overseas campaigns.

The German colonial empire was the creation; somewhat against his own will, of the Prussian and German politician, Otto von Bismarck, the famous 'Iron Chancellor'.

Bismarck, in concert with the Prussian King Wilhelm I, had unified the German nation in 1871 and devoted himself to promoting peace in Europe with his skills in statesmanship. He was forced to contend with French desire to avenge the loss in their Franco-Prussian War and therefore engaged in a policy of diplomatically isolating France while maintaining cordial relations with other nations in Europe. Thus he at first had no interest in naval or colonial entanglements, originally arguing that the burden of obtaining, maintaining and defending colonies would outweigh any potential benefit.

However, during the late 1870s and early 1880s public opinion in Germany shifted to favour colonies, and Bismarck converted to the colonial idea, largely influenced by the arguments of Hamburg merchants and traders, although Bismarck himself still never saw overseas colonies as anything other than bargaining chips in the game of *realpolitik*.

Coming so late to the so-called 'Scramble for Africa', Germany found that most of the more desirable colonial real estate had been snapped up by Britain, France, Portugal and Belgium. In the end, Germany had to settle for:

- two pestilential slivers of West Africa, Togoland and Kamerun (modern day Togo and Cameroon), claimed in 1885;
- the arid Namib wastes of German South-West Africa (modern day Namibia), claimed in 1884;
- and German East Africa (the mainland portion of modern day Tanzania, plus Rwanda and Burundi), claimed in 1885, the undoubted jewel in the German imperial colonial crown.

The Berlin Conference of 1884-85, hosted by Germany, established internationally agreed regulations for the acquisition of African colonies and in particular guaranteed free trade in the so-called 'Congo Basin'.

To the African colonies, Germany added territories in the Pacific, including:

- German New Guinea, claimed in 1884;
- the Marshall Islands, claimed in 1885;
- Bougainville and Nauru, claimed in 1888;
- the Mariana and Caroline Islands, purchased from Spain in 1899; and
- German Samoa, claimed in 1899.²

Finally, in 1898, Germany obtained, more or less by coercion, a 99 year lease on the Kiaochow (Jiaozhou) Bay region in Shantung Province in China. Although nominally a German colony, Kiaochow was actually a German naval base and was run by and for the Imperial Navy.³

Security in the various territories was originally the responsibility of the various trading companies, whose activities preceded formal empire, with virtual private armies of native soldiers under the command of mercenary officers and NCOs. Anything that these forces could not handle was generally taken in hand by German naval forces. With the formal establishment of empire, however, official military and armed police forces were raised in each of the colonies, except Kiaochow.

² McKenzie, pp.2-3.

³ Ibid.

In the African colonies, the military forces were known as *Die Schutztruppe* or ‘armed security troops’.

In Togoland, Kamerun and German East Africa, the *Schutztruppe* consisted of locally enlisted native troops, or *askaris*, commanded by officers and specialist NCOs and soldiers from the Prussian Army.⁴

In German South-West Africa, for various reasons, the *Schutztruppe* consisted entirely of Germans.⁵

In the Pacific colonies, with the exception of Samoa, the defence force consisted of a mobile, armed constabulary, *Die Polizietruppe*, recruited from local people and commanded by German police officers and NCOs.

In Samoa, the *Polizietruppe* had evolved out of the Samoan royal guards and were known as *Fita Fita*.

When the police troops were not enough to put down unrest or insurrection in the Pacific colonies, reinforcements were provided by the Imperial Navy. One of the most famous examples of this was the deployment of sailors and marines from the Imperial Navy ships SMS *Emden*, *Nürnberg*, *Cormoran* (light cruisers) and *Planet* (survey ship) in support of the *Polizietruppe* during the short but bloody Sokehs Rebellion on Ponape (Pohnpei) in the Marshall Islands in 1910 and 1911. Significantly, however, while the Imperial sailors and marines certainly represented a strong moral reinforcement and an unmistakable sign of Germany’s imperial power and reach, most of the actual fighting during the Sokehs Rebellion was carried out by the *Polizeitruppe*.⁶

Finally, the German concession at Kiaochow in China was garrisoned by the Imperial Marines, with a small, locally recruited Chinese police force to maintain order in the ‘native areas’.

Having had an overview of the German colonial military effort, the article will turn now to a slightly more detailed look at the German Pacific territories. German incursions into the Pacific were very much trade driven. From the mid-19th century onwards German entrepreneurs ventured into the Pacific in search of gold, pearls, timber and, above all, copra.

Germany showed little interest in the mainland of New Guinea until the annexation of the southern portion of the eastern half of the island by the British colony of Queensland in 1883.⁷ Although this action by a colonial government was originally repudiated by Britain, in Germany it spurred the formation of the privately funded but government sponsored *Deutsch-Neuguinea Kompanie* in Berlin in 1884 and the flag of the *Kompanie* was raised over Kaiser-Wilhelmsland and the Bismarck Archipelago on 3 November 1884.⁸

Germany purchased the Marshall Islands from Spain in 1884 and annexed the island of Nauru 1888, adding it to the Marshall Islands ‘protectorate’.

In 1899, following its disastrous defeat in the Spanish-American war, Spain negotiated the sale of its remaining Pacific territories, the Caroline and Marianas Islands and Palau, to Germany. In

4 Bassett-Powell, pp.3-4. See also Herbert, pp.117 (German South-West Africa), 130 (German East Africa), and 136 (Kamerun).

5 Bassett-Powell.

6 The Sokehs Rebellion is little known outside the Marshall Islands and the highly specialised Pacific historical community, and has been little written about in English. Probably the best and most accessible account of the uprising is to be found in *Strangers in Their Own Land: A Century of Colonial Rule in the Caroline and Marshall Islands*, by the Jesuit priest and missionary Francis X. Hezel, SJ.

7 McKenzie, p.1.

8 Ibid, p.2.

the same year, the western half of the Samoan group was granted to Germany and it was at this point that the German government assumed direct control of all the Pacific territories, including New Guinea, and the New Guinea Company became a pure commercial concern. For administrative purposes the various island territories were placed under the overall control of the governor of German New Guinea, except for Samoa, which remained a separate colony.

The German administration in New Guinea, as in each of the other colonies, maintained a small armed force, strictly for internal security. The first constabulary, actually a private security force, was established in 1893 by the *Deutsch-Neuguinea Kompanie* but from 1898, with assumption of administration by the Imperial government, responsibility for policing was taken over by the colonial administration.⁹

The new Imperial administration established a police force consisting of two German Sergeants (*Polizeimeister*) and 90 native constables. This small force expanded fairly rapidly as new areas were added to the German 'protectorate', with the size of the forces increasing as new territories were added. Thus, by 1910 the administration fielded a force consisting of 16 European *Polizeimeister* and 670 native constables.

The main station for the *Polizeitruppe* was at Rabaul on *Neu-Pommern* (New Pomerania, now New Britain), which was the site of the seat of government. There were smaller detachments at various outstations, both in New Guinea itself and in the various outer islands.

In 1913 the *Polizeitruppe* was reorganised along the lines of the *Schutztruppe* in Togoland, converting the force from a largely static armed constabulary into a highly mobile and more heavily armed field gendarmerie. By this stage the strength of the *Polizeitruppe* stood at 20 *Polizeimeister* and 839 native constables, with the latter recruited exclusively from the protectorate area. A previous experiment in recruiting constables from Makassar and Amboina in the Netherlands East Indies had been a dismal failure. The failure was due to a combination of extreme cultural differences and the inability of the East Indian recruits to acclimatise to the harsher conditions of the protectorate. The unsuitability of the East Indian constables had been particularly remarked during the operations to suppress the Sokehs Rebellion on Ponape in 1910-11, when the behaviour and performance of the East Indian constables had been compared very unfavourably with that of constables recruited from the protectorate.¹⁰

Recruits from the island of Buka in the Northern Solomon Islands were particularly prized and this would later carry over into the Australian administered New Guinea Police and Royal Papuan Constabulary, both of which regarded recruits from Buka with great favour. Despite this preference, the bulk of recruits came from *Neu-Pommern* since this island was the location of the seat of government and it was administratively easier to recruit from this island.

Conditions of service for native constables were originally derived from regulations governing discipline, wages, rations, etc for native plantation workers. However, following the full takeover of police functions by the Imperial government in 1898, far better conditions were instituted for police troops, including higher pay, free accommodation, free food, free medical and free clothing, as well as issues of tobacco and matches.¹¹ This move was specifically designed to foster and boost recruiting. In addition to the comparatively excellent employment conditions they enjoyed, as with *askaris* and native police troops in the African colonies, native constables of the Pacific *Polizietruppe* enjoyed immense prestige in the local community and a certain amount of power and legal impunity that greatly enhanced this prestige.

9 Morlang, p.7.

10 Hezel, pp.139-140.

11 Morlang, p.10.

In the matter of uniforms, *Polizeimeister*, i.e. German officers and NCOs, wore the same uniform as that of European police officers in German East Africa, but with green facings and trimmings instead of the white worn in East Africa.¹² Native constables wore a red lap-lap with leather equipment belt and a khaki field cap with red band and Imperial cockade. Constables were armed with the Model 88 Mauser rifle and Model 71/84 bayonet.¹³ In addition to the armed constabulary, the administration appointed 'local constables' or *ortspolizeilicher* whose role was to assist the *tul tul*, the local head man or chief to maintain order. These men were neither armed nor paid, but were issued with badges of office.

Turning now to medals for service, it needs to be understood that the Germans did not just walk in and take control of various areas of Africa and the Pacific uncontested. Between the mid-1880s and 1914 there was much hard fighting and hard marching on the part of the German colonial forces. While the Germans were fairly quick to recognise service in China during the Boxer Rebellion with the *China-Denkünze*, established in 1901, and in German Southwest Africa for the Herero and Nama campaigns, with the *Südwestafrika-Denkünze*, established in 1907, they were not so quick to recognise other colonial service. It was not until 1912 that the *Kolonial-Denkünze* or colonial service medal was established. The German word *Denkmünze* is literally untranslatable, the best English rendering being 'thinking coin'. Perhaps the absolute correct rendering should be 'commemorative medallion'; however, the normal English rendering is 'Colonial Medal' or 'Colonial Service Medal', so that is the term that will be used. Also *Kolonial-Denkünze* is abbreviated in German terminology as 'KD', and for simplicity this term will be used as well.

The KD was formally established on 13 June 1912 by Kaiser Wilhelm II, for award to both European and Native troops for service in various colonial actions and was made retrospective to 1884. The medal could be awarded to all persons who participated in military campaigns in the German colonies including Imperial Navy and Marines; Imperial Army and *Schutztruppe*; colonial police; colonial service; and, in certain instances, civilians. The largest campaigns, with the concomitant most awards of the KD, were fought in German East Africa (the mainland portion of modern day Tanzania) in 1900-01 and German Southwest Africa (modern day Namibia) from 1904-08.

The KD itself was issued in bronze to European combatants and brass to non-European combatants, while non-combatants were issued medals made of steel. The design of both versions was identical and featured on the obverse the uniformed effigy of Wilhelm II, facing left – to the Kaiser's left is the Imperial cipher, the capital letter 'W' above the Roman numeral 'II', with the Imperial crown above the 'W'.

The reverse features a wreath consisting of a spray of oak on the right and a branch of laurel on the left, with the Imperial crown at the top. Enclosed within the wreath is the inscription:

DEN TAPFEREN STREITERN FÜR DEUTSCHLANDS EHRE

This could probably be best, translated as:

A TRIBUTE TO THE COURAGEOUS STRUGGLE FOR GERMANY'S HONOUR

The medal is suspended by a simple ring suspension from a ribbon of white with black edges and four red stripes in the centre. The medal ribbon for Europeans was 35mm wide while the ribbon for native troops was only 30mm wide.

As with all German medals, the KD was issued un-named, however, its issue was accompanied by an impressive certificate giving details of the award.

¹² Bassett-Powell, p.12. Also Morlang, p.12.

¹³ Morlang, p.11.

The medal was generally issued accompanied by a clasp (*spange*) denoting the campaign involved. A total of 88 clasps were authorised, and these are listed below.

DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1888/89	KAMERUN 1897	TOGO 1897/98
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1889/90	KAMERUN 1898	TOGO 1898
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1889/91	KAMERUN 1898/99	TOGO 1898/99
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1892	KAMERUN 1899	TOGO 1899
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1893	KAMERUN 1899/00	TOGO 1900
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1894	KAMERUN 1900	TOGO 1900/01
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1895	KAMERUN 1900/01	TOGO 1901
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1896	KAMERUN 1901	TOGO 1902
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1897	KAMERUN 1901/02	TOGO 1903
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1898	KAMERUN 1902	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1893
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1899	KAMERUN 1902/03	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1897
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1900	KAMERUN 1903	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1899
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1901	KAMERUN 1904	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1900
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1902	KAMERUN 1904/05	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1901
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1903	KAMERUN 1905	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1902
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1905/07	KAMERUN 1906	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1903
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1911	KAMERUN 1905/07	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1904
DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA 1912	KAMERUN 1906/07	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1905
SÜDWEST-AFRIKA 1893/95	KAMERUN 1907/08	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1906
SÜDWEST-AFRIKA 1896	KAMERUN 1911	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1907
SÜDWEST-AFRIKA 1897	KAMERUN 1912	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1908
SÜDWEST-AFRIKA 1897/98	SAMOA 1888	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1909
SÜDWEST-AFRIKA 1901	VENEZUELA 1902/03	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1910
SÜDWEST-AFRIKA 1903/04	PONAPE 1910/11	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1911
KAMERUN 1884	TOGO 1894/95	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1912
KAMERUN 1886/91	TOGO 1895	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1913
KAMERUN 1889	TOGO 1896	DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1913/14
KAMERUN 1890	TOGO 1896/97	
KAMERUN 1891	TOGO 1897	
KAMERUN 1891/94		
KAMERUN 1893		
KAMERUN 1895/96		

- The clasps are manufactured of brass and fastened to the ribbon by brass folding clips, with subsequent clasps clipped to the ribbon above the original clasp in ascending order. As can be seen in the list, the vast majority of clasps were issued for service in Germany's African colonies with:
- 29 clasps authorised for operations in Kamerun (modern day Cameroon) between 1884 and 1921;
- 18 clasps for German East Africa (which later became the British colony of Tanganyika and is today the mainland portion of Tanzania) between 1888 and 1912;
- 14 clasps for Togoland (modern day Togolese Republic); and
- 6 clasps for German South-West Africa (modern day Namibia) between 1893 and 1904.

In addition to these, 18 clasps were authorised to recognise service in German New Guinea between 1893 and 1914 (the focus of this article), while single unique clasps were authorised for service in Samoa in 1888, Venezuela in 1902-03 and Ponape in 1910-11. As an example of a version of the KD with a Pacific spange and what the medal and clasp were awarded for, the clasp 'DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1909' was awarded for 3 different events:

- April 1909: the Ndrano Punitive Expedition. Plantations and residents had been attacked by the Ndrano clan and the Colonial Government despatched a small force (less than 150 men) of the *Polizeitruppe* to punish them. The *Polizeitruppe* engaged the Ndrano in several actions that saw casualties to both sides and pacified the region.
- April and May 1909: Actions in the Wakaia area of New Guinea. Wakaia area plantations, farms, and residents had been attacked by bandits and the Colonial Government sent out a series of fighting patrols (totalling less than 75 men) to locate and punish the perpetrators. Unfortunately, very little information is available on these actions.

- September 1909: the Asmata Punitive Expedition. Plantations and residents had been attacked by war bands of the Asmata clan and the Colonial Government decided to punish those responsible. The Police Troops (175 men plus 1 German *Leutnant*, a German Doctor, and 4 *Polizeimeister*) engaged the Asmata bands with casualties to both sides.

With the *Kolonial-Denk Münze* described, the article will now discuss the medal's short link with Australian military history.

This article was originally sparked by the pair of medals illustrated at Figure 1. I purchased this pair, which consists of the *Prussian Militär-Ehrenzeichen zweite Klasse* and *Kolonial-Denk Münze und spange* 'DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1913/14' last year. The interesting element here is the clasp, 'DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1913/14'. This clasp was awarded to *polizeitruppen* and to German military and naval reservists, for two actions.

Firstly, the *Neu-Mecklenburg* Expedition from 14 December 1913 to 21 March 1914. This expedition resulted from an attack on a German forestry survey party in the south of the island of *Neu Mecklenburg* on 15 December 1913, which saw the deaths of *Oberförsters* Deininger, the head of the party, five police constables and a number of other members of the party.¹ As soon as Governor Hahl in Rabaul became aware of the incident he despatched an expedition with orders to punish the perpetrators and put down any unrest in the region. The expedition completed its work at the end of March 1914. While little detail has been found on the expedition itself, it is apparent that the unrest was serious enough to cause Governor Hahl to demand permanent reinforcements, including two police lieutenants, four additional police sergeants, and an armourer (*büchsenmacher*) as well as permission to establish a permanent expeditionary force of 125 native constables with full military training.² This submission was largely rejected by the Colonial Office on the grounds of cost, the most they were prepared to finance being an increase in the overall *Polizeitruppe* of 50 constables, plus one additional police lieutenant and two additional *Polizeimeister*. The attitude of the Colonial Officer, officially transmitted to Governor Hahl in January 1914, was that he had more than sufficient force to maintain order and that unforeseen emergencies such as the *Neu-Mecklenburg* incident, could easily be handled by drawing in reinforcements from outlying police stations.³

Hahl then responded with the proposal that he would reorganise the *Polizeitruppe* into a large 180 man central reserve company, a 125 man expeditionary company, and the remaining 500 or so constables into several smaller companies, dispersed in detachments throughout the protectorate. However, as Hahl pointed out to the Colonial Office in February 1914, 'One cannot turn a plantation worker into a field soldier in a single day' and to assist him in converting his plantation workers into field soldiers he requested a Police Captain as Commanding Officer of the *Polizeitruppe*, two lieutenants for each company, eight *Polizeimeister* for the expeditionary company and six each for the other companies, including the central reserve company. Although this request too was rejected by the Colonial Office, Hahl intimated that he would be resubmitting the request in the 1915 budget estimates.

This was more or less the situation at the outbreak of World War One, which leads us nicely into the second reason that the *Kolonial-Denk Münze und spange* 'DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1913/14' was awarded.

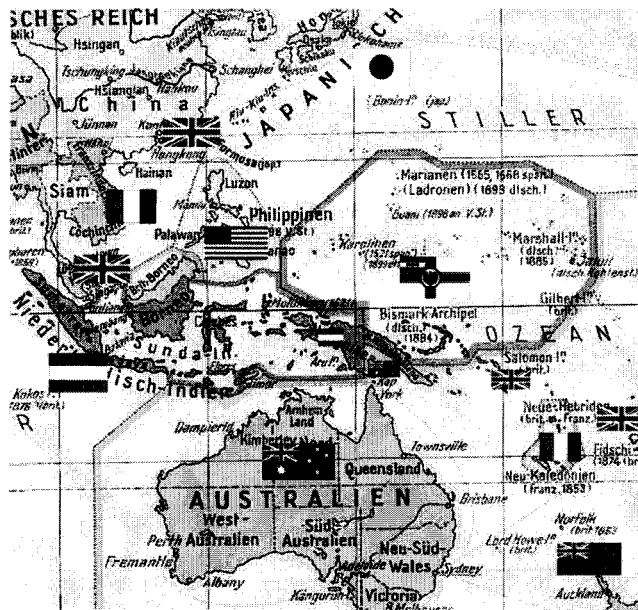
At this point it will be useful to consider Germany's strategic situation in the Pacific. As the map below shows, the major part of Germany's pacific empire was in an untenable position, to say the least, surrounded to the south and east by enemy controlled territory, to the west by neutral Dutch territory, and with mainland Australia a huge threat (especially naval threat), further to

1 Ibid, p.15.

2 Ibid, p.16.

3 Ibid.

the south. To say that the situation of the German colonial government at Herbertshöhe was difficult would be totally understate the situation. The German position was, in fact, totally hopeless.



Germany's Strategic Position in the Pacific - 1914
(Source: *Geschichtsatlas*, Bayerischer Schulbuchverlag, 1954)

World War One came to the Protectorate on the night of 5 August 1914 when the newly commissioned *Telefunken* station at Bitapaka picked up a message from Berlin, relayed through Nauru, advising that war had broken out between Germany and Britain, France and Russia.

On receipt of the news the acting governor immediately declared a state of emergency and removed the seat of government to Toma in the interior of *Neu-Pommern*.⁴ Toma, a pleasant hill station, had been used before the war as a holiday retreat for colonists and administrators and was the site of a convalescent hospital. It was also a small administration station and was selected as the emergency seat of government as it both provided an excellent view of most of the island and was in telephone and telegraph connection with most major out-stations.

At the same time as the seat of government was moved, the administration embodied the *Polizeitruppe* on a war footing, called up all reservists and called for volunteers, both European and native, to enlist to repel the expected invaders. While the colony could call on the 200 or so men of the expeditionary company, as well as the remainder of the armed constabulary, other than that, the military resources of the colony were more or less non-existent and for all intents and purposes the war was over for Germany in the Pacific before it really began.

Having said that, although at first glance a sleepy colonial backwater, *Deutsch*

⁴ The Acting Governor, Edward Haber, was actually absent at that time on an inspection tour of the mainland portion of the colony, in company with the Commandant of the *Polizeitruppe*, *Hauptmann* von Klewitz, so the initial responsibility for preparing the colony for war fell on the Chief Officer, Adolf Schlettwein, see Morlang, p.19.

Neu-Guinea, and especially *Neu-Pommern*, was important to the British imperial government for two reasons:

- Herbertshöhe represented a vital coaling and resupply station for the Imperial German Navy's powerful East Asia Squadron, which had sortied from Tsingtao as soon as war was declared and which threatened all British shipping, both naval and merchant, in the Pacific, and
- the power of the *Telefunken* station at Bitapaka when it had commenced full operation at the outbreak of the war had shocked the Royal and Royal Australian Navies, and its neutralisation was seen as a high priority.⁵

Given the location of Herbertshöhe and Bitapaka it made sense for the British government to request assistance from the dominions. Thus, in response to a request from the imperial government on 6 August 1914, the Australian government began forming a special force for the capture of German New Guinea. The hastily assembled force consisted of an army infantry battalion, with a small support element, and a battalion of naval reservists. The whole force was entitled the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force, or AN&MEF. Totally separate from the AIF then forming under Major General Bridges, the AN&MEF was placed under the command of a talented and experienced militia officer, Colonel William Holmes.⁶

Enlistment for the AN&MEF began on 11 August 1914 and the whole unit embarked for overseas service on 18 August 1914. Despite this incredibly short time scale, Holmes was castigated by the Minister for Defence for his tardiness in having his force ready for despatch. It seems that unreasonable expectation of the military on the part of politicians is not a new phenomenon.

The AN&MEF departed Sydney aboard HMAT *Berrima*, their objective the capture of the German settlements at Yap in the Carolines, Nauru and Rabaul. A New Zealand force was despatched to capture German Samoa. The force endured an enforced delay for several days at Palm Island off the north Queensland coast awaiting news of German raiders in the Pacific but used the time to good effect, practicing landing drills, carrying out route marches and conducting range practices on the island.⁷

On 30 August the force sailed for Port Moresby, where it was joined by a 500 man contingent from the militia Kennedy Regiment that had been garrisoning Thursday Island but volunteered to take part in the operation against German New Guinea. Holmes was not keen on accepting the young and poorly trained militiamen of the Kennedy Regiment, but was ordered to do so by higher authority. However, when the force finally sailed from Port Moresby on 7 September, the stokers on the merchant ship *Kanowna*, carrying the men of the militiamen, went on strike, complaining that they had not signed on to sail into a war zone. Although the militiamen offered to stoke the ship themselves, Holmes used the incident as a heaven sent opportunity to send them home.⁸

Berrima rendezvoused off the eastern tip of New Guinea with the battle cruiser *Australia* and the cruiser *Sydney*, plus some destroyers, and proceeded for Rabaul, which was reached on 11 September.

Finding the port free of German forces, Holmes landed small parties from the Naval Battalion at Kabakaul and at Herbertshöhe. The 25 man party from the Naval Battalion at Kabakaul was

5 McKenzie, pp.5-6.

6 Ibid, pp.23-24.

7 Ibid, pp.29-30.

8 Ibid, pp.31-33.

reinforced with a small landing party drawn from the crew of the destroyer *Warrego* and this force was instructed to push inland to capture the radio station at Bitapaka.⁹

The small force worked its way up the Bitapaka road, little more than sandy track, avoiding the road as much as possible, sticking to the bordering scrub and jungle for cover and security. Tithe first action occurred at about 0900, when Australian scouts located a German ambush and opened fire. During the initial engagement the senior German, *Polizeimeister* Mauderer of the *Polizeitruppe*, was wounded in the hand and surrendered. The leader of the Australian party then coerced the wounded Mauderer to call on his comrades to surrender or face annihilation at the hands of '800 Australians' deployed in the bush. The ruse worked and resulted in the capture of two German officers and a native police trooper.¹⁰

The Australians continued to advance up the Bitapaka road, with German fire becoming more intense. At about 0930 Able Seaman Williams was mortally wounded, earning himself the melancholy distinction of being the first Australian servicemen to die in action during world war one.¹¹ Shortly after, Captain Brian Pockley of the Australian Army Medical Corps was also mortally wounded and, dying soon after Williams that afternoon, earned himself the just as melancholy double distinction of being both the first member of the Australian Army and first army officer to die in action during the war.¹²

At around about the same time, the right half of the Naval Battalion, also advancing under heavy fire, suffered three casualties in quick succession, Able Seaman Courtney and Signalman Moffat killed and Able Seaman Skillen seriously wounded.¹³ Soon after, Lieutenant Commander Elwell RN was killed, drawn sword in hand, at the head of a bayonet charge mounted to clear a German trench.¹⁴ Approximately 1300, outflanked and outnumbered, the German officer commanding the last trench lines on the Bitapaka road, raised the white flag.

The Australians then began advancing cautiously up the road towards the radio station, which had been surrendered to them by the senior German officer prisoner. Unfortunately, due to a misunderstanding, a short fire fight broke out, which saw two more Australians wounded and Able Seaman Street killed.¹⁵ Street was the last Australian fatality of the campaign and by 1900 the radio station, largely intact, was in Australian hands.

With the settlement and radio station at Bitapaka in Australian hands and with his administrative centre at Toma being threatened by a strong force from Herbertshöhe, Governor Haber was not in much of a position to negotiate. Nevertheless, and despite the official proclamation of the surrender of the German forces by the Australian commander and the raising of the Union Jack at Rabaul, he refused a call to surrender.¹⁶ It was not until the morning of 14 September,

⁹ Ibid, pp.50-51.

¹⁰ Ibid, pp.53-55. While it is possible to excuse the conduct of the Australian commander on the spot during this incident, had he tried to get away today with the actions that he carried out in 1914, i.e. force a wounded prisoner to give false information to his companions under pain of being shot out of hand, which is exactly what happened to *Polizeimeister* Mauderer at the hands of the Australian commander of the spot, Commander R.G. Bowen, RAN, the chances of that commander avoiding court-martial for contravention of the laws of armed conflict would be vanishingly remote.

¹¹ Ibid, p.58. Able Seaman W.G.V. Williams, RANR, of Melbourne.

¹² Ibid, p.59. Captain B.C. Pockley, AAMC, of Sydney.

¹³ Ibid, p.61. Able Seaman J.E. Walker, RANR, of Townsville, and Signalman R.D. Moffatt, RANR, of Sydney. Walker served under the assumed name of Courtney.

¹⁴ Ibid, pp.63-64. Lieutenant Commander C.B. Elwell, RN, of Sydney. Elwell was a British officer on loan to the RAN.

¹⁵ Ibid, p.65. Able Seaman H.W. Street, RANR.

¹⁶ Ibid, p.75.

following a short shelling of a ridge near Toma by the guns of HMAS *Encounter*, that the German governor officially surrendered.¹⁷

Although there were several German settlements that still needed to be occupied and although one German officer and about 40 members of the *Polizeitruppe* remained at large for the duration of the war, Australia's first military adventure was over.

Turning back to the main subject of the article, while not exactly rare, the *Kolonial-Denkminze* is also not a common medal and a number of the clasps are extremely rare. The clasp *DEUTSCH-NEUGUINEA 1913/14* is considered one of the rarest. It is estimated that, taking into account the pre-war punitive expedition and the actions in September 1914, between 2,000 to 5,000 men earned entitlement to this clasp, but less than a quarter ever received it. Some of the recipients have been documented as being in the Imperial German Army Reserve (or with the Reserves from one of the German States) during their service. Any recipient of this clasp for service in German New Guinea on 31 August 1914 was automatically entitled to the WWI Cross of Honour

(Combatant) when it was instituted in 1934. *Schutztruppen* and *Polizeitruppen* not in possession of this clasp was individually evaluated as to whether they were considered a combatant or non-combatant for purposes of the award of the WWI Cross of Honour in 1934-1935. By that date of course, Germany had lost its colonies and many of the eligible persons had passed away or, in the case of former native constables, were now living in an Australian protectorate and ineligible for World War One German awards, which goes a long way to explaining why within the German militaria collector community, substantial effort has been and is being made on building a roll of those authorized this clasp.

All in all, a very interesting medal, with an interesting story attached to it, made the more interesting by its link to Australian military history.

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_____, 2008 *Askari und Fitafita: "Farbige" Söldner in den deutschen Kolonien*, Links Verlag, Berlin.

¹⁷ Ibid, p.79.

A SOLDIER'S WALLET

Donald Lawie

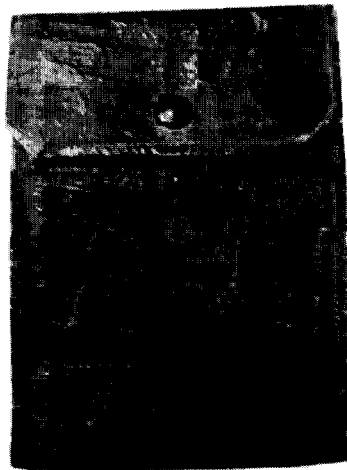
The Mulgrave Settlers' Museum in Gordonvale, Far North Queensland has a small militaria display. A precious item included is a leather wallet donated by a former Shire Chairman, Ken Alley who wrote:

On joining the Army the YMCA gave all the soldiers a wallet. This is the one I received in 1916 before departing for overseas. If you look closely at the wallet you will see on the front the YMCA emblem superimposed over the map of Australia and the badge of the Rising Sun, and on the back the words:

THINK CLEAN
LIVE CLEAN
FIGHT CLEAN
PLAY THE GAME

These words are faded, I know, but are still readable. I carried this wallet with me at all times, even when I was in the trenches in France and Belgium. Perhaps I should tell you a little about the contents of the wallet:

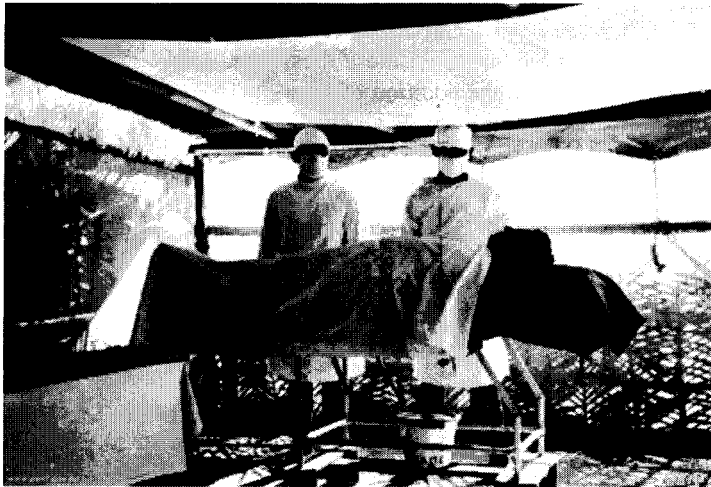
When the ship left Cairns after our final home leave, streamers were thrown from the ship to the wharf. The remains of the streamers which you can see were those which were held by me and which I carried during the whole time I was overseas. They were always a reminder of home. "



3010 Private G K Alley enlisted in the 7th reinforcements of 41st Battalion, 11th Infantry Brigade AIF. He suffered a gunshot wound in the shoulder but returned to Australia and lived a long, productive life as a farmer and shire councillor and chairman. His wallet is preserved in a climate-controlled case and still contains the faded remnants of ribbon. One can picture the Australian digger in the trenches of France and Flanders, occasionally taking out the pieces of faded crepe paper and breathing the air of home and dreaming of his return there. The piece of old leather is a poignant reminder of the humanity that survives in the worst of wars.

(NEI), the battalion groups were to be held in readiness in Darwin until an ‘appropriate time’. *23 Inf Bde Gp* moved to Darwin in April with *2/12 Fd Amb* now attached. Thus the unit avoided being sent to Malaya with *27 Inf Bde Gp* where they would have been captured at Singapore and spend the rest of the war as POWs. In NT the medics assisted the engineers in the construction of hospitals and facilities at Winnellie and Katherine to the extent that they referred to themselves as ‘*2/12 Pioneers*’.

When the war with Japan started, *2/21 Inf Bn* was sent to Ambon in December 1941 as *Gull Force* to supplement the Dutch garrison guarding the air and sea base. A detachment of 50 medics from *A Coy 2/12 Fd Amb* were part of *Gull Force* (along with ambulance drivers and support staff). They established dressing stations at Laha Airfield and Galala with a hospital at Kudamati. The Japanese landed in late January 1942 and the small garrison were soon overcome. The *2/12 Fd Amb* detachment shared the fate of their *Gull Force* companions in captivity. All eighteen of the Laha group were among the 200 Australians massacred shortly after they were captured. The rest were held on the island as POWs until one third left for the inhospitable island of Hainan in October 1942. Here they lived in primitive and cruel conditions and 31% of them died in captivity. Those that remained on Ambon experienced an even harsher regime which saw 77% die in captivity (including some killed in US air-raids).

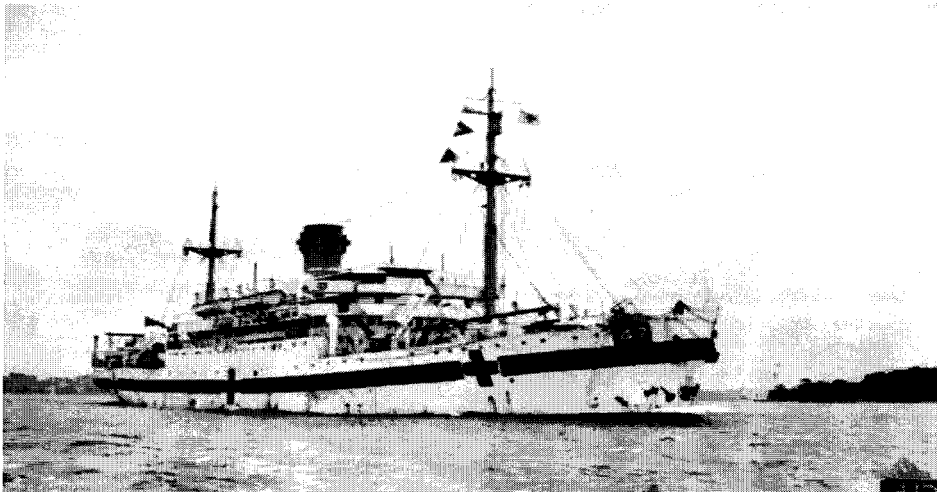


Improvised Operating Theatre, Usapa-Besar
POW Camp, Timor AWM P04801.011

Sparrow Force was sent to Koepang in West Timor with *2/40 Inf Bn* and the rest of *A Coy 2/12 Fd Amb* was attached along with ambulance drivers and support staff. They established a dressing station at Babau and a hospital in the base area at Champlong. The Japanese attack in February 1942 included a paratroop landing at Usau which cut off the base area and captivity soon followed. The POWs concentrated at Usapa-Besar until September when they were sent to Java to join other POWs captured in Java and Malaya. From here groups of POWs were sent to work on the Thai-Burma railway and the mines in Japan. Although they did not suffer to the extent of those captured at Ambon, many did not make it home at the end of the war.

Having lost all of *A Coy* and about half of the ambulance drivers and support staff, *2/12 Fd Amb* was rebuilt with men from other medical units and reinforcements. They continued to service *23 Inf Bde Gp* which moved to a new area 38 miles south of Darwin in April. After 20 months in NT, *2/12 Fd Amb* was relieved by *2/13 Fd Amb* in January 1943 and the still under-strength unit

moved to NSW where they joined *9 Inf Bde Gp* which was defending the Wollongong-Illawarra region. After leave they reassembled at Reidtown (NSW) where they were brought up to strength with men transferred from other medical units of *1 Inf Div*. By May they were ready for a more active role and they were assigned to relieve *3 Fd Amb* at Port Moresby (NG). Here they were to service the base units and take over the MDS, dysentery hospital and the airfield medical posts which were receiving casualties from forward areas. Although most troop reinforcements moved to NG on troopships, *2/12 Fd Amb* (as a non combatant unit) could travel on a hospital ship which sailed under international laws of the sea, supposedly without fear of interference.



AHS Centaur, sunk 14 May 1943 AWM 302800

Hosp Ship Centaur was painted white with a prominent green strip and Red Cross markings and they sailed fully lit at night. They left Sydney on 10 May 1943 carrying the 75 merchant navy crew, 62 members of the ships hospital staff (incl 12 nursing sisters) and 195 members of *2/12 Fd Amb*. At 0400 the Japanese submarine I-177 attacked *Centaur* by torpedo approx 50 mile NNE of Brisbane and she sank within 3 minutes. When the few survivors were rescued by USS *Mugford* the toll was enormous. Only 15 soldiers survived from the 195 members of *2/12 Fd Amb* on board, along with only 19 of the ships medical staff and 26 of the merchant seamen. The survivors returned to Reidtown to rejoin the unit's rear party and to commence the rebuilding of the unit. *4 Lt Fd Amb* had previously been attached to *3 Army Tk Bde Gp* but was being disbanded at this time and many men transferred to *2/12 Fd Amb*. *14 Fd Amb* had serviced the units fighting over the Kokoda Trail and on the Papuan beachheads in 1942 and so was severely under strength when it joined *1 Inf Div* at St Ives in June 1943. They were then disbanded and the experienced AIF men completed the rebuilding of *2/12 Fd Amb*.

By August 1943 they were back to full strength and moved to Balgownie to rejoin *1 Inf Div* before they joined the corps troops of *1 Aust Corps* at Kairi on Queensland's Atherton Tableland in November. They moved to Wongabel in January 1944 where they waited for a role in New Guinea. The landings of *9 Inf Div* at Lae and Finschhafen had demonstrated the need for a specialist unit to manage the assault beach, so trials were conducted north of Cairns to form *1 Beach Gp*. In March, *B Coy 2/12 Fd Amb* moved to Palm Beach and in April they became *1 AAMC Coy (Bch Gp)* and a new *B Coy* was formed. Following the recapture of Madang the Australian troop numbers in New Guinea were reduced and *1 Aust Corps* waited in Queensland for a future role north of New Guinea. In early 1945 they were allocated the liberation of Borneo.

In February 1945, *2/12 Fd Amb* moved to Morotai (NEI) to service *AdvLHQ* which was planning the coming operations. *26 Inf Bde Gp* was tasked with the capture of the island of Tarakan to prepare an airfield for the other Borneo operations and *2/12 Fd Amb* left *B Coy* with *AdvLHQ* and landed at Tarakan in May. Leaving *A Coy* at Tarakan, the unit returned to Morotai and in June, *2/12 Fd Amb* landed at Labuan (BNB) with *9 Inf Div*. When units of *20 Inf Bde Gp* then landed along the coast of Brunei and Sarawak, they were accompanied by *HQ Coy* and a section of *B Coy* which moved with *2/13 Inf Bn Gp* to Lutong and Miri. In these areas they saw out the war and following the Japanese surrender, *2/12 Fd Amb* formed part of *Kuching Force* which liberated the POWs at Kuching.



2/12 Fd Amb preparing for Borneo 1945. AWM 108162

Overall *2/12 Fd Amb* suffered the highest casualty rate of a non-combatant unit in the Australian Army and almost all of those casualties occurred while the unit was out of active service. As we celebrate the discovery of the *Centaur* and the closure that brings to the families of those lost at sea, we must also celebrate a unit that suffered severely while doing its job away from the limelight.

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THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY DENTAL CORPS IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Lt. Col. Sven Kuusk RFD, BDS(Hons), MDS, qs(us) Ret.¹

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Prior to the First World War there was no dental service in the Australian Military Force.

World War I 1914 - 1918

The *Defence Act 1903* precluded the Australian Army from serving overseas. The Australian Imperial Force consisting only of volunteers was thus raised for overseas service. As the Australian Army units formed would operate in conjunction with British formations and, in the interests of standardisation the decision was made to adopt British War establishments for the AIF.

There was no provision for a dental service in the British Order of Battle even though lessons learnt in the Boer War relating to dental casualties were ignored, and even resisted by the British Director General of Medical Services on the Imperial Staff in London. The four universal dental extraction forceps issued to medical officers were deemed all that was required.

Volunteers for the AIF who subsequently departed for overseas were only selected if they were dentally fit. Some dental treatment was provided by dental hospitals and private dentists prior to embarkation.

The rigors of Gallipoli, poor diet, hard army rations, fatigue and the outbreak of Vincent's disease soon took its toll, resulting in over 600 evacuations from the 1st Division on Gallipoli due to dental problems – A soldier who cannot bite or chew his food cannot fight. Urgent requests for dental support from Gallipoli and Egypt eventually resulted in six dental sections (one from each State) being sent to Egypt as supernumerary postings to the Australian hospitals in Egypt.

Thus the dental service was born of necessity and subsequently shaped by circumstances. In 1916 approval was given for three dental sections to accompany each division proceeding overseas. These dental units to be attached, one to each Field Ambulance.

By 1918 there were 39 dental units operating in France. In 1918 the hexagonal chocolate brown colour patch was introduced for dental units. By the end of the First World War there were 130 army dentists employed in England, France, Egypt and Palestine or one dental officer per 4200 men. At the end the First World War all dental units were disbanded.

The Militia Period 1920 - 1939

After the First World War no dental units were retained. A small nucleus of First World War veteran dental officers continued to serve in the militia in each state under the control of a senior dental officer appointed for each military district. This dental service as such was regulated by standing orders for the Australian Army Medical Corps (AAMC). These officers provided treatment for the permanent forces in clinics at Victoria Barracks in Sydney and in Melbourne and/or in their own professional rooms.

On the 15 September 1939, the militia was progressively called up for full time duty.

¹ This paper is based on the personal papers and diaries of past and serving dental personnel, and on the incomplete army records held by the AWM, CARO and NAA.

The Second World War 1939 – 1945

Recruitment for the Second AIF in 1940 found the Army wanting as there were no dental units to treat the new AIF recruits, First World War history had repeated itself. Those who do not learn from history will repeat it. The Australian Dental Association came to the rescue as it did in First World War. The Auxiliary Army Dental Service a civilian organisation, was founded in April 1940 in NSW and Victoria formed the Volunteer Dental Service. In other states the Dental Hospitals and private practitioners made their services available until dental units could be raised and equipped. The initial and main effort was to prepare troops of the 6th Division for deployment overseas.

Following the departure of the 6th Division, the Army Dental Service developed into two organisations:

1. The AIF Dental Units and dental sections organic to the General Hospitals, Convalescent Depots, Casualty Clearing Stations and Field Ambulances; and
2. The AMF ie Militia Dental Units and Base Area Dental Centres as part of the Lines of Communication Areas.

For the Second AIF special dental units were raised consisting of a captain dental officer, staff sergeant and corporal dental technicians, private (Group 3) dental clerk orderly and batman. These units were the smallest numbered units in the Australian Army, and were numbered 1 to 68 with the provision for 100 units.

9 Units were raised for service in the Middle East
 9 Units were raised for service in Malaya
 50 Units for service with the AIF as required.

In the meantime dental centres were set up in all major bases and recruiting depots in each state. Militia dental units were raised from the call up for full time duty of Reserve of Officers and the recruitment of dental mechanics. These militia units became part of the lines of communication area organisation and when 75% of personnel in a unit volunteered for the AIF they became designated as AIF Dental Units and could then be deployed with the AIF Formations outside Australian Territory. Initially each state or military district went its own separate way and there was no uniformity in naming or numbering of Militia Dental Units. Recruited dental personnel were held against the establishment of the various dental centres. Eg:

QLD Redbank
 NSW Sydney Showground Ingleburn Tamworth
 VIC Balcombe Bonegilla Puckapunyal
 SA Wayville Woodside
 WA Northam Fremantle
 TAS Brighton
 New Guinea Dental Centre

Early in 1942 the dental service was restructured into main treatment centres and numbered dental units to operate away from the centres. The militia dental units were numbered from 200 to 421 although some were only in existence for a short period of time, or to treat a specific army unit. Many of these units were raised temporarily from the staff of the major dental centres found in each state.

Unit numbers allowed for future expansion, and were allocated as follows:-

201 to 213 Queensland. Replaced Northern Command Dental Units 1 to 13.
 214 to 251 New South Wales
 252 to 281 Victoria
 282 to 289 South Australia

290 to 295 West Australia
 296 to 299 Tasmania
 300 Northern Territory
 301 New Guinea
 302 to 304 West Australia
 305 General Headquarters
 306 to 319 Queensland
 320 to 362 New South Wales
 363 to 400 Victoria
 401 to 404 South Australia
 405 to 407 Tasmania
 408 to 416 West Australia
 417 to 420 Northern Territory
 421 New Guinea

By 1942 there were 287 Dental Units and 390 Units or establishments with at least one dental officer supported by technicians and dental clerk/orderlies. The AIF and militia organisations continued until March 1942 when the Japanese threat saw the return of the 6th and 7th Divisions from the Middle East and a drastic reorganisation of the dental service into fewer but larger dental units.

The 9th Division remained in North Africa and was supported by the 14th and 20th Special Dental Units, and the dental sections organic to the CCS's, Convalescent Depots and General Hospitals. With the fall of Singapore the six dental units sent to Malaya with the 8th Division became POW's

17, 18, 25, 32, 33 and 43 Special Dental Units were not re-raised.
 19 Special Dental Unit was captured in Rabaul as part of Lark Force
 22 Special Dental Unit was captured in Timor as part of Sparrow Force.
 23 Special Dental Unit was captured in Ambon as part of Gull Force.

A significant number of dental other ranks died as POW's in Japanese Camps and on the Burma Thailand Railway.

The remaining AIF special dental units were combined in October 1942 to form the new enlarged dental units of a HQ consisting of:-

OC Major	Six Sections with
2 i/c Captain	Captain - Dental Officer
WO2 Senior Technician	S/Sgt Technician
Sgt. Clerk	Cpl Technician
Cpl (2) Mechanics	Dental Clerk/Orderly
Pte (2) Orderlies	Batman
Pte (2) Batmen	

Total 8 Officers 32 Other Ranks

These new AIF units were numbered from 2/1st to 2/9th Aust. Dental Unit.

On the 23 April 1943, GRO G.316 – 1943 established the Australian Army Dental Corps as a separate corps and no longer a part of the AAMC. On 7 July 1943, GRO O.520 / 1943 authorised a new distinctive hexagonal burnt orange colour patch.

In October and November 1943 most dental sections were withdrawn from field ambulances and amalgamated into the new expanded Dental Units commanded by a Major with HQ and six sections. The reason for removing the dental sections was to make better use of their technical skills. During active operations the dental officers attached to Field Ambulances were often used on non dental tasks such as anaesthetists, transport co-ordinators or other tasks.

Most of the militia dental units were also amalgamated and re-numbered from 51 to 85 and when 75% of personnel volunteered for the AIF the unit was designated as an AIF unit. A number of these AIF units served in New Guinea.

The new enlarged militia dental units were allocated as follows:-

- 51 to 54 Queensland
- 55 to 63 New South Wales
- 64 to 65 Land Headquarters
- 66 to 71 Victoria
- 72 Land Headquarters
- 73 to 74 South Australia
- 75 to 77 West Australia
- 78 Tasmania
- 79 to 81 First Army
- 82 to 83 Second Army
- 84 Victoria later NSW
- 85 Northern Territory - 2 Sections only
- 85 New Guinea Unit less 2 Sections
- 86 Dental Unit was raised in Oct 1945 as part of the AIF Reception Group in the UK to treat POWs from Germany. Four Sections were raised.
- 87 Dental Unit was raised in Oct 1945 as part of 2nd Aust PW Reception Group to treat POWs held in the Singapore and South East Asia.
- 88 Dental Unit was raised in Oct 1945 as a HQ and two sections for the 3rd Aust PW Group to treat POWs in Manila and the Philippines.
- 89 Dental Unit was raised in Oct 1945 at Morotai as dental support for the 34th Infantry Brigade for service with BCOF in Japan.

On 16 November 1945, GRO 283/1945 authorised the new rectangular colour patch to be issue.

The Army War Effort Report prepared by the General Staff and issued under the direction of the commander in chief summarised the work of the Dental Service as follows:

The Dental Service had to be expanded considerably to render and maintain the AMF in a desirable state of dental fitness. The significant increase in numbers and problems with the Medical Corps not comprehending the technicalities of dental treatment resulted in the formation of a separate Dental Corps.

The war establishment provided for strength for the Australian Dental Corps of:

Officers	475
Dental Mechanics	874
Clerks Orderlies & Batmen Drivers	830
TOTAL	2179

The amount of dental work executed by the A.A.D. Corps has been satisfactory and the organization proved flexible enough to supply the dental requirements of troops in all zone.

Up to 31st. August 1945, the following dental operations have been performed:

Fillings	2,775,000
Extractions	1,510,000
Dentures	450,000
Prophylactic Treatment	396,000
Repairs to Dentures	352,000

Statistics so far accumulated in relation to enlistments and discharges showed, that recruits on enlistment are estimated at 15% dentally fit, and discharges 60% dentally fit.

Demobilisation

With the end of hostilities the army began to demobilise and repatriate back home. Before a soldier could be discharged he had to be dentally fit, this necessitated dental units being retained until the work load diminished.

Demobilisation was based on a points system based on months of service x 2 and if dependants x 3, plus age at enlistment x 2, but also on the needs of the service, as all the troops had to be dentally fit prior to discharge. Thus the Corps gradually wound down as all AIF personnel were discharged and only the Interim Army personnel remained.

On 31 December 1948, in recognition of the work performed by the corps in the Second World War WW2, AAO 99 of 1948 announced the grant of the Title Royal to the AAD Corps.

INTERIM ARMY 1947 – 1952

As the army demobilised and contracted in size dental personnel were still required to support troops in clean up operations until 1948, together with the dental sections operating in each Command and to support the BCOF Japan and later Korea.

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THE RICARDO LIBEL CASE

Max Chamberlain¹

A soldier since 1884, Percy Ralph Ricardo (1855-1907) had led a detachment to maintain order at Clermont during the shearer's strike of 1891, earning him disfavour in union circles. As a Lieutenant-Colonel he commanded 1st and 2nd Queensland Mounted Infantry (QMI) in the Boer War, and was in actions at Sunnyside, Dronfield, Sannah's Post, Vet River, Dasport and Diamond Hill. When the QMI was reduced to fill the ranks of the South African Constabulary, the remaining men were reformed into two companies under Major Henry George (Harry) Chauvel, and Ricardo held administrative posts.

While Ricardo was still in the South Africa a returned trooper named Cammack² gave an interview to the *Townsville Star* accusing Ricardo of cowardice. An anonymous letter rebutting the accusation was later discovered to be from Chauvel. Nevertheless, when Ricardo returned home he found the rumour persisted and he was hooted by children, and his wife insulted. In April 1901, he was made a Companion of the Order of Bath (CB), the *Brisbane Observer* stating that the award was for valour in the field. The following day however the same paper intimated that CB had other meanings - Caught Behind, Caught in the Barbed-wire and Companion of the Boulder.

A few days later a cartoon showed a pair of trousers torn in the seat and repaired with a star-like patch, which referred to the time at Dronfield when Ricardo had his binoculars caught when climbing through a fence under fire and had been extricated by Chauvel and Captain Philip William Grant Pinnock. The implication was that a tarnished reputation could be repaired by the granting of an award. This was highly damaging to an officer seeking to advance in the Commonwealth forces.

After unsuccessful attempts to obtain an official inquiry, Ricardo had to resort to civil proceedings to clear his name. He sued the *Observer* and the case was heard before Mr Justice Cooper in the Queensland Supreme Court from 14-22 August 1901. He sought damages to restore his reputation. The defendants pleaded the publications were fair comment and for the public good. Witnesses for Ricardo included Chauvel, Pinnock, Major Victor Conradsdorf Morisset Sellheim and several NCOs and men, and for the defence included Captains Richard Dowse and Joseph Espic Dods and several NCOs and men, including Cammack, who testified that at Dronfield he had heard Ricardo call out, "My God! Come and help me or I'll be shot!". Denied by Ricardo's witnesses who were there, and with the defence case showing contradictions, the jury of four awarded 500 pounds damages.

Vindicated, Ricardo went on to become Commandant in Western Australia in 1902 and in Victoria in 1905, although he is still the subject of criticism by recent writers. He died in 1907 as a result of a horse-riding accident. He is buried in Boroondara Cemetery, Kew, Melbourne.

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

2 218 Private William Cammack, A Company 1st Qld Mounted Infantry invalided to Australia arrived 18 August 1900, *Official records of the Australian Military Contingents to the War in South Africa*, compiled and edited for the Department of Defence by Lt.-Col. P. L. Murray RAA (Ret.), Government Printer Melbourne, 1911, page 452.

LIEUTENANT CHARLES CAMERON'S BRITISH-CHINESE WAR, 1839-1842 DIARY

Justin Raward

In 1839 Britain and China went to war over a series of grievances felt by both sides. This war, commonly referred to as the 'First Opium War', was fought by the British to essentially defend and further extend what they perceived as their legitimate trade rights in China. For the Chinese, the war was fought to essentially protect societal values and maintain a traditional status quo. The war ended in 1842 with the Treaty of Nanking. During this time Lieutenant Charles Cameron, a soldier in Her Majesty's 26th Regiment of Foot who fought in the war, kept an account of his experiences in a diary dated from 24 March 1840 until 20 August 1841.¹ Therefore to what extent does Cameron's diary help us to better understand the British-Chinese war, 1839-1842? Cameron's diary does prove useful in providing some detailed insights into the conflict, particularly those pertaining to the British Army, as well as verifying other sources and previously established conclusions. Unfortunately the extent in which Cameron's accounts help to better understand the wider scope of the British-Chinese war is limited, mostly due to the narrow scope of Cameron's own perspective and the dating of the diary. By identifying notable inclusions and omissions in Cameron's diary, as well as comparing and contrasting the discontinuities and continuities of Cameron's accounts with other sources, this will become apparent.

When assessing the usefulness of Cameron's diary as an account of the First Opium War the context and influences that prejudiced the inclusions he contributed should be addressed. Cameron was a Lieutenant in the British Army. This meant that Cameron would have experienced firsthand the actual conduct of the conflict. Though not privy to the elements of operational planning, his understanding of military operations assists in the description of their execution. In this manner Cameron does make a significant contribution when writing about engagements. Furthermore, though his position in the British Army often places a favourable bias towards the British and a distinct prejudice against the Chinese, Cameron's diary does provide some useful details of Chinese defences and capabilities. This contributes to understanding some of the ways in which the Chinese conducted the war. In addition Cameron also notes some of the hardships faced by the soldiery through disease and lack of supply. By analysing Cameron's accounts of British engagements, Chinese defences and capabilities, and hardships faced by the soldiery a few insights into the conflict become apparent.

Contained within Cameron's diary are his accounts of British operations and engagements against the Chinese. Two engagements which he significantly writes on are the assault on Tinghai on the island of Chusan, and the attack on Canton. A close examination of a few passages written on these actions will prove useful in detailing the conduct of British operations. In the assault on the island of Chusan Cameron writes;

The moment the Gun was fired from the *Wellesley* the Chinese Guns opened, and the Men of War returned their fire with interest. The boats pushed off from the different ships with the soldiers, and forming under cover of the *Wellesley* dashed ashore as fast as possible.... The business was over before the troops landed. It lasted altogether about 6 or 8 minutes, and 5 or 6 rounds was the most that was fired. When the smoke blew off every Chinese had disappeared...²

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- 1 R Bowers, 'Notes from the Opium War: Selections from Lieutenant Charles Cameron's diary during the period of the Chinese War 1840-41', in *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, Vol. 86, No. 347, Autumn 2008, p.190.
 - 2 Bowers, op. cit., pp. 192-193.

In the attack on Canton Cameron notes that, “Several small Forts opened at the same time upon the Men of War, who returned the Compliment twenty-fold and set fire to the suburb in different directions; and there we were, in the middle of Shot and Shell, Bullets and Stones, Fire and smoke, and yet unmolested.”³ Within these passages three things about the British conduct of operations in the war and their engagements with the Chinese become clear. Firstly, the British where possible utilised their maritime advantage. Combining the forces of the Navy and the Army in a joint operation, amphibious assaults gave the British strategic and operational manoeuvrability. Secondly, Cameron’s accounts give a clear indication to the British superiority in firepower over the Chinese. During an engagement the Army could be provided with cover and counter battery fire from Naval Gunfire Support. One of the reasons for the British advantage in firepower will be discussed further on. Finally, Cameron notes the ease in which British forces were able to achieve victory over the Chinese forces. The details provided in Cameron’s diary that describe British engagements with Chinese forces, such as the assault on Tinghai, are mostly consistent with those provided by other sources.⁴ Furthermore, other sources also note the same three distinguishing features of British engagements with the Chinese.⁵ These passages, as well as Cameron’s other accounts, contribute to an understanding of the conduct of British operations as well as the one sided nature of engagements between British and Chinese forces.

Included within Cameron’s diary entries are details pertaining to the Chinese conduct during the war, particularly with accounts describing Chinese defences and capabilities. The details of these two aspects help in understanding why engagements between the British and Chinese forces were often so one sided. In describing the Chinese Forts and defences at Hong Kong Cameron notes that, not only were they immediately abandoned upon the arrival of HMS *Druid* but more importantly that “like all the Chinese Forts, useless to their owners unless attacked in front, the honest Celestials decidedly having no idea of an attack either from flanks or rear.”⁶ This account thereby highlights a weakness observed by the British in the design of Chinese fortresses. One in which the British were able to tactically exploit. In addition to tactical weaknesses in fortress design other methods of Chinese defences are also described. Cameron notes that when the British were assaulting Tinghai the Chinese were utilising empty boats and bags of rice as breastworks. Moreover, the Chinese had only approximately 20 guns which were supported by three or four armed Junks.⁷ Considering that the HMS *Wellesley* a third rate ship with 72 guns was supporting the assault, the British advantage in firepower over the Chinese starts to become apparent.⁸ The disparity in capability between the British and Chinese forces is also further reinforced when Cameron notes the condition of the Chinese guns. “On examination, we found their Guns of the most paltry description and eaten up by rust. All but one: a brass 32 in the centre of their line, which was in splendid order and bore the inscription ‘John Philipps made this piece, A.D. 1601’.”⁹ From this account it can be reasonably inferred that the Chinese indigenous guns were of an inferior quality to that of their British opponents. Cameron’s remark to the quality and general inferiority of Chinese weaponry is consistent with the general conclusions established in other sources, describing the Chinese as possessing “... quaintly antique weapons.”¹⁰ Accounts included within Cameron’s diary outlining the

3 Bowers, op. cit., p. 198.

4 G S Graham, *The China Station: War and Diplomacy 1830-1860*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1978, p. 127.

5 R Giddings, *Imperial Echoes: Eye-Witness Accounts of Victoria’s Little Wars*, Leo Cooper, London, 1996, p. 64.

6 Bowers, op. cit., p. 198.

7 Bowers, op. cit., pp. 192-193.

8 Graham, op. cit., p. 81.

9 Bowers, op. cit., p. 193.

10 H G Gelber, *Opium Soldiers and Evangelicals: Britain’s 1840-42 War with China and its Aftermath*, Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire, 2004, p. 109.

engagements between the British and Chinese, detailing the conduct of British engagements as well as the Chinese defences and capabilities, contribute to a better understanding of the First Opium War.

In addition to its usefulness in understanding aspects of British and Chinese engagements, Cameron's diary contributes to an even better understanding of aspects pertaining to life for the British soldier during the war. Of note are some of the hardships faced by the British soldiery which included disease and lack of supply. Cameron remarks, "... and at a time that 280 of his own Regt. are on the sick list, that the Hospital Tents can't contain them, that they have not a clean sheet for one of them, and last, though far from least, that they are dying for want of proper provisions..."¹¹ Cameron notes in no less than six of his accounts written during the first year of the impact in which disease was afflicting either him or his regiment. From Cameron's accounts it can be inferred that a significant proportion of British soldiers suffered from disease whilst in China. Cameron also notes the lack of supply and provisions made to his regiment.¹² Ian Heron notes that at Tanghai the 26th Regiment of Foot suffered the heaviest casualties predominantly from disease and lack of provision. They were inadequately supplied reliant on food from India which was packaged in old bags or insanitary boxes. Moreover the regiment whilst starting with 930 officers and men, lost 240 dead through illness whilst only 110 men were deemed fit enough for active duty.¹³ Though there is continuity with Cameron's accounts of disease and inadequate supply when compared with other sources, there is unfortunately a lack of detail that would have contributed to an even broader understanding of the war. Nevertheless, Cameron's accounts contribute to understanding the role in which disease and lack of provisions played in a soldier's life, identifying some of the typical hardships that would have confronted the British soldier in China during the conflict.

As a source for the First Opium War there are a number of omissions from Cameron's diary that hinder in the understanding of the conflict, demonstrating the limitations of the diary's use as a source. Like with the aspects included in Cameron's accounts, those features of the conflict which were omitted are invariably tied to the narrow scope of Cameron's own perspective as a soldier in the British Army. There are two omissions in Cameron's diary which are distinctly apparent. The first is the exclusion of any reason provided by Cameron for either Britain's, or his own, involvement in the war. The second is the discontinuity or lack of detail provided by Cameron in his accounts. Though there are reasonable explanations for the presence of both these omissions, they nevertheless hinder in the understanding of the conflict and represent the extent of the diary's use.

Despite what Cameron includes within his diary that assists in understanding the British-Chinese war there is a distinctly notable omission. Throughout Cameron's diary there is no reference made to the reasons for which Britain, and therefore he, were in China fighting in the first place. Though the British were at war to defend and extend their trade rights in China, there was a distinct commodity that contributed to triggering the conflict, Opium. It was the British sale of Opium in China, contrary to a Chinese embargo, that contributed to the start of the conflict. However there is little mention of the drug itself or of the Opium trade throughout Cameron's diary. Cameron does make reference to boarding the *Omega*, a ship that traded in Opium, but he does not make any reference to the role in which Opium played into the commencement of the war. This is somewhat strange considering Cameron's apparent disgust of the drug; "The Captain, a very civil, obliging person, took us into his Cuddy (which, by the by, stank most

¹¹ Bowers, op. cit., p. 195.

¹² Bowers, op. cit., pp. 194-195.

¹³ I Heron, *The Savage Empire: Forgotten Wars of the 19th Century*, Sutton Publishing, Gloucestershire, 2000, p. 77.

horribly of Opium)...”¹⁴ Opium aside, there nevertheless is still no reference made by Cameron to any other reason for Britain’s involvement in the conflict. There is any number of logical explanations for this, taking into consideration the limitations of Cameron’s own personal scope and his position in the British Army. The first is that the omission is one caused by reference of time, as Cameron’s diary is written after the build up and commencement of hostilities. The second and most reasonable to assume, is that from Cameron’s perspective the reasons for British involvement were commonly known and therefore did not warrant mention or explanation. Nevertheless, the omission of any reason for Britain’s involvement in the conflict does not contribute to a better understanding of the actual war and marks the limited use of Cameron’s diary in understanding the wider scope of the conflict.

Another hindrance in utilising Cameron’s diary to better understand the British-Chinese war is the discontinuity or lack of detail presented by Cameron in his recollection of events. This is most apparent when Cameron presents the nature in which the Chinese forces assaulted the British. From Cameron’s accounts it is difficult to understand the true extent in which the Chinese held a numerical superiority over the British forces or the tactics they employed. This is because when describing Chinese attacks, Cameron’s entries often omit, exaggerate or downplay the extent of the Chinese forces arrayed against those of the British and the methods they employed. Some of the events and details described by Cameron surrounding the British assault on Canton demonstrate this point. Firstly, Cameron’s accounts do not mention the numerical disparity between the British and Chinese forces. The British were assailing Canton with a force of 3,500. Canton was being defended by more than half a million inhabitants and a further 45,000 Chinese troops in the surrounding region.¹⁵ Secondly, according to Cameron’s diary during the attack on Canton, “[t]he Chinese had sent a Fire Raft down upon the Ships.”¹⁶ Cameron’s portrayal of this event is contrary to many other sources who elicit that there was more than one Fire Raft utilised by the Chinese and that it in fact could have numbered as many as 200 Fire Rafts.¹⁷ Finally, on 31 May 1841 in the surrounding hills of Canton Cameron notes how the British forces were harassed by “thousands” of Chinese.¹⁸ However the true extent of the engagement is not quite sufficiently portrayed in Cameron’s expression. The Chinese force actually comprised of around 15,000 villagers from over one hundred villages in the surrounding area, and who had armed themselves and come to Canton to defend their homelands.¹⁹ As it can be identified there are a number of difficulties in distinctly relying upon Cameron’s diary as a source of detail and events when deriving an understanding of the First Opium War. Understandably these difficulties originate from the narrow scope of Cameron’s own personal perspective. Nevertheless, the discontinuity or lack of detail presented in these events in conjunction with the omission of any reasoning for the British involvement in the war, establish the limitations in which Cameron’s diary can be utilised in better understanding the British-Chinese war.

In conclusion, there are both substantial inclusions and notable omissions within Cameron’s diary that both assist and hinder in understanding the First Opium War. The most notable omission in Cameron’s diary which hinders the understanding of the conflict is the exclusion of any reasoning which might explain why Britain and China were at war. Cameron’s diary also has marked discontinuities and lapses in detail pertaining to those aspects which are either beyond Cameron’s perspective or are influenced by his bias. Nevertheless, there are substantial

14 Bowers, op. cit., p. 195.

15 Gelber, op. cit., p. 121.

16 Bowers, op. cit., p. 198.

17 P C Kuo, *A Critical Study of the First Anglo-Chinese War: With Documents*, Hyperion Press, Connecticut, 1973, 1st published 1935, p. 152.

18 Bowers, op. cit., p. 201.

19 Kuo, op. cit., pp. 154-155.

contributions made by Cameron in his diary which add to a better understanding of the war. Moreover, many of Cameron's accounts display continuity when compared and verified against other sources. From Cameron's diary conclusions concerning the nature of British engagements and operations against Chinese forces can be established. These draw attention to the British use of amphibious operations, the advantage in and use of fire power, and the quick and often one sided victories attained by British forces. Cameron's diary also highlights the weaknesses in Chinese defences and how this predominantly originated from the inferior quality of Chinese weaponry. Cameron's own personal perspective also contributes and verifies established conclusions that disease and lack of supply were beset hardships upon the British soldiery. Therefore, though Cameron's diary for the most part favourably assists in providing a better understanding of the British-Chinese war, there are some limitations which define the extent of its use. These limitations are confined principally to the narrow scope of Cameron's own personal perspective as a British soldier during the war. This aspect in itself bifurcates the usefulness of the diary to its advantage and to its detriment.

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ABLE SEAMAN WILLIAM HALL: FIRST BLACK VICTORIA CROSS RECIPIENT

Anthony Staunton



Canadian Black History Month saw the issue of a stamp on 1 February 2010 commemorating Royal Navy Victoria Cross recipient Able Seaman William Hall who was decorated for gallantry during the Indian Mutiny. A number of references and websites continue to say black recipients were not eligible for the Victoria Cross until 1911 despite Hall and two West Indian soldiers being decorated in the second half of the 19th Century.

William Hall was born at Horton's Bluff, Nova Scotia on 25 April 1827. His father was an African slave freed by the Royal Navy frigate *Leopard* and taken to Nova Scotia during the War of 1812. In 1844, aged 17, Hall signed onto

the crew of an American trading vessel and in 1852 he enlisted in the Royal Navy as an able seaman. He saw service in both the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. In 1857, while serving on the HMS *Shannon*, Hall volunteered for the Naval Brigade that joined the second relief force sent to Lucknow, India, where the British garrison was besieged by mutineers.

Of the 182 Victoria Cross awards for the Indian Mutiny just six were awarded to the Royal Navy and just two including the award to Hall were to the lower deck. Lieutenant Thomas James Young and Able Seaman William Hall shared the same citation on 1 February 1859:

Lieutenant (now Commander) Young, late Gunnery Officer of Her Majesty's ship "Shannon," and William Hall, "Captain of the Foretop," of that Vessel, were recommended by the late Captain Peel for the Victoria Cross, for their gallant conduct at a 24-Pounder Gun, brought up to the angle of the Shah Nujjiff, at Lucknow, on the 16th of November, 1857.]

Young and Hall were two of 24 recipients of the Victoria Cross on 16 November 1857, the highest number ever awarded on one day

Hall served in the Royal Navy until 1876 when he retired as a quartermaster and petty officer. He returned to Nova Scotia where he lived his last years on a farm overlooking the Minas Basin. In 1901, during the tour of the Duke of Cornwall and York (later King George V), the same tour in which he had visited Australia and opened the first Federal Parliament in Melbourne, a parade of British veterans was held, and Hall wore his Victoria Cross medal group. The Duke inquired about the medals and drew attention to Hall's service. He died on 27 August 1904, aged 75, at Avonport Nova Scotia. In 1945, after a local campaign, his body was reburied in the grounds of the Hantsport Baptist Church. The monument erected there bears an enlarged replica of the Victoria Cross and a plaque that describes his courage and devotion to duty. In 1967, Canada's centennial year, a plaque was unveiled that recognised Hall as "the first man of colour" to receive the Victoria Cross.

The commemorative stamp issued in his honour features an illustration of an older, decorated Hall, is based on a photograph taken in Nova Scotia when he was in his 70s. Hall is shown against a seascape, with the HMS *Shannon* in the background. He is wearing his Victoria Cross, the Indian Mutiny Medal with two clasps, the Turkish Crimea Medal and the Crimea Medal with three clasps. ! The Canadian Post Office stamp is a fine commemoration of William Hall, a Victoria Cross recipient and a veteran of 23 years service in the Royal Navy.

DYING TO SAVE THE COLOURS: military themes in Australia's circus history

Mark Valentine St Leon¹

From the 1830s until the 1960s, entertainments of a circus nature were an important feature of the Australian leisure landscape, especially in regional areas. From 1847, building on the British model of circus, Australia's circus entrepreneurs and circus families developed a domestic circus industry that by the turn of the 19th century exported as well as imported talent. As an institution of public entertainment, the circus in Australia has been an intersection point with contemporary social, economic, cultural and other themes. One theme that has received little scholarly attention is the intersection of circus with military history.

With particular, but not exclusive, reference to Australia, this paper explores the impact of military affairs on the lives and activities of circus people and how circus people, programming and operations influenced military affairs.

Introduction

Born in Newcastle-under-Lyme in 1742, Philip Astley ran away from home at the age of 17 to enlist in the 15th Light Dragoons. He soon distinguished himself by his 'great activity and excellence in horsemanship'.² During the Seven Years War, Astley captured the French standard in battle. Upon discharge in 1766 with the rank of Sergeant-Major, Astley was presented with a white army charger named *Gibraltar*. With *Gibraltar*, dubbed the 'Little Learned Military Horse', and two other horses they bought and trained, Astley and his wife began to give displays of trick riding at Ha'penny Hatch, on the south side of the Thames in 1768.³ By 1779, these displays were enclosed in a building called Astley's Amphitheatre, popularly known around London as 'the circus'.⁴ Before each afternoon's program, Astley sat upon his charger dressed in his old dragoon's uniform and, with sword outstretched, pointed patrons the way to the entrance.⁵ Between acts of equestrianism, Astley presented brief skits and scenes, tumbling, juggling, rope dancing and trained animals. Astley's single, self-contained entertainment earned him, in posterity, the title of 'the father of the circus'.⁶

The Seven Years' War left Great Britain the supreme military and naval power. That power assured the expansion and exploitation of an empire needed to secure the materials and markets to fuel industrialisation and to receive investments of surplus capital.⁷ Industrialisation accelerated agrarian reform and urbanisation but the new working classes did not immediately benefit from industrial progress.⁸

To cater for the new working-class playgoers, the separate equestrian and dramatic companies maintained at Astley's began to blend to produce 'hippodramas', equestrianised melodramas in which riders engaged in combat and galloped across a long stage that was adjacent and overlooked the circus ring. Many of these hippodramas were military spectacles based on

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² P. Bemrose, *Circus genius: A tribute to Philip Astley, 1742-1814*, Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council, District History No.7, 1992, pp.8-9.

³ Bemrose, pp.13-17.

⁴ G. Speaight, *A history of the circus*, Tantivy Press, London, 1980, p.34.

⁵ Anon., 'Old London fairs', *New York Clipper*, 11 September 1875, p.172.

⁶ Speaight, p.31.

⁷ G.D.H. Cole, *Introduction to economic history, 1750-1950*, Macmillan & Co Ltd, London, 1954, pp.104-05.

⁸ Cole, p.59.

famous battles and incidents.⁹ The first hippodrama produced was *The Brave Cossack, or Perfidy Punished*, seen at Astley's in 1807 which featured a final scene of a cavalry battle between riders and their horses.¹⁰ The most popular spectacle produced at Astley's was *The Battle of Waterloo*, first seen in 1824.¹¹

In 1825, Astley's former apprentice, Andrew Ducrow (1793-1842) assumed the lease of Astley's Amphitheatre. Ducrow raised circus equestrianism into an art form. By 1830, he had devised 38 equestrian scenes and pantomimes, pieces that demanded acting as well as equestrian skill. Many were based on military or nautical themes and characters, as detailed in Table I:

Table I
Military & naval spectacles in Astley's Amphitheatre, 1825-41

Title	Description	Producer	Year
<i>Battle of Blenheim, The, or The Horse of the Disinherited Son</i>	Hippodrama	A.Ducrow?	1841
<i>Bonaparte's Invasion of Russia, or The Conflagration of Moscow</i>	Military and equestrian spectacle	J.H.Amherst	1825
<i>Burmese War, The, or Our Victories in the East</i>	Hippodrama	J.H.Amherst	1826
<i>Drunken Hussar, The</i>	Equestrian burlesque	Traditional	1825
<i>Fall of Algiers by Sea and Land, The</i>	Pantomime	C.A. Somerset	1830
<i>Waterloo, or The Life and Death of Shaw, The Life Guardsman</i>	Pantomime	H. Adams	1831
<i>Vicissitudes of a Tar, The</i>	Pantomime	A.Ducrow	1826?
<i>Victories of Edward, The Black Prince, The, or The Battlefield</i>	Hippodrama?	A.Ducrow	1839
<i>Wars in Spain, The</i>	Hippodrama?	A.Ducrow	1837
<i>Wars of Oliver Cromwell, The, or The Royal Oak</i>	Hippodrama	W.West	1841

Sources: Saxon, 1968; Saxon 1978.

The equestrian pantomime, *Waterloo, or The life and death of Shaw, The Life Guardsman*, depicted the story of a hero of Waterloo, leaving his country village to join a regiment, drilling, marching, firing his rifle in combat and, in the last moment of his life, throwing away his broken sword and fighting with his bare fists.¹²

The circus represented the new 'popular' culture, entrepreneurially created for the new urbanised masses to replace the older agrarian 'folk' culture from which they were now divorced.¹³ The new popular culture helped these masses to construct new sets of values, ideas and beliefs that softened the 'drudgery' of their new urban lives.¹⁴ The circus provided them

⁹ A.H. Saxon, *Enter foot and horse: A history of hippodrama in England and France*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1968, pp.2-3.

¹⁰ Saxon, 1968, pp.46-48.

¹¹ Saxon, 1968, p.137.

¹² A.H. Saxon, *The life and art of Andrew Ducrow and the romantic age of the English circus*, Archon Books, Hamden, Connecticut, 1978, pp.234-35.

¹³ L.W. Levine, 'The folklore of industrial society: Popular culture and its audiences', *American Historical Review*, vol.97, no.5, December 1992.

¹⁴ Levine.

with displays of action, excitement, colour and heroism, which even the most illiterate and unsophisticated could comprehend and appreciate.¹⁵

Many of equestrian pantomimes, spectacles and hippodramas produced at Astley's and elsewhere were subsequently seen, if on a much-reduced and probably rougher scale, in Australia's colonial amphitheatres in the late 1840s and early 1850s.

Circus in Australia

In Launceston, Van Diemen's Land [now Tasmania] in the 1840s, racetracks and numerous drinking houses were the principal entertainments for an ex-convict and transient military population. The town and district was also a major source of horses for the British army:

Captain Apperley's visit for the purpose of purchasing for India, has necessarily created some sensation. The Captain is expected to require about 300 horses.¹⁶

In December 1847, Robert Avis Radford (1814-65), a professional horse trainer and jockey, pioneered the first successful circus in Australia, an Astley's 'on a limited scale' erected in the yard of his Horse & Jockey Inn.¹⁷ Among the equestrians who passed through his circus were two who founded the first Australian circus dynasties, John Jones (who later took the professional name of Matthew St Leon) and Golden Ashton, who founded Ashton's Circus, still in existence today.

Between December 1847 and January 1850, Radford presented remarkable, if modestly replicated, programs of contemporary British circus, theatre and music hall. As in the original Astley's, Radford's equestrian-based programs emphasised action and story rather than dialogue. Among the spectacles presented were several that were clearly of a military or naval nature as detailed in Table II.

Richard Cœur De Lion, told the story of Richard the Lionheart's attack on Saladin during the Crusade for the Holy Land. Two months in preparation, Radford's production presented 'richly caparisoned' equestrians in scale armour, and featured 'a grand shield, sword and battle axe combat' as well as 'a grand ballet-of-action, on horseback'.¹⁸ Apart from their entertainment values, these quasi-military productions stamped Radford's entrepreneurial efforts as morally 'rational' in the eyes of the colonial establishment.¹⁹

Of some 56,000 British soldiers stationed throughout the Empire during the 1840s, some two to three thousand were stationed in the Australian colonies at any one time, about half of them in Tasmania.²⁰ The monotonous routine of garrison and convict guard duties were familiar to most British regiments of the era.²¹ Not surprisingly, Radford's programs regularly featured military themes and the military establishment even contributed to their production. The band of the 96th Regiment accompanied Radford's performance one evening in February 1849.²² The military

15 P. Downes, *Shadows on the stage: Theatre in New Zealand, the first 70 years*, John McIndoe, Dunedin, 1975, pp.13-15; Saxon, 1968, pp.2-3.

16 *Cornwall Chronicle*, 8 April 1846.

17 *Cornwall Chronicle*, 1 December 1847.

18 *Cornwall Chronicle*, 15 January, 11 March 1848.

19 J.M. Golby and A.W. Purdue, *The civilisation of the crowd: Popular culture in England, 1750-1900*, Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 1999, pp.91-92; *Cornwall Chronicle*, 3 January 1846.

20 J. Morris, *Heaven's command: An imperial progress*, The Folio Society, London, 1992, p.10; M. Austin, *The army in Australia, 1840-50: Prelude to the golden years*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1979, p.97.

21 P. Stanley, *The remote garrison: The British army in Australia*, Kangaroo Press, Sydney, 1986, p.71.

22 *Cornwall Chronicle*, 13 February 1849.

presence on such occasions not only fostered public expressions of loyalty and patriotism but made the public aware of the power available to colonial authority.²³

Table II
Military & naval spectacles in Radford's Royal Circus, 1847-50

Title	Description	Date	Origins
<i>Battle of Austerlitz, The, or The Soldier's Bride</i>	Historical drama	Jul 1849	F.Cornu, 1837
<i>Battle of Waterloo, The</i>	Equestrian spectacle	Jun 1849	J.H.Amherst, 1824
<i>Battle of Sedgemoor</i>	Historical drama	Jan 1850	G.Almars, 1837
<i>British Grenadier, The</i>	Act of equestrianism	Jul 1848	Unknown
<i>[Lost Ship, The, or] British Man o'war's Man, Th [and the Privateere</i>	Nautical act of horsemanship	Aug 1848	T. Townsend
<i>Deserter, The</i>	<i>Tableau vivant</i>	Aug 1848	H.Adams, c.1834.
<i>Drunken Hussar, The</i>	Act of equestrianism	Dec 1847	G.Woolford?, 1824?
<i>French Cuirassier, The</i>	Military act of equestrianism	Oct 1848	A.Ducrow, c.1820
<i>Military hornpipe</i>	Dance	Aug 1848	Traditional
<i>Naval dance</i>	Dance	Aug 1848	Traditional
<i>Naval Engagements</i>	Two Act Comedy	Oct 1848	C.Dance, 1838
<i>Naval Hornpipe, A</i>	Dance	Dec 1847	Traditional
<i>Rear Admiral, The</i>	Laughable farce	Jan 1850	Dramatic unknown
<i>Recruiting Sergeant, The</i>	Act of equestrianism	Jan 1848	C.Dibdin, 1769
<i>Richard Couer de Lion</i>	Grand ballet of action	Mar 1848	J.Cuvelier de Trie, c.1810
<i>Vicissitudes of a Tar, The</i>	Equestrian pantomime	Jan 1848	A.Ducrow, 1824
<i>Waterloo, or The Life & Death of Shaw, The Life Guardsman</i>	Equestrian pantomime	Jan 1848	H.Adams, 1831

Sources: Saxon, 1968; Saxon 1978.

In June 1849, Radford produced the hippodramatic spectacle *The Battle of Waterloo*, to coincide with the 34th anniversary of the famous battle with 'the assistance of the military, and the expenditure of sundry conglomeration of saltpetre, charcoal & c.'.²⁴ Absent from the audience, however, were any of the officers and 500 rank and file soldiers of the 96th Regiment, their wives and children, as they were relocated to India a few months earlier, thereby removing an estimated £200,000 of annual expenditure from the town's economy.²⁵ By the following January, Radford was insolvent.²⁶

Despite Radford's ultimate failure, his enterprise inspired circus the establishment of amphitheatres on the mainland, from which were derived the first itinerant circus troupes during the gold rush period of the early 1850s. The itinerant circus could sustain economic viability by replacing expensive, complex equestrian spectacles with less-expensive, routine displays of acrobatics and horsemanship.²⁷ Co-incidentally, circus programs based more on spectacle than speech and storyline appealed to a frontier society more concerned with material than intellectual matters.

²³ M. Higgins, 'Deservedly respected: A first look at the 11th regiment in Australia', *Journal of the Australian War Memorial*, no.6, April 1985, p.10.

²⁴ *Cornwall Chronicle*, 23 June 1849.

²⁵ *Cornwall Chronicle*, 10 January 1849; Austin, p.257.

²⁶ *Cornwall Chronicle*, 1 September, 3 November 1849.

²⁷ P. Burke, *Popular culture in early modern Europe*, Ashgate Publishing Ltd, Aldergate, 1994, p.97.

In the latter months of 1854, one of the early itinerant troupes, Jones, Noble and Foley's Circus entertained the diggers on the Ballarat goldfields as the gold licensing issue reached its dramatic climax. The diggers commandeered the circus tent for the storage of arms and ammunition in readiness to meet contingents of the 12th and 40th Regiments, mounted troops and police sent from Melbourne. With bails of straw, the circus people built barricades for protection during the anticipated affray. The German bandsmen of the circus were forced at gunpoint to serenade the diggers labouring to build their makeshift fortress, the Eureka Stockade.²⁸ On the evening of 2 December 1854, the stockade was overrun by the troops and police and the miners' rebellion collapsed.²⁹

The American Civil War, 1861-65

The first American circus troupes landed in Australia on the eve of the gold rush period and troupes and performers continued to arrive up until the eve of the Civil War. By 1857, the first circus performers of Australian origin had landed on American soil, pre-eminently the young equestrian, James Melville, whose daredevil equestrianism 'which, once seen, can never be forgotten'.³⁰ In the United States in 1861, Melville's Australian Circus 'moved along the Mississippi River in a stern wheel steamboat, landing and giving performances often to Union soldiers one day and Confederates the next'.³¹

The Civil War temporarily halted the westward flow of circus activity in the United States and, as a result, trans-Pacific flows of circus talent. The traffic was resumed when, in the summer of 1865, Cooke, Zoyara and Wilson's Great World Circus shipped from San Francisco for Sydney.³²

Despite the paucity of trans-Pacific circus traffic during the four years of conflict, the American Civil War touched circus activity in Australia in other ways. In October 1864, a Confederate privateer, the CSS *Shenandoah* set course for Melbourne, by way of the Cape of Good Hope. Then she was coaled, provisioned and repaired early in 1865 preparatory to entering the Pacific to seek the American whaling fleet.³³ Feted during their brief stay in Melbourne, the *Shenandoah*'s officers and men were treated to an evening at Melbourne's Theatre Royal, which included gymnastic and trapeze performances by 'The Wonderful St Leon Family', headed by Radford's former equestrian of 1848.³⁴

[The] Confederate officers arrived at the theatre singly, and thus avoided the chance of a popular demonstration.³⁵

Entering the Pacific, the *Shenandoah* seized and burned 20 unarmed whaling ships during June 1865, two months after General Lee's surrender. Captain Waddell then sailed the *Shenandoah* to Liverpool so that he could surrender the ship to the British instead of the Yankees.³⁶

28 Anon., 'One who was there', *Australasian Bandsman*, 26 October 1923, p.13; *Muswellbrook Chronicle*, 18 February 1955.

29 Stanley, pp.68-71.

30 *New York Clipper*, 15 August 1863.

31 Unsourced clipping, New York, 24 November 1908.

32 *Bell's Life in Victoria*, 3 March 1866; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 March 1866.

33 C. Pearl, *Rebel down under: When the 'Shenandoah' shook Melbourne, 1865*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1970, pp. 32, 77, 147ff., 197-99.

34 *Argus*, 27 January 1865.

35 *Herald*, 2 February 1865

36 G.C. Ward, with R. Burns and K. Burns, *The civil war: An illustrated history*, Alfred A. Knopf Inc, New York, 1990, p.395.

The imperial climax

Britain's Empire was acquired piecemeal and held together by her ubiquitous military and naval presence. To imperialist intellectuals, the Empire needed to be bound together more closely and responsibilities shared more rationally.³⁷ South Africa was one of three pillars upon which a grand imperial structure could rest, the others being an already-federated Canada and an Australasia (comprised of Australia and New Zealand) that was confidently expected to federate in due course.³⁸ If South Africa was to be 'ordered', the Zulus had to be subdued and the Boer republics, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, annexed. Public sentiment was on Disraeli's side when, in January 1879, 16,000 red-coated British soldiers invaded Zululand.³⁹ The British Army suffered a crushing defeat at Isandhlwana at the hands of Cetawayo and his 20,000 warriors, a defeat only partially redeemed when about 100 soldiers successfully fought off the same warriors at Rorke's Drift.⁴⁰

The first and only South African circus to visit Australia, Fillis's Great Circus & Menagerie opened in Sydney in November 1892.⁴¹ Frank Fillis, an expatriate Englishman, introduced to Australian audiences a patriotic, equestrian dramatic interlude showing a British officer, bearing the Union Jack, attacked by Zulus after the battle at Isandhlwana. Called *Dying to save the colours* or similar titles, the same piece was soon replicated in Australian circus. In Probasco's Circus in 1896, Walter St Leon's rendition of the piece was thus observed:

The lights were turned low, the band played patriotic music and in dashed St Leon, mounted on a superb grey charger. He was quickly followed by some of the troupe dressed as Zulus, who vigorously attacked the Englishman.⁴²

Although by no means an elaborate piece, *Dying to save the colours* broke the drought of dramatic interludes in Australian circus programs. Accompanied by popular patriotic airs such as *Comrades* or *Pals*, the piece also evoked pride in British imperial glory in the most remote regional audiences.⁴³ The piece, or variations thereof, was regularly seen in Australian provincial circuses between the late 1890s and the early 1920s, an era that embraced such imperial milestones as Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee (1897), the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) and World War I (1914-18).

The Boer War of 1899-1902 was the logical extension of the Zulu Wars, the climax of British imperial expansion and it touched Australia on the eve of nationhood. A wave of patriotism spread over Sydney as the New South Wales contingent marched to embarkation.⁴⁴ The popular stage demonised Paul Kruger, the leader of the Boers.⁴⁵ The conflict was also a matter of reality for Australia's largest circuses of the era, FitzGerald Bros and Wirth Bros, although in different ways. As the fighting broke out in South Africa on 11 October 1899, and before Australian troops had even landed, Wirth's happened to be touring the Cape colonies and only avoided being drawn into the conflict by its even-handed treatment of both Boer and Briton. At home

37 Morris, p.354.

38 Morris, p.354-55.

39 Morris, p.359-61.

40 Morris, pp.362-63.

41 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 November 1892.

42 Onlooker, 'Spangles and sawdust: A chronicle of colonial circus life', *The Theatre*, 2 December 1907 ff.

43 M. Seymour, undated clipping, *The Outdoor Showman*, c.1960.

44 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 October 1899.

45 J. Davis, 'The Empire right or wrong: The Boer War on the Australian stage 1899-1901', in M. Hays and A. Nikolopoulou (eds.), *Melodrama: The cultural emergence of a genre*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1996, pp. 21-37.

and far from the conflagration, FitzGerald Bros mirrored popular sentiment in programs that glorified Empire and ridiculed Boer.⁴⁶

The Wirths had originally shipped their circus to South Africa several years earlier, in 1893, to escape Australian colonies plunged in depression.⁴⁷ The Wirths relied heavily on rail transport but for some stretches through the Boer provinces they had to 'trek it' with wagons, mules and bullocks. While trekking, they became aware of the 'soreness' between Boer and Uitlander [non-Boer whites], 'the stirrings of racial passions' and of plans to forcibly return the Transvaal to British rule.⁴⁸ The poorly-conceived raid of Dr L.S. Jameson late in 1895 pushed South Africa closer to civil war. Fearing the outbreak of conflict, the Wirths shipped for Montevideo in August 1896 and later toured England.⁴⁹

Intending to return to Australia, the Wirth circus returned to Durban in April 1899 for a second tour of South Africa.⁵⁰ At Johannesburg, they saw signs of war preparation. At Pretoria, the Boer President's son, Tjaart Kruger, suggested the Wirths remain as they 'would be safer there than anywhere else in Africa' and they 'could amuse the Boers ... after or before going into battle'. The Wirths politely declined the invitation. The even-handed treatment of Boer and Briton during their South African tour effectively immunised the Australian circus against maltreatment by either side.⁵¹

Touring Natal, the Wirths played to audiences of khaki-dressed British 'tommies' from the garrison camps. With 'big guns and soldiers' arriving from Cape Town, the British war preparations gave the Wirths confidence to move on to Mafeking, a 'most desolate-looking place' surrounded by sand hills and defended by a fortress constructed of wheat bags in the market square. In a blinding sandstorm, Colonel Baden-Powell and his officers watched the Wirths strike their tent after the last performance and pack, within 55 minutes, the entire circus onto the train waiting to take them to Bulawayo, three days' rail travel away.⁵²

In contrast to Mafeking, Bulawayo was a large town, replete with its own theatre, skating rinks, large hotels and electricity. The English men of Bulawayo 'had fought the Matabele, the Zulu and other tribes, and were now getting ready for the Boer'. They offered the Wirths £500 to remain as the war would be over in 'seven or eight weeks'. Declining this invitation also, the Wirths slowly returned by rail to the Cape Colony.⁵³ At Vryburg, on the border of the Orange Free State, the Boers halted the train and began to commandeer the circus horses, promising to pay for them 'after the war'. Protesting their 'Australian' origin and their desire to depart Africa as soon as possible, the Boers relented and allowed the circus train to proceed unmolested. It would be the last train allowed out of Kimberley. Very shortly after, the bridge over the Modder River was demolished by the Boers.⁵⁴ At Beaufort West, the Wirths' train passed wrecked refugee trains and had to pull over onto sidings to make way 'regiment after regiment' of tommies travelling to the front.⁵⁵

46 G. Arrighi, 'Political animals: Engagements with imperial and gender discourses in late-colonial Australian circuses', *Theatre Journal*, vol.60, no.4, December 2008.

47 M. Martin, in M. St Leon, *Australian circus reminiscences*, The author, Sydney, 1984, p.28.

48 G. Wirth, *Round the world with a circus: Memories of trials, triumphs and tribulations*, Troedel & Cooper Pty Ltd, Melbourne, 1925, pp.80-81;

49 *West Australian*, 9 September 1931; Morris, 1992, pp.447-50.

50 G. Wirth, 1925, p.109.

51 G. Wirth, 1925, pp.109-11; P. Wirth, *The life of Philip Wirth: A lifetime with an Australian circus*, Troedel & Cooper Pty Ltd, Melbourne, 1933, p.91.

52 G. Wirth, 1925, pp.111-15.

53 G. Wirth, 1925, pp.113-15.

54 *West Australian*, 9 September 1931; P. Wirth, 1933, p.92.

55 G. Wirth, 1925, pp.116-17; P. Wirth, 1933, pp.91-92.

At home, during the Wirths' absence, their major rival, FitzGerald Bros Circus, increasingly was importing novelties from the circuses and music halls of England, Europe and America for their annual circuit of Australasia. In 1897, Dan FitzGerald engaged 'The Great Lion and Elephant Act', from the famous German animal trainer, Carl Hagenbeck, at a reputed cost of some £3,000, equivalent to about \$468,750 today.⁵⁶ In this act, a large, heavily-maned lion named *Prince* mounted the back of a heavily-protected elephant named *Lizzie*, seated on a tricycle-like contraption that she pedalled around the circus ring. With the commencement of hostilities in South Africa in October 1899, the FitzGeralds soon transformed the act into a topical pro-Empire statement.⁵⁷ The lion, *Prince*, was now presented, not as an icon of the jungle, but as a symbol of British imperial might; the elephant upon which he majestically rode, *Lizzie*, was now dressed with Kruger-style top hat and beard to symbolise and mock the Kruger-led Boer forces.⁵⁸ As the band played patriotic airs and the surrounding audience waved Union Jacks, the lion, symbol of Britannia, sat complacently and majestically upon the Krugeresque elephant.⁵⁹

In August 1900, Wirth Bros Circus landed at Fremantle thus completing the longest overseas odyssey undertaken by any Australian circus.⁶⁰ Structured Boer resistance collapsed in October after Germany refused support for the Boers. Thereafter, the South African conflict descended into guerrilla warfare which gave less scope for patriotic war-mongering in popular culture. Eventually defeated, the Boers accepted British sovereignty in May 1902.⁶¹

The Anglo-Boer War briefly re-entered the annals of popular culture by another route when 'interesting' and 'realistic' scenes were exhibited at the St Louis World Fair in the latter half of 1904. The company of some 600 Boers, British veterans and Zulus, as well as some 400 horses was assembled by the circus man, Frank Fillis. So as not to ridicule a class-ridden British army held at bay by Boer farmers for over two years, both sides 'won' an equal number of 'battles' during the exhibition. The 'biggest outdoor entertainment ever given in America' was well-received, its conception 'a triumph of genius'.⁶²

The Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) altered the world's strategic balance. In January 1902, an imperially overstretched Britain entered into the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, thus strengthening the position of the new Asian super-power in the east Asia region.⁶³ In May 1905, not long after Russia's humiliation at the hands of the Japanese navy in the Straits of Tsushima, the Sydney magazine, the *Bulletin* asserted that Australia could no longer rely on Britain for its security.⁶⁴

During 1904-05, FitzGerald Bros Circus presented a troupe of six Sumo wrestlers, the first professional wrestling team to leave Japan. The visit was arranged with the help of Mr Kitamura, 'a well-known Sydney merchant', and suggested the ulterior purpose of promoting Japanese goodwill in an Australia fearful of the 'yellow peril'.⁶⁵ The arrangements were

⁵⁶ G. Wirth, 1925, pp.108-09; Anon., 'Circus life in Australia', *The Australasian Stage*, 1901, pp.55-56.

⁵⁷ Arrighi

⁵⁸ *Bulletin*, 13 October 1900.

⁵⁹ *New Zealand Observer and Free Lance*, 28 April 1900.

⁶⁰ M. Martin, in St Leon, pp.53ff.

⁶¹ H. Williams, *Cassell's chronology of world history: Dates, events and ideas that made history*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 2005, pp.458, 460, 461.

⁶² F. van der Merwe, *Frank Fillis: The story of a circus legend*, FJG Publikasies, Stellenbosch, 2007, pp.133ff; F. Pfening III, 'William P Hall', *Missouri Historical Review*, Spring 1968, pp.286-313.

⁶³ F. Broeze, *Island nation: A history of Australians and the sea*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1998, p.44; J.E. Hunter, *The emergence of modern Japan: An introductory history since 1833*, Longman, London, 1989, pp.24-25.

⁶⁴ *Bulletin*, 27 July 1905.

⁶⁵ Anon, 'Some elephants and FitzGerald's Circus', *Bulletin*, 20 April 1905, p.22; J. Hughes (ed.), *Australian words and their origins*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1989, p.658.

finalised in March 1904, co-incidentally on the eve of the outbreak of war between Russia and Japan, and the troupe joined FitzGerald Bros in October.⁶⁶

After centuries of isolation, Japan had been forcibly opened up to the West when warships of the United States Navy entered Tokyo Bay in 1853.⁶⁷ The Convention of Edo [Tokyo], signed by Japan in 1866 provided *inter alia* that 'Japanese in the employ of foreigners may obtain Government passports to go abroad'. The first troupes of Japanese acrobats promptly departed for Europe and America and the first to visit Australia landed in Melbourne late in 1867. Troupes of acrobats and other performers periodically visited Australia up until 1941.

In Sydney in 1873, the 13 performers who comprised the Sakuragawa Troupe disembarked from the SS *Baroda*.⁶⁸ Ewar Decenoski, born in 1867, was an infant member of the troupe.⁶⁹ Although most of the troupe eventually returned to Japan, Decenoski remained in Australia and continued in circus. By the early 1900s, he was travelling the eastern states, by horses and wagons, with his circus and family. In 1908, the Decenoskis unknowingly came under surveillance as they toured outback Queensland. Each police district was required to report the movements of any parties of Japanese to the Director of Military Intelligence, fearful that they might be agents examining territory through which Japanese forces could enter. From Charleville in October 1910, it was reported that the Decenoski circus had recently performed at towns, homesteads and shearing sheds in the district.⁷⁰ Despite the attention discretely given the Decenoskis and other Japanese, nothing came of the concerns of military intelligence.

After her victory over Russia, Japan emerged as the leading military and naval power in North-East Asia.⁷¹ This threatened America's interests in the Pacific, one reason why, in 1907, President Roosevelt dispatched the so-called Great White Fleet on a goodwill voyage around the world to project American power onto the international stage. Whitehall expressed concern over the visit of the American fleet to Australia during August-September 1908, perceiving the tour as a further diminution of its own naval hegemony.⁷² Anchoring at Albany, Western Australia's only deepwater port and the Fleet's last port-of-call in Australia before sailing to Yokohama, an array of Australian travelling entertainments were on hand to meet some 14,000 American sailors landed ashore. These included St Leon's Circus, FitzGerald's Circus (now conducted by the widow of Tom FitzGerald) and Lance Skuthorpe's Buckjumping Show. As their ships were coaled, the American sailors hired one of the Australian circus tents to hold a boxing contest.⁷³

In 1876-77 and again in 1877-78, James A. Bailey, 'the greatest operator in circus history', brought Cooper, Bailey & Co - across the Pacific to make the first rail-based circus tours of Australia.⁷⁴ After returning to the United States, Bailey merged his interests with those of P.T. Barnum in Barnum & Bailey's Circus. Bailey was left in control after Barnum died in 1891 and toured 'the greatest show on earth' throughout England and the Continent during the five years, 1898-1902. The tour of the great American circus was of more than passing interest to the Imperial German High Command who studied how the circus fed, accommodated, loaded, unloaded and transported the large company of men, women and animals, with almost clockwork precision.⁷⁵ Unwittingly, Barnum & Bailey lent inspiration to the Schlieffen Plan,

66 *Lorgnette*, 26 March 1904; *Evening Post*, 22 October 1904.

67 J.E. Hunter, *The emergence of Modern Japan: An introductory history since 1853*, Longman, London, 1989, p.17.

68 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 July 1873.

69 D.C.S. Sissons, letter to the author dated 27 April 1987.

70 Queensland State Archives: Police Department, File 14m, 'Japanese' [1908-1910].

71 Cole, p.108.

72 Broeze, pp.44-45.

73 A. St Leon, in St Leon, p.83.

74 S. Thayer, *Mudshows & railers: The American circus in 1879*, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1971, p.24.

75 E.C. May. *The circus from Rome to Ringling*, Duffield and Green, New York City, 1932, pp.126.

the grand military strategy which was activated by Germany in September 1914 after the assassination of the Austro-Hungarian Archduke, Ferdinand d'Este.⁷⁶ Just 21 years earlier, the Archduke had innocently visited Sydney, aboard a cruiser of the Austro-Hungarian navy, where he patronised FitzGerald Bros Circus one evening and saw a crowded Australian audience 'moved to repeated outbursts of uncontrollable hilarity'.⁷⁷

In the 20 years leading up to the outbreak of war in 1914, circus in Australia had touched upon, or had been touched by, the forces that, due to the calculations and miscalculations of politicians and generals, plunged the world into conflict for the next four years.

World War I

By 1914, Wirth Bros Circus was left Australia's pre-eminent circus, servicing the entire country and New Zealand by rail and steamer. Despite their German name and ancestry, the Wirths actively supported the allied cause.⁷⁸ The Wirth circus 'lost money' on its operations during World War I although it was still able to tour by its 'special' trains, a privilege denied the company for most of World War II.⁷⁹ Other circuses that serviced regional Australia by road also felt the war's impact.

The conflict severely curtailed the customary international traffic in top-class circus acts, while the importation of acts from Germany and Austro-Hungary into the circuses of Allied countries ceased altogether.⁸⁰ During and immediately after the war, Wirth's engaged many of its acts from neutral countries, such as Spain, and places closer to home, such as India and Japan. After America's entry into the war, the Wirths opened a representative office in New York to better secure circus talent.⁸¹

Given the difficulty of obtaining top acts, the Wirths were happy to bring home Australia's premiere circus 'export' of the era, May Wirth, and her troupe of riders in 1915. However, armies were still largely horse-powered and the export of horses from Britain was restricted. While the troupe's horses were shipped to Melbourne by way of South Africa, the riders returned by way of Canada, a procedure apparently intended to prevent the troupe and its horses returning to the still neutral, but financially lucrative, United States.⁸²

The highlight of Wirth's 1915-16 circus tour was the opening of its Sydney season in its new venue, The Hippodrome, the present-day Capitol Theatre.⁸³ At the conclusion of the season, the Hippodrome was turned over to the Wirths' production of the imported English 'propaganda play', Leonard Dural's *Kultur*. This realistic but expensive production required horse-drawn cannons, with gunners, postilions, and full artillery equipment. Despite the 'furore' the production had created in England, *Kultur* was a 'flop' in Australia. Recalled George Wirth:

Australia, or rather Sydney, was too far away from the war, and the propaganda was not required to stir the loyalty of the nation as it was in England.⁸⁴

76 J. R. North & A. Hatch, *The circus kings: Our Ringling family story*, Doubleday & Co Inc, New York, 1960, pp.34-35.

77 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 May 1893.

78 A.F. St Leon, in St Leon, p.188.

79 G. Wirth, 'The romance of a great circus: George Wirth in a reminiscent mood', *The Theatre*, 1 April, 1920.

80 *Variety*, 10 January 1919.

81 *Variety*, 18 January 1918.

82 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 September 1915; *Bulletin*, 7 October 1915; *Argus*, 16 October 1915; *Age*, 25 October 1915.

83 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 April 1916.

84 G. Wirth, 'Under the big top: The life story of George Wirth, circus proprietor, told by himself', *Life*, 15 May 1933.

The subsequent tour through central western New South Wales in June 1916 was thrown into confusion when, at Dubbo, ten of the circus labourers enlisted for service and almost prevented the circus from loading and proceeding to Coonamble.⁸⁵

During 1916, conscription emerged as a major issue in Australian politics after Prime Minister W. M. Hughes, became convinced of the need for compulsory military service, as Great Britain had already introduced, to make up for the massive losses on the Western Front. Even before the outcome of a referendum was known, travelling shows, including circuses, were stopped and their young men put into uniform.⁸⁶ While ‘a lot of actors went to war’, Australia’s free-spirited circus people were not so enthusiastic about military service.⁸⁷ As the Gus St Leon circus entered Casino, the young men of the circus ‘were told to present ... for engagement to the army’ at a military recruitment camp outside the town. They were soon discharged when the referendum was rejected by a narrow margin.⁸⁸

In the United States, available circus talent had to be conserved to make up for the shortfall of artists normally imported from Europe. The Ringlings were therefore eager to re-engage May Wirth and her troupe of riders at the conclusion of their year-long engagement with Wirth Bros Circus. The Australian women and the horses of the troupe left for San Francisco without difficulty but the troupe’s male riders had to surreptitiously depart with forged exit papers.⁸⁹ Early in April 1917, the troupe opened with Ringling Bros Circus in Chicago just as America declared war on the Central Powers.⁹⁰

Audiences were thinner as ‘the men were all out of the country and the women were doing the work’.⁹¹ Near Yarloop in Western Australia, where they had closed up their circus after the outbreak of war, the Hyland family put on charity shows for departing soldiers including the Light Horse, the Expeditionary Forces and the Red Cross.⁹² In Adelaide in September 1916, Wirth’s Circus allowed returned soldiers to enter without charge, if in uniform.⁹³ The Wirths gave over ‘a great portion’ of their amusement park in Melbourne to the Red Cross to establish a rest home for returned soldiers. The land was never returned to the Wirths, as was promised, but instead given to the Returned Soldiers League.⁹⁴

Early in 1917, a wartime amusement tax of a penny in the shilling was introduced on tickets sold at all entertainment venues, including circus.⁹⁵ For circus managers, the tax was ‘a dam nuisance’ as it involved several hours work sticking tax stamps onto tickets prior to sale.⁹⁶ Moreover, the mere existence of the tax raised incentives for evasion.⁹⁷ Despite the conclusion of hostilities in 1918, the tax remained in force until after World War II.⁹⁸

When the Armistice was announced on 11 November 1918, the Gus St Leon circus was playing Warrnambool. As Mervyn King, then a lad of ten years of age, remembered ‘everyone went mad

85 *Australian Variety*, 28 June 1916.

86 A. St Leon, in St Leon, p.94.

87 S. St Leon, in St Leon, p.139.

88 A.F. St Leon, in St Leon, p.159.

89 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 October 1916; A.F. St Leon, in St Leon, pp.159ff.

90 *New York Clipper*, 4 April 1917.

91 S. St Leon, in St Leon, p.139.

92 E. Coverley, unpublished transcript of interview with R. Jamieson, 1986, Battye Library Oral History Programme, OH 1646, State Library of Western Australia.

93 *South Australian Register*, 8 September 1916.

94 G. Wirth, 1925, p.140.

95 *Referee, Australian Variety*, 3 January 1917.

96 M. King, unpublished transcript of interview with the author, Sydney, 1989, Tape 13.

97 *Everyone’s*, 18 April 1928.

98 King, 1989, Tape 13.

in the street ... running around the town, singing out, drinking and that'. It was prudent for the circus not to show that evening.⁹⁹

The shortage of circus artists was not immediately solved with the end of hostilities. The ranks of available American, English and Continental circus artists had been depleted as many had been killed, injured or had just grown older.¹⁰⁰ For those that remained, there was 'so much work' at home without having to contemplate a voyage to Australia.¹⁰¹ Although a major source of acrobats before the war, only two out of some 200 German acrobatic troupes survived the war intact.¹⁰² In any case, it would be some years before audiences would tolerate German artists in the circus ring. Furthermore, as a result of shipping losses during the war and the need to give priority to the repatriation of troops, 'outgoing' boats for Australia were few.¹⁰³

The worldwide influenza epidemic was brought to Australia by some of the 200,000 soldiers who returned home in the first few months after the war.¹⁰⁴ Each state declared a state of emergency and places of public amusement were compulsorily closed for six weeks. The Gus St Leon circus laid up at Bowen Gap, near Whitfield, outside of Wangaratta.¹⁰⁵ Wirth's customary Sydney Easter opening was deferred for six weeks.¹⁰⁶ As Colleano's All-Star Circus slowly made its way by road towards Brisbane from Glen Innes, where it had camped during the epidemic, many towns had to be skipped.¹⁰⁷

The war forced Australia's circuses, large and small, to negotiate societal obligations in ways they had never done before. Although Australia's circus people had shed little blood in the war effort, they had contributed to the maintenance of the domestic front in cash and kind. For the circuses that remained, the role of wild animals in circus continued to increase in critical importance, if only to replace artists that could no longer be obtained.

World War II

Between the end of World War I and the commencement of World War II, most 'road shows' (road-based circuses) replaced their horse drawn wagons with motor transport. This changeover was made possible by improvements in country roads and the importation of the first American motor trucks and made imperative by the changing economic landscape of the 1920s and 30s.

At the outbreak of the World War II in September 1939, Australia was served by two large, rail-based circuses, Wirth Bros and Perry Bros, and numerous smaller 'road shows' of various sizes and reputations. The outbreak of this war did not immediately affect Australia's circus people or circus activity. The Wirth double circus train which crossed the Nullarbor to Western Australia in 1940 was the longest to make the crossing.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, some circus people failed to understand the deterioration in international relations:

I had very little idea of what war was. I had no background knowledge. I never knew what the war was about, it was a mystery to me.¹⁰⁹

The consequences of the war became more clearly apparent as limitations were increasingly placed on any economic activities regarded as 'non-essential'. Petrol rationing, lighting

⁹⁹ King, 1989, Tape 4.

¹⁰⁰ A. Hippisley Coxe, *A seat at the circus*, Macmillan, London, 1980, p.34.

¹⁰¹ G. Wirth, 1920

¹⁰² *Variety*, 10 January 1919.

¹⁰³ *Variety*, 16 January 1920.

¹⁰⁴ A.K. Macdougall, *Australia, An illustrated history: From dreamtime to the new millenium*, The Five Mile Press, Scoresby, 2008, p.302.

¹⁰⁵ S. St Leon, in *St Leon*, p.132-33.

¹⁰⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 April, 17 May 1919.

¹⁰⁷ *Glen Innes Examiner*, 30 May 1919; *Australian Variety*, June 1919.

¹⁰⁸ Undated clipping, Handley Collection, State Library of WA.

¹⁰⁹ P. St Leon, unpublished notes of interview with the author, Tuross Head, 2002.

restrictions and the forcible requisition of motor vehicles became even more pronounced after the declaration of war on Japan on 8 December 1941. The Uyenos, a Japanese acrobatic troupe touring with Wirth's, were immediately interred and remained confined at Tatura for the duration.¹¹⁰ When the South Australian railways commissioner refused Wirth's the hire of an 'engine' to bring the circus to Adelaide in January 1942, a self-interested circus management complained directly, but unsuccessfully, to Prime Minister John Curtin:

[The] elimination of Adelaide from our present tour will ... incur the loss of profits of between £1,500 and £2,000 and, while we are ever ready to do our bit and make essential sacrifices, we take the view that it is just as essential that the morale of the population should be maintained with bright and healthy amusement programmes.¹¹¹

Lacking both road and rail transportation at the height of the war, Wirth's used their elephants to haul the main circus vehicles from Melbourne to Sydney.¹¹² The Wirths' Olympia circus building in Melbourne was requisitioned for use as a prisoner-of-war camp, as Mervyn King remembered:

They were Italian prisoners. They could have let them go up the top of Bourke Street and back. They wanted no more to do with the war than hardly anybody.¹¹³

Most of Australia's circuses and other travelling shows closed by early 1942 for the duration of the war. Deprived of livelihood and way of life, Australia's circus people drifted to active participation in the war effort in far greater numbers than they had in World War I, whether to active service or to service on the home front. The Ashtons 'went off the road' and settled at Newcastle until the end of hostilities:

My father got a job in the steel works and my grandfather used the two trucks that we had left to carry gravel to the [Williamstown] aerodrome, but even there we were not far from show business. Mum and Dad used to work at carnivals and different shows doing the trapeze and roman rings.¹¹⁴

After reaching Toorinden, outside of Melbourne, late in 1941, the St Leons closed their circus and some of the family went with Perry's Circus:

Sole's [Circus] had booked all the land up from the beaches and Perry's didn't bother ... We were forced up to the Blue Mountains with Perry's and of course the Blue Mountains was crowded with people and we turned them away nearly every night. Sole's were blacked out and had restrictions on their lighting.¹¹⁵

But Perry's stock was detained at Texas in March 1942. Eventually, Perry's lost its special train and was playing Brisbane in a one-pole tent. The army commandeered many of the circus trucks. Perry's re-formed soon after the end of the war but was unable to use rail transport again until March 1946.¹¹⁶

In 1943, Norman St Leon (1888-1963), a skilled 'boss' tentman in circus life, was refused service in the Australian forces on the grounds of age. Undeterred, he enlisted in the maintenance and equipment repair section of the US Army at a salary of £940 per annum, nearly

110 National Archives of Australia: Prisoner of War/Internee, Uyeno, Shojiro Aka (Albert), MP1103/2.

111 National Archives of Australia: Wirth's Circus, Series B 1989, Item 1/64/4.

112 B. Cunningham, with B. Bullen, *Mr Bullen's elephants: The story of Bullen's circus elephants*, Mahout Publication, Bribie Island, 2006, p.11.

113 King, 1989, Tape 23.

114 N. Fernandez, *Asht* <http://www.erepublik.com/en/organization/1372746ons>: *Circus saga*, Ashton's Circus, Sydney, 1971, pp.39-40.

115 P. Joseph, in St Leon, p.291.

116 T. Wilksch, *Sawdust and headaches, or stop laughing, this is serious, as told by Robert Perry*, The authors, 2008, p.44; King, 1989, Tape 25.

four times the Commonwealth Basic Wage.¹¹⁷ In the United States, his younger brother, Clyde, a professional acrobat, welded 'Liberty' ships while cousins, the Honeys, adapted their acrobatic skills to become physical education instructors in the US Army.¹¹⁸

The enforced lay-up of Bullen's Circus outside Yeppoon coincided with the presence of thousands of American G.I.'s camped in the vicinity. The Bullens visited each of the American camps outside Rockhampton, labelled A to Z, a week at a time, with the remains of their circus. The Bullens entertained the troops, several times a day, and amassed the capital necessary to finance their return to active touring after the end of the war.¹¹⁹

Two months after the surrender of Japan, Stan Gill's Australian Round-up and Sole Bros Circus appeared in Gundagai, within a few days of each other.¹²⁰ The few vehicles available went to 'priority organisations' and circuses were initially forced to rely on horse drawn wagons again as well as the hire of 'special' trains. By 1948, there was 'plenty of army equipment and trucks around'. Bullen's purchased 14 'blitz' trucks, converted these into usable circus vehicles and for the first time in its 25-year history was fully motorised.¹²¹

As soon as they could afford the cost of trans-Tasman shipping fares, many Australian circuses toured New Zealand, a country even more deprived of entertainment than Australia during the years of war. The first to reach New Zealand was Skuthorpe's All-Australian Rodeo and Circus which arrived in 1948, breaking a drought of some nine years when the last Australian circus, Perry Bros had toured on two special trains.¹²² In 1948, Wirth's did 'tremendous business' while Sole Bros remained to tour for three years.¹²³

Conclusions

The entertainment of the public, like any other social activity, does not take place within a vacuum. By virtue of its public and transient nature, the circus has often found itself, if serendipitously, at the juncture of the great social, political and economic currents of history. In this paper, I have attempted to demonstrate how, with particular reference to the Australian situation, circus has intersected with military history. *Firstly*, spectacles based on military and nautical themes could not only celebrate heroism and glory but actively stimulate feelings of loyalty and patriotism. *Secondly*, the circus could project national identities, whether real or contrived, far beyond its home borders. *Thirdly*, circus entertainments represented 'evidences of civilisation' that military and naval personnel witnessed on the 'new' Australian soil. *Fourthly*, wars could both restrict and facilitate the flow of circus traffic, a traffic which has long possessed an international dimension. *Fifthly*, circus actively contributed to war efforts as circus programs and personnel were offered and dedicated in support.

The circus of the modern age owes much to a military man, the former cavalryman, Sergeant-Major Philip Astley. But the interface of circus and military by no means finished with Astley's seminal contribution.

¹¹⁷ Anon., 'With circus for 72 years', *The Outdoor Showman*, January-February 1961, p.16.

¹¹⁸ *Paterson Evening News*, 18 May 1944; *Paterson Morning Call*, 10 January 1945.

¹¹⁹ M. Dennis, unpublished transcript of interview with the author, Perth, c.1990; Mark Valentine St Leon, 'Bullen, Alfred Percival (Perce) (1896 - 1974)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol.13, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1993, pp. 294-295.

¹²⁰ *Gundagai Independent*, 11, 15 October 1945.

¹²¹ Cunningham, p.11

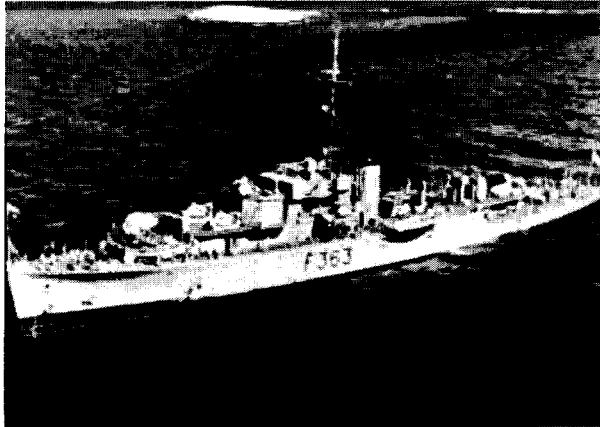
¹²² J. Sullivan, 'Circus', *New Zealand Memories*, Issue 64, February-March 2007, pp.42-47.

¹²³ King, 1989, Tape 21; Cunningham, p.19.

HMAS *Hawkesbury*

Tas Browning¹

HMAS *Hawkesbury*, a River class frigate, keel's was laid down on 24 August 1942, launched 24 July 1943 and commissioned on 5 July 1944. During the Second World War *Hawkesbury* served in the Madang area as well as undergoing patrol and escort duties at Leyte in the Philippines and in Borneo. After returning to Australia in November 1945, the ship entered Port Phillip Bay and commenced a refit at Williamstown. In the 17 months that had elapsed since her commissioning, *Hawkesbury* steamed 81,056 miles and spent 6,000 hours underway.



HMAS *Hawkesbury*

In April 1946, after a four month refit, *Hawkesbury* took up duty with the Australian Squadron on the east coast. After 13 months in New South Wales and Queensland waters, including five months in Sydney Barbour, *Hawkesbury* was paid off into reserve on 31 May 1947.

Five years in reserve ended on 14 May 1952 when *Hawkesbury* was recommissioned under command of Lieutenant Commander John P Stevenson RAN. During June and July 1952 the ship carried out gun and steaming trials. Lieutenant Commander R Scrivener assumed command on 29 June. On 31 July at Fremantle, *Hawkesbury* transferred to the operational control of the Royal Navy Fourth Task Force serving with the First Frigate Squadron with the senior officer in HMAS *Shoalhaven*. The next three months were spent on operations in support of the first British atomic test in the Monte Bello Islands off the northern coast of Western Australia.

Hawkesbury conducted security patrols in the prohibited areas and served as a dispatch vessel between Onslow and the area of operations. On 4 August 1952, *Hawkesbury* departed Exmouth Gulf and arrived at Monte Bello on 11 August and was used for patrolling duties in the prohibited area. On 21 September, the ship laid Dan Buoys at various distances of up to fifteen miles, in a semi circle north of the target vessel HMS *Plym*. A Geiger counter was fitted on 30 September and the ship commenced patrolling duties.

3 October was D-Day, and in order that the ship's company would have the opportunity to witness Britain's first atomic explosion the lower deck was cleared at 0925IK. Eight minutes later, there was a brilliant orange flash, followed by a boiling cloud of smoke, dust and water,

¹ My thanks to National Archives of Australia and the Royal Australian Navy for their help with copies from archival records that has enabled me to put this together, first as a submission in 2006 and again recently, seeking recognition for those that served at Monte Bello. This is a small part of the documentation going forward concerning the Naval role at Monte Bello.

shooting up in the sky with dramatic speed. The typical mushroom cloud was soon distorted by high winds in the upper levels. The blast of the explosion was felt two minutes and 16 seconds later.

On 8 October, approximately two tons of scientific equipment and records, some of which were radioactive and approximately four tons of RAAF stores were embarked in good weather during the afternoon and evening. The next day, RAF and Ministry of Supply personnel as well as all stores were disembarked at Onslow the same afternoon. The scientific stores and records were taken to the aerodrome and placed in a RAF Hastings aircraft under armed guard.

On 11 October, the ship returned to the test area and anchored in the vicinity of HMS *Campania*, approx seven mile south east of Flag Island. Whilst at anchor, it became necessary to close down the evaporators for three days due to high levels of radioactivity in the sea water. Fresh westerly winds were experienced throughout this period.

On 16 and 17 October, the ship was engaged in the recovery of records. The ship continued to undertake post test security in the Monte Bello Islands. The ship left for Fremantle for two weeks recreation. Whilst in Fremantle a boiler clean was carried out with the assistance of a party of National Service stokers from HMAS *Leeuwin*.

A training program was put in place for ten days from 4 to 14 November and as a part of that training program a partial radiation survey of the islands was undertaken. All of Trimouille and North West Island were covered in this manner. As was expected, in respect of radiation intensities, it was found that within practical limits, the decay rate appeared to be following the so called "1.2 Law".

A report, downgraded from secret to restricted, noted the ship patrolled the Monte Bello prohibited area in order to prevent, or apprehend any unauthorised persons entering the islands. There were also verbal instructions from Rear Admiral Torlesse to arrange safe disposal of certain electronic equipment and to prevent unauthorised removal of radioactive material.

Whenever the ship was absent from the islands to collect mail and provisions, a small party of trained personnel were left camped on South East Island with a pinnace and wireless transmission communications. During December 1952, the ship was employed on security duty in the Monte Bello Islands, approx 30 tons of stores (apparently abandoned) were recovered for return to naval stores depot in Fremantle. As the security party would soon be withdrawn from the Monte Bellos, a land rover was loaded onto a makeshift barge, towed to the ship and hoisted aboard.

A signal was received on 13 December expressing appreciation of Flag Officer Commanding Australian Fleet from the Flag Officer Special Squadron HMS *Campania* in respect to the services rendered by HMAS *Hawkesbury* during Operation Hurricane. Prior to the ships departure from Monte Bello area on 16 December samples of seedlings, wheat, grass and plant life were collected from the clean and contaminated areas for dispatch to the Ministry of Supply. The special notices (signal from NOIC 020820z) which had been received from the Naval Officer in Charge, Western Australian area, were placed at every jetty and at other conspicuous points throughout the Islands. After the local authorities at Onslow had been warned that a serious danger to health still exists in the Islands and that it was still a prohibited area, then the ship left for Fremantle.

On 5 January 1953, the ship departed from Fremantle for the final security check of the Monte Bello area and to recover as far as possible stores remaining on the islands. On 15 January, the ship sailed for Fremantle with approx 20 tons of miscellaneous stores and equipment.

The position of *Hawkesbury*, the closest RAN ship relative to the blast site at the time of the blast, was some 40 kilometres south east. HMAS *Sydney* and HMAS *Macquarie* were stationed approximately 130 kilometres south west of the blast site.

Conclusion

In conclusion some observations and questions.

- On 30 September 1952, a Geiger counter that was fitted to the ship had no reading entered in the ships Report of Proceedings from the 3 October 1952 until the ship left the area for the last time on 15 January 1953.
- Why was some but not all of the scientific equipment recovered on 8 October 1952 radioactive.
- How was the lower deck, cleared to witness the blast, protected against the blast?
- On 11 October 1952, the evaporators were closed down because of radioactive seawater. The evaporators were not the only machinery that used seawater. The steam from the engines passed through the condenser that consisted of many tubes, then the steam was condensed to water by a cooling effect of the seawater passing over the tubes. The bathroom ejectors also used seawater.
- As the ship was at anchor it would need steam to generate lighting and for cooking?. It would appear that the crew would have ingested by eating and drinking and also their normal everyday contact with the ship itself.
- On 14 November 1952, work details collecting stores etc were subject to radiation.
- How was the removal of radioactive material policed?
- What was radioactive and what was not radioactive?
- How and when was the ship cleared of all radioactivity?

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