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Sabretache



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EDITORIAL

The new year ushers in a fresh round of centenary commemorations, which from the perspective of Australian military history represent quite a different phase of the Great War. This chiefly involves the transfer of a much-expanded infantry element of the AIF plus supporting units from Egypt and the Dardanelles to the Western Front, while the mounted arm and its supports were to become a major component of the expeditionary forces into Sinai and eventually Palestine. This phase is reflected in a number of articles – beginning in this issue with the first of a two-part submission translating the German official history's version of the Australian involvement at Pozières – planned for 2016-18 and written by some key practitioners in the field. Federal Council has done commendable work in soliciting what promise to be significant contributions to WW1 research and writing, and I very much look forward to being a part of the publication process.

For readers from varying backgrounds or with different interests, of course, 1916 involves many other possibilities for commemoration. One that sprang to mind recently was the Easter Rising in Dublin, when members of the Irish Citizens Army and associated volunteers instituted an armed revolt against British rule. It was a relatively bloody affair and was ruthlessly put down, resulting in the execution of 15 of its leaders. My point, however, is not to debate the validity or otherwise of the rising, but that it came to mind by my recalling its 50th anniversary commemoration in 1966 through a remarkable Telefís Éireann (Irish Television) series called *Insurrection*. Its makers had the inspired idea of presenting the rising as though it were live news coverage, with on-the-spot reportage, in-studio interviews and map-plotting, and actors playing the participants, often in original locations. I was only 11 or 12 years old when it was shown on ABC TV, but *Insurrection* had a very powerful impact on me which has lasted to this day.

According to the account in *The Irish Story* online site, the 'live reporting' techniques used in *Insurrection* were inspired by Peter Watkins' BBC TV docu-drama *Culloden* (1964). This comes as no surprise to me, because this too ingrained itself on my memory from the very first time I saw it. In fact, the more I think about it, the more I realise how influential such acts of commemoration have been in fostering and shaping my fascination with military history. Most of these have been in the form of TV documentary, which I suppose is because I'm part of the first proper television generation in Australia. So my childhood viewing resonated with programs such as *Victory at Sea* (1952-53), with its poetic narratives (and wonderful music score by Richard Rodgers); *The Valiant Years* (1960-61), with its stirring Churchillian rhetoric; the masterful and very moving *The Great War* (1964); and of course *Anzac* (1961), which extolled my own nation's efforts in WW2.

So why all this nostalgia for crusty old TV shows? Because for most of us, great events and times are experienced not directly, but through some form of medium; in my case through a certain type of television program. And so it matters that commemoration takes place; that those with the means and will to do so help us to revisit the past and be influenced by it. By the same token, those 'means' don't have to be in the form of big budgets and large-scale production companies; they can be simply a pair of hands on a keyboard belonging to someone with the desire to recall.

Paul Skrebels

‘TAKEN UP AS A ROGUE AND A VAGABOND’: CIVIL PUNISHMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE AIF IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Graham Wilson

With the end of the Dardanelles Campaign and the withdrawal of the AIF from Gallipoli, the force went through a major reorganisation and expansion. The 4th and 5th Divisions and their supporting units were created from elements of the 1st and 2nd Divisions and the AIF portion of the NZ & A Division and the bulk of the AIF (minus almost all of the mounted units and their support units) were slated for service on the Western Front (along with the 3rd Division, raised in Australia). While the bulk of the AIF on the Western Front was planned to be based in France, there was a need for a support base in England itself: a base to command and administer the AIF; a base to receive, train, equip and dispatch reinforcements to the front; a base to receive, care for, retrain and despatch back to the front, if they recovered sufficiently, or back to Australia if not, wounded and sick members of the force.

After a somewhat haphazard start, when the Australian High Commissioner in London, Sir George Reid, had, for want of anyone else to do it, accepted the responsibility of administering and caring for members of the AIF in England, by 1918 the AIF establishment in the UK had grown to a large and sophisticated administrative machine. For various reasons, the bulk of the Australian establishments in the UK were located in the south and south-east of England and came under the administrative control of the British Army's Southern Command. At any given time, the AIF had in England, from mid-1916 until the armistice, an average of about 49,000 officers and men. Needless to say, not every one of these men was well behaved or well-disciplined and, also probably needless to say, when members of the AIF transgressed and were found out, they had to be punished, and that punishment included incarceration, both military and civil. Men who were convicted of purely military offences either carried out their sentences under unit arrangements or were committed to a British Army military prison or detention barrack or, after October 1917, to the AIF Detention Barrack at Lewes in Sussex. What about men who were found guilty of offences against the civil code by civil courts?

This issue – members of the AIF who committed civil offences and were brought before the civil courts and were subsequently incarcerated as civil felons – was a major one and a major headache for the AIF in the UK. The list of offences for which members of the AIF were brought before the civil courts ranged from the very serious, including murder and rape, to the incredibly, even bizarrely, petty, including ‘begging’ and ‘being a rogue and vagabond’. The list of known offences for which members of the AIF found themselves before the civil authorities in the United Kingdom, gleaned from the records of the Assistant Provost Marshal (APM) AIF Depots UK and personal records of members of the AIF, includes:

- aiding and abetting in the forgery of discharge certificates
- assault (common)
- assault (felonious)
- assault (with intent to commit bodily harm)
- assault (occasioning bodily harm)
- assault on the civil police
- attempted rape
- attempting to obtain money by false pretences
- attempting to redeem a pledge, not having any colour of title to redeem
- attempting to travel on a railway train without paying a fare

begging
behaving in a disorderly manner
being a rogue and vagabond
being a suspicious person
being armed with an offensive weapon to assault and rob
bigamy
breaking and entering
breaking, entering and stealing
counterfeiting coins
damage to property
driving a motor vehicle without a licence
drunk and disorderly
drunk and incapable
drunk and riotous
drunkenness
falsely wearing gold wound stripes to which not entitled
forging
indecent assault
indecenty
insulting behaviour
larceny
loitering with intent to commit a felony
malicious damage
manslaughter
masquerading as an officer
murder
obstructing the civil police in the execution of their duty
obtaining goods under false pretence
picking pockets
possession of counterfeit coins
possession of stamping apparatus for altering pay books, passes, etc.
rape
receiving stolen property
receiving stolen property after a previous conviction of felony
resisting arrest
riotous behaviour
robbery with violence
sexual assault
stealing
stealing and receiving
stealing blank parchment discharge certificates
stealing government stores
stock destruction
stock theft
theft
trespass
unlawful carnal knowledge of a girl under the age of 16 years
unlawful possession of blank parchment discharge certificates
unlawfully wearing a War Services Rendered Badge
using a fraudulent index marker on a motor vehicle

using obscene language
using petrol without a permit
uttering
uttering counterfeit coins
uttering forged Bank of England notes
uttering worthless cheques
warehouse breaking
wearing military decorations to which not entitled

Each of the above charges, in the exact wording given in almost every case, has been taken either from AIF military police reports or from the service records of individual members of the AIF. Sentences imposed included death and imprisonment, which ranged from 10 years down to a single day. Not every man brought up before the civil power was found guilty. The records tell of a number of men who were found not guilty or who had the charges against them dismissed for one reason or another. Nor was every man who was found guilty sentenced to a term of imprisonment. A large number of men were let off on the payment of a fine (ranging from a known high of eleven pounds to a low of seven shillings and sixpence) or were bound over to be of good behaviour for a specific period. However, enough men were found guilty by the civil power of various offences and admitted to civil prison to keep the AIF military police and other authorities busy.

This matter of civil charges was a constant headache to the AIF, starting with the fact that the AIF itself had to be represented by an officer at the court proceedings (assuming the miscreant had been identified as an AIF member). In a number of cases the men before the civil courts were discharged by the civil authorities but handed over to the military authorities for military law proceedings; this, of course, required the provision of a military escort to collect the man from the civil holding cells and escort and convey him to an AIF establishment. When men had finished their civil sentences, they also had to be collected by an AIF escort to be brought back to the Australian military fold, either to be returned to service or, as seems to have been more often the case, face military justice. The records of the APM AIF Depots UK contain constant reference to the incredible strain that ‘escorting’ placed on his resources.

Turning to examples of AIF civil offenders, the record of Gunner Colbran of the Australian Artillery Training Depot tells us that, having absented himself without leave from Tidworth on 12 May 1917, he was brought before the Mansion House Police Court in London on 18 July 1917 on a charge of ‘being a rogue and vagabond’.¹ This wonderfully Dickensian offence was covered under British law by the *Vagrancy Act 1864*, which stated in part:

Every person committing any of the offences herein-before mentioned, after having been convicted as an idle and disorderly person; every person pretending or professing to tell fortunes, or using any subtle craft, means, or device, by palmistry or otherwise, to deceive and impose on any of his Majesty’s subjects; every person wandering abroad and lodging in any barn or outhouse, or in any deserted or unoccupied building, or in the open air, or under a tent, or in any cart or waggon, not having any visible means of subsistence and not giving a good account of himself or herself; every person wilfully exposing to view, in any street, road, highway, or public place, any obscene print, picture, or other indecent exhibition; every person wilfully openly, lewdly, and obscenely exposing his person in any street, road, or public highway, or in the view thereof, or in any place of public resort with intent to insult any female; every person wandering abroad, and endeavouring by the exposure of wounds or deformities to obtain or gather alms; every person going about as a gatherer or collector of alms, or endeavouring to procure charitable

¹ NAA B2455 3267385 Personal Record COLBRAN, Henry, Service Number 1692.

contributions of any nature or kind, under any false or fraudulent pretence; every person being found in or upon any dwelling house, warehouse, coach-house, stable, or outhouse, or in any inclosed yard, garden, or area, for any unlawful purpose; every suspected person or reputed thief, frequenting any river, canal, or navigable stream, dock, or basin, or any quay, wharf, or warehouse near or adjoining thereto, or any street, highway, or avenue leading thereto, or any place of public resort, or any avenue leading thereto, or any street, or any highway or any place adjacent to a street or highway; with intent to commit an arrestable offence; and every person apprehended as an idle and disorderly person, and violently resisting any constable, or other peace officer so apprehending him or her, and being subsequently convicted of the offence for which he or she shall have been so apprehended; shall be deemed a rogue and vagabond ...

Unfortunately, as the details of Gunner Colbran's court case are not available, it is impossible to state exactly which section of the act the British authorities got him on; however, given the fact that he was absent without leave (AWL) and on the run from both the British and Australian authorities, there is a very good chance that he was 'taken up' by the police for: 'wandering abroad and lodging in any barn or outhouse, or in any deserted or unoccupied building, or in the open air, or under a tent, or in any cart or waggon, not having any visible means of subsistence and not giving a good account of himself'. Found guilty of the charge, Colbran was sentenced to one month's imprisonment with hard labour (IHL) and committed to His Majesty's Prison (HMP) Pentonville to undergo his sentence.² Colbran was obviously one of those men who could not help themselves; collected by a military escort from Pentonville at the expiration of his civil sentence for escort back to Bulford to face a charge of AWL, he broke away from his escort and escaped custody.³ Recaptured soon after, he faced a District Court-Martial (DCM) on 16 November 1917 on the charges of AWL and while in custody escaping and was sentenced to six months' detention and became one of the earliest inmates of the AIF Detention Barrack (AIF DB) at Lewes.⁴

Another soldier to find himself on the wrong side of the civil bench for contravention of an archaic law was Private Claude Smith of the 1st Division Ammunition Column. Pte Smith was charged at the Lavender Hill Police Court on 23 January 1918 with another Dickensian sounding offence, 'being a suspicious person and loitering with intent to commit a felony'.⁵ Found guilty of the charge, Smith was sentenced to two months' IHL and committed to HMP Wandsworth to carry out his sentence.⁶ Smith was another chronic misbehaver who had already spent a total of 42 days in military detention for various offences, along with 61 days in hospital for venereal disease (VD) and a number of days confined to barracks and would continue to commit petty military offences following his release from Wandsworth.

On 4 February 1918, Pte Hunt of the 28th Battalion was before the bench at Bow Street Police Court in London on a charge of 'being a suspicious person'; found guilty, he was sentenced to three months' IHL.⁷ Hunt also had a long record of misbehaving; he had already been before the civil courts on 17 July 1917 on a charge of warehouse breaking, for which he was sentenced to two months' IHL and would be brought before the courts again on 29 June 1918 on a charge of stealing, for which he was sentenced to three months' IHL.⁸ Between January 1916 and the

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ AWM4 3/9/13 War Diary, Assistant Provost Marshal, AIF Depots UK, February 1916 – January 1919; 'Police Report for Week Ending 27th January, 1918'.

⁶ NAA B2455 1767406 Personal File SMITH, Claude, Service Number 5530.

⁷ AWM4 3/9/13; 'Police Report for Week Ending 9th February, 1918'.

⁸ NAA B2455 7023464 Personal Record HUNT, Jack, Service Number 904.

beginning of December 1918, Hunt served 31 days' detention and 131 days' Field Punishment No.2 (90 days of which was a sentence of remission of an original sentence passed by Field General Court-Martial of two years' IHL).⁹ Apprehended at the end of November 1918 after having been posted AWL since the middle of October, he was tried by DCM in London on 31 December 1918 on two counts of AWL, three counts of desertion and one count of escaping and, having been found guilty of all charges, was sentenced to two years' IHL and to be discharged with ignominy (DWI); placed aboard ship under custody on 2 July 1919 for return to Australia to complete his sentence, he escaped from the ship's cells at Cape Town in South Africa on 20 July 1919, was never seen again and was subsequently DWI in absentia, with effect from 6 February 1919.¹⁰

On 8 March 1918 Pte Triffitt of the 40th Bn was found guilty of larceny by the Bristol Police Court, sentenced to three months' IHL and committed to HMP Gloucester.¹¹ Triffitt was yet another one of the AIF's chronic problem children. He had been sentenced to undergo 14 days' detention on the voyage from Australia to England in March 1917 for stealing from a fellow soldier aboard the transport *Seang Bee*.¹² Between his arrival in England at the beginning of May 1917 and his appearance at the Bristol Police Court on 8 March 1918 Triffitt spent 50 days undergoing FP No.2 for various offences of AWL, breaking out of camp and neglecting to obey AIF orders, as well as 17 days in the 1st Australian Dermatological Hospital (1 ADH) for treatment of VD.¹³ Following his release from Gloucester Prison, he was tried by DCM on 6 June 1918 for AWL and being in possession of a false pass and committed to the AIF DB to undergo 40 days' detention and on 7 August 1918 was awarded 28 days' FP No.2 for AWL.¹⁴ On 27 November 1918 he was again before the civil courts, appearing at the Summary Jurisdiction Court, Taunton, on a charge of stealing, for which he was found guilty, sentenced to three months' IHL and committed to HMP Exeter.¹⁵ More of Pte Triffitt below.

On 22 August 1918, Pte Dalton of the 34th Bn was tried at Bow Street Police Court on charges of 'being drunk and riotous' and assaulting a British Army officer, for which he received two months' imprisonment and was committed to HMP Pentonville to undergo his sentence.¹⁶ A far less amusing case was that of Pte Gorvin, of the 1st Pioneer Bn. Gorvin was brought before the Wiltshire Assizes in Salisbury on 16 October 1918 on a charge of unlawful carnal knowledge of a girl under the age of 16 years; found guilty, he was sentenced to 12 months' IHL.¹⁷ Gorvin, who already had a number of military convictions for AWL and disobeying, was committed to HM Prison Winchester to undergo his sentence.¹⁸

Even with the war over or, perhaps, because the war was over, men continued to offend. On 7 January 1919 Pte Chandler of the 4th Bn appeared before the County of London Quarter Sessions, Clerkenwell charged with stealing and receiving; found guilty, he was sentenced to three months' IHL and committed to HMP Wormwood Scrubs.¹⁹ Chandler had been a sergeant at one stage but had been reduced to the rank of corporal by sentence of FGCM in France in

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ AWM4 3/9/13; 'Police Report for Week Ending 10th March, 1918'.

¹² NAA B2455 8394377 Personal Record TRIFFITT, Leslie George, Service Number 3158.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ AWM4 3/9/13; 'Police Report for Week Ending 24th August, 1918'.

¹⁷ AWM4 3/9/13; 'Police Report for Week Ending 26th October, 1918'.

¹⁸ NAA B2455 4787660 Personal Record GORVIN, Edward James, Service Number 2621.

¹⁹ AWM4 3/9/13; 'Police Report for Week Ending 11th January, 1919'.

August 1917 for AWL and improper possession of Sergeant's Mess funds.²⁰ He was then reduced to the rank of private and sentenced to 90 days' FP No.1 on November 1917, again for AWL plus conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline in that he was wearing badges of rank (sergeant's chevrons) and ribbons of decorations he was not entitled to.²¹ Following a couple of more minor scrapes, on 29 June 1918 he was sentenced to six months' IHL (sentence suspended on 6 August 1918) for drunkenness and conduct to the prejudice of good order and military discipline, namely, wearing sergeant's chevrons (again) and the ribbons of the Victoria Cross, the Distinguished Conduct Medal and the French *Croix de guerre*.²² On 19 August 1918 he was convicted of larceny at the Guildhall, Newport, in England and sentenced to a fine of forty shillings or one month's IHL in lieu (the fine was paid).²³ Doubtless the AIF was glad to see the back of Pte Chandler.

The case of Pte James of the 4th Pioneer Bn is interesting. James faced the Weymouth Police Court on 10 January 1919, charged with larceny of silver articles from a dwelling house; found guilty of the charge, he was sentenced to six months' IHL and committed to HMP Dorchester.²⁴ The interesting thing about James's case is the fact that, at the time of his arrest, he was using the name 'Pierre Mons' and was identified by the Metropolitan Police as a professional British criminal named Robert Cuthbert who had fled the UK in 1913 and was wanted by Scotland Yard.²⁵ Apparently, however, Scotland Yard was unable to prove to the AIF's satisfaction that their Pte James was the man the Yard were after and refused to give him up, despite being an incredibly bad soldier – besides a sentence of 12 months' IHL in Egypt for insubordination and striking, and a sentence of five years' penal servitude (PS) for using insubordinate language in France, James/'Mons'/Cuthbert had undergone a sentence of 28 days' FP No.1 in France for looting.²⁶ James continued to offend in the AIF and continued to undergo punishment, but was not given up to the British police as the man they claimed he was, received a normal discharge in Australia and, somewhat incredibly, did not forfeit his medal entitlement or war gratuity.

Pte A.J. Burns of the 25th Bn and Pte J. Hudson of the 54th Bn were dealt with by the Marylebone Police Court in London on 31 January 1919 on the incredibly archaic charge of 'begging'. Found guilty, both were sentenced to one month's IHL.²⁷ Then we have the further example of Pte Triffitt, mentioned above. Following his release from HMP Exeter, to which he had been committed after having been found guilty of a charge of stealing by Summary Jurisdiction Court at Taunton on 27 November 1918, he almost immediately went AWL again and was awarded seven days' FP No.2 on 21 February 1919.²⁸ He saw the inside of HMP Gloucester again in March and April 1919. On 31 March he was sentenced by the Nailsworth Police Court to 21 days' IHL for larceny and committed to Gloucester; given that his sentence was not due to expire until 20 April 1919, he must have managed to accrue several days' time off for good behaviour, as, incredibly, he was before the Nailsworth Police Court again on 19 April 1919, again charged with larceny, again found guilty, sentenced to fourteen days' IHL and re-admitted to Gloucester Prison.²⁹ Release from civil prison in May 1919 was not the end of Triffitt's problems, as on 19 May he faced a DCM at Sutton Veny for two counts of AWL

²⁰ NAA B2455 3232568 Personal Record CHANDLER, Jack Service Number 1013.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ AWM4 3/9/13; 'Police Report for Week Ending 11th January, 1919'.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ NAA B2445 7363244 Personal File JAMES, Thomas, Service Number 2616.

²⁷ AWM4 3/9/13 War Diary, Assistant Provost Marshal, AIF Depots in UK, February 1916 – January 1919.

²⁸ TRIFFITT Record.

²⁹ Ibid.

not previously dealt with; found guilty, he was sentenced to 100 days' detention and committed to the AIF DB. Discharged from the AIF DB on 2 July 1919, he was immediately returned to Australia and discharged 'services no longer required' (SNLR) on 7 September 1919.³⁰

Having established that a significant number of members of the AIF were committed to civil prison in England during the war, it is legitimate to ask the question, what was prison like for these men? Prison life in England at the time was governed by the *Penal Servitude Act 1853* and the *Prisons Act 1898*. The *Penal Servitude Act* established penal servitude, that is, imprisonment in the United Kingdom with hard labour, as an adjunct and alternative to transportation, however, the amended Act of 1857 effectively abolished transportation as a punishment, and replaced it with penal servitude.³¹ In 1891, the act was again amended, this time specifying that a sentence of penal servitude was not to be for less than three years.³² In terms of what the sentence actually subjected the convicted person to, 'penal servitude' and 'imprisonment with hard labour' were indistinguishable, with the form of incarceration and the type of work done being the same for both types of prisoner. The only difference was in the length of the sentence, persons being sentenced to IHL being subject to a maximum of two years' incarceration, while those sentenced to PS were subject to sentences of three years and more.

In 1895, a government committee established to examine the prison system concluded that while the purpose of imprisonment was to punish, imprisonment should also aim to reform the prisoner.³³ The committee felt that 'men and women should be better people when they left prison than when they went in'.³⁴ These principles were endorsed by parliament and embodied in the *Prisons Act 1898*. The act formed the basis upon which *Prison Rules* were made and these were eventually to lead to a more enlightened prison regime (although too late to benefit members of the AIF). The evolution of the prison system into the more enlightened version we know to' had really only just begun at the outbreak of World War I and was to be effectively halted for the duration of the war, nevertheless, one of the first things that the *Prisons Act* did was to abolish the treadmill and the crank and stipulate that isolation in solitary cells could not be imposed for periods longer than a month.³⁵ This at least was fortunate for members of the AIF who found themselves on the wrong side of Britain's prison walls.

Isolation, that is, total separation from the rest of the prison population, as a part of prison policy was largely abolished by the *Prisons Act* – a member of the AIF sentenced to IHL or PS could expect, after his first month of incarceration, when he was held apart from the rest of the general prison population in order to provide him with an 'introductory period', to carry out his work in full association with other prisoners.³⁶ The days of a man sentenced to PS or IHL carrying out his assigned work in silence inside his cell were now gone. By the time members

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Crown copyright, 1858, *Penal Servitude Act 1857*: 1857 c. 3 (Regnal. 20_and_21_Vict) Section 2, legislation.gov.uk, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/20-21/3/contents>, accessed 23 June 2012.

³² Crown copyright, *Penal Servitude Act 1891*: Penal Servitude Act 1891: 1891 c. 69 (Regnal. 54_and_55_Vict), legislation.gov.uk, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/54-55/69/contents>, accessed 23 June 2012.

³³ UK Parliament, no date 'Moves towards a modern penal system', *Living Heritage: Police, Prisons and Penal Reform*, <http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/laworder/policeprisons/overview/modernpenalsystem/>, accessed 23 June 2012.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Cross, Rupert, 1971, *Punishment, Prison and the Public: An Assessment of Penal Reform in Twentieth Century England by an Armchair Penologist*, Stevens & Sons, London, p.17.

of the AIF found themselves introduced into the British penal system, the period of separate confinement with which a sentence of penal servitude began was reduced (from six months to one month); prison diet underwent some improvements (but see below); the prisoner's bath came to be a weekly instead of a fortnightly occasion; some beneficial changes were made with regard to visits to and letters to and from prisoners; more books were allowed; and there were improvements in the training and education of prisoners.³⁷

Nevertheless, the change in prison conditions between 1895 and 1920 was not a spectacular one. The convict's head was still cropped; prison clothes were still an ill-fitting 'dress of shame', bespattered with broad arrows; work might be in association, but there was very little recreation in association, and as much as seventeen hours out of the twenty-four might be spent in the cell (more still on Sundays).³⁸ The silent rule was not as absolute as it had been at the time when the Gladstone Committee recommended its modification, but it was still in place and must still have been extremely irksome. Corporal punishment, although now tightly controlled by the provisions of the *Prisons Act*, was still legal inside British prisons and would remain so until 1967 (although no records, public or private, have been found to indicate that any member of the AIF underwent corporal punishment while incarcerated in British prisons).³⁹

A view of the effect on the inmate of life in a British prison during World War I can be found in the report into British prisons originally commissioned by the British Labour Party in 1919 and published in 1921 as *English Prisons Today*. The authors, Hobhouse and Brockway, had been incarcerated as conscientious objectors during the war and stated from their own first-hand experience:

Self respect is systematically destroyed and self expression prevented in every phase of prison existence. The buildings in their ugliness and their monotony have a deadening and repressing effect. The labour is mostly mechanical and largely wasteful, and every indication of craftsmanship or creative ability is suppressed. The meals are distributed through momentarily open doors as though the prisoners were caged animals. The sanitary arrangements are degrading and filthy, and the dress is hideous, slovenly, and humiliating.⁴⁰

Another account of English prison life can be found in a reminiscence of Alexander Paterson, who was appointed a prison commissioner in 1922. Paterson, however, had had some experience with English prisons well before his appointment to the prison commission. On his graduation from Oxford University in 1906 he had become active in his spare time with the Oxford Medical Mission to Bermondsey; in this capacity he befriended a Bermondsey boy of eighteen who was sentenced to ten years' PS for killing his equally young wife during a quarrel.⁴¹ Paterson visited the boy in Dartmoor Prison in 1912 and left the following reminiscence of the prison:

As I walked along the endless landings and corridors in the great cellular blocks, I saw something of the 1,500 men who were then immured in Dartmoor. Their drab uniforms were plastered with broad arrows, their heads were closely shaven, which might make them of interest to the phrenologist, but would have baffled any portrait painter. Not even a safety razor was allowed, so that in addition to the stubble on their heads, their faces were covered with a sort of dirty moss, representing the growth of hair that a pair of clippers could not remove. The prison regime, resting primarily on considerations of safe custody and security, determined to minimise the chances of

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid, p.16.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p.17.

⁴¹ Ibid, p.30.

violence or suicide, had succeeded in making a large number of human beings objects of contempt. No child could have recognised his father in such condition, no girl or wife believe she ever loved a man who looked like that.⁴²

While Dartmoor was considered one of Britain's more severe prisons at the time, the regime can be taken to be reasonably indicative of that in other prisons at the time of World War I.

One of the constant causes of complaint in British prisons of the period was food. While there had been some improvement in prison diet as a result of the *Prisons Act 1898*, at the time of World War I when members of the AIF found themselves inside the walls of English prisons, prison diet was not really much better than it had been in the time of Charles Dickens. A retired British prison governor and food historian named Bill Robinson records that until well into the 1920s the prison diet for men serving sentences longer than seven days consisted of:

Breakfast: 1 pint of oatmeal gruel and 6 oz [ounces] of bread

Dinner Sunday & Thursday: 1 pint of soup and 8 oz of bread

Dinner Tuesday & Saturday: 3 oz of cooked meat without bone, 8 oz bread, ½ lb [pound] potatoes

Dinner Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 8 oz bread and 1 lb of potatoes

Supper: Same as breakfast⁴³

For those prisoners serving less than seven days, including members of the AIF, the menu was even more basic, consisting of:

Breakfast: 1 pint of gruel

Dinner: 1 lb of bread

Supper: 1 pint of gruel⁴⁴

Robinson provides us with the following recipe for prison soup and prison gruel:

Ingredients for Soup and Gruel: The soup to contain, per pint, 3 ounces of cooked meat, without bone, 3 ounces of potatoes, 1 ounce of barley, rice, or oatmeal, and 1 ounce of onions or leeks, with pepper and salt. The gruel to contain 2 ounces of oatmeal per pint. The gruel on alternate days to be sweetened with three quarter ounces of molasses or sugar and seasoned with salt.

In seasons when the potato crop has failed, 4 ounces of split peas made into a pudding may be occasionally substituted; but the change must not be made more than twice in each week.⁴⁵

In layout, all of the prisons to which members of the AIF were committed to undergo civil sentences were built on the Victorian model of a number of wings radiating from a central hub. All were also of respectable age. Of the prisons noted in the various entries above (Dorchester, Exeter, Gloucester, Pentonville, Wandsworth and Wormwood Scrubs), the newest was Wormwood Scrubs, the construction of which had commenced in 1874 and been completed in 1891. Pentonville had been laid down in 1840 and commissioned in 1842. British prisons of the 19th century were built on the principle of isolation, with the intent that every man incarcerated had his own cell, with contact to other inmates strictly controlled and, as far as possible, forbidden. Living conditions are perhaps best described in an article from the *Illustrated London News* of 1843, which describes the individual accommodation units of the then newly built Pentonville Prison as follows:

⁴² Ibid, pp.30-31.

⁴³ Robinson, Bill, no date, 'The Best of British Prison Food, Past and Present Prison Cuisine', *FoodReference.com*, <http://www.foodreference.com/html/british-prison-food.html>, accessed 20 June 2012.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

The Cells are each 13 feet long, by 7 feet broad, and are all of them of one uniform height of 9 feet. The piece or partitions between them are 18 inches thick, and are worked with close joints, so as to preclude as much as possible the transmission of sound. The ceiling is arched, and the light is admitted by a window (a fixture), filled with strong glass, of similar form, in the back wall, and crossed by a wrought-iron bar, in the direction of its length, so to divide it into two portions, of about 5 inches each ... (conveniences include) a stone water-closet pan, with a cast-iron top, acting on a hinge let into the wall. Next is a metal basin, supplied with water, to prevent the waste of which, the quantity is limited to one cubic foot, or about 6 gallons; the service-pipe from the water-trough being beat in the form of a trap, to prevent any transmission of sound. Opposite these conveniences is a strong three-legged stool, and a small table, with a shaded gas burner above it. Across the cell is slung from iron staples in the wall the prisoner's hammock, with mattress and blankets, which are folded up and placed upon a shelf to the left of the door in the day time. Here also is a hand-spring communicating with a bell, which when pulled causes a small iron tablet, inscribed with the number of the cell in the engraving, to project from the wall, so that the officer on duty in the gallery may be apprised of the precise cell where he is required. Each cell is warmed by air, through perforated iron plates in the floor, supplied through flues, communicating with immense stoves in the basement of the wing. The foul air is carried off, and a circulation of atmosphere maintained by means of perforated iron plates above the door of the cell, which communicate with an immense shaft.⁴⁶

During the first month of imprisonment, a man committed to a British prison was required to sleep on bare planks but, even when the man graduated from segregation to association he slept on a canvas or ticking mattress stuffed (inadequately) with horsehair, with canvas 'bed linen', the bedding laid out either on an iron bedstead or a hammock. Hobhouse and Brockway recorded that the sanitary arrangements in prison were 'degrading and filthy'. One of the strongest memories of men incarcerated in British prisons of the day was the 'conveniences'; while some of the cells in Pentonville, for instance, boasted 'stone water-closet pan(s)', most British prison cells were served by a chamber pot or bucket stored in a corner of the cell. No privacy was provided for a prisoner who had to use the 'convenience' during the hours of lock up; while this might not have been a great trial for a man who inhabited a cell on his own, British prison records of the day indicate that most prisons were perennially overcrowded with two or more men in a cell designed for one. A daily ritual for all inmates was 'slopping out', when each man left his cell with his chamber pot or bucket and took it to a waste disposal point where the 'convenience' was emptied and cleaned. The stench in the cells was recalled by all men who had served time and there are reminiscences of hardened prison officers throwing up in reaction to the smell emanating from cells when the doors were unlocked and opened in the morning.⁴⁷

This then was what the member of the AIF could expect to face when committed to a civil prison to undergo a sentence for a civil offence – a cropped head, uncomfortable and humiliating prison clothing, a tiny, foul smelling cell (quite possibly shared by one or more other inmates, depending on the degree of crowding in the individual prison), hard work, strict discipline and poor food.

A handful of men found themselves before the civil bench on the most serious of charges, murder. On 8 January 1918, Ptes Ernest Sharp and Thomas Maguire of the AIF appeared before Mr Justice Darling at the Central Criminal Court in London, along with a discharged British

⁴⁶ Anonymous, 1843, 'Pentonville Prison', *The Illustrated London News*, quoted in 'Victorian London – Prisons – Pentonville Prison', The Dictionary of Victorian London,

<http://www.victorianlondon.org/prisons/pentonvilleprison.htm>, accessed on 23 June 2012.

⁴⁷ Despite advances in the prison regime, British convicts were still 'slopping out' as late as the early 1970s.

soldier named Joseph Jones, charged with the murder of a Canadian soldier and with assault and robbery. Ernest Sharp, a labourer, had enlisted into the AIF in Sydney, under the assumed surname of Emmett, on 18 November 1915 and had been allotted to the 4th Bn; he had served in France, including a period of attachment to the military police, from April 1916 until the end of August 1917, when he had proceeded to England on leave.⁴⁸ He did not return from his leave and was declared an illegal absentee on 1 October 1917. Thomas Maguire, who listed his trade as ‘pugilist’, enlisted into the AIF in Brisbane on 26 September 1916 and was allotted to the 26th Bn; he disembarked in England on 26 August 1917 and went AWL from the 7th Training Bn at Fovant on 25 October 1917.⁴⁹ Maguire and Sharp apparently met up in London and according to a police account in their files formed a criminal group with Jones, who had been discharged from the British Army in 1917 and was employed as a dock labourer in London. The three targeted off-duty soldiers, who they would drink with and then lure into a selected out of the way place on some pretext and there assault and rob them.⁵⁰

On the night of 8 November 1917 the three made the acquaintance of two Canadian soldiers, Ptes Oliver Imlay and John M’Kinley, both of the 87th Bn (Canadian Grenadier Guards), CEF, and spent some time drinking with them in a public house in the Waterloo district of London. After leaving the hotel, the two Canadians were steered to a laneway by the three other men, who then set upon them and assaulted them; M’Kinley managed to get away but Imlay, who, according to some accounts was convalescing from wounds received in France, died in hospital as a result of the beating he received.⁵¹ Following investigations by the Metropolitan Police, assisted by Detective Brennan, an Australian detective attached to the Anzac Provost Corps (APC), Jones, Sharp and Maguire were arrested on 19 November 1917. From various testimony it became clear that, while all three men had been involved in the attack, it was Jones who had wielded the club (a policeman’s truncheon) that caused the fatal injuries to Imlay. The three stood trial before Mr Justice Darling at the Old Bailey on 8 January 1918; Sharp, who, according to Detective Brennan, was ‘known to police’ in Sydney, turned King’s Evidence against his accomplices and after pleading guilty to robbery was sentenced to seven years’ PS.⁵² For his part in the attack on M’Kinley, Maguire was found guilty of robbery with violence and sentenced to ten years’ PS.⁵³ In the end it was Jones alone who stood charged with the murder of Pte Imlay; he was convicted of the charge, received the death penalty and was hanged at HMP Wandsworth on 21 February 1918.⁵⁴ Sharp and Maguire were both discharged from the AIF on 8 January 1918, the date they received their sentences of penal servitude; Sharp was committed to HMP Maidstone and Maguire to HMP Parkhurst to undergo their sentences. Unfortunately, no further details are known of the two.

Not as lucky as Sharp and Maguire was Pte Verney Asser of the Australian Army Service Corps (AASC), who faced the Wiltshire Assizes on 15 and 16 January 1918 for the murder of Acting Corporal Joseph Durkin of the 6th Bn at Sutton Veny on 27 November 1917 (both men were attached to the 2nd Training Bn).⁵⁵ Asser was an interesting character; he had originally enlisted into the Permanent Military Forces at Adelaide on 9 October 1915 and had been appointed Acting Staff-Sergeant Major in the Administrative and Instructional Staff, however,

⁴⁸ NAA B2445 8080188 Personal Record SHARP (EMMETT), Ernest Edward, Service Number 4482.

⁴⁹ NAA B2455 8212543 Personal Record MAGUIRE, Thomas Vincent, Service Number 6823.

⁵⁰ Report by Detective R.P. Brennan, AIF, in the files of Sharp and Maguire, dated 14 February 1918.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² SHARP Record.

⁵³ MAGUIRE Record.

⁵⁴ Great War Forum, ‘Murder Most ‘Orrid: Looking for Soldier’s Details’, <http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=18408&st=25>, accessed 15 June 2012.

⁵⁵ NAA B2445 3037556 Personal Record (AIF) ASSER, Verney, Service Number 296A.

he is recorded as having deserted on 3 December 1915.⁵⁶ He next surfaced, literally, on 1 March 1916 when he gave himself up as a stowaway aboard the transport ship *Malwa*, which had just docked in Egypt, and was enlisted into the AIF and allotted to the AASC.⁵⁷ Despite apparent chronic ill-health – Asser spent time in hospital at various times suffering from folliculitis, bronchitis, rheumatism, debility and gastritis and would be admitted to a mental hospital in England for several days in July 1917 – he managed to serve several months in France with the 1st Div Train and the Anzac Entrenching Bn, until he was medically evacuated to England in January 1917.⁵⁸ He had committed a number of minor offences in France, for which he suffered CB and pay stoppages, but had no major discipline problems. After medical treatment in England for gastritis, he was posted to the permanent staff of the AIF Depots, his record indicating that he was possibly employed as a Lewis Gun instructor, being promoted to Acting Corporal on 24 October 1917.⁵⁹

On 29 November, Acting Cpl Durkin, who shared a hut with Asser at Sutton Veny and who was described as Asser's friend, was found dead with a gunshot wound to the head in the hut the two shared. Although the local coroner originally brought down a finding of suicide, another soldier implicated Asser and after investigation he was taken into custody and held pending trial. The Commandant AIF Administrative HQ, Brig Gen Thomas Griffiths, apparently on his own initiative, arranged for legal representation for Asser at Commonwealth expense.⁶⁰ At Asser's trial at the Wiltshire Assizes at Devizes on 15 and 16 January 1918, it was shown that Durkin had died from a gunshot wound to the head from a Lewis Gun and it was demonstrated to the court that, based on the wound location, Durkin could not have shot himself, either deliberately or accidentally, and that the fatal shot had been made from a distance of five inches; as Asser was the only other person in the hut at the time he was found guilty of the offence, despite a plea of not guilty.⁶¹ Following an unsuccessful plea for mercy on the grounds of insanity, Asser was hanged at HMP Shepton Mallet, in Somerset, on the morning of Tuesday, 5 March 1918 and was buried in the grounds of the prison. A cutting from the *Wiltshire Times* of 8 March 1918 records that the execution was carried out in 'great secrecy' with no hoisting of the black flag or tolling of the prison bell, as was customary for executions.⁶²

On 3 May 1920, Pte Albert James Fraser, a deserter from the AIF, stood in the dock of the High Court, Glasgow, along with his accomplice, James Rollins, a deserter from the British Army, charged with the brutal murder of Henry Senior, a physically incapacitated former British soldier. Senior had enlisted into the 11th Hussars in 1914 and served continuously in France from 1914 until he was seriously wounded and subsequently medically discharged in April 1918.⁶³ Senior's body was discovered in bushes near Queen's Park Recreation Ground, Glasgow, on the morning of 4 February 1920, so badly mutilated as the result of the savage beating that had led to his death that it could only be identified by his clothes and a couple of physical peculiarities known to his brother, who made the identification.⁶⁴ Excellent work by the City of Glasgow Police saw two suspects, Rollins and Fraser, along with the their girlfriends, arrested by Scottish detectives in Belfast, Ireland, on the evening of 8 February

⁵⁶ NAA B4717 9526456 Personal Record (PMF) ASSER, Verney, no Service Number.

⁵⁷ ASSER Record (AIF).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Fraser, Donald M., 2011, *The Book of Glasgow Murders*, Neil Wilson Pub Ltd, Glasgow, no page numbers.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

1920.⁶⁵ By the time Rollins and Fraser faced the court on 3 May 1920, charged with murder and three counts of assault and robbery, the police had amassed a wealth of evidence against them, including incriminating statements by their girlfriends, who had turned King's Evidence in order to escape a murder charge themselves.⁶⁶ Of interest to the spectators who crowded the court that morning was the fact that one of the accused, Fraser, was a member of the AIF – despite the fact that, in the interests of fairness, no mention was made at any time during the trial proceedings that the two men in the dock were not Scots, the nationalities of the two men was well known to the public via news reports preceding the trial. Albert James Fraser, a labourer from Geelong, had enlisted into the AIF on 6 September 1916 and been assigned to the 56th Bn and then later re-allotted to the 59th Bn; he arrived in England on 13 October 1918.⁶⁷ He never reached his unit in France, going AWL from the training camp on 14 November 1918.⁶⁸ Apprehended in London on 24 June 1919, he again absented himself on 5 July 1919 and was declared an illegal absentee on 28 July 1919.⁶⁹

The next the AIF heard of its absent member was on 15 February 1920, when a report from the Glasgow Police was received at Administrative HQ AIF advising that Pte Fraser had been arrested for murder.⁷⁰ Contemporary accounts of the trial record that Rollins, a deserter from the Irish Guards, and Fraser seemed to enjoy being the centre of attention in the court room and spent the trial laughing and joking with each other.⁷¹ The star witnesses for the prosecution were the two erstwhile girlfriends, who testified that the victim, Henry Senior, had been enticed into Queen's Park by one of the girls, acting the role of prostitute, and then set on by the two men, who proceeded to beat him to death; the crime netted the four about six shillings in coins, and Senior's boots and tweed overcoat, which were pawned for twenty-five shillings and sixpence.⁷² After a two-day trial the weight of evidence was such that the jury took just 20 minutes to reach a verdict of guilty; the presiding judge donned the traditional black cap and sentenced the two men to death, with 26 May 1920 set as the day of execution.⁷³ An almost pro forma plea for commutation of the death sentence was lodged but quickly rejected and on the morning of 26 May 1920, Fraser and Rollins were hanged in Glasgow's Duke Street Prison.⁷⁴ Present at the execution was a representative of the AIF, probably an officer from Administrative HQ AIF in London, and it is reported that Fraser's last words before the drop were 'Cheer up, Jimmy', directed to his accomplice Rollins, who was hanged with him at the same time (the last double hanging ever carried out in Scotland).⁷⁵

The AIF in England was not a particularly well-behaved military force; military police reports reveal a constant flow of offenders, both military and civil. Civil punishment for members of the AIF in the UK ran the full gamut, ranging from official warnings and small fines, to periods of imprisonment, some quite extensive, up to, in a small number of cases, death at the end of the hangman's rope.

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⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ NAA B2455 4033536 Personal Record FRASER, Albert James, Service Number 60118.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

CONFERENCE REVIEW

Chris Yardley

New Directions in War and History: Debating Military History, an international conference presented by The Strategic & Defence Studies Centre (ANU) and the Australian Centre for the Study of Armed Conflict and Society (UNSW Canberra). Held 4-5 February 2016 at the Australian National University's Hedley Bull Centre, Canberra.

The conference was organised by two younger academics, Tristan Moss (SDSC) and Tom Richardson (ADFA) and the two days were structured into the keynote address by Prof Jeffrey Grey and three sessions, each of three speakers, on the first day, with day two following a similar pattern: four sessions each with three speakers. Jeffrey Grey got us off to a rollicking start with his address on 'The Future of Military History', describing it as the most maligned history genre. Looking back to where it started, he observed that there has never been a golden age for military history, although he recognised a 'golden minute' during the period of the Menzies Government's university expansion and job opportunities. He commented that the Australian War Memorial had taken itself seriously during the 1980s but military historians had lost control of their own destinies. We need to strengthen the sector, such as by the concept of an identifiable body to help derive a viable conversation, and not be 'dependent upon the Anzac gorilla in the corner'. The question and answer response was lively, with no pregnant pauses, a feature of the whole event. The younger section of the audience participated strongly and Prof Grey complimented them on being the actual future of military history in Australia.

Session one looked at 'Approaches to studying war and history'. The three speakers covered topics of WW1 study: the potential of the digital soldier's tale and the future availability of data from social networks as compared to soldiers' diaries, and included a historiography which examined the mythology of mercenary soldiers and foreign fighters. Session two, after lunch, was a good one. John Blaxland chaired three presentations on the theme of 'Professional Military Education and Training'. Assistant Prof Ong Wei Chong, of the Military Studies Program, Nanyang Technological University, delighted in explaining how Singapore, as a new country, so far untroubled by conflict, used the wars of others to derive lessons of war. Mesut Uyar, previously of the Turkish Military Academy, now at ADFA as Associate Professor of Ottoman military history, questioned whether military history, as an academic discipline, is an essential part of the professional military education. Huw Davies, from University College London, an expert on Napoleonic history, reflected upon the writings of Maj Gen Henry Lloyd in the eighteenth century and their use in his teaching at the Advanced Command and Staff Course at Shrivenham, UK. He concluded with the maxim, 'Take men as they are rather than you would have them be', and emphasised the enduring relevance of the military principle that 'war is about people'.

The last session of day one was entitled 'Australian Military History' with Tom Frame, the chairperson, pointing out that there would be no focus on Anzac. The first speaker, Peter Stanley, asserted that 'military history is a vigorous and self-sustaining undertaking'. He described his first day at the Australian War Memorial and being told by a new colleague that 'It's all in there' – pointing to the twelve volumes of the *Official History* of the First World War on a shelf. Peter spoke of how, in the early days of the AWM, Bryan Gandevia and Michael McKernan introduced a program to establish, through the AWM, the field of military history with limited funds but great enthusiasm. They developed an extended research grants scheme, an annual conference, a journal, encouraged AWM staff to research and write and the AWM supported publications in the field. As controversial as might have been anticipated, Prof Stanley claimed that the AWM has suffered two decades of neglect. Tom Frame's

comment was that the talk had been an ‘insightful observation and courageous interpretation’ as military history demanded. Next, Kerry Neale, a curator at the AWM, bravely presented the ways the Memorial seeks to engage with the public through social media, its refurbished galleries and its encouraging today’s front-line soldiers to think about the souvenirs that reflect their experiences of war. The final speaker for day one, Romain Fathi, a PhD candidate from France, stated that there is little military history of WW1 in France and he discussed French amazement that Australia would allocate a budget of \$A100 million to commemorate the Battle of Villers Bretonneux. He analysed the battle from a French perspective to examine Australian engagement on the Western Front. It was an interesting presentation upon which to reflect.

Day two’s first session promised to be a bit different, with ‘Issues in Military History’. John Moremon discussed his project in assessing the official response to Australian aircrew loss and bereavement during WW2. He described how the ‘void of silence’ was partly filled by the Red Cross. Miesje de Vogel recommended war financing as deserving of scrutiny and re-engagement by scholars; the last economic study of war was in 1970. Mark Bailey, an ex-Naval officer, quietly excited the conference by discussing the ‘collapse and failure of the globalised maritime trade system 1914-16’ as his approach to the study of war and the military. It was a very different approach. During the session Prof Frame suggested ADFA might be in the position to organise a discussion group to look at ‘gaps in research findings’ for our field of interest. Nobody disagreed with this suggestion but I suspect we non-academics are already pursuing what we perceive as those gaps.

‘The Second World War’ was the title of the second morning session; Chairperson Craig Stockings was quick to declare ‘No Kokoda’. Instead, David Stahel investigated secondary criminality of the Wehrmacht on the Eastern Front during which time 10 million soldiers crossed the borders with the requirement to live off the land. Stahel argued that the Army was forced into this situation, which is why he calls it a secondary criminality. Oleg Beyda explored the reaction of White émigrés and their input to ‘Hitler’s crusade against Bolshevism’. Greg Raymond looked at ‘Thailand’s memory of Japanese occupation 1942-45: Just a bad dream?’ Thailand has not commemorated WW2 and still maintains that the country has never been colonised: ‘The war was disposable and the Thais are getting on with business’.

The penultimate session dealt with ‘Culture and War’. Margaret Hutchison spoke on ‘Painting at the Front: Australia’s official war art scheme of the Great War’, and showed several iconic painting and sketches. Emily Robertson conducted a similar review of posters used towards the end of the Great War when what was happening on the Front and propaganda overlapped. Neil Ramsay discussed his survey of the number of books published in the 18th century in the UK that contained the word ‘military’. The final session’s subject was ‘Military Identities’. Noah Riseman energetically presented his preliminary observations of ‘Gay Australian Servicemen in Vietnam: a work in progress’. Robert Hogg entertained us with ‘Queensland Diggers: identity, place and belonging in the First World War’, looking at how home and belonging was exhibited in the narratives of two Queensland diggers. The conference’s final paper was presented by William Westerman, who got back to basics by evaluating the middle class at war. He cited a gap in the history: what was the relationship of officers and the men during WW1?; and a gap in definitions: how does one define middle-class? Leaving the session with questions seemed to be a good way to conclude proceedings.

The speakers all had prepared structured talks, most illustrated with Powerpoint slides. The academic approach to the conference was immediately apparent, with no speakers from outside this group. We amateurs none the less enjoyed ourselves. One surprise was that only two

speakers, Ong Wei Chong and David Stahel, spoke without notes. The ‘new cohort’ of military historians, identified as such in Prof Grey’s keynote address, did not present as well as they might have. Their attention was focused upon their scripts and they achieved little engagement with their audience. Perhaps ‘how to present’ should be taught at SDCS and ADFA? After the two days we were not given any indication whether papers might be available online or podcast, which would be a shame as the level of scholarship was high.

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PAGE AND SCREEN

Resources for the Researcher and Collector

Defending Australia: a History of Australia’s Defence White Papers: Parliamentary Library Research Paper 2015-16, 20 August 2015

http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp1516/DefendAust#_Toc423684380

This study begins with an historical background covering defence issues from 1870 to 1976. It then summarises and examines the official White Papers of 1976, 1987, 1994, 2000, 2009 and 2013 as well as the Defence Updates of 2003, 2005 and 2007. It modestly claims that it

does not attempt to provide a comprehensive history of Australian strategic policy. Instead, [it] ... considers some of the key strategic issues and influencing factors that directly relate to the production of the various defence white papers. It provides a comparison of different government policies relating to defence and considers whether the stated objectives and outcomes of each white paper were fully, or even partially, realised.

All in all, a timely background for the forthcoming 2016 Defence White Paper.

Steve Dyer

AS YOU WERE ...

Feedback from Readers and Contributors

Further to Tony Harris’s article ‘British Army Deaths in South Australia 1839-1870’ in the December 2015 issue, **Justin Hulme** notes concerning No.1224 Corporal James Moon of the 2/14th Regiment (mentioned p.18):

- Moon served as a private in 1st Bn, Rifle Brigade in 1852 in the 8th Kaffir War on the Eastern Cape frontier. The 1st Bn Rifle Brigade returned to England in October 1853, before being committed to the Crimea. (Reference: G.R. Everson, *The South Africa 1853 Medal*, Swanson Books, London, 1978, pp.125, 129)

Prompted by Ian and Guy Littler’s article ‘The “Last to Leave”: An Analysis of the Final Hours of the Evacuation of Anzac – Part 1’, also in the December 2015 issue, **John and Justine Tremlett** from Rathfarnham, Dublin, sent the editor a copy of an article by David Saunders that appeared in the February 2016 issue of *Military History Monthly*, “‘Come into the Lighter, Maude’: The Gallipoli Evacuation, Winter 1915/16’. *Sabretache* readers will find that it provides a very interesting broader context for the events described in the Littlers’ article, and that it also covers the final evacuation in January 1916. In particular, it demonstrates what a stunning success the whole operation was in planning and execution.

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THE AUSTRALIAN ATTACK IN THE BATTLE OF POZIÈRES, 21-31 JULY 1916: A TRANSLATION OF THE OFFICIAL GERMAN VERSION – PART 1

Paul Thost and David Pearson¹

The following article is the first of a two-part series involving a translation from the relevant pages of the German Official History pertaining to the Australian attack at Pozières. The original work is titled *Somme-Nord II. Teil: Die Brennpunkte der Schlacht im Juli 1916. (Schlachten des Weltkrieges, Band 21)* [Somme-North 2nd Part: The Focal Points of the Battle in July 1916 (Battles of the World War, Volume 21)] by Lt Col (ret'd) Albrecht von Stosch (at that time Major and Battalion Cdr, in the 8th Thuringian Infantry Regiment 153), published by Gerhard Stalling: Oldenburg i.O./Berlin, 1927. The translated pages are from the chapter titled 'The Loss of Pozières. 21-31 July', pages 127-52.

The authors would like to thank the MHSA Federal Council for their support with this project and Craig Mackenzie and Andrew Long for assistance with the digital images. The copyrights in the original rested with Gerhard Stalling Publishing House, which according to our inquiries closed down in 1983. The authors/editors have made significant efforts to trace any subsequent copyright owner(s) of the original material but have not been able to identify any. The authors/editors would appreciate contact with anyone which may have an interest in the original text. The copyright in the translation rests with David Pearson and Paul Thost.

Notes on this translation: This is a literal translation. The authors have tried to keep as true to the original text as possible, although some effort has been made to make it more readable by the application (in places) of plain English techniques. The original pagination is indicated within the translated text in square brackets, while footnotes as they appear in the original are marked with asterisks. Footnotes added by the authors are numbered and formatted as standard footnotes. Any additional text by the authors appears also in square brackets. As in the original: full stops after numbers (e.g. 1., 2., 3. etc) equal ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc); Arabic numerals preceding a unit designation indicate a company (e.g. 1., 2., 3.-12.); and Roman numerals preceding a unit designation indicate a battalion (e.g. I., II., III.). The original German ranks have been retained in the text and a table showing the various German ranks can be found in Appendix 1. For ease of reference portions of Maps 10-13 from von Stosch showing the Australian attack are included in the colour section located in the middle of this issue, and are referred to as [Fig.1.1] and so on.

* * *

¹ Paul O Thost, AFAIM, Dip ANU was born in Germany in 1929 and came to Australia in 1953. He studied at the Sydney Technical College and at the Australian National University. Paul wrote numerous articles for Australian and S.E. Asian aviation magazines and translated Pilots notes of German aircraft now in the Australian War Memorial; he also translated many other documents for the AWM for over 15 years. He did volunteer work for the Australian Federal Police and is the bearer of the Australian National Medal with two clasps.

David Pearson, BA (Hons.) ANU, FSA holds an honours degree in archaeology from the Australian National University, Canberra. He has worked in various cultural institutions for the last 20 years and is currently the Manager of the Digital Preservation Section at the National Library of Australia. David has written a number of articles in academic journals on both archaeological and digital preservation issues. He has a keen interest in the technological and social contexts of conflict archaeology and is a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London.



[page 127] **The Loss of Pozières. 21-31 July**

In the last third of July there were especially heavy battles for the ruins of Pozières and the German positions thereabouts as well as for the dominant windmill height 161 [161m]. The enemy was expecting as well to gain the Thiepval position after he had occupied those positions, which he hadn't been able to achieve so far and which he wasn't to attain for a long time, thanks to the bravery and tenacity of the Swabians, in association with Prussians, Bavarians and Badeners. At first the English employed between their 48. and 1. Divisions the 1. Australian Division* against Pozières.

In the Thiepval sector I.R.² 185, the 3., 4., 7. and 8./186 as well as I./R. 15 were relieved during the 20. to 22. July by R.I.R.³ 22 (117. I.D.⁴), whose Commander, Major Freiherr von Senden, took command of the sector early on 22. July. On 24. July the command of the positions at St. Pierre-Divion-Thiepval came to the 26. R.D.⁵, as ordered by the A.O.K. 1.** With this, the defence of the important place Thiepval came to the very experienced Württemberger [page 128] I.R. 180, Oberstlt. [Lieutenant Colonel] Vischer. The last remaining sections of the Bavarian R.I.R. 8 retired after almost four weeks of combat on 25. and 26. July. from the ruins of St. Pierre-Divion and Thiepval, during the brave defence of which this Regiment had lost 252 dead (5 Off.), 758 wounded (7 Off.) and 208 missing (1 Off.).

* This Division belonged to the 1. Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) that was so distinguished in the Dardanelles in 1915 but also suffered (bled) very heavily. The Australian Divisions consisted of three Australian and one New Zealand Brigades of four Battalions each rather than the

² I.R. = Infanterie-Regiment (Infantry Regiment) (General Staff, 1918: 189).

³ R.I.R. = Reserve-Infanterie-Regiment (Reserve Infantry Regiment). R. = Reserve (General Staff, 1918: 202).

⁴ I.D. = Infanterie-Division (Infantry Division) (General Staff, 1918: 188).

⁵ R.D. = Reserve Division.

British Divisions of three Brigades.⁶

** *Armee Ober Kommando* [Army High Command].

Under heavy enemy artillery fire, I., II. and the M.G.Verbände/185⁷ had been repulsing repetitive English attacks at the endangered position near Thiepval-Ovillers since 1. July, III./185 since 12. July, and they generally held their positions. With a loss of 156 dead, including Lt. d. L. [Landwehr Second-Lieutenant] Schmidt (Wilhelm), Lt. d. R. [Reserve Second-Lts] Kauffmann and Götz, 628 wounded (10 Off.) 59 missing, the Baden Regiment left the battlefield on the Ancre rivulet. According to Gen.Maj. [Major General] Burkhardt,⁸ the 3., 4., 7. and 8./186 had performed outstandingly during this action. The other companies of the I. and II./186 had given excellent support to R.I.R. 121 and 119 north of the Ancre. I./186 suffered 36 dead, 122 wounded, 3 missing, II./186 24 dead, 104 wounded, 2 missing. I./R. 15 had performed bravely since 3. July continuously and with many losses in the threatened place Thiepval.

I.R. 27 formed three Battalion sectors in the area at Pozières on 21. July: to the right, II./27 Hptm. [Captain] Lyons⁹, with the Companies Messerschmidt (5. and 6.) and Schade (7. and 8.); in the centre staff III./R. 77, Major d. R. [Reserve Major] von Lettow-Vorbeck¹⁰, with 8./62, 9. and 10./R. 77; on the left staff II./62, Hptm. Heck, with 7./62, 11. and 12./R. 77, I./27 (without 3.) was the reserve of the Brigade in Ligny and Le Barque.

On 21. July the fire of the English artillery and heavy Minenwerfer¹¹ [mortars] became heavier from 2.00 a.m. to the north and northeast of Ovillers. Shortly after 3.00 a.m. components of the English 145. Brigade (48. Division) attacked again the 12./G.F.¹² [Guard Fusiliers] north of Ovillers, 10. and 11./R. 91 in the old *Nordwerk* northeast of Ovillers and adjoining right wing of those companies, where the I./157 (without 4.) Major Zech¹³ († 6.12.16) had only just then relieved the III./R. 15 in the *Schwarzwaldgraben*¹⁴ and on the north-western side of Pozières. At the 12./G.F. the English entered a gap where two groups had been destroyed by minefire [i.e. trench-mortar fire] but they were repulsed again. There, V.F. [Vice-Sergeant] Schuyler and the G.F. [Lance Corporal] Giessler, Knapnick and Kagma distinguished themselves especially. At 10./R. 91 Oblt. d. R. [Reserve Lieutenant] Windels († 4.8.17) repulsed the enemy as well. Similar to the 19. July Lt. d. R. Sütterle with a group chased the retreating enemy with hand grenades [page 129] but had to stop, because he entered the excellent curtainfire from the artillery group *Caesar*, Hptm. Jäckh, II./R.F.A. 27, that had just commenced and had caused him some losses. At 11./R. 91, the alerted platoon of Lt. d. R. Rösing, with a machine gun repulsed the enemy who had come very close. At day-break Utffz. [Corporal] Grensser with three men, followed by the whole platoon Rösing, advanced to clear the enemy from the dug-outs in the front. Only few Englishmen could escape; most were felled with handgrenades. In front of 11./R. 91 were about 100 dead Englishmen; 10. and 11./R. 91 took 16 P.O.W.s of the 5. Gloucesters. In front of I./157., Lt. d. R. Rammensee, the attack also collapsed in the

⁶ See Bean 1936: 523 n.66, who comments on the inaccuracy of this description.

⁷ M.G.Verbände = Maschinen-Gewehr unit (M.G. units).

⁸ Gen.Maj. Burkhardt (10. Bavarian Div.) is mentioned in Bean (1936: 520) and Miles (1938: 142 n.2).

⁹ Hptm. Ponsonby Lyons (II./27) is mentioned in Bean (1936: 524, 542 n.36).

¹⁰ Reserve Major von Lettow-Vorbeck (III./Res. 77) is mentioned in Bean (1936: 524).

¹¹ Minenwerfer = trench mortar (War Office 1918: 103).

¹² Presumably G.F. = Garde-Füsilier (Guard Fusilier). G = Garde (Guard) (General Staff, 1918: 184). F = Füsilier (Fusilier) (General Staff, 1918: 180).

¹³ Major Zech the commander of the (I./157) is mentioned in Bean (1936: 521 n.54).

¹⁴ Schwarzwaldgraben = Black Forest Trench.

defensive fire of the crew and the outstandingly aimed artillery fire. A Captain of the 1. Oxford and Buckingham Battalion was taken prisoner.

The remainder of the III. and II./R. 15 moved to the rear as army reserve. The staff of R.I.R 15 was relieved in Courcelette by the staff of I.R. 157, Major Hengstenberg.¹⁵ II./R. 15 had 73 dead, 247 wounded (8 Off.), 129 missing (2 Off.); III./R. 15 suffered 29 dead (1 Off.), 190 wounded, of whom Offz.St. [Deputy-Officer] Haferkamp later died of his wounds, and 9 missing.

The III./G.F. that was relieved from the Hindenburg position in the night of 22. July by the III./R. 11, leader Hptm. Feuerstein (gef.¹⁶ 1.10.18), retired to Metz-en-Couture: 'The Garde-Füsilier Regiment [Guard Fusilier Regiment] that has defended this important sector with which it had been entrusted has covered itself with lasting glory. It has performed much better than could ever have been expected. I am proud to have had the heroes of Ovillers under my command'. With these words discharged Gen.Maj. Burkhardt the brave Regiment to his 3. G.I.D.¹⁷ [Guard Infantry Division]. Total losses of the G.F.R.¹⁸ [Guard Fusilier Regiment] on dead, wounded and missing were for the timeframe 3. to 22. July 220 dead (5 Off.), 790 wounded (14 Off.) and 209 missing (3 Off.).

To hand responsibility for the defence of the village Pozières, which was continuously under the heaviest fire, to a single Division, the Div. Burkhardt extended its left wing over the path Pozières-Contalmaison on the night of 22. July as ordered by Army Group Armin in place of the II./27, which had only about 150 rifles left, and in place of 8./62, the 4./157 and 10./R. 77 occupied the south and southeast positions; 20 men of the 6./27. [page 130] remained between 10. and 11./R. 77 in the front.¹⁹ The remaining sections of the Komp. Messerschmidt and Schade occupied blocking positions northeast of the village. The M.G./27 remained in their current position, i.e. in part with the 157now. This regiment was charged early on 22. July with the defence of the village ruins. II./62 returned to Ligny-Thillooy, so that the regimental sector of I.R. 27 only included the sectors Lyons and Lettow. During the difficult relief operations at night the Australians tried several times to enter the Pozières position but were unsuccessful.

All day on 22. and in the night to the 23. July the village and the area around it was under brisk English air activity and drum fire [see Fig.1.1, p.31]. Losses increased significantly, many buried by shellfire. Lt. d. R. Heider of I./R. 22 was killed in action; Lts. d. R. Kutsch and Bartsch of III./R. 11 were wounded. Lt. [Second-Lieutenant] Hachtmann of I.R. 27 also fell and Lt. d. R. Buchholz and Lt. Vornkohl were wounded. Wounded from III./R. 77 were Lts. d. R. Klussmann, Baetke, leaders of the 9. and 11. Komp., Wildhagen and Offz.St. Frey and Sporn.

II. and III./R. 91 were supposed to be relieved north and northeast of Ovillers during the night of 23. July by I./R. 11, Hptm. d. R. [Reserve Captain] Theuer. The M.G.K./R. 11²⁰ advanced to relieve the M.G. of the G.F.R. and R.I.R. 91. As well, III./R. 77 (without 12.) was to be relieved in the Pozières position by III./62 (without 12.), 12./R. 77 east of Pozières by 11./27, and 12./62 to move to Martinpuich. But during the reliefs at about 1.30 a.m. there commenced

¹⁵ Major Hengstenberg the commander of I.R. 57 is mentioned in Bean (1936: 521 n.54, 524, 577).

¹⁶ gef. could be gefallen (K.I.A.) or gefangen (Prisoner)?

¹⁷ G.I.D = Garde-Infantry Division (Guard Infantry Division).

¹⁸ G.F.R. = Garde-Füsilier Regiment (Guard Fusilier Regiment).

¹⁹ See Miles (1938: 142 n.2).

²⁰ M.G.K. = Maschinen-Gewehr-Kompanie (Machine Gun Company) (General Staff, 1918: 197).

strong attacks by the English 144. Br. (48. Div.) and the 3. Australian Br. (1. Australian Div.) against the positions of R.I.R. 11 north of Pozières, of I./157 in front of this village, as well the 10. and 11./R. 77 southeast of the village.²¹ At the same time a heavy English attack commenced further east against I.R. 165 and 93 in the *Foureaux* blocking position, that adjoined I.R. 27.*

* Refer the section *The Victorious Defence of the Foureaux Forest from the 21. to 31. July* refer page 153 [not included in this translation].

At III./R. 11 the English thrust was directed principally against 9./R. 11, Hptm. d. R. Thiel, which was in position east of the shellhole²²; this had been under heavy minefire for three hours. By especially brave action of Lts. d. R. Grütznier and Tschech, the English, who had penetrated in the centre, were immediately repulsed and 5 prisoners (1 Off.) as well as a machine gun taken. At the I.R. 11., 2. and 1. Komp., Lts. d. R. Hoffmann and Pflaume reported soon by telephone that the enemy had been repulsed. In front of the 3. Komp., Lt. d. R. [page 131] Hebrocks as well and the right section of the 4. Komp., Lt. d. L. Böhm, the dense lines of the attackers soon came to halt in the defensive and artillery curtainfire, which caused heavy losses to the enemy. But on the left wing of the 4. Komp. and at the neighbouring 157. the enemy penetrated the position. Oblt. d. R. Windels, leader of the 10./R. 91 gathered anyone he could of his company who had already been relieved and hurried to the front. Here Uffz. Eggebrecht and his group excelled again. He had been buried three times and wounded on the right ear by a shell fragment. Even so, he held fast with his team and threw hand grenades into the enemy lines. Lts. d. R. Schade, Rösing and Helwes from 11./R. 91 were still at the front at 4./R. 11 with their runners. Without a thought of their own safety they remained at the front; thus Lt. d. R. Rösing was fatally injured. Lt. d. R. Helwes personally defended a sap. 4./R. 11 asked for reinforcements, to prevent the infiltrating enemy from rolling up the left wing of I./R. 11. Major von Lüttichau, Komdr. [Commander] of the II./R. 11, sent two platoons of 7./R. 11 with Lt. d. L. Korsawe to the front. One platoon got lost but the second was soon helping the 3./R. 11, which had suffered heavy losses. In the meantime, counter charges of the 4./R. 11 had some success. V.F. Kluge had pushed back some of the enemy but further attempts were held in check by heavy English machine gun fire. The leader of the company was missing. With the successful invasion at 4./R. 11 and I./157 the enemy was able to occupy about 250m of the position. Sections of New South Wales battalions²³ took possession of the actual defence line of the 1. and 2./157. Lt. d. R. Rammensee was able to dislodge the enemy there twice, but in the end he had many losses and had to be satisfied with holding the old *Schwarzaldgraben*. Several companies of the Victorian battalion²⁴ entered the southern part of the village, after having breached the left wing of the 4./157 and the right wing of 10./R. 77. The rest of 6./27 soon noticed Australians in the rear of 10./R. 77, which was almost obliterated in fierce hand-to-hand fighting.²⁵ Only few people were able to escape the encirclement. Lt. d. R. Janssen, the leader of the company, was one of the missing, so were Lts. d. R. Zimmermann, Koop, and Lt. d. L. Bülter. The few people of the 6./27 who were able to defend themselves from the encirclement by the enemy had two of M.G./27²⁶ along who happened to be with them. 11./R. 77 pushed the enemy in hand-to-hand fighting back with heavy losses. Lt. d. R. Pawlik, who had been disabled by shell burial, nevertheless remained at his post under heaviest fire and so

²¹ See Bean (1936: 523-24).

²² Granatloch = shellhole. Must be a prominent point?

²³ Sic. These could be any of the four New South Wales battalions in 1st Brigade, 1st Australian Division.

²⁴ Sic. 1st Australian Division actually contained four Victorian battalions in its 2nd Brigade.

²⁵ See Miles (1938: 143 n.3).

²⁶ M.G./27 = Machine Gun Company I.R. 27, presumably.

displayed an example of [*page 132*] bravery and faithfulness. To avoid being cut off the last few of the 6./27 and the rests of 10./R. 77 retreated fighting with both machine guns to the area northeast of Pozières.²⁷

The left wing of 4./157 was also soon attacked in the rear and almost completely annihilated.²⁸ Only few people could escape to the right. When the Australians then continued in the rear of the 4. and 3./157 from the left and pushed on, those left were pushed together to the right. That caused a gap west of the National Str. [Street]. Lt. d. R. Ertel,²⁹ leader of the 4./157, who remained with three machine guns and a few people in the Panzerturm³⁰ [armoured turret] on the National Str. was soon completely isolated. With the intention to come to the relief of their endangered comrades, Lt. d. R. Roske,³¹ leader of the 3./157 with a few men stormed against the Australians but could only get to about 30m of the great road. One could hear machine gun fire from the armoured turret until 6.00 a.m., then all was quiet there. Lt. d. R. Ertel and his men had been overpowered by the enemy.³²

The enemy opposite the 11./R. 77 had in the meantime attacked again but had been repulsed with the help of the 9. and 12./62 which had come to relieve there. Then a daring counterattack by the leader of 12./62, Oblt. d. R. Ohr³³ who had mustered men from Reserves of 77. and 62. reached as far as the road Pozières-Kl. Bazentin, where heavy English machine gun fire held the heroic advance for good. The companies that had suffered heavy losses were finally forced by flanking fire and renewed attacks on both sides by superior forces of the enemy to evacuate the position they had won. Oblt. d. R. Ohr and Offz.St. Graetsch were killed in action.

Of the M.G./27 that had been in position in Pozières, seven [machine guns] were lost with their entire crews, after they had been destroyed by fire previously. Lt. d. R. Seher and V.F. Kornemann were among the missing.

On 23. July at 3.30 a.m. the staff of III./62, Hptm. Bruck³⁴, had arrived in the combined command post of the staffs of III./R. 77 and II./27 in the northeast of Pozières, to relieve the staff of III./R. 77. There no one knew of the battles that had occurred at the front because of the terrible English artillery fire that was covering the village.³⁵ Not until 3.40 a.m. a runner (Gefr. Meyer, III./R. 77) who was supposed to guide the Battalion Doctor of III./62, Ass.Arzt d. R. [Assistant Doctor] Dr. Mogwitz, [*page 133*] to the First Aid Post, reported that he had seen several enemies in front of the Gef.St.³⁶ [Battle Headquarters]. All officers and personnel of the staffs left the Gef.St. at once to defend it. By the light of flares they observed an enemy company which was entrenching immediately south of National Str. 30m from the Gef.St. With the few available rifles they fired at the enemy, who returned the fire. Lt. Horn, Adj. [Adjutant]

²⁷ See Miles (1938: 143 n.3).

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Lt. d. R. Ertel (4./157) is mentioned in Bean (1936: 547).

³⁰ Panzerturm = armoured turret (War Office, 1918: 112). This strongpoint was first named 'The Cement House' and then 'Gibraltar' by the Australians (Bean, 1936: 536, 536 n.17; Miles, 1938: 146 n.1). It is annotated 'Panzer T.' in Fig.1.1.

³¹ Lt. d. R. Roske (3./157) is mentioned in Bean (1936: 547, 578).

³² According to Bean (1936: 535 n.12; 535-36) and Talyor & Cusacks (1942: 182) the strong post was attacked by Lieutenant Waterhouse and a number of men from the 2nd Battalion. The structure was found to be occupied by 3 officers and 23 men with 3 machine guns who subsequently surrendered. One officer later died of his wounds. Also see Charlton (1986: 144); and Wray (2015: 37).

³³ Oblt. d. R. Ohr (12./62) is mentioned in Bean (1936: 524). He was killed in this action.

³⁴ Hptm. Bruck or Brück (III./62) is mentioned in Bean (1936: 524).

³⁵ See Bean (1936: 522).

³⁶ Gef.St. or Gef.Std. = Gefechts-Stand (Battle Headquarters) (War Office, 1918: 185).

II./27 (gef. 25.3.17) and a few men were wounded. As the continuation of the uneven fight would have been hopeless with the coming of the day, Major d. R. von Lettow and Hptm. Lyons with their staffs retreated to the first blocking trench northeast of the village, to arrange a counterattack against the enemy in the village. With a few casualties from the enemy curtainfire they reached the primary blocking trench, but the staff of III./62 that had been left behind was taken prisoner later on.³⁷ A similar fate befell the doctors of II./27 and III./62, Ob.Arzt d. R. [Reserve-Lieutenant (Medical)] Dr. Albrecht and Ass.Arzt d. R. Dr. Mogwitz, as they had not heard of the intrusion of the Australians into the village in their first aid post.³⁸

Major Hengstenberg had received a report from I./157 by telephone early 2.30 a.m. ‘Attack on Pozières. Enemy has entered some areas’. After having notified the artillery and the Division he ordered III./157 at Courcelette, Hptm. Rumland, to retake the village immediately in an attack and to push on to the old position.³⁹ Shortly after 3.00 a.m. Bavarian 20. I.Br.⁴⁰ [20. Infantry Brigade] made the II./157, Hptm. d. R. Mende, also available; this had been in place west of Le Sars but was already assembled to move to Courcelette. As 9./157 remained at Courcelette to protect the artillery the attack commenced at 5.30 a.m. by the 10., 11., and 12./157 from the II. Position north of Pozières.⁴¹ Hptm. Lyons as well used weak remnants of the Komp. Messerschmidt (II./27) from the blocking position in a counterattack; he personally proceeded with the second wave. The counterattack fell apart in the machine gun fire of the Australians; Hptm. Lyons was captured.⁴² 12./157 met in the northern part of Pozières a greatly superior enemy, was caught in the left flank by enemy machine guns and had to go to ground. But 10. and 11./157 were able to enter the village west of the National Str. and push the Australians to the east behind or close to the National Str. But then the Australians received reinforcements and entrenched.

Major Zech, I./157 asked shortly after 7.00 a.m. for urgent assistance, as the situation of his companies became more and more critical. [page 134] During the morning the 8./157 were able to penetrate the English artillery fire in sections and to reinforce the rest of the 3. and 4./157 in the former *Schwarzwald* trench. But the situation there remained grim so that the 6./157 was assigned there as well early in the afternoon.

When Oberstlt. Hundrich,* Komdr. of the I.R. 27, learned at 5.00 a.m. in Martinpuich of the penetration by the Australians in Pozières, the 5. and 6./62 at Ligny-Thillooy were assigned to him. As they advanced at about 5.00 p.m. against the National Str. northeast of Pozières into the position of the III./62 they lost in the heavy English artillery fire about a third of their effective strength, including their leader Oblt. Heinrici (wounded).

* Later on a Knight of the order *Pour le mérite*.

On the morning of 23. July there were the following changes in Command: Gen. d. Inf. [General of Infantry] Kuntze⁴³, Komdr. of the 117. I.D. in Bancourt took over from Gen.Maj.

³⁷ See Bean (1936: 524) and Miles (1938: 143 n.3).

³⁸ See Bean (1936: 515 n.39).

³⁹ See Bean (1936: 524).

⁴⁰ I.Br. or I.B. = Infanterie-Brigade (Infantry Brigade) (War Office, 1918: 175, 188).

⁴¹ See Bean (1936: 524 n.69) and Miles (1938: 144, 144 n.1) in relation to the 3rd Australian Brigade.

⁴² Newton (1925: 223) apparently describes this event in relation to the 12th Battalion. He says: ‘A large dug-out was discovered and an officer and nineteen men taken prisoners. The officer said, in good English, to Captain Vowles, “My name is Ponsonby Lyons; I am the Commandant of Pozières.” “You mean that you *were*,” replied Vowles’. Also see Bean (1936: 524, 542 n.36).

⁴³ Gen. d. Inf. Kuntze (117. I.D.) is mentioned in Bean (1936: 520 n.51) and Miles (1938: 142 n.2).

Burkhardt for the sector between Ancre and Pozières inclusive and Oberst [Colonel] von Weise, Komdr. of 233. I.Br. (Br.Gef. St. ⁴⁴ Pys) from Gen.Maj. Rauchenberger as leader of the Infantry employed in the Divisional Sector. Oberstlt. Nicolai, Komdr. of F.A.R. ⁴⁵ 233 from now on commanded the Field Artillery in the new sector of the 117. I.D. and Oberstlt. Bansi, Komdr. of the R.Fß.A.R. ⁴⁶10, the heavy artillery.

A permanent hold by the enemy in Pozières between the paths leading to Contalmaison and Kl. Bazentin had to be prevented at all costs. Therefore I.R. 157 and 27 received orders to combine and to eject the enemy from the village. As well, the Army Group Armin placed a battalion from the R.I.R. 86 behind the 117. I.D. The artillery of the Division received orders to keep the area to the south and southwest of the village under continuous fire and also to lay down a barrage in front of the right wing of the 7. I.D. to prevent the enemy from sending reinforcements.

I.R. 157 and 27 agreed that the joint counterattack should start at 6.00 p.m. after the artillery had softened up the target. III./157 (without 9.) were to advance in the village from the north and northwest, 5. and 6./62 were to attack in the sector of the I.R. 27 from the northeast on the National Str. But before the attack could commence, it was noticed that the preparatory artillery fire had missed the Australians and their numerous machine guns on the northern and north-eastern edge of the village. So the attack could not be carried out as yet.⁴⁷

12./R. 11, Lt. d. R. Brieger, had repulsed an English assault at the Hindenburg position soon after 8.00 a.m. after a two-hour fight with handgrenades. [page 135] A counterattack by the 6./R. 11, Lt. d. R. Zoch, at about 5.00 p.m. against the enemy on the left wing of the 4./R. 11 failed after suffering severe losses. At 11.30 p.m. 5./R. 11, Oblt. d. R. Steffen, attacked yet again, regained about 100m of the position and recovered the missing leader of 4./R. 11, Lt. d. L. Böhm, who had been lying wounded in a shellhole the whole day. Lt. d. R. Pflaume, leader of 2./R. 11 was killed in action. Lt. d. R. Urban, leader of the 8./R. 11 and Lt. d. L. Grunwald were wounded, Lt. d. R. Niedenzu was missing. The enemy had also taken two M.G./R. 91 at his penetration of 4./R. 11.⁴⁸

The enemy was sitting in a total of about 200m within the German position between the left wing of R.I.R. 11 and the right wing of I./157. Both wings were blocked off, but I./157 was now left with only about 175 rifles.

R.I.R. 91 (without I.) retired during the day to billets in the rear; in its short period of combat north of Ovillers from 17. to 23. July it had lost from English artillery fire and during the successful repulse of English assaults 45 dead (including Lt. d. R. Overesch, leader of the 9. Komp., Lt. d. R. Rösing and Offz.St. Averbeck), 199 wounded (4 Off.) and 17 missing.

Oberst von Weise⁴⁹ had planned to renew the attack onto the south-eastern half of Pozières on the night of 24. July with the cooperation of I.R. 27. So that I.R. 157 could utilise all sections for the attack, he made his last reserves, 5./R. 22, available to occupy the positions in the rear. But the nightly assault had to be left undone, as in the meantime 10. and 11./157 in the north-

⁴⁴ Br.Gef.St. or Br.Gef.Std. = Brigade-Gefechts-Stand (Brigade Battle Headquarters) (War Office, 1918: 175).

⁴⁵ F.A.R. = Feld-Artillerie-Regiment (Field Artillery Regiment) (War Office, 1918: 180).

⁴⁶ R.Fß.A.R. = [Reserve] Fuss-Artillerie-Regiment (Foot Artillery Regiment) (War Office, 1918: 184).

⁴⁷ See Bean (1936: 547) and Miles (1938: 145 n.3).

⁴⁸ In this instance it is not clear if M.G./R. 91 refers to soldiers or guns.

⁴⁹ Oberst von Weise is mentioned in Bean (1936: 548).

western part of the village were endangered to be cut off by the Australians who received continuous reinforcements, therefore had to retreat even before midnight with 12./157 to the old II. Position north of Pozières.

The I.R. 26 which was stationed at Beaulencourt and Villers-au-Flos with six combat companies was alerted early on the 23. July from Le Barque and had the companies Winter and Leist transferred to I.R. 157, the companies Molsen and Hedicke to I.R. 27. Company Molsen occupied the Martinpuich position west of the village late in the evening and Komp. Hedicke reinforced 11./27, which had suffered very much under the English artillery fire, on the left wing of the 27. The companies Winter and Leist advanced over Le Sars through the sunken Road Courcelette-Martinpuich. As Lt. Leist was soon wounded, Lt. d. R. Deckert assumed command of the Company. [page 136] The Komp. Winter received a direct hit from shrapnel and suffered three dead and twelve wounded.

During the night of 24. July Pozières was shelled heavily by the combined artillery of 117. and 7. I.D. to prepare the counterattack [see Fig.1.2, p.32]. For this Hptm. Rumland had available 7., 9., the remains of 10., 11. and 12./157, Komp. Winter (I.R. 26) and two platoons of the 62. (5. and 6.). The assembly for the attack, which had been made difficult by the retreat of the 157. from Pozières, was only just ready by 4.00 a.m. The attack that commenced did not advance because of the heavy English curtainfire and rapid machine gun fire from the masonry wreckage.⁵⁰ In the devastating fire the assault companies shrank more and more. Only a few of the 157. had got as far as the western sector of the village but were now thrown back in a counterstroke by the Australians in this area, to the outer northwest rim of the village. The positions of the 157. now only passed through the outer north-western tip of the village ruins on the way to Thiepval, from there to the blocking position northeast to the old II. Position and then in that old II. Position further to the southeast. Therefore there were Australians already in the western edge of Pozières in the rear of the rest of the 4. and 3./157, but they continued to hold their positions bravely in spite of this and of further serious losses.

On the morning of 24. July the heavy batteries of 117. I.D. began firing on the whole of Pozières with exception of the north-western tip. But superior English artillery as well fired very heavily into the surroundings of the village. As there was hardly any cover left, the soldiers were sheltering mostly in shellholes, unprotected from the heavy fire. In the 117. I.D. alone ten guns were put out of action. As well, English aircraft fired their machine guns from a few metres at infantry and battery positions. The leader of the M.G. Ss. Tr. ⁵¹ 107 Lt. d. R. Seydel,⁵² was able to personally shoot down an English plane with a machine gun.

The occupation of Pozières by the enemy now endangered also the left flank of R.I.R. 11, for the protection of which the 8. and 9./R. 22, which had become available at Thiepval, were engaged. Two-thirds of 8./R. 22 moved into the *Ganter* path, that by now consisted only of shellholes, and 1/3rd of 8./R. 22 and 9./R. 22 moved into the *Gierich* path behind. With this 117. I.D. had put all its forces into the frontline and into blocking positions. [page 137] The losses in the three infantry regiments were great, especially in I.R. 157. The only unit available for another attack on Pozières was I./R. 86, Hptm. Deichmann (18. R.D.) east of Courcelette, which had been in the meantime assigned to I.R. 157 but it had also had its share of losses from the English artillery fire. For 117. I.D. it had become hopeless to attack the extended village

⁵⁰ See Bean (1936: 548) and Miles (1938: 149 n.1).

⁵¹ M.G.S.s.T. = Maschinen-Gewehr-Scharfschützen-Trupp (Machine Gun Marksman Section (obsolete)) (General Staff, 1918: 197).

⁵² This incident and Lt. d. R. Seydel is mentioned in Bean (1936: 564 n.23).

with their own units yet again, especially as the Australians had used the time at their disposal to dig in thoroughly. Only a strong and keen body of men could dare to carry out a successful attack after a heavy and intensive artillery preparation. Therefore Gen. d. Inf. von Below charged at noon on 24. July Gen. d. Inf. von Boehn,⁵³ Commanding General of the IX. R.K.⁵⁴ [Reserve Army Corps], with the recapture of Pozières. In the evening at the K.H.Qu.⁵⁵ [Corps H.Q.] in Havrincourt he took charge of the sectors of the 117. and 7. I.D., of which the last mentioned was assigned to Gen.Maj. Wellmann,⁵⁶ Komdr. of the 18. R.D. in Haplincourt. He was to arrange the recapture of Pozières, for which he had assigned the troops in the sector of I.R. 157 and R.I.R. 86, Oberstlt. Burmester (gef. 11.4.17).⁵⁷ Gen.Maj. Stüve,⁵⁸ General of the Fußartl. 7, had command of the entire heavy artillery; the Field artillery of the 117., 7. and 8. I.D. as well as units of field artillery of the IX. R.K. already in combat were also available. On the night of 24. July the staffs and batteries of the R.F.A.R. 18, Major Koehler, had taken over battery positions at Martinpuich, Eaucourt-L'Abbaye and Courcelette for Field Artillery Regiment 40 and II. (F.)/F.A. 4.⁵⁹ The guns of F.A.R. 40 remained in position. Batteries of the southern wing of 26. R.D. were expected to support the attack and the subsequent retention of Pozières on the flank.

Of a strong English reconnaissance force, that appeared in the evening in front of I./R. 11, Lt. d. R. Breitenstein (gef. 1918) who had already distinguished himself during a reconnaissance to determine the the situation as it existed at the I./157, took an officer and five men prisoner; the others were driven away.

In the evening the relief commenced of the exhausted troops east of Pozières in the sector of I.R. 27. I./R. 84, Hptm. Freiherr von Hammerstein-Gesmold advanced with 2. and 4. Komp., Lt. d. R. Klüver and Oblt. Kühling, into the very front line with contact on the left with III./R. 31 (17. R.D.); 1. and 3. Komp. remained in lines further to the rear on standby. In the heavy English artillery fire the relief was made extremely difficult, 2./R. 84 lost 25 men in the advance alone. In the sunken road Courcelette-Martinpuich so many men of the 3./R. 84 were entombed or wounded, [page 138] that the company had to move into shellholes east of the sunken road.

The series resumes with Part 2 in the next issue.

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⁵³ Gen. d. Inf. von Boehn is mentioned in Bean (1936: 557, 584, 721, 732, 742) and Miles (1938: 152 n.1, 153 n.1).

⁵⁴ R.K. is probably R.A.K. = Reserve-Armee-Korps (Reserve [Army] Corps) (War Office, 1918: 202).

⁵⁵ K.H.Qu. = Korps Hauptquartier (Corps Headquarters) (War Office, 1918: 192).

⁵⁶ Gen.Maj. Wellmann is mentioned in Bean (1936: 557, 567, 576, 583-84, 721-22) and Miles (1938: 149 n.2), 152 n.1, 153 n.1, 155 n.1 and n.3).

⁵⁷ Oberstlt. Burmester (R.I.R. 86) is mentioned in Bean (1936: 557 n.70, 612).

⁵⁸ Gen.Maj. Stüve is mentioned in Bean (1936: 582).

⁵⁹ Unsure which artillery unit this refers to.

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Appendix 1

Table showing German ranks and their abbreviations used in the text.

<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Signification</i>	<i>English Equivalent</i>	<i>Source</i>
G.F. or Gefr.	Gefreiter	Lance Corporal	War Office (1918: 63, 185).
Utfz., Untfz. or U. Offz.	Unteroffizier	Corporal	War Office (1918: 153, 207).
V.F., Vfw. or V.Fwl.	Vice-Feldwebel	Vice-Sergeant	
Fwl. or Fldw.	Feldwebel	Sergeant	War Office (1918: 182).
Offz.St.		Deputy-Officer	
Fährn.	Fährnich	Ensign	War Office (1918: 48, 180).
Lt.	Leutnant	Second-Lieutenant	War Office (1918: 97, 196).
Lt. d. R.	Reserve Leutnant	Reserve Second-Lieutenant	
Lt. d. L.	Landwehr Leutnant	Landwehr Second-Lieutenant	
Ass.Arzt d. R.		Assistant Doctor	
Ob.Arzt	Oberarzt	Lieutenant (Medical)	War Office (1918: 109).
Ob.Arzt d. R.	Reserve Oberarzt	Reserve Lieutenant (Medical)	
Oblt. or Oberlt.	Oberleutnant	Lieutenant	War Office (1918: 109, 200).
Oblt. d. R.	Reserve Oberleutnant	Reserve Lieutenant	
Oblt. d. L.	Landwehr Oberleutnant	Landwehr Lieutenant	
Hptm. or Hauptm.	Hauptmann	Captain	War Office (1918: 74, 188).
Hptm. d. R	Reserve Hauptmann	Reserve Captain	
Hptm. d. L.	Landwehr Hauptmann	Landwehr Captain	
Major or Maj.	Major	Major	War Office (1918: 99, 196).
Major d. R.	Reserve Major	Reserve Major	
Oberstlt. or Obstlt.	Oberstleutnant	Lieutenant-Colonel	War Office (1918: 109, 200).
Oberst or Ob.	Oberst	Colonel	War Office (1918: 109, 200).
Gen.Maj.	General-Major	Major General	War Office (1918: 185).
Gen. d. Inf.		General of Infantry	

COLLECTORS' CORNER #1

Imperial German Helmet Plate

David Alderson



A friend of mine was approached by a work colleague one day, saying, 'We were cleaning out Grandma's stuff and found this old badge. One of my great-uncles brought it back from the First World War. It's got your name on it so you can have it if you like.' My friend examined the badge but had no idea what it was, but was sufficiently impressed with his family name, Koenig, showing so prominently in the centre, to accept the kind offer.

Despite his German ancestry he did not know what a Pickelhaube was, or that he was holding a standard issue Other Ranks helmet plate for one. Crudely wired to the centre of the plate, obscuring the scroll-surrounded 'FR', is an 1813 dated Landwehr Cross, which bears the same inscription except for the use of umlauts instead of an 'e' after the 'o'. This addition I believe indicates issue to a Prussian reserve unit.

Of particular interest to collectors is the bullet hole through the orb grasped in the left talons of the eagle, which probably made it a much envied battlefield find. It is doubtful that this would have caused a fatal wound, as examination of such a plate in-situ and the angle of bullet-strike would seem to indicate only a glancing blow, or possibly even a near-miss, to the left temple. Nonetheless, the wearer would almost certainly have been incapacitated temporarily.

On learning more about his 'badge' my friend has developed a greater appreciation of it as an important historical item related to his heritage and, unfortunately for me, will not part with it.

COLLECTORS' CORNER #2

The Kennedy Regiment, 1914

Paul A. Rosenzweig

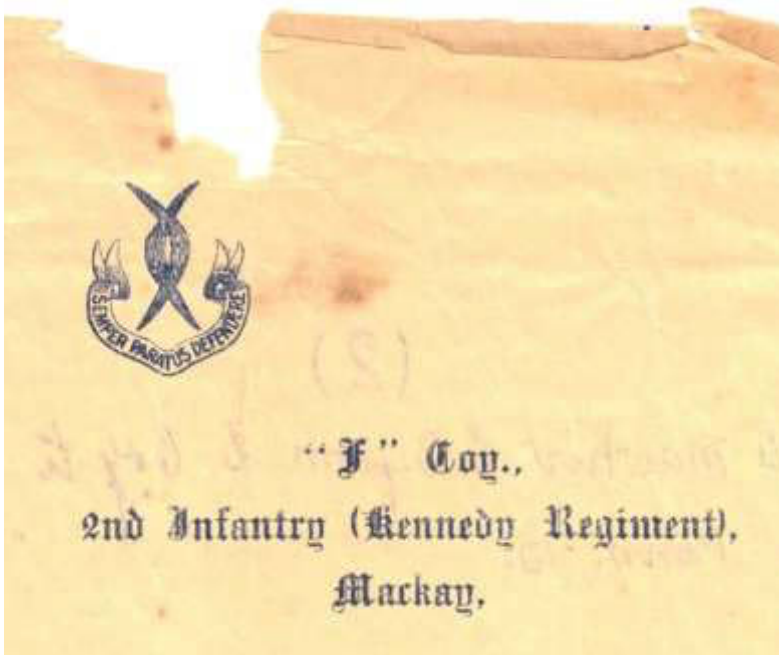
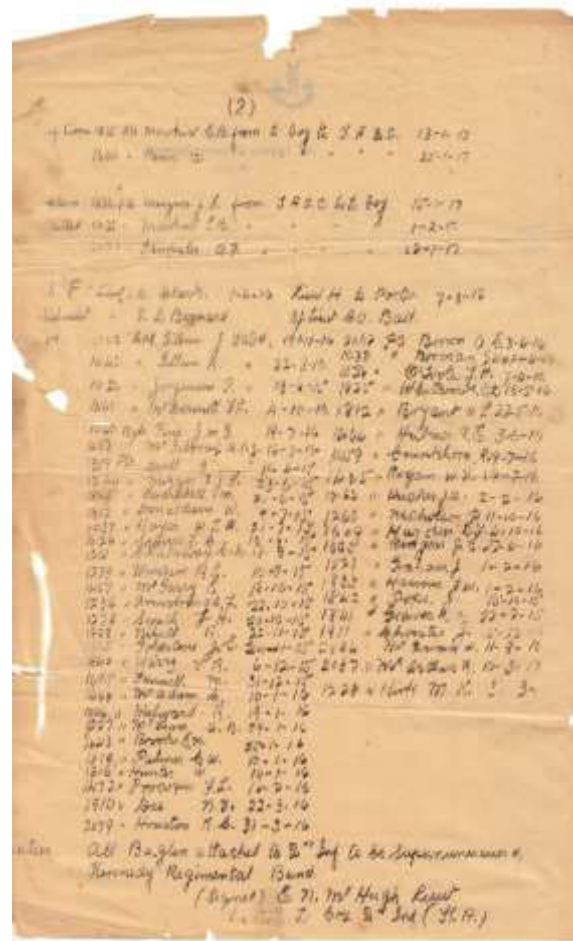


Fig.1 (left): A letterhead page of F Company from Mackay, headed by the crest of the 2nd Infantry (Kennedy Regiment) (author's collection)

Fig.2 (below): The reverse of this F Company letterhead page – the second page of an issue of orders signed by Lieutenant E.N. McHugh for the Officer Commanding D Company of the 2nd Infantry (Kennedy Regiment) (author's collection)



Fig.3 (above): The cap badge and shoulder title of the Kennedy Regiment, c. 1900-1918 (author's collection)



In *The War with Germany*, volume 3 of *The Centenary History of Australia and the Great War* (see the book review on pp.57-59 in this issue), Robert Stevenson refers briefly to the intended contribution of the 2nd Infantry (Kennedy Regiment) from north Queensland in the war with Germany. In 1914, these equivalents of the modern-day Army Reserve were to have made up the third battalion of the Australian Naval & Military Expeditionary Force (ANMEF) in its urgent deployment to German New Guinea.¹

Reading this entry revived a memory of a browned foolscap page long-ago filed away, bearing routine administrative details of Great War-era transfers and appointments. Significantly though, these details were printed on the back of a letterhead sheet – headed with the crest of the 2nd Infantry (Kennedy Regiment) and bearing the title of F Company from Mackay and the space for a date to be entered with the year ‘191_’ (see fig.1). This scarce piece of ephemera recalls the enduring disappointment of those citizen-soldiers who missed the opportunity of being the first Australians to deploy in the Great War.

The page is headed by the Kennedy Regiment crest – a pair of overlapping boomerangs standing vertical, above a scroll bearing the motto *Semper Paratus Defendere* (‘Always Ready to Defend’). The vertical boomerangs remained a significant emblem in hat and collar badges of descendant battalions, but some – such as the 31st Battalion (The Kennedy Regiment), 1948-52 – had the overlapping boomerangs horizontal.

Kennedy Regiment

The *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918* details how the ANMEF was to be formed, with the anticipated third battalion to be made up of serving reservists enrolled under the compulsory training scheme – who in pre-war plans had been identified to garrison Thursday Island in time of war.² Stevenson makes it clear that these enthusiastic volunteers, mobilised in great haste, were in fact not wanted by the Army component commander, and in the end did not go to war anyway because of a mutiny aboard their troopship.

The 2nd Infantry (Kennedy Regiment) of the Citizens’ Forces had originally been established by the *Defence Act* of 1904,³ although it already had a long heritage of service – it had contributed volunteers to the Boer War, and earlier still under a different title had played an active role in key point security during the Great Shearers’ Strike of 1891.

Warned out for overseas service, the soldiers of F Company in Mackay under Lieut E.T. Moyle mobilised at their drill shed at 9am on 4 August.⁴ This was near where the Sir Albert Abbott Administration Building now stands. Like most regional centres Mackay had a strong rifle company, drawing from the efficient and active cadet unit which had existed for the preceding three years. In October 1912 for example, Lieut Moyle was one of four officers of the Senior Cadets who attended a School of Musketry at Enoggera: the foursome from Mackay took out practically every shooting prize on offer.⁵

¹ Stevenson (2015) pp.34-35. See McKenzie (1927) and also Jose (1928) pp.74-99.

² McKenzie (1927) pp.29-31 and Jose (1928) pp.74-78.

³ Palazzo (2001) p.49: the title ‘Citizens’ Forces’ remained in use from 1911 until the government abandoned conscription in 1930, after which the designation ‘Militia’ was revived to describe Australia’s volunteer non-permanent forces.

⁴ *Mackay Mercury*, 5 August 1914.

⁵ *Mackay Mercury*, 13 January 1989.

F Company comprised three sections, each commanded by a lieutenant. Its strength then was 4 officers and 62 other ranks, with one attachment – the Medical Officer, Capt Stuart Kay, AAMC. Kay had earlier served as Surgeon-Captain with No.3 Squadron, 24th Australian Light Horse Regiment (the local Citizens' Forces unit earlier known as the Mackay Mounted Infantry). The administrative details on the back of the page in question list some of these members with their regimental numbers: this shows that the more senior members had numbers in the approximate range from 1026 to 1044, while more recent enlistees had numbers within the range 1460-1490. There was an inspection of all kit and equipment, uniform was hurriedly issued to the newer members, and the Medical Officer carried out an inspection – only two members were declared unfit. Musketry instruction then followed.

At midday a telegram was received directing the company to proceed to Townsville. On 5 August, the Minister for Defence announced that the only mobilising of CMF troops to occur at present was of some 700 from Queensland 'to act as a garrison for Thursday Island and from NSW to guard the defence works'.⁶ That night, in 'an enthusiastic display of loyalty', the company received a send-off in Star Court from the citizens of Mackay.⁷ They mustered at the Drill Hall at 7pm and marched through the principal city streets headed by the City and Pipe bands. A crowd of some 3000 cheered them on their arrival at the Star Theatre. The Acting Mayor of Mackay, holding a cable advising that war between Germany and Great Britain had commenced as anticipated, observed:

The occasion was unique in the history of Australia. Australia had sent contingents to fight in different parts of the world before, but this was the first occasion she had called on her own citizen forces to defend her own country.⁸

Local veteran Lt Col George William Hodges also addressed the troops. Hodges had commanded the company's predecessor, the first volunteer infantry company raised in Mackay in 1881, N Company of the Townsville-based 2nd Queensland Volunteer Infantry. He had come to Mackay as an assistant teacher in 1874 and was later a stock and mining agent and licensed auditor; he soon became a renowned townsman – president of the School of Arts, Town Clerk in 1882, father of the Central Mill Scheme, and Mayor of Mackay in 1890, 1896 and 1901. Hodges noted that the citizens of Mackay were for the first time,

sending away their own young boys to fight and garrison their different forts so as to assist in the prevention of invasion by foreign persons of any kind.⁹

The reference to the town's sons was not mere rhetoric: his own son was in the contingent, Pte W.G. Hodges of 3 Section. Typical perhaps of the soldiers was Pte William Charles Arnold Laurie, aged 19, a member of 2 Section.¹⁰ Born to Sarah Ann Laurie in Mackay in May 1895, Arnold attended the Mackay State School for Boys from July 1902 to April 1908, reaching 6th Class. From 1911, Arnold undertook compulsory military training with the Australian Commonwealth Cadet Corps as required under the *Defence Act*, 1903-1910. He then joined F Company (Citizens' Forces), and worked as an apprentice fitter in the Locomotive Department of Queensland Railways.

⁶ *Mackay Mercury*, 5 August 1914.

⁷ *Mackay Mercury*, 6 August 1914.

⁸ *Mackay Mercury*, 6 August 1914: Alderman G M Cameron.

⁹ *Mackay Mercury*, 6 August 1914: Lieutenant-Colonel George William Hodges.

¹⁰ W.C.A. Laurie personal papers: Mr J.R. Norris, State School for Boys, memorandum dated 3 February 1910; Lieut P.N. Swanson (Area Officer, Mackay), letter dated 11 September 1911; Lieut E. McHugh (D Company, 2nd Infantry, Mackay), letter dated 30 August 1916 and letter undated (September 1916).

The company paraded at the Drill Shed early on Thursday 6 August, and marched down River Street (now Bluewater Quay) to the Pioneer River wharves. Here they joined the tender *Brinawarr*, to be taken out to the SS *Wollowra* bound ‘for northern ports’. The local business houses closed, the Citizens Band played, and the local Light Horse squadron paraded to mark the contingent’s departure – ‘to do honour to the young men who were on the march to the Front’.¹¹ The wharves could not contain the crowds, so many people swarmed onto the rooves of buildings along the riverbank. The *Brinawarr* carried the signal flags for ‘Goodbye’, and as she neared Flat Top Island the signal station there fired a cannon to signal the troops as they passed.

The Master of the *Wollowra* was Capt R. Sunter, and the Chief Steward was Mr J. Wells. When they sailed for Townsville these soldiers, 5 officers and 60 other ranks (see Table 1), effectively became the first citizen-soldiers to embark for overseas service in World War 1. The editorial in the local newspaper that day announced:

In the call to arms, Mackay has been signally honoured, for to it has fallen the high privilege of sending from its shores the first contingent to represent Australia in the defence of the Empire.¹²

On Friday 7 August, F Company joined the other Kennedy Regiment companies from Bowen, Charters Towers and Townsville which had mobilised at Kissing Point – there were over 800 men in camp. Lieut Moyle addressed his men and,

assured them that when it came to fight, the Germans or Austrians would find that the Kennedy Regiment would give a good account of itself.¹³

The Kennedy Regiment sailed at noon on Saturday 8 August on the SS *Kanowna*, a steam tender of the Australasian Navigation Company commandeered by the Australian Government – the regiment heralded by the press as the first troops to deploy for active service.¹⁴ The *Kanowna* joined the *Berrima* at Port Moresby carrying the 1st Bn ANMEF, and they left on 7 September in convoy for a rendezvous at Rossell Island off the southeastern corner of New Guinea. As they left Port Moresby harbour however, the firemen mutinied and refused to take the ship any further – ironically, while the troops had volunteered for overseas service no one had thought to secure the agreement of the ship’s civilian crew, who now refused to leave Australian waters. Although the troops offered to stoke the boilers, Col Holmes commanding the ANMEF ordered the 500-strong contingent back to Australia – where it carried out garrison duties on Thursday Island.

Some went on to serve in the AIF. Others remained in Mackay – like Arnold Laurie, who worked locally with the Queensland Railways while serving as a member of the Citizens’ Forces. During the war years, the local rifle company was redesignated D Company of the 2nd Infantry (Kennedy Regiment).

From the western districts of Queensland during the Great Shearers’ Strike, to its active duty embarkation in August 1914, the 2nd Infantry (Kennedy Regiment) was indeed – as this aged letterhead sheet reminds us – *Semper Paratus Defendere*.

¹¹ *Mackay Mercury*, 6 August 1914: Editorial.

¹² *Mackay Mercury*, 7 August 1914.

¹³ *Mackay Mercury*, 10 August 1914.

¹⁴ *Mackay Mercury*, 13 August 1914.

1 Section	2 Section	3 Section
LT E T Moyle	LT H D Porter	LT V D Bernard
LT W D Clark	____ PTE R Aitken	____ PTE W Beveridge
1042 LCPL J Gillan	____ PTE H A Allen	____ PTE W Cleary
____ PTE R J S Cox	1236 PTE C F Armstrong	1489 PTE R Crunkhorn
____ PTE P Curtin	____ PTE F Avenell	____ PTE J E Fitzsimmons
____ PTE P Greenfield	____ PTE F H Chataway	____ PTE R Gillan
1037 PTE W L A Hayes	____ PTE J Cleary	____ PTE B L Hayes
____ PTE T W J Hussey	1359 PTE G Duell	____ PTE W G Hodges
1026 PTE P Jorgensen	____ PTE V Hensley	1425 PTE W V Hogan
1027 PTE A B McLean	1262 PTE J A Hucker	____ PTE W Howard
____ PTE J Maloney	____ PTE W C A Laurie	1464 PTE A E Hubner
____ PTE H Menadue	____ PTE J M Matthewson	____ PTE C Johnson
1044 PTE R Milward	1264 PTE V J F Mezger	1468 PTE G McAdam
____ PTE T Power	1266 PTE P W Nicholson	1469 PTE F C McDermott
____ PTE W Sandoff	____ PTE J J Nihill	1467 PTE E McGarry
____ PTE J H Sargent	____ PTE G Rudell	1483 PTE R P J McGilvrary
____ PTE A Wilson	____ PTE B H H Smith	____ PTE J Maloney
____ PTE R Winton	1276 PTE F H Smith	1038 PTE J W Norman
1040 BUGLER J M G Pirie	____ PTE A H Williams	____ PTE D D Pirie
		1472 PTE F L Procopis
		____ PTE L Power
		____ PTE G Reid
		____ PTE C Scott
		____ PTE H Sykes
		____ PTE D Tucker
		1279 PTE R L Windsor
Attached Captain Stuart Kay, AAMC		

Table 1: Nominal Roll of members of F Company, 2nd Infantry (Kennedy Regiment) who embarked on the SS Wallowra in Mackay on 6 August 1914 [names drawn from the Mackay Mercury, 5 August 1914 and 6 August 1914; with regimental numbers shown where known].

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THE ‘LAST TO LEAVE’: AN ANALYSIS OF THE FINAL HOURS OF THE EVACUATION OF ANZAC – PART 2

Ian C.M. Littler and Guy M. Littler

Summary of Part 1

The identity of the last Australian to leave the Anzac shore on the final night of the evacuation from North Beach, Gallipoli Peninsula, on 20 December 1915 has not been investigated thoroughly since the Australian War Memorial digitised many of its records. A number have laid claim to being the ‘last to leave’ but only a few individuals have ever been seriously considered by historians. Depending on the publication and edition or website, various individuals are put forward. In his *Letters from France* in 1917,¹ C.E.W. Bean first named Capt Charles Augustus Murray Littler as the ‘last to leave’, but in 1924 in the 1st edition of *The Story of Anzac*,² Bean changed his mind to the rear-guard commander, Lt Col John Paton. In official correspondence in 1929,³ Bean admitted that he discounted the testimony of other witnesses with regard to the question as to who was the last off the shore. He wrote that it was because ‘the definitive statement by Paton seemed to clinch it.’

Later in 1930, Paton’s staff officer at Anzac, Maj Evan Alexander Wisdom, disclosed that Paton was followed onto the steamboat in which they left by Captain Cecil Minet Staveley, of the Royal Navy, and by the seamen who untied the boat’s ropes.⁴ This led Bean to change the 2nd edition in 1934, removing Paton’s name and replacing it instead with ‘an anonymous seaman.’⁵ That has remained the official history until the present day. Yet, in the 1980s an historian for the Australian War Memorial, Matthew Higgins, became convinced that the official history was incorrect after corresponding with Lt Col Stanley Holm Watson, the man in charge of 2nd Division signals at Anzac during the evacuation.⁶ Watson informed Higgins that Paton departed on a previous boat to Watson and Littler.

The Last Hours: The Timeline Cross-Referenced

The key to understanding how Paton and Wisdom came to think they were on the last boat is to retrace the actual sequence of events by comparing various independent sources. There are many sources that can be drawn on: the diaries and recollections of eye-witnesses, the individual unit reports, the operational procedures for the evacuation as well as military protocols and customs. The precise detail of the Evacuation Plan has already been examined in the Part 1. In this section of Part 2, the execution will be discussed with the aim of determining who was on the beach and at what time they departed.

When cross-referencing the various accounts, reconciling times can be an issue. This is for numerous reasons: first, there was no systematic way of synchronising time across the land and sea; second, the watches were not as reliable as those of today; and third, they were exposed to

¹ Bean, C.E.W. *Letters from France*. Melbourne: Cassell, 1917. Chap.23, ‘Mouquet Farm September 7th’.

² Bean, C.E.W. *The Story of Anzac*. Vol.2. The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918. 1st Edition. Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1924. Chap.31 ‘The Final Stages’.

³ Bean, C.E.W. Letter, Bean to B.G. Littler. ‘History based on Paton’s statement. Postscript; Sort it out with Paton’, Commonwealth of Australia Reference No. 5029, 22 October 1929.

⁴ Wisdom, Evan Alexander. Letter, Wisdom to Bean. ‘Last to leave Anzac’. 28 January 1930. AWM44 18/2 Part 3.

⁵ Bean, C.E.W. *The Story of Anzac*. Vol.2. The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918. 2nd Edition. ‘Paton changed to Seaman’. Sydney, 1934. Corrections. AWM44 18/3 Part 2 to 18/5.

⁶ Higgins, Matthew. *Canberra Times*. ‘The adventures of the “Duke of Anzac”’. 29 December 1991.

extreme conditions. The 2nd Division orders prescribed ‘watches to be checked against signals each evening’, but no protocol was discussed.⁷ Indeed, in the disastrous Nek offensive of August, the battleship guns stopped a full seven minutes before the men went over the top to their deaths.⁸ Lastly, often diary entries were made after the event, and sometimes in non-chronological order, with estimates made of the time. Fortunately, in the case of the evacuation, there was the giant explosion at the Nek, on Russell’s Top, which was seen and heard by many observers on land and at sea. This provides an excellent means of verifying and, more importantly, re-synchronising recorded diary times.

Resynchronisation is important in the case of at least two diaries since the times noted do not line up with events and lead to causality issues, as a few examples show. In Littler’s diary, if one uses his times it would mean that he had put aboard the First Australian Casualty Clearing Station (1st ACCS) before they had received orders to evacuate.⁹ He also recorded the Russell’s Top explosion as happening at 03:00, a full half-hour before it actually occurred; a time of 03:30 is accepted in the *Official History*.¹⁰ In Lt George Shaw’s account of his rear-party withdrawal (he was a machine gun officer of 28th Bn on Walker’s Ridge), he noted the Russell’s Top mine explosion as occurring at 03:40,¹¹ ten minutes after it occurred. Bean noted it as 03:26 but adopted 03:30 in his *Official History*,¹² as was also indicated in Wisdom’s *Narrative of Operations*. For these reasons, it is reasonable to re-synchronise the times with the Russell’s Top explosion. Such times will be referred to as Mine Synchronised Time (MST).

The detailed departure records (lighter name, pier, number of men and destination ship) for the last night of the evacuation, from the piers at North and South Beach, still exist up until 01:05 on 20 December.¹³ The embarkation officers recorded exactly who was leaving down to the last man. Also gleaned from these records is that these lighters carried 400 men to steamers waiting about one mile off-shore, with a loading time of between 20 and 30 minutes. The minimum period from departure to return of a lighter was around one hour.

At 12 midnight, Capt Watson at his signal office switched through a phone call from Wisdom to start the evacuation from the various redoubts.¹⁴ At intervals, Wisdom called Watson and the signal office switched Wisdom through to the various front line positions. The troops then withdrew, proceeding at an orderly prearranged pace and gathering very briefly on North Beach. At the beach, they were directed by embarkation officers onto lighters waiting at the pier which took them to a predetermined steamer. One soldier remarked that the whole process took just 30 minutes, from being marched onto a lighter until embarked on-board one of the ships, waiting about a mile off-shore.¹⁵ This is consistent with the lighter records and party arrival timetables.

⁷ 2nd Division H.Q. Orders. Order No.2, Appendix 27, ‘Watches to be synchronised with signals each evening’. 16 December 1915. AWM4 1/44/5 Part 4, p.3.

⁸ Australian War Memorial. ‘Charge at the Nek’. <https://www.awm.gov.au/military-event/E133/>. Accessed 7 May 2015.

⁹ First Australian Casualty Clearing Station, Diary. ‘Last day of the Anzac evacuation’. 20 December 1915. AWM4 26/62/11 Part 2, pp.5-6.

¹⁰ Bean, C.E.W. *The Story of Anzac*. Vol.2. The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918. 11th Edition. Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1941, p.895.

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¹² Bean, C.E.W. Diaries and Notebooks. ‘Explosion 3:26’. 20 December 1915. AWM38 3DRL606/22/1, p.46.

¹³ ANZAC H.Q. Diary. ‘Embarkation Records’. 20 December 1915. AWM4 1/25/9 Part 11, p.36.

¹⁴ Watson, Stanley Holm. ‘Gallipoli ... The last seven days’. ca. 1977. Private Record.

¹⁵ Cosson, John George. Letter to his mother based on diary entry. ‘Marched straight on and were on the steamer in 30 minutes’. 20 December 1915. www.awm.gov.au/collection/RCDIG0000153, p.8.

According to the 2nd Division plan, at 01:00 after B2 had gone, 500 defenders should remain, at 02:45 after C1 had gone, 372 should remain, at 03:05 after C2 had gone, 244 should remain, and at 03:25 after the final C3 party had left, 50 should remain plus eight machine gun crews on Plugge's Plateau above South Beach and 40 on Walker's Ridge.¹⁶ These numbers did not include the embarkation staff, signallers, police and the 1st ACCS. The Evacuation Plan focused principally on the defending troops but not on the ancillary staff such as the 1st ACCS. It was not envisaged that everyone would get away and large numbers of casualties were not to be evacuated.¹⁷ According to the 1st ACCS diary, at 02:15 it received an order from Brig Gen A.H. Russell that it had been negotiated with Paton to evacuate half of the 1st ACCS between B and C parties, the remaining half, less one medical officer (Capt Alan Barton), one NCO and six men, with the covering party (rear-party). The remaining eight hospital staff were to be evacuated with the last 68 of the force.¹⁸

At 02:30 (MST) Littler wrote in his diary that he put aboard half of the 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Hospital (i.e. Station) on special barges. Then at 03:30 (MST) he wrote that he put aboard the last half less the eight staff mentioned by the 1st ACCS diary earlier and that 'they would have to take their chance with the last 68 of the force.' In the 1st ACCS diary, the order from Wisdom for the second half of the 1st ACCS to move off immediately was noted as 03:10. This is consistent with Littler's time of 03:30 (MST) when he wrote that he had finished putting the second half aboard. Littler noted that the explosion at Russell's Top occurred at this moment.¹⁹

Lt Col J.M. Antill of the 1st Division Headquarters noted in the 3rd Light Horse Brigade (3rd LHB) diary entry of 20 December 1915 that 'Last parties left beach at 0335. Walkers Ridge blown up as the last boats were about to leave'.²⁰ By last parties he is referring to the contingents of the C3 party since the 3rd LHB was not part of the rear-party. Antill was one of the men put forward as among the last to leave with Paton by Bean.²¹

Meanwhile at about 03:00, Wisdom was being patched through to Plugge's Plateau. He ordered the troops to withdraw, including Capt Radford and his machine gunners.²² Watson and his signallers continued with their work patching through calls, waiting for Wisdom to order Watson and the 2nd Division signallers to withdraw, but that call never came. At about 03:30 Watson found that the lines were dead to Wisdom and Paton at North Beach as well as to other posts. He then took the initiative and ordered the remaining signallers, including Sgt Both, to head double-time for North Beach approximately 1000 yards from their position along the beach. He then took the message handed to him by Wisdom at 17:00 in the previous evening

¹⁶ 2nd Division H.Q. Orders. 'Appendix 30, Troops remaining'. 16 December 1915. AWM4 1/44/5 Part 4, p.21.

¹⁷ 2nd Division H.Q. Orders. 'Medical Arrangements'. 16 December 1915. AWM4 1/44/5 Part 4, p.6.

¹⁸ First Australian Casualty Clearing Station, Diary. 'Last day of the Anzac evacuation'. 20 December 1915. AWM4 26/62/11 Part 2, pp.5-6.

¹⁹ Littler, Charles. Diary extract, 19/20 December 1915.

²⁰ Antill, J.M. Antill war diary, 1915-1916. MLMSS 584. Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales. <http://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/transcript/2012/D14492/a5407.htm>. MLMSS 584. Accessed 14 Feb 2016.

²¹ Bean, C.E.W. Letter, Bean to Paton. 'On Russell's Top and Last to Leave'. 14 June 1924. AWM38 3DRL 7953/35.

²² 2nd Division H.Q., Orders. '2nd Div. C Party, beach arrival and line departure times, Radford and M.G.s'. 16 December 1915. AWM4 1/44/5 Part 4 p.14; Paton, John. Report of Col. John Paton. 'At Anzac evacuation on night of 19th-20th December 1915'. Mudros, Lemnos, 23 December 1915. AWM4 1/25/9 Part 12 p.49; Watson, Stanley Holm. 'Sapper Signalman'. 1977. Private Collection AWM MSS0760. In Watson's account he writes 'Radcliffe' but it is clear from the unit's orders and diaries that Capt Radford, in charge of the Plugge's Plateau machine gunners, is meant.

and raced with Sgt Kelynack, also of the 2nd Division signallers, down to the beach (South Beach) to give the wireless operators an incomplete 'Evacuation completed' message. The message contained no detail about casualties that Paton would later write existed in the message. As they raced, they were spurred on by shells from the Turkish artillery at Gabe Tepe called 'Beachy Bill' by the Anzacs. HMS *Grafton* noted that at 03:35 'Beachy Bill' fired shells.²³ This provides an independent confirmation of Watson's timing.

At around 2:50 (MST) Lt Shaw of 28th Bn and his three crew were manning a machine gun at Bully Beef Sap on Russell's Top. Shaw was due to retire with the C2 party and set up his machine gun at 'Post P' on lower Walker's Ridge to form part of the rear-party (26). He heard a commotion behind him and wondered why. He had received no further orders and as far as he was concerned he still had ten minutes to go before withdrawal to Walker's Ridge (just below Russell's Top) on the left flank of North Beach. He was informed that the withdrawal for his section had been brought forward and that he must withdraw now. At 02:55 (MST), he withdrew and relocated his machine gun on lower Walker's Ridge, where two other machine guns from his battalion were already positioned. At 03:25 (MST) he received an order from a runner to withdraw to the beach. He '*imshied*'²⁴ down the ridge and at 03:40 by his watch, 03:30 (MST), he heard the mine explode. According to orders, it should have taken him 15 minutes to reach the beach. Leaving when he did, he therefore arrived at the North Beach pier at an estimated 03:40 (MST). On arrival, he noted seeing Capt Radford (Plugge's Plateau machine guns) and everybody being hurried onto lighters (11). It is also to be noted that the 20th Bn embarkation table stated that each of the C and rear parties was to report to the Military Landing Officer (MLO), further supporting that the embarkation officers knew the details of the evacuation of all final troops down to the last man.²⁵

At 03:40 the 1st ACCS noted in its diary that the remaining eight staff (including the remaining medical officer Capt Barton) embarked. At 02:15 they had been ordered by Brig Gen Russell to embark with the remaining 68 of the force.²⁶ Capt Barton confirmed this in his diary as follows: 'I brought my party down to the beach and reported to the embarking officer ... Soon I heard the Naval Transport Officer told that all men would be on the beach in 10 minutes.' At that moment Barton reported that the mine exploded and then 'the N.T.O. came running along and ordered all into the barge at the double ... The covering party from Plugge's 68 strong were coming aboard with us ... When we got away it was 3:40 according to me.'²⁷ Notable from this diary entry is that: he reported to the embarking officer on arrival; all were expected on the beach within ten minutes at which point the mine explodes (03:30); the Plugge's Plateau troops and machine gun crews boarded with Barton; and the covering force (rear-party) got away at 03:40. Both the mention of the Plugge's Plateau machine gunners and the time of departure are consistent with Shaw's account.

Maj Richard FitzGerald, the commander on Russell's Top, was noted in the 20th Bn diary as leaving Walker's Ridge at 03:31.²⁸ In a letter to Bean on 21 February 1917, FitzGerald wrote to clear up some issues he had with a newspaper article, as he was at the position mentioned in

²³ Bean, C.E.W. *The Story of Anzac*. Vol.2. The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918. 11th Edition. Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1941, p.897.

²⁴ 'Imshied' meaning 'he went in a hurried way'. From the Arabic used by Anzacs in Egypt 'imshi yalla' meaning 'hurry up and go away'.

²⁵ 20th Battalion, Diary. '20th Battalion Embarkation Table'. 1915. AWM4 23/37/5 p.10.

²⁶ First Australian Casualty Clearing Station, Diary. 'Last day of the Anzac evacuation'. Loc. cit, pp.5-6.

²⁷ Barton, Alan Sinclair Darvall. Diary. Private Collection of Alan Sinclair Darvall Barton (Major, AAMC, 1886-1950). 1915. AWM 2DRL/0056.

²⁸ 20th Battalion, Diary. 'Russell's Top, FitzGerald leaves'. 20 December 1915. AWM4 23/37/5, p.7.

the article and could provide first-hand knowledge. He wrote that the mines ‘at the Nek’ were blown on his personal order given from Russell’s Top, not from the beach as had been reported. He also mentioned that Lt Col Lamrock called FitzGerald by phone, about 15 minutes before FitzGerald left his position, to say that the Plugge’s Plateau flank was being withdrawn.²⁹ This indicates that the phone system was working up until about 03:15, with Watson and his signallers patching through calls until at least this time. It also puts the Plugge’s machine gunners on the beach at around 03:35, allowing 20 minutes to traverse the terrain.

Most importantly, FitzGerald told Bean that when he got to the pier he met Paton and Wisdom (he does not mention Littler). He says in his letter that he, Paton and Wisdom walked up and down looking for stragglers for about 15 minutes. They then embarked at about 03:55, with ‘Paton being the last to leave the wharf.’ It should be noted that the time in his letter to Bean has been changed from an earlier time and that time appears to be 03:45. In any case, regardless of time alteration, the FitzGerald letter puts the time of the departure of the boats, which he and Paton boarded, as 03:55. Paton himself noted in his letter to Bean that he waited for stragglers for about ten minutes,³⁰ not the 15 minutes that FitzGerald mentioned. This indicates perhaps a slightly earlier departure time of 03:50.

At 03:45 Watson, Kelynack and the naval wireless operators, two of whom are named as A. W. Herbert and A.E. Jones,³¹ were still on their way to North Beach. Watson noted that the evacuation signal had been sent at this time, 03:45. He did not know the number of casualties. On board HMS *Chatham* (the Royal Navy flagship of Admiral de Robeck) the following Morse code message from W4 (the South Beach wireless station) was received at 03:42: ‘To A.H.Q. Evacuation completed 0325’ The message was written at 03:25,³² consistent with Watson’s account that the lines were dead and he started to move.

Paton wrote in his Official Report that the message he despatched to Army Headquarters on HMS *Chatham* read: ‘EVACUATION COMPLETED; NO CASUALTIES LEFT ASHORE; ONE SENT ABOARD’.³³ The message was never received in this form. Wisdom had handed Watson an incomplete message at 17:00 the previous evening with no mention of the casualties since they weren’t known yet. Watson left his signal office at around 03:30 for the wireless station on South Beach and sent the incomplete message, with a blank for casualties, he had received ten-and-a-half hours earlier.³⁴ The message was relayed by HMS *Heliotrope*, where Lt Gen A.J. Godley awaited news, and was received by Vice Admiral Commanding at 03:55; Anzac Intelligence noted that the evacuation was complete by 03:47.³⁵ These times are consistent with one another and further support Watson’s account.

Watson wrote that he arrived at North Beach and met Littler at the pier whereupon ‘Capt Littler (Beach Master) hastened us to get on the “beetle” barge, which he said was the last’. It is to be

²⁹ FitzGerald, Richard Francis. Letter, FitzGerald to Bean. ‘*In a dirty Hun Dugout*’. 21 February 1917. AWM38 3DRL 6673/98, pp.5-7.

³⁰ Paton, John. Letter, Paton to Bean. ‘On Russell’s Top and Last to Leave’. 21 June 1924. Private Record.

³¹ Bean, C.E.W. *The Story of Anzac*. Vol.2. The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918. 11th Edition. Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1941, p.896.

³² Message, W4 to Chatham. ‘Evacuation Completed 0325’. 20 December 1915. AWM38 3DRL 6673/98, p.8.

³³ Paton, John. Report of Col. John Paton. ‘At Anzac evacuation on night of 19th-20th December 1915’. Mudros, Lemnos, 23 December 1915. AWM4 1/25/9 Part 12 p.49.

³⁴ Watson, Stanley Holm. ‘Gallipoli ... The last seven days’. ca. 1977. Private Record.

³⁵ Message, Heliotrope to VAC. ‘Evacuation completed awaiting arrival commander of rear-guard 0347’. 20 December 1915. AWM38 3DRL 6673/98, p.4; ANZAC H.Q. Intelligence, Diary. ‘Evacuation was completed at 0347’. 20 December 1915. AWM4 1/27/10, p.59.

noted that Watson did not mention seeing his rear-guard commander.³⁶ Based on a time to cover the approximately 1000 yards around Ari Burnu from South to North Beach at night on sandy, pebbly ground carrying instruments, Watson would have arrived at about 03:55, after leaving the wireless station around 03:45, according to his timing. Shaw, in one of the rear parties, noted that he arrived for embarkation at 03:40 (MST) and saw Capt Radford. Barton mentioned that the Plugge's Plateau machine gunners (Radford) left with him at 03:40. These times are consistent with the assertion that the lighter with Shaw and Radford would have already left the pier by the time Watson arrived at 03:55.

At the pier Watson asked about the phone and Littler said that 'Radcliffe' (i.e. Radford) and his machine gunners had taken it. After speaking with Littler, Watson ran over to the phone location near Walker's Pier higher up the beach, and returned after confirming that the phone was gone. According to Watson, Littler stated that the rear-guard commander, Paton, and Radford's machine gunners, had left with the previous lighter (barge). Littler then restated that this was the 'LAST' lighter (barge).³⁷ Finally, Littler made one last pass over the beach then gave the order to 'shove clear'.³⁸ Watson wrote that Littler joined them on the barge some time later. In Littler's diary, he wrote that checking the beach took about five minutes.³⁹ Combining Littler's time interval with Watson's reported times, time estimate for traversing from South to North Beach and allowing five minutes to check for the phone, puts the time at which the very last barge and steamboat left North Beach, Anzac as 04:05.

It is interesting that Watson and Both in *Sapper Signalman*, which contains extracts from each of their diaries, called Capt Radford, of the Plugge's Plateau machine gunners, by the same incorrect name Littler used, 'Radcliffe'.⁴⁰ This provides additional confirmation that they indeed spoke with Littler about Radford and the missing phone, since it is unlikely that they would independently make the same mistake about a surname. Shaw, on the other hand, used Radford's correct name.

Later when they were aboard the steamer which would take them to Lemnos, Littler mentioned to Watson that Watson was the last officer he sent aboard. Watson pulled out his pay book and asked Littler to attest to that on the back of the will page. Littler wrote, 'Captain S.H. Watson was the last officer I sent aboard at North Beach on the evacuation of Anzac. Signed C.A. Littler, Captain. Beach Commandant. 20/12/15'.⁴¹ It follows that Wisdom, Paton and Capt C.M. Staveley RN left at sometime between 03:45 and 03:55 on a steamboat a few minutes after the barge containing the rear-party. This is supported by numerous accounts: battalion diaries, the letters from FitzGerald and Paton, Watson and Both's diaries, Shaw's (under FitzGerald's command) and Barton's accounts as well as that in Littler's diary.

Due to last-minute acceleration of the withdrawal plan and severing of phone communications sometime after 03:15, stragglers were inevitable. Littler wrote in his diary that at 04:00 (MST) 'all complete but a few last down were 9 machine gunners and Captain Watson and five from wireless.'⁴² Among the 'wireless' was the signaller Kelynack as well as the naval wireless

³⁶ Watson, Stanley Holm. 'Gallipoli ... The last seven days'. ca. 1977. Private Record.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Watson, Stanley Holm. 'Sapper Signalman'. 1977. Private Collection AWM MSS0760.

³⁹ Littler, Charles. Diary extract, 19/20 December 1915.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Littler, Charles Augustus. Attestation. 'Watson: last officer I sent aboard'. On board Steamer for Lemnos: 20 December 1915. AWM EXDOC109.

⁴² Littler, Charles. Diary extract, 19/20 December 1915.

operators. Using Littler's diary, an estimate of the total number of latecomers and remaining beach staff would be around 20, not including naval personnel on the boats. This number includes approximately five embarking officers and sentries, Watson with five signallers and wireless operators, as well as nine machine gunners. From Littler's diary at 04:10 (MST) all embarking officers were aboard and at 04:15 (MST) Littler 'went aboard last picket boat having been preceded by N.T.O. Colonel Paton and all others', and they steamed away. This time is consistent with the estimate derived from Watson's account of 04:05 and significantly later than the time noted by FitzGerald, and supported by other evidence, as when he, Paton and Wisdom and the majority of the rear-party left.

At 04:25 Lt Gen Godley on HMS *Heliotrope* wrote a wireless message to Gen Birdwood which stated that Paton had already reported to him and there were no casualties, no hospital staff or wounded left ashore and four guns were saved.⁴³ In the brigade reports of Paton and Wisdom, it was stated that Paton left the pier at 04:10 in Staveley's steamboat and then transferred to a picket boat to take him to HMS *Heliotrope*.⁴⁴ According to Paton's times, in just 15 minutes he left the pier and transferred from Staveley's boat to a picket boat that took him to HMS *Heliotrope*. He then boarded the ship (sloop), met Godley and gave his verbal report. After Paton had reported, Godley wrote his wireless message, noting the time as 04:25. It does not seem plausible that all this occurred in 15 minutes and indicates that Paton departed earlier than 04:10. It is to be noted that the lighters and steamboats had no communication means with the larger ships farther out from shore. There was no radio and communication by light signals was to be avoided.

Based on cross-referencing of accounts and time interval estimates, the time range for the departure of Paton, Wisdom and Staveley is between 03:45 to 03:55 and for the departure of Littler, Watson and the remaining stragglers the range is between 04:05 and 04:15. That is, Staveley's boat, with Paton and Wisdom, left approximately 20 minutes earlier than Littler's picket boat. At some time later, Littler transferred from the picket boat to the barge to join Watson and others as they recounted (24). He noted in his diary that he was preceded by the NTO (Staveley), Paton and all others. When compared with Wisdom's statement reported by Paton 'You Sir (Paton) are the last man to leave', Littler's entry sounds more like evidence of having completed his job as an MLO overseeing the embarkation of the troops rather than a statement of claim.

By 05:00 (MST) Littler was aboard a steamer bound for Lemnos Island. On Lemnos, on Christmas day 1915, Littler wrote to his mother:

Last night I received your packet for which many thanks. The chapter is closed and the hard 8 months campaign finished with our evacuation of Anzac. It seemed like leaving home to come away. The getting away was most successful. As Geoff⁴⁵ was going to be amongst the last, I was able to get special permission and this carried out right up to the finish and I was the last to leave and having been amongst the first to land, and never away, had the record.⁴⁶

⁴³ Godley, Alexander John. Wireless message, Godley to Birdwood. 'Rear-guard Commander has reported'. 20 December 1915. AWM4 1/25/9 Part 11, p.46.

⁴⁴ Paton, John. Report of Col John Paton. 'At Anzac evacuation on night of 19th-20th December 1915'. Mudros, Lemnos: 23 December 1915. AWM4 1/25/9 Part 12, p.49; Wisdom, Evan Alexander. Narrative of Operations. 'Evacuation of Anzac'. Lemnos Island: 23 December 1915. AWM4 1/25/9 Part 12, p.53.

⁴⁵ Charles Littler's eldest son Geoffrey Ashburner Littler, a machine gunner with the 22nd Battalion at Wire Gully/Lone Pine.

⁴⁶ Littler, Charles Augustus. Letter, Littler to his mother (H.S. Stevens). 'The evacuation'. Mudros, Lemnos Island: 25 December 1915. AWM PR91-64.

Charles Littler mentions that he was last to leave in among other general conversation regarding family and the evacuation.

In Bean's *Official History* and Paton's Official Report the last steamboat left at 04:10 with Littler, Paton, Staveley and Wisdom aboard. Paton then transferred to a picket boat to rendezvous with HMS *Heliotrope* to give his account to Lt Gen Godley. The 'EVACUATION COMPLETED; NO CASUALTIES LEFT ASHORE; ONE SENT ABOARD' message was ordered to be sent by Paton (via Watson). Discovering the line dead, Watson then raced south from North Beach to the wireless station at Anzac Cove to have this message sent. Watson, the man with responsibility for the signals and phone lines and who delivered the incomplete 'Evacuation completed' message to wireless, was adamant that this is not how it happened and provided a detailed account. The report of the rear-guard commander Paton and the narrative (timeline) of his staff officer Wisdom, on which Bean's account in the *Official History* is largely based, are both erroneous in critical aspects of troop departures and signals as the has been shown by the evidence.

Conclusion

The question as to the last Australian to leave Anzac has interested Australians from the end of the Gallipoli campaign onwards. In this article, the first thorough investigation of the issue has been performed since the digitisation of the Australian War Memorial records, drawing on many independent sources including new evidence not previously available. Although much credence is given to Bean's determination of the last to leave Anzac on the morning of 20 December 1915, it has been shown that he did not have the time to probe the issue to the bottom, as he might have liked. This is evidenced by the fact that he asked one of Charles Littler's sons to work out the inconsistencies with Paton.

Examining the Evacuation Plan in depth has provided an understanding of how the last troops were withdrawn from the hills and how withdrawal times were staggered so that they could be marched straight onto the waiting lighters without accumulating on the beach. It has been discussed how the acceleration of the evacuation timeline as well as severed communication lines put pressure on the rear-party, wireless and signallers, invariably leading to some stragglers. Moreover, multiple eye-witness accounts have been cross-referenced, with the Russell's Top mine explosion providing a convenient way to synchronise the times reported by each independent party, allowing us to determine when the rear-party left.

Littler was not in Staveley's boat as Paton attested. This is supported by eye-witnesses, who spoke to Littler on the beach, and also by the acknowledgement of a mistake by Bean later in life. The testimony of the witnesses reveals inconsistencies between the Official Report and what is recorded by FitzGerald, Barton, Watson, Both, Littler and indeed in the 'Evacuation completed' message itself. Additionally, the time on Godley's message to Birdwood casts further doubt on the time Paton asserts he embarked.

The accounts of eye-witnesses, careful cross-referencing of reported times as well as analysis of rear-party departures and lighter loading schedules have shown that an additional lighter and picket boat left the pier approximately 20 minutes after Staveley's boat, containing the beach officials and the stragglers, machine gunners, naval wireless operators and signallers. Onto the last picket boat, after all were aboard the boats, stepped Capt Charles Augustus Murray Littler, Beach Commandant; the last Australian to leave Anzac. Bean himself admitted as much and so in his words, 'I had always understood that old Littler was'.

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The authors are the descendants of Charles Augustus Murray Littler (1868-1916), being the sons of Burnett Guy Littler (1896-1967), the youngest son of Charles.

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THE HEROES OF KOPYBOYN

June Torcasio

On 11 March 1898 a six-stanza poem by Harry Crawford, ‘the Bard of Kobyboyn’, was published in the *Seymour Express*. A brief introduction to the poem reads: ‘Among the troops which went to England to represent Australia at the Jubilee celebrations were Messrs R. McAlpin and W. Scott of Kobyboyn. About their life there, the Bard of Kobyboyn (Mr H. Crawford) has penned the following lines.’¹ This is the poem:

The Heroes of Kobyboyn

It was springtime 97, Koby folk had gathered then,
 To give a hearty welcome home to their gallant riflemen,
 When two horsemen coming nearer o’er the hilltop plainly showed,
 But they know not those distinguished strangers riding down the road.
 On they come, their waxed moustaches glisten in the morning sun,
 And their proud and haughty bearing paralyses every one.
 But at last they recognise them, and they cheer with right good will,
 For they all are proud to honour Koby’s heroes, Bob and Bill.

Ask me not whom they have conquered, or what valiant deeds they’ve done,
 This is no blood-thirsty tale of butchered men, or battles won,
 I will not of horror tell you – carnage dire or woeful strife,
 ‘Tis of victory bright and cheerful, won with peaceful table knife.
 It was thus our heroes conquered, and they nobly held their part,
 British beef, or fish, or poultry, pudding, pastries, appletart
 Disappeared as if by magic when our boys were on the job
 For I vow no two could slate them, Koby’s darlings, Bill and Bob.’

When off duty in ‘the village’, they would gaily stroll about,
 And the Cockneys, when they saw them, greeted them with cheer and shout.
 But the girls they fairly mobbed them, as they crowded round to kiss,
 They were almost killed by kindness, by the charming London miss.
 Offers there were made to wed them, by the fairest of the fair,
 ‘Twas a wonder that the ‘fifty’ were not wedded then and there.
 But although the whole contingent was considered fit to ‘kill’,
 None could ever hope to equal Koby’s mashers, Bob and Bill.

The Jubilee, with all its grandeur, a fiasco must have been,
 Had our soldiers not been present to defend our glorious Queen,
 For the Mayor of Melbourne told them they must keep a sharp look out,
 And be ready if they spotted wild-eyed looking coves about.
 To arrest them instantaneous, heedless what the risk might be,
 Lest they might be meditating injury to Her Majesty.
 While that great procession lasted, eagle eyes were in the mob,
 But no harm could ever reach her, with her escort, Bill and Bob.

At last the festive scene is finished, homeward bound they now must start,
 Though it is with pangs of sorrow, still the best of friends must part.

¹ ‘The Heroes of Kobyboyn. Welcoming the returning troopers’. *The Seymour Express*, Friday 11 March, 1898.

A gigantic farewell banquet, by their London chums is spread,
 Healths are pledged and hands are shaken, vows exchanged and goodbyes said.
 Now they're off, but ah! The horror, there arose a fearful storm,
 Soon in agony most dreadful, writhed full many a manly form,
 And the fishes round that steamboat soon of dainties had their fill,
 Though they struggled hard to keep theirs did the suffering Bob and Bill.

What emotions stirred their bosoms, when they reached Port Melbourne pier,
 And a thousand lusty voices, greeted them with cheer on cheer,
 And they hear the news so joyful, they'll be banquetted again,
 For they will full well enjoy it, without fear of future pain.
 Now their junketing is over, and the pair have ceased to roam.
 They both say they thought of Koby, always as their 'dear old home'.
 Just one thing I have to mention, though I'll call no man a snob,
 Still boys do not trust your donahs, out of sight with Bill and Bob.



Fig.1: 'Bob' in the uniform of the Victorian Mounted Rifles (author's photo)

From which war are the characters Bob and Bill returning? Where is Kobyboyn? Who were the central characters? Who was H. Crawford, the author of this jaunty poem?

It wasn't a war at all. It was an expedition of Mounted Riflemen chosen by Colonel Tom Price to sail to London. They were celebrating Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee from 18-26 June 1897. This was an opportunity for colonials to display their military prowess.

Kobyboyn is the old name for a district situated between Yea and Seymour in north-eastern Victoria. The Victorian Mounted Rifles (VMR) were part of Australia's colonial defence force and units were first raised in 1885. Drawn largely from country Victoria, there were detachments in Yea, Seymour and neighbouring districts such as Avenel, Ruffy and Cathkin. In 1897 Col Tom Price was seeking 'Australian natives' at least

5 feet 9 inches tall, of fine physique, capable of excellent drill work and horsemanship and a fair to average shot to represent Australia in London. The selection took place at the Victoria Barracks in St Kilda Road, Melbourne and 20 soldiers were chosen from a muster of 200. The team was announced in *The Yea Chronicle* on 18 March 1897.²

R. McAlpin was my great uncle, Robert Stephen McAlpin, known as Bob. Much of his life has been documented in a personal diary, letters, war records, photographs and newspaper articles.

² 'The V.M.R. team', *The Yea Chronicle*, Thursday, 18 March, 1897.

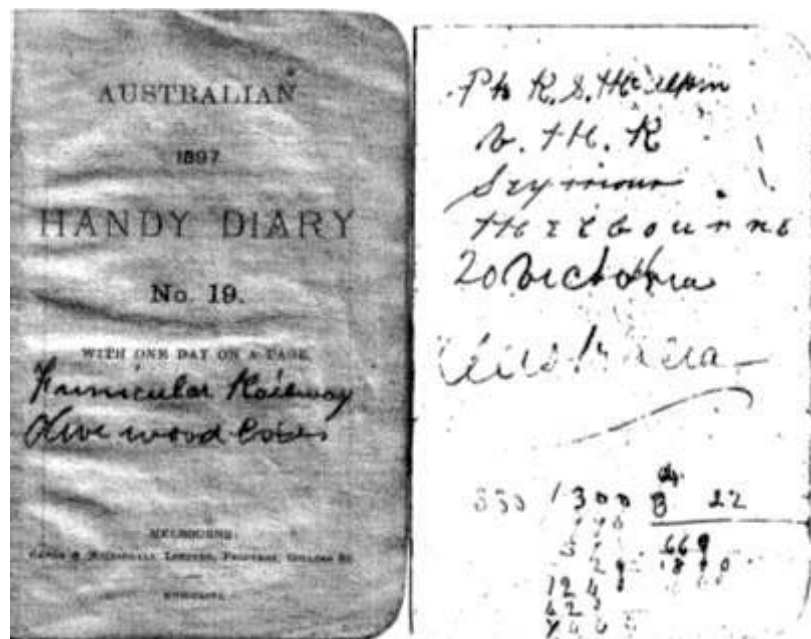
He was the eighth child of the 11 children of Archibald McAlpin and Manie Ritchie, who had emigrated from Scotland. He was born on 18 October 1873 at Emu Flat near Pyalong.³ Archibald arrived in 1853 and Manie in 1854. They married in 1857.⁴ Archibald was a builder and stonemason and built a stone house on his Emu Flat property. Bob lived in Caveat prior to the expedition.

Information on W. Scott has eluded me. However a J. Scott from Cavendish appears in the initial list of the 20 soldiers selected. He is also noted in one of several newspaper reports:

Sergeant F. McNaughton and Privates S.T. Staughton, J. Scott, and G. Neil of the Victorian Mounted Rifles, were members of the Queen's escort from Slough to Windsor Castle.⁵

Perhaps the 'W. Scott' in the introduction was a mistake and it should have been 'J. Scott'? Further information compounds the matter. To ensure that Victoria was keeping up with New South Wales and New Zealand in terms of numbers, an extra 20 men, including a Corporal J. Scott, joined the team in April.⁶ According to Calder, Victoria was actually represented by a detachment of 51 soldiers.⁷

Fig.2: Cover and title page of Bob's shipboard diary (photo courtesy of John Ridd of Yea)



Bob kept a record of his journey. This water-stained diary was found in 1995 in a tin at the Molesworth home of his nephew Robert McAlpin. In it he describes the Contingent's departure from Port Melbourne on 24 April on the *Orotavia*. They stopped at Adelaide and Albany for the South Australian and West Australian Contingents. They banqueted and they threw up, as recorded in the poem. Sea sickness plagued Bob for much of the voyage. For instance, he found the passage to Adelaide very rough and was 'terribly sick', sleeping on deck all night rolled up in his coat.

A Western Australian infantryman, Alfred Sneller, was struck and killed instantly by a block at the top of a mast during drill on 29 May. A black ribbon marks this diary entry. Corporal McNaughton of Shepparton also described the journey in despatches sent to the *Euroa Advertiser*.⁸ An anonymous correspondent sent despatches to *The Gippsland Times*.

³ Birth certificate Reg. No.18358.

⁴ Marriage certificate Reg. No.3867.

⁵ 'The Colonial Troopers', *Australian Town and Country Journal*, Saturday 3 July 1897, p.36.

⁶ 'The Victorian Contingent', *The Australasian*, 10 April 1897, p.36.

⁷ W. Calder. *Heroes and Gentlemen: Colonel Tom Price and the Victorian Mounted Rifles*. Melbourne: Jimaringle Publications, 1985, p.68.

⁸ Sergeant McNaughton's despatches appeared in the *Euroa Advertiser*, 30 April 1897, p.2; 4 June 1897, p.3; 2 July 1897, p.2; 9 July 1897, p.2.

Bob was entranced by the people at Colombo and Port Said, interested in the goods they were selling and the exotic views. The *Orotavia* arrived at Tilbury on 4 June and were enthusiastically cheered as they marched through the East End of London. Winty Calder in her book *Heroes and Gentlemen* quotes Corporal Patterson, writing to his mother:

Invitations are pouring in, asking us to go to the theatres, passes for the boxes and dress circle being enclosed; and then there are always people coming along inviting us to partake of some refreshment.⁹

Bob in his diary also records those theatre visits and receiving complementary refreshments. He saw Queen Victoria for the first time on 22 June when he spent 8½ hrs in the saddle experiencing ‘sights indescribable’. There were ‘illuminations at night. The VMR participated in numerous military ceremonies. They went on to Paris and Versailles and he was surprised at the motor cars and ‘girls riding bikes in bloomers’. He was also impressed by the Tuileries, Notre Dame, Halles Centrales market and Napoleon’s tomb.

Most of the Victorians and all of the South Australians sailed home on 23 July on the RMS *Oroya* which berthed at Port Melbourne on 1 September.¹⁰ On 5 July the men dispersed, Bob noting that a lot of them were ‘going today to different parts’. He stayed in Europe longer than most of the other VMR soldiers. After returning to London, he visited relatives in Scotland. His souvenirs included a bible signed by Queen Victoria, his dairy, and walking sticks – ‘crooks’ – from the Highlands, deer horns, heather, and oat cakes. He greatly enjoyed singing songs in Gaelic and wearing a kilt.

Bob left England on 6 August on the *Orient*. During the journey home the weather became unbearably hot and a fireman in the engine room died. Heat and sickness claimed the lives of a baker and barman. A black coal pit worker also died and was cremated in the furnace. Arriving at Port Melbourne on 16 September, he was home at Fort William, Caveat on 19 September and the closing entry in his diary reads: ‘Here ends one of the most pleasant & enjoyable trips I ever had or am likely to have’.

Strangely, there was no reaction to the poem in subsequent issues of the *Seymour Express*. Perhaps because it was published almost six months after the return of the soldiers, interest in the Jubilee had waned. I wonder what Bill and Bob thought of the poem? Were they amused or annoyed by its anti-establishment tone and comments about their ‘junketing’, their waxed moustaches and their romantic conquests? Significantly Bob kept a copy of the poem and it was found among his belongings after he died.

This was just the first of several trips abroad. For the time being he resumed his farming and VMR activities. In January 1899, *The Euroa Advertiser* reported a rifle match between Longwood and Ruffy. The Ruffy team included Ptes R. and D. McAlpin and Sgt Maygar. Losing by eight points, they were consoled by a dinner which included goose and turkey. It appears that both Robert and his older brother Daniel were volunteer Riflemen prior to the Boer War.¹¹ The fearless Leslie Cecil Maygar was a neighbour and friend who later earned a VC for his heroic actions at Geelhoutboom, Natal on 23 November, 1901 in the approaching South African conflict.

The Second Anglo-Boer War broke out on 9 October 1899. On 28 October Bob sailed with the

⁹ Calder, op cit, p.73.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ ‘District news’ [From our own correspondent] Ruffy. *Euroa Advertiser*, Friday 20 January 1899, p.2.

First Victorian Contingent in the *Medic* to South Africa as Corporal.¹² The men could shoot and ride, and many were bushmen experienced at finding their way in unfamiliar territory. Capt Duncan McLeish of Yea commanded these Victorian Mounted Riflemen. Bob's stay was less than one year because he contracted enteric fever and from early February 1900 spent about 14 weeks in the military hospital at Wynberg, Capetown. Then he was sent to Netley Hospital near Southampton in England.¹³ Subsequently invalided home on the SS *Ormuz*, he arrived on 21 November 1900.¹⁴ It is unlikely that he was involved in any of the major fighting; he was perhaps deployed in routine patrols across the veldt to search for Boer commandos.¹⁵ Soon after arriving home he was first elected in 1901 as a councillor to the Yea Shire. He resigned to return to the Boer War.¹⁶



Fig.3: Bob, seated on the right with his unit at Broadmeadows Camp just prior to his second tour of duty in South Africa in 1902. He is wearing his corporal's stripes and the group are beside a bell tent (author's collection)

He departed on board HMT *St Andrew* on 12 February, 1902 with the 2nd Battalion, Australian Commonwealth Horse (Vic).¹⁷ The 2nd Bn served from March-May 1902 on the Natal border

¹² Lt Col P.L. Murray. *Official Records of the Australian Military Contingents to the War in South Africa*. Dept of Defence, Melbourne, 1911, p.213.

¹³ 'Letter from Corporal R.S. McAlpine, of Seymour. Wynburg Hospital, 22nd April, 1900' and 'Wynburg Hospital, 7th May, 1900', *Euroa Advertiser*, Friday 15 June 1900, p.3.

¹⁴ Murray, op. cit., p.223.

¹⁵ David Philips. 'Australia's Imperial War: the Anglo-Boer War, 1899-1902'. *Victorian Historical Journal*, vol.71, no.2 (Sept 2000), p.89.

¹⁶ 'Death of R.S. McAlpin: Friend of the Soldiers', *The Yea Chronicle*, 3 June 1942, p.3.

¹⁷ Murray, op. cit., p.308.

and west Transvaal.¹⁸ Peace was declared on 31 May 1902.¹⁹ Bob then remained in Johannesburg working as a carpenter for the developing South African Railways. It is unclear when he returned from South Africa, but a letter from his mother, dated 2 August 1903, implored him to come home.²⁰ Diamonds had been discovered in Witwatersrand and a family anecdote has Bob posting jewels home and young nieces wearing sparkling brooches to school. His eldest niece, Manie, born in 1896 was the most likely recipient of this jewellery. However, the brooches seem to have disappeared, perhaps lost in long grass or secreted behind loose weatherboard walls? Bob was certainly home by 1909 when he was re-elected to the Yea Council.²¹

Early in 1914 Bob's sisters, Nell and Jean, fostered a baby named Mary, born 14 January 1914. Jean died in 1920 and subsequently Mary was later reared by Nell and Bob. Meanwhile in late 1914, the 4th Light Horse Regiment was formed as part of the Australian Imperial Force. Raised in Victoria, it attracted men with good physique, equestrian abilities and resourcefulness, some with militia and Boer War experience. The 4th Light Horse was recruited, organised, trained and equipped at Broadmeadows Camp. In his application for a commission with the 4th Light Horse Regiment, Bob put his age back four years, from 41 to 37.²² The 4th Light Horse left Port Melbourne on 18 October 1914 and arrived in Alexandria on 11 December. Soon after, they reached Mena Camp at the foot of the pyramids. Bob's friend, Capt Leslie Maygar VC was appointed in command of B Squadron.²³

On 3 February 1915 Bob received an additional 'pip'.²⁴ He was now a lieutenant in B Squadron. At about this time he had to have his appendix removed. As the heat intensified, many men cut the legs of their trousers to keep cool and to stop the spread of lice. Swimming provided some relief. On 24 June 1915, he was wounded in the leg by a Turkish shell whilst on the beach with his 'Boys' at Tenedos in the Dardanelles.²⁵ Transferred to hospital in Heliopolis, writing to his friend Bertha Ridd of Molesworth, he said that he had got a bullet through the fetlock.²⁶ Given the proximity of Troy to Gallipoli, this could be seen as Bob's Achilles Heel. According to his obituary in 1942, he was 'invalided to Scotland'.²⁷ He was welcomed back at the Yea railway station on Saturday 4 September 1915.²⁸ Bob's nephew, Robert McAlpin, said that Bob completed an officer's course at Cambridge University before joining the A.I.F.²⁹ Several Cambridge University Colleges have searched on my behalf and have been unable to find any

¹⁸ Craig Wilcox. *Australia's Boer War: the War in South Africa, 1899-1902*. South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2002, p.411.

¹⁹ R.S. Lawson. 'The Boer War 1899-1902'. *Defence Force Journal* no.12 (Sept/Oct 1978), pp.51-52.

²⁰ Letter held by the author.

²¹ 'Cr. R. McAlpin (Yea) retires.' *Alexandra and Yea Standard and Yarck, Gobur, Thornton and Acheron Express*, Friday 27 Feb 1942, p.3. The article records that ill health had prompted the retirement of Cr R. McAlpin from the Yea Shire Council after having served the ratepayers for 34 years. First elected in 1901, he resigned in 1902 when he was accepted for service in the South African War. On his return he was re-elected in 1909 and held office until Saturday 21 February, 1942.

²² Service record, Robert Stephen McAlpin, National Archives of Australia, <http://naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=1936736>.

²³ David Holloway. *Hooves, Wheels and Tracks: A History of the 4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Regiment and its Predecessors*. Fitzroy, Vic: Regimental Trustees, 1990, Ch.6.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p.114.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p.127.

²⁶ Letter to Bertha from Heliopolis Hospital, 2/7/1915.

²⁷ 'Death of R.S. McAlpin: Friend of the Soldiers', *op cit*.

²⁸ 'Welcome home to Lieut McAlpin'. *The Yea Chronicle*, Thursday 9 September 1915, p.2.

²⁹ G.P. & N.E. Jones. *Molesworth 1824-1994*. Molesworth Local History Committee, 1994, p.118. As remembered by his nephew Bob McAlpin.

record of his enrolment.

November 1916 saw the termination of his appointment with the A.I.F. He eventually married Bertha in 1932,³⁰ and they went to live at 'Floradale' in Molesworth³¹. Bertha told me that they had been engaged for 20 years.³² After many years as a bachelor, Bob took time to adapt to married life. Highlands neighbour, Doug Lade, remembered sitting down to order lunch at a cafe in Station Street Seymour, when Bob leapt to his feet, recalling that Bertha had prepared lunch for him at home.



Fig.4: At Mena Camp, Egypt. Bob is pictured (centre) on 'Hector' with Lt Stanley Pollard and Capt Leslie Maygar. Inscription on verso reads: '27-1-15 from Bob & Hector' (photo courtesy of John Ridd, Yea)

During 1915-1920 Bob was Yea Shire President. He served as a councillor for 34 years. He also worked for the Closer Settlement Board, and was instrumental in having Killingworth thrown open for returned soldiers. As Closer Settlement Officer he was in charge of about half the North East district. A sworn valuer, he valued the area for the Board.³³ Mary's daughter recalls her mother saying that Bob was very critical of the implementation of the Soldier Settlement scheme and the way that infertile land was given to returned soldiers who had no

³⁰ 'Molesworth'. *Alexandra and Yea Standard and Yarek, Gobur, Thornton and Acheron Express*, Friday 27 May 1932, p.3.

³¹ G.P. & N.E. Jones, op cit, p.114.

³² Conversation with Bertha McAlpin at Banavie, in the early 1970s.

³³ 'Death of R.S. McAlpin: Friend of the Soldiers'. op cit, p.3.

farming experience.³⁴ He became Bailiff of Crown Lands in 1920.³⁵ In 1933 he was appointed Appraiser for the Department of Lands and Survey, his job being ‘to determine the price at which any portion of Crown lands in the State of Victoria may be sold.’³⁶ Bob retired from the Council for health reasons in February 1942,³⁷ dying on 28 May 1942 in Seymour. His obituary was subtitled ‘Friend of the Soldiers’ and noted that on matters of policy he was fearless but friendly – a ‘councillor’ and a ‘counsellor’.³⁸

I turn now to the ‘Bard of Kobyboyn’. Harry Crawford was born in Blamey NSW in 1865 where his father was teaching at the National School. He was the fourth child of the 11 children of William Crawford and his English wife Emma Wilson. William had emigrated to NSW from Meff, Donegal in October 1852.³⁹ The couple married in 1860 according to the rites of the Church of England.⁴⁰ The family had moved to Whiteheads Creek near Seymour by 1875 where William was principal of the local school from 1875-1890.⁴¹ Harry leased land in Kobyboyn;⁴² he also played cricket in the district during 1891-94.⁴³ The late Joyce Waddell (nee Minchinton), long-time resident of Caveat, recalled her father saying that Harry had lost an eye.⁴⁴

Harry, his newly widowed sister Sara Minchinton, and his two brothers, surveyor James Sharman and George Hunter, went to Western Australia around 1896, before publication of ‘The Heroes of Kobyboyn’ in 1898. This suggests that Harry had maintained contact with his friend Bob McAlpin during and after the 1897 VMR expedition to London. Peter Crawford, Harry’s nephew, claims that Harry cut timber at Bibra Lake for the Fremantle Steamship Company, moved out to Armadale, then to Nymbup before his siblings arrived in WA.⁴⁵ In 1905, according to Brian Taylor, Harry acquired c10,000 acres of land in Tambellup.⁴⁶ Brian later purchased a 1600-acre portion of this land from the Crawford estate. Harry was a very good axeman and ring-barked the big trees to encourage the growth of native grasses. He cut shingles for the roof of his home which he built in 1915.⁴⁷

His farming methods were questionable. He threw out superphosphate by hand from the back of his Model-T-Ford,⁴⁸ neglected his farm fencing, and let his sheep suffer from lice and dehydration.⁴⁹ To boost the weight of the bales he put quartz rocks in his meagre woolclip.

³⁴ Reminiscences of Mary’s daughter, 1996.

³⁵ Office of the Board of Land and Works, Melbourne. [Certificate of appointment] ‘as notified in the Government Gazette of the thirtieth day of June, 1920’, p.2194.

³⁶ Extract from the *Victorian Government Gazette*, no.74, 12 April 1933.

³⁷ ‘Cr. R. McAlpin (Yea) Retires’, op cit, p.3.

³⁸ ‘Death of R.S. McAlpin: Friend of the Soldiers’, op.cit, p.3.

³⁹ The Ancestry Library records a William Crawford, born c1827, from Meff (Donegal, Ireland), aged 25, arriving as an assisted immigrant on the ship *Kate*, on 10 October, 1852, according to State Records Authority of New South Wales; Kingswood, NSW; *Persons on bounty ships to Sydney, Newcastle and Moreton Bay (Board’s Immigrant Lists)*; Series: 5217; Reel: 2463; Item: [4/4925].

⁴⁰ New South Wales Marriage Certificate, Reg No.1860/001803.

⁴¹ John G. and Virginia Jennings. *The Schools of Seymour and district 1846-1999*. Seymour, Vic: Seymour and District Historical Society, 2000, p.75.

⁴² *Kilmore Free Press*, 3 September 1891, p.2.

⁴³ *The Yea Chronicle*, 26 March 1891 and *The Seymour Express*, 26 Jan 1894.

⁴⁴ Conversation with Joyce Waddell at her home in Caveat in 2005.

⁴⁵ Email from Ian Jeisman, September 2014.

⁴⁶ Brian Taylor correspondence, 12 February 2013.

⁴⁷ Brian Taylor. *Cooperation Incorporated*. The author, 2010, p.57.

⁴⁸ Judith Parnell. *Country Cavalcade: a History of the Shire of Tambellup*. East Fremantle, WA: Shire of Tambellup, 1982, p.141.

⁴⁹ Brian Taylor, correspondence, 21 Feb 2013.

London wool-buyers, Henry Willis & Co., sent the rocks back, cash on delivery including freight. Harry, curious to know what was in the case, had to pay before the mystery wooden trunk could be delivered!⁵⁰

At 63 he married the gentle, gracious, Eva Ullyot in Kelmscott; she was 30 years younger than him. In 1928 their daughter Ann was born.⁵¹ Harry died at 88 in 1953.⁵² Harry and his brothers occupied public positions in the Tambellup area. They were men of substance in a developing community of poorly educated people.⁵³ However, it was not easy for Harry's family because he smoked opium and drank heavily.⁵⁴ In fact, Mr Justice Wolff in a judgement concerning Harry's disputed will, described him as perverse, truculent, overpowering and quarrelsome.⁵⁵



Fig.5: A photo of Harry Crawford, on which he dubbed himself 'The Squire of Stinkwood Park' (courtesy of Ian Jeisman)

Jane Taylor recalls a writing retreat in Nymbup Road.⁵⁶ From there Harry probably wrote his letters to the *Great Southern Herald* expressing disenchantment with rabbits, people, roads, licensing, prohibition and federal aid to farmers.⁵⁷ In 2014 I tracked down surviving poems written by Harry. They were in a leather-bound volume of newspaper cuttings and mementos held privately in Robinson, WA. His poetry, still quirkily humorous, had become less focused, more pessimistic, and more political. Much of it expressed nostalgia and a deep love of place, but none quite equalled the sparkling, carefree poem published in the Seymour Express in 1898 about the Heroes of Kobyboyn.

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Have you come across a book, magazine, DVD or website which you think may be of interest to readers of *Sabretache*? Why don't you write a brief description of it – include illustrations if you think they help – and email your contribution (editor@mhsa.org.au) with the subject line 'Page and Screen', or contact the editor with your idea.

⁵⁰ Taylor, *Cooperation Incorporated*, op cit, p.57.

⁵¹ *The West Australian*, Wednesday 7 March 1928, p.1.

⁵² *The West Australian*, Friday 24 July 1953, p.33.

⁵³ Brian Taylor, correspondence, 21 Feb 2013.

⁵⁴ Taylor, *Cooperation Incorporated*, op cit, p.57.

⁵⁵ 'Judgement of Mr Justice Wolff delivered 14 July 1954 in the matter of the Will and Estate of Harry Crawford late of Tambellup in the state of Western Australia, Farmer, deceased'. 14 July 1954.

⁵⁶ Jane Taylor, phone conversation, 2013.

⁵⁷ Parnell, op cit, p.165.