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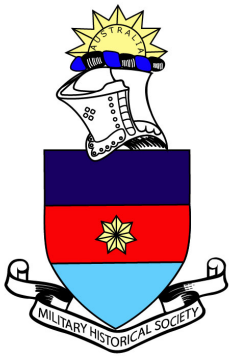

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EDITORIAL

Astute readers will no doubt notice that all bar one of this issue's Reviews have been written by me. Be assured that this is not through any growing sense of megalomania on my part. While I'm quite happy practising my essay-writing skills, not to mention adding some nice titles to my military library, I would be only too delighted if I had as wide a range of reviews to choose from as feature articles in recent months. Alas, this hasn't been the case. So I'm making a fresh plea: by all means feel free to send me reviews of recently published works you've read and enjoyed (or not!); but also let me know if you're willing to go onto my (currently very short) list of reviewers. Email me your contact details so that I can send you the occasional work (which you get to keep, of course), and tell me which aspects of military writing you are most interested in or about which you reckon you can make informed comment. I'm also more than happy to give advice if you want to contribute reviews but aren't sure how to go about it.

The other liberty I've taken in this issue is to use two pages from the colour section to assemble a couple of collages based on recent museum visits. In June my wife and I travelled through Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic, and there are certainly some splendid collections, military and otherwise, to be seen there. The Polish Army Museum in Warsaw has a mixture of indoor and outdoor displays, the latter made up of both aircraft and land vehicles which can be viewed from very close quarters. The interior consists of an impressive range of artefacts drawn from Polish military history from the early Middle Ages to the present. The wonder of it – to my mind, anyway – is how much material seems to have survived the ravages of partition and occupation that Poland has endured over the centuries. The museum is a tribute not only to the nation's military achievements, but also to the pride of place these are afforded as an essential aspect of Poland's culture.

The second collage is from the Bundeswehr Museum in Dresden. This too deals with the armed forces from early times to now, and its curators do not appear to shy away from the less savoury aspects of German history, principally the Third Reich and the Cold War period which saw the nation divided into East and West. But there is also – as I hope some of the photos demonstrate – an attempt to show aspects of war from a more thematic perspective, and very imaginative some of them are. In addition to features in the permanent displays such as the shell-burst illustrated in the photos, there are exhibitions devoted to topics such as war toys, animals at war, 'destruction and protection', and the development of military dress over the centuries. There are of course many other museums and displays worth a visit by the military enthusiast; a couple of standouts for us were the armoury in the Wawel Castle complex in Kraków, Poland and the Festung Marienburg, the Renaissance fortress in Würzburg, Bavaria.

While I'm giving plugs, one other exhibition we visited recently in Melbourne is called 'Horse and Morse in WW1'. It is made up of photographs taken by Eric Keast Burke during his time as a member of the Australian Wireless Signal Squadron in Mesopotamia. After the war Burke produced the history of the Anzac units in that theatre, called *With Horse and Morse in Mesopotamia*, based mainly on contributions from returned service personnel and his own photographs. Additionally, he took his depictions of life in what is now largely Iraq on travelling glass slideshows around the country. I spoke to family members who are responsible for the exhibition, and they hope that it will also travel the country. If it happens to visit your neck of the woods, do make the effort to see it. I would also urge you to follow my lead and send in your photos of other museum collections for publication in the colour section. I look forward to helping the rest of us share your discoveries.

Paul Skrebels

THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY ON THE WORLD STAGE 1916-19

David Stevens[1]

The Royal Australian Navy's activities in the latter years of the First World War have generally received far less attention than those of the Australian Imperial Force. For a nation increasingly reliant on its 'Blue Economy' this is unfortunate, for a deeper understanding of Australia's maritime environment should ideally underlay all discussions about our long-term security. Certainly, Australia's wartime naval experience still has much to tell us about our vital interests and critical vulnerabilities. As it was, our ships and sailors were scattered throughout the seven seas, performing all manner of vital tasks in support of the Allied war effort.[2]

1916

The Australian Navy's flagship, the battle cruiser HMAS *Australia*, had arrived in the United Kingdom in January1915 having helped clear German warships from the Pacific.[3] The North Sea offered a far more difficult operating environment, but her crew soon grew familiar with the tempo and weather conditions. Integrated with the Royal Navy's Battle Cruiser Fleet and acting as senior ship of the 2nd Battle Cruiser Squadron, *Australia* afterwards took part in a succession of offensive sweeps that attempted to intercept commerce raiders, draw out the larger German warships, or simply keep them impotent in their bases.

Forewarned by intelligence, on 22 April 1916 the British sailed yet again to counter an expected German sortie.[4] A heavy fog developed in the afternoon and, while zigzagging to avoid enemy submarines, *Australia* twice collided with her sister ship HMS *New Zealand*. The fault was procedural rather than with ship handling, but *Australia* was the more badly damaged and remained in dockyard hands for six weeks. The battle cruiser thereby missed the Battle of Jutland on 31 May, the largest naval engagement of the war.

Nevertheless, the RAN had not been entirely absent from the action; Gunner John Gill, from Port Adelaide, was Director Gunner in the battleship HMS *Benbow*, and saw one of his 13.5-inch salvoes explode in a German battleship.[5] Elsewhere, *Australia*'s Roman Catholic Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick Gibbons, had transferred to the battle cruiser HMS *Indomitable,* and spent the battle deep in a casualty station, hearing confessions while German shells burst around his ship.[6] Not all the RAN's participants at Jutland survived. Two sub-lieutenants, Joseph Mack and George Paterson, were serving in HMS *Defence* when she received the enemy's concentrated fire at the aptly named 'Windy Corner'. Within seconds, the old armoured cruiser had exploded with the loss of all hands.[7]

By January 1916, Australia's two most modern cruisers, *Melbourne* and *Sydney*, had already

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[1] Dr David Stevens spent 20 years as the RAN's historian. His latest book, *In All Respects Ready: Australia's Navy in World War One*, was awarded the 2015 Frank Broeze Memorial Maritime History Book Prize. It is available from Oxford University Press.

[2] For a more complete account of the RAN's wartime activities see Stevens, David, 2014, *In All Respects Ready: Australia's Navy in World War One*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

[3] Stevens, David, 'Australian Maritime Campaigning in 1914', in Frame, Tom (ed.), 2015, *Maritime Strategy 1914: Perspectives from Australia and beyond*, Barton Books, Canberra, pp.104-19.

[4] Beesly, Patrick, 1982, *Room 40: British Naval Intelligence 1914-18*, Hamish Hamilton, London, pp.147-8

[5] NAA MP1049/1, 1915/0206, Naval Representative 81st Report, 28 October 1916.

[6] Gibbons, Reverend, 'The Naval Fight', *Advocate*, 5 August 1916, p.24.

[7] Gordon, Andrew, 1996, *Rules of the Game: Jutland and British Naval Command*, John Murray, London, pp.392-3, 443-5.

spent more than a year operating in the North Atlantic and the West Indies. Patrolling from bases as far apart as Halifax in Canada and Kingston in Jamaica, they had hunted raiders, prevented the escape of German merchantmen from neutral harbours and escorted Allied troop convoys. Despite the importance of these roles, the nature of the threat was changing and, following Jutland, British commanders deemed that the two cruisers would be of far greater use in the North Sea.[8] In September, they joined the Royal Navy's 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron, part of the Battle Cruiser Fleet, and based at Rosyth on Scotland's east coast. The Battle Cruiser Fleet was in turn part of the British Grand Fleet, based out of Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands.

Normally kept at less than four hours' notice for sea, the cruisers' duties included a succession of offensive sweeps into the North Sea, variously aimed at intercepting enemy raiders, minelayers, U-boats, Zeppelins, or trade. Although the enemy's heavier surface forces were seldom in evidence, the possibility of sudden death from mine or torpedo remained a factor in every man's thinking and, in response to the dangerous nature of their work, the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron became known among its members as the 'Suicide Squadron'.[9]

The North Sea in winter is also one of the stormiest in the world and, during a sweep in December 1916, the weather became so bad that two of the accompanying destroyers collided and sank. For their part, *Melbourne* and *Sydney* lost two ratings drowned when thrown overboard and another killed when he smashed his head on a shot rack. More than a dozen men were also injured by the violent motion. Among the most severely injured were *Sydney*'s commander and gunnery officer, who were washed along half the length of the deck by a huge wave when attempting to secure loose gear. Far luckier, was a sailor swept over the side by the same wave then deposited safely back onboard by another.[10] That the RAN lost far more men to accidents than it did to battle is one of the small ironies of the war at sea. *Sydney* lost more than most, including two men who had the misfortune to be in cells in the battleship HMS *Vanguard* when she blew up accidentally at Scapa Flow on 9 July 1917.[11]

In the western Indian Ocean, the old Australian cruiser *Pioneer* maintained her contribution to the maritime blockade of German East Africa. There had been little sign of the enemy at sea since the destruction of the cruiser *Königsberg* in June 1915, but 1916 brought a resurgence in the land campaign. The allied commander, General Smuts, expected a good deal of naval cooperation and *Pioneer* took part in several shore bombardments in support of his advance, including two on the enemy capital of Dar-es-Salaam. Her last action was in July, by which time the Germans were being driven inland, and the unlikelihood of the enemy receiving further support by sea allowed a reduction in the offshore patrol. By October, *Pioneer* had returned to Sydney where she paid off and became an accommodation vessel.[12]

Another elderly cruiser, *Psyche*, together with the armed sloop *Fantome*, had been deployed from Australia to the China Station in August 1915. Around the theatre, neutral ports held more than seventy interned German merchantmen, and Allied authorities were constantly alert to reports of covert enemy activity, particularly the smuggling of arms and ammunition via local sympathisers. At the beginning of 1916 the two Australian warships were still in the Bay of

[8] TNA (UK), ADM137/1207, CinC Grand Fleet, 26 June 1916.
[9] Brennand, Surgeon Commander Henry, 'The War Cruises of HMAS Melbourne and Sydney 1914-18', Sea Power Centre – Australia.
[10] 'Naval Superstitions', *Spindrift*: *The Magazine of HMAS Cerberus*, January-April 1931, p.11.
[11] Hobbs, David, 'Those They Left Behind', http://www.navy.gov.au/media-room/publications/semaphore-march-2009, accessed 18 April 2016.
[12] Perryman, John, 'Blockading German East Africa 1915-16', http://www.navy.gov.au/media-room/publications/semaphore-july-2005, accessed 18 April 2016.

Bengal patrolling the length of the Burmese coast, but in July *Psyche* proceeded to Hong Kong for maintenance and then spent several months patrolling off neutral China. By the end of the year she was visiting the major ports of Burma, India and Ceylon to show the flag and examine the adjoining coasts.[13]

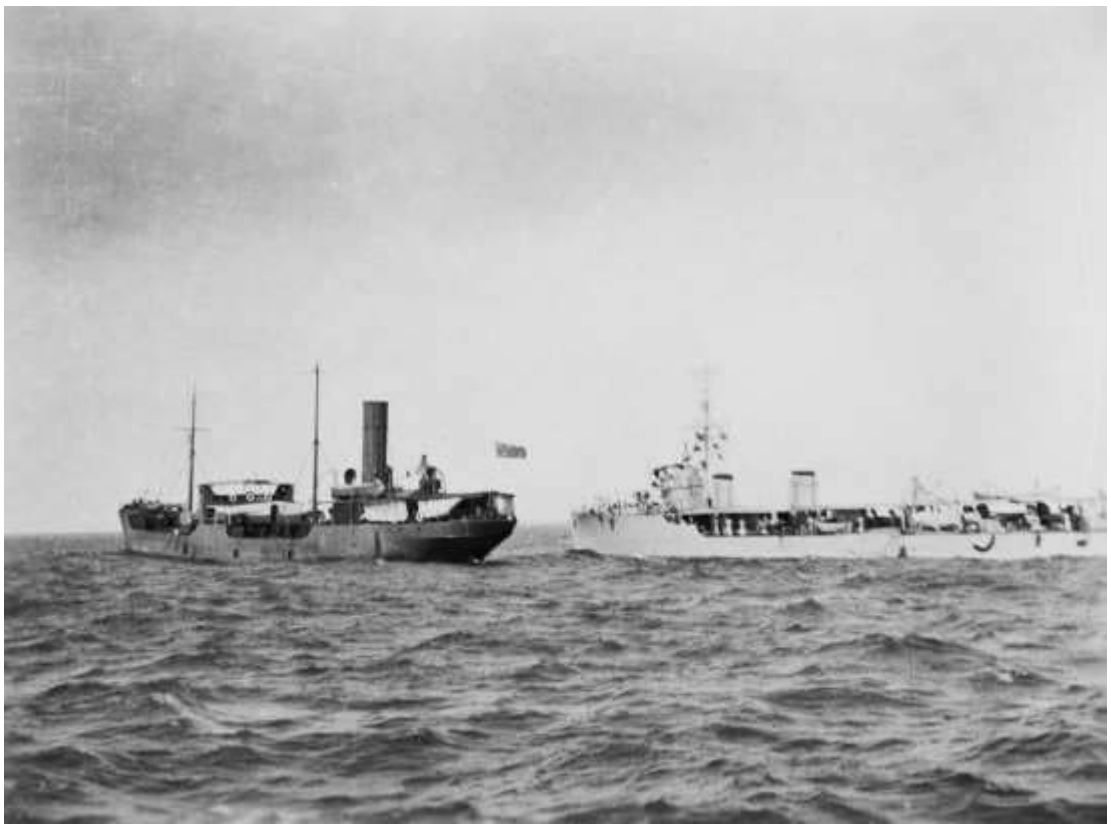

Fig.1: The destroyer HMAS Swan *about to replenish from the Royal Australian Fleet Auxiliary* Esturia *during service on the China Station. (Sea Power Centre – Australia collection)*

Fantome had meanwhile joined with the Australian sloop *Una* and the destroyers, *Parramatta*, *Warrego* and *Yarra*, to undertake similar duties in the waters of the Netherlands East Indies and Malaya. Like the East Africa blockade, the work remained essential, not only due to the occasional discovery of infringements, but also from less direct means; such as the discreetly publicised visits of landing parties to remote islands, that served to both deter enemy attempts to set up hidden arms caches and demonstrate the British Empire's continued authority. The patrols also achieved their main function of preventing the communication or travel of enemy agents. During January 1916, the three destroyers between them boarded 74 vessels in the Gulf of Siam, resulting in the paralysis of all German activities originating from Bangkok.[14]

By September, the RAN's three newly commissioned destroyers, *Huon*, *Torrens* and *Swan*, had taken over the duties on the China Station, allowing the RAN to relieve the other deployed units and reinforce patrols in Australian waters. Balancing local and more distant defence priorities remained a constant challenge for the Navy's governing body, the Australian Commonwealth Naval Board, particularly after the escape into the Atlantic of the German raider *Möwe* in early 1916 had revived fears of enemy deployments closer to Australia. *Una* thereafter kept watch in New Guinea waters; *Parramatta* and *Yarra* operated from Fremantle;

[13] Stevens, *In All Respects Ready*, chap.12.
[14] Ibid.

Warrego patrolled from Sydney; and the old cruiser *Encounter* searched the rugged coastline of the Dampier peninsula.[15]

Mention must also be made of Australia's sole naval engineering unit ashore, the RAN Bridging Train (RANBT). The RANBT had initially played a key role in the over-the-shore support of Allied forces at Suvla Bay, then assisted in the subsequent evacuation. In late December 1915, some of its members became the last Australians to leave Gallipoli. Thereafter the unit moved to the Suez Canal, where it became heavily involved in bridge-building and the control of floating traffic. As the Allies advanced into Palestine active bridging work declined, but in December 1916 the unit took part in the landing at El Arish and constructed a pier under fire. This was, however, to be the RANBT's last action, for the success of the operation reduced the need for further employment and the unit was disbanded early in 1917.[16]

Fig.2: A postcard depicting the battle honours of the Royal Australian Naval Bridging Train. (Sea Power Centre – Australia collection)

1917

For the most part 1916 had been a year of consolidation for the Allied navies, one that saw the gradual tightening of the maritime blockade against the Central Powers and an unceasing watch at sea. However, much work remained to be done. Most dangerously, 1917 would usher in an intensification of the German U-boat campaign against Allied shipping. On 19 February, the Naval Board concluded that a general danger to Australian trade existed and put in place a more definite system of coastal patrol, still using *Encounter*, half the destroyer flotilla, and an assorted collection of small craft.[17] For a nation with more than 47,000 kilometres of coastline, this was hardly a comprehensive defence, and later in the year a number of Japanese cruisers were employed to augment the patrols. This in turn gave many Australians the disconcerting impression that the Imperial Japanese Navy had been given responsibility for protecting their waters.

Notwithstanding the Naval Board's concerns, the U-boats remained in the Atlantic and only the surface raiders *Wolf* and *Seeadler* reached the Pacific. *Seeadler*—the only commerce-raiding sailing vessel of either world war—sailed west around Cape Horn, but sank only three small sailing ships before being wrecked in the Society Islands in August 1917. *Wolf* came via the Cape of Good Hope, laid minefields in South African, Indian, Australian, and New Zealand waters, and sank fourteen Allied vessels before returning triumphantly to Kiel on 24 February

[15] Ibid, chap.16.
[16] Frame, Tom and Swinden, Greg, 1990, *First In, Last Out: The Navy at Gallipoli*, Kangaroo Press, Kenthurst, Part Two.
[17] Stevens, David, 2005, *A Critical Vulnerability: The impact of the submarine threat on Australia's maritime defence 1915-1954*, Sea Power Centre-Australia, Canberra, chap.2.

1918. *Wolf* survived by carefully selecting ships steaming independently and then ensuring that they were given no opportunity to broadcast a distress call before they were captured. Minefields, by contrast, claimed their victims at random.

On 6 July 1917, SS *Cumberland* signalled that she had hit a mine ten miles off Gabo Island on the main shipping route between Sydney and Melbourne. Aware that a raider was loose, the Naval Board showed a regrettable lack of insight when the first underwater investigation misled them into favouring an alternative explanation that attributed the loss to sabotage. Not until October, and the receipt of a dissenting report from the federal Attorney-General's Office, did the Board decide to resolve the question and order a mine sweep. Several trawlers were commissioned at Sydney with crews from the recently established 'Minesweeping Section' of the RAN's reserve force, the Naval Brigade. By January 1918, thirteen mines had been discovered in the Gabo field. A second field laid by *Wolf* in Bass Strait was identified and swept after the end of hostilities.[18]

Raider operations aimed to maintain widespread pressure on British commerce, but they were too few to be much more than a distraction and the German Admiralty retained greater faith in its unrestricted submarine campaign. By April 1917, the U-boats were sinking more than 500,000 tons of Allied shipping each month and, although the campaign contributed to the decision of the United States to enter the war, dire predictions were made that Britain would soon be starved into submission. Stung by the criticism that they were not doing enough to combat the menace, the Admiralty at last approved trials of an oceanic convoy system, while simultaneously introducing other shipping control measures to increase the efficiency of the declining tonnage available.[19]

The convoy system found the Royal Navy struggling to provide sufficient escorts and, on 9 May 1917, the Commonwealth received an urgent request for the assistance of the three destroyers still retained on the Australian Station. Australian authorities not only agreed, but also hinted that they could make available the three destroyers still in South-East Asia. The RAN's combined flotilla reached Port Said on 9 August and was immediately employed on escort operations across the Mediterranean. The first action against an enemy submarine came just a week later. For men used to weary and unspectacular patrols in the Far East, the hard steaming and occasional dropping of depth charges provided a welcome incentive to extra vigilance.[20]

From October 1917 the destroyer flotilla began patrol operations in the mouth of the Adriatic Sea from a base at Brindisi on the Italian coast. Much of the work was in support of the Otranto Barrage, a major undertaking involving heavy nets, mines, surface ships, and aircraft, and that aimed to prevent enemy submarines from escaping into the Mediterranean. The Australian destroyers were fitted with hydrophones as an aid to submarine detection and *Huon*, *Parramatta*, and *Yarra* also received captive observation balloons; but, while an Adriatic patrol seldom passed without a suspected U-boat being discovered and chased, the destroyers made no kills. They were, however, called in on a number of occasions to rescue the crews of sinking ships.

In the North Sea, meanwhile, Captain John Dumaresq – a Royal Navy officer who later become the first Australian-born officer to command the Australian Fleet – had taken command of

[18] Stevens, *In All Respects Ready*, chap.19.
[19] Stevens, *A Critical Vulnerability*, p.27
[20] Stevens, *In All Respects Ready*, chap.20.

Sydney. In May 1917, he had the unusual experience of fighting a duel with a German airship. *Sydney*, her sister ship, HMS *Dublin*, and four destroyers were investigating a suspicious fishing vessel and urgently reacting to reports of torpedo sightings, when a third distraction appeared in the shape of Zeppelin *L43*. Dumaresq, who was in charge of the British force, spread out his ships and then turned the two cruisers to close the Zeppelin and open fire. *L43* retaliated by dropping a number of bombs, including some dozen aimed at *Sydney*, but kept above 6000 metres to avoid damage from the anti-aircraft guns. Manoeuvring unpredictably and steaming his cruiser at 25 knots, Dumaresq was able likewise to avoid being hit. Once all combatants were out of ammunition the inconclusive engagement ended.[21]

The incident highlighted the need for the cruisers to embark their own aircraft, something Dumaresq had been actively promoting since joining *Sydney*. His persistence paid off, and in August 1917, she became the first British light cruiser to be fitted with a rotating flying-off platform, built to Dumaresq's own design. The first launch of a Sopwith Pup took place in December 1917, the aircraft flown by Flight Sub-Lieutenant Harold Brearley of the Royal Naval Air Service. The arrangement proved such a success that Admiral Sir David Beatty, the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet, ordered all available light cruisers be fitted with a similar deck. *Melbourne* received her platform in March 1918.[22]

Sydney was associated with several aviation firsts, but was not the first Australian ship to use an aircraft operationally. This distinction rested instead with the light cruiser *Brisbane*, which had been under construction at Sydney's Cockatoo Island Dockyard at the outbreak of war and commissioned in October 1916. First despatched to the Mediterranean, in early 1917 she was set to work in the Indian Ocean searching for the raider *Wolf*. To assist in this task, she borrowed a Sopwith Baby from the seaplane carrier HMS *Raven*, and the aircraft carried out daily flights for some weeks. Lowered and recovered by crane, the aircraft proved extremely useful in extending the cruiser's horizon. But the search for *Wolf* was fruitless and, in June 1917, *Brisbane* returned to Australia to take over coastal patrol work.[23]

1918

From early 1918, the more powerful Sopwith Camel fighter replaced the Pup in the Grand Fleet, but its difficult handling characteristics meant that it could be a dangerous mount even for experienced pilots. Flight Sub-Lieutenant Brearley became one of the type's many victims, losing his life when he spun his aircraft into the ground during a training flight on 30 January.[24] In consequence, it was not until 27 February that *Sydney* launched a Camel for the first time, with her new pilot, Flight Sub-Lieutenant Albert Sharwood, at the controls.

Launching was one thing, but at the end of a mission the pilot would need to either return to an airfield ashore or ditch in the sea. Fortunately, Sharwood survived the war, and has left us with a description of how a ditching was achieved:

> The Camel was brought down to about four or five feet above the wave tops and held on until it stalled, then the fun began! The safety belt had been released and when the wheels and fixed undercarriage struck the water at 40 or 45 knots the tail went up like greased lightning and the nose of the machine plunged down into the sea. Just before the cockpit submerged the pilot was kicked out as the tail went up. If he had done all this nicely he went over the top plane through a

[21] Stevens, David, 2001, *The Royal Australian Navy*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, p.47.
[22] Stevens, *In All Respects Ready*, chap.17.
[23] Isaacs, Keith, 1971, *Military Aircraft of Australia 1909-1918*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, p.134.
[24] Warner, Guy, 2011, *World War One Aircraft Carrier Pioneer*, Pen & Sword, Barnsley, p.158.

semi-circular cutaway and went into the ditch head first about 20 yards ahead of the Camel.[25]

Although *Australia* was also fitted to carry aircraft, only *Melbourne* and *Sydney* were ever able to employ them operationally, and *Sydney*'s Camel was the only one ever to engage the enemy. On 1 June 1918, Admiral Beatty planned another raid in force into the Heligoland Bight to encourage German forces to give battle. The 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron formed part of the supporting force, together with two aircraft-carriers and the 1st Battle Cruiser Squadron. As the British ships closed their objective, three German reconnaissance aircraft suddenly appeared and dropped a number of bombs among the battle cruisers before departing eastwards. Within two minutes *Sydney* and *Melbourne* had launched their aircraft to intercept, well before any other ship in the force. *Melbourne*'s pilot lost sight of his quarry in cloud, but Sharwood, pursued the Germans for 60 miles before surprising the rearmost enemy by diving out of the sun. Unfortunately, he was forced to break off the dogfight when one of his guns jammed and the other ran out of ammunition. Sharwood then attempted to return to *Sydney* but, unable to find his ship, ditched ahead of a British destroyer and was safely recovered. His efforts subsequently earned him a mention in despatches.[26]

Fig.3: During the last year of the Great War, RAN ships operating in the North Sea all carried aircraft. HMAS Sydney *and* Melbourne *launched their Sopwith Camel fighters from a flying-off deck mounted above the forward gun. (Sea Power Centre – Australia collection)*

The German threat to global sea communications would remain until the last days of the war, and it should never be forgotten that it was the success of Allied sea power in all theatres that kept the troops so well supplied, and essentially determined the course of fighting ashore. Nevertheless, for many Australian sailors, their war had involved a frustrating and seemingly endless watch 'night and day, for month after month, in fair and foul weather, hoping ever, that the detested Huns would come out of their hiding places to receive their well-merited punishment'. The dull routine was briefly broken in *Australia* by a call in February 1918 for volunteers for special service. Many applied, still desperate to see action, but only Engineer Lieutenant William Edgar and ten ratings were finally selected. In April, they found themselves among 1300 other volunteers taking part in a bold commando raid on the occupied Belgian ports of Ostend and Zeebrugge. By closing these ports with blockships the Admiralty hoped to prevent the U-boats and torpedo boats based upstream at Bruges from gaining access to the sea. The raid on Ostend failed and the Germans soon cleared a channel at

[25] Sea Power Centre – Australia, Albert Sharwood File, Sharwood to Captain Alan Robinson, 30 August 1973.
[26] Ibid, Sharwood to Lieutenant Commander R Geale, 21 March 1971.

Zeebrugge, but the sorties were a great propaganda success and the Australians acquitted themselves well. Edgar, in charge of the engine room of the ferry-boat HMS *Iris*, was awarded the DSC for his tireless efforts under heavy fire, while the five RAN seamen in the naval storming party at Zeebrugge all took part in the VC ballot, and were afterwards awarded either the DSM or a mention in despatches.[27]

In the Adriatic, the Austro-Hungarian Navy had at last decided to test the defences of the Otranto Barrage. On the night of 22 April 1918, *Torrens* took part in the pursuit after five enemy destroyers had attacked and damaged two other members of her patrol. By the time the chase was called off the British destroyers were only 20 miles from the Austrian base of Cattaro. Six months later *Swan* and *Warrego* took part in a major bombardment of the Albanian port of Durazzo, but the naval situation in the Mediterranean was improving. Hostilities with Turkey ceased on 31 October, and the Australian destroyer flotilla was thereafter scattered on a variety of operations in the Sea of Marmara, Black Sea, and Sea of Azov, including support for anti-Bolshevik forces fighting in the Russian Civil War. The flotilla's last operation did not take place until early December, when *Swan*'s commanding officer, Commander Arthur Bond, headed a joint Australian-French mission to Novocherkassk on the Don with orders to collect intelligence on conditions in eastern Ukraine. [28]

Fig.4: HMAS Sydney *anchored at Rosyth in Scotland, 1918. (Sea Power Centre – Australia collection)*

By this stage the Australian flotilla had been joined in the eastern Mediterranean by *Brisbane*. Released from Australian waters in October, the cruiser reached the theatre too late to take part in operations against the Central Powers, but she did assist with a landing by the Royal Marines at Sevastopol on 10 December. *Brisbane* was next ordered to Smyrna in Turkey where her captain became commander of a combined Allied force charged with clearing a swept channel though the minefields and the opening of the harbour to civilian shipping.[29] The cruiser

[27] Swinden, Greg, 'Australian Sailors at Zeebrugge, 1918', http://www.navy.gov.au/media-room/publications/semaphore-march-2007, accessed 18 April 2016.
[28] Stevens, *In All Respects Ready*, chap.21.
[29] Sea Power Centre – Australia, *Brisbane* (I) File, 'Smyrna', *The Brisbane*, 1919.

remained in place until January 1919, and then proceeded to the United Kingdom where she joined the destroyers.

In the North Sea, the most recent operations for *Australia*, *Sydney* and *Melbourne* had included the escort of Scandinavian convoys and support for the great Northern mine barrage between Norway and the Orkney Islands, but everywhere the war was drawing to a close. On 11 November 1918 the signing of the Armistice brought the fighting in western Europe to an end. However, many loose ends remained to be tied up. For the Royal Navy, the most important was the internment of the German High Sea Fleet. Desiring a spectacle to emphasise the Grand Fleet's triumph, Admiral Beatty arranged an elaborate surrender ceremony in the North Sea. Operation ZZ, as it was titled, involved 370 Allied warships, including *Sydney*, *Australia* and *Melbourne*. The German fleet had been ordered to sail with no ammunition and minimum crews, and on the morning of 21 November, the Grand Fleet steamed out in two lines finally to meet their rarely seen foe. When the leading ships of the two fleets were abreast of each other, the British lines turned about to provide an escort.[30]

The decisive battle longed for by many British naval officers had not occurred, but the ceremony provided a suitably auspicious end to the RAN's participation in the war, with *Australia* given the honour of leading the port line at the head of her squadron. After anchoring outside Rosyth, each German ship was allocated a guardship. *Australia* was given charge of the latest German battlecruiser *Hindenburg*, *Melbourne* the second *Nürnberg* and, most appropriately, the second *Emden* was placed in *Sydney*'s custody. *Sydney*'s boarding party went onboard at the end of the day to search for hidden explosives. To their surprise, they came across one or two of the old *Emden*s, who claimed to have been repatriated during the war.[31]

1919

By January 1919, the RAN had more than a dozen warships and auxiliaries in European waters and willingly accepted the Royal Navy's offer to make use of its dockyards for refit and modernisation. The destroyers and *Melbourne* were the first to begin the long voyage back to Australia, followed in early April by *Sydney* and a gift flotilla of six modern submarines and their depot ship. On 15 April, on the eve of *Australia* and *Brisbane*'s departure from Portsmouth, King George V relayed his feelings of gratitude and pleasure that Australian ships had shared in British naval triumphs. The Admiralty was similarly effusive: 'Their Lordships state that Australia may well feel pride in the record of its navy newly created in the years prior to 1914, but shown by the test of war to be in all respects ready to render invaluable service to the Empire in the hour of need'.[32]

That the fledgling Australian Navy had played a significant role in global maritime operations caused immeasurable pride among its founders and established enduring traditions among its members and their successors. There were undoubtedly new lessons learnt, but there was also ample evidence that Australia's warships and their crews could perform as effectively as any in the world. In this time of centenary commemorations, it is to be hoped that their achievements will not be forgotten.

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[30] Stevens, *The Royal Australian Navy*, pp.52-3.
[31] AWM, 1DRL/0396, Petty Officer Kemp Diary, 21 November 1918.
[32] Stevens, *The Royal Australian Navy*, p.53.

'TO THE WARRIOR HIS ARMS': UNDERSTANDING THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY ORDNANCE CORPS IN WORLD WAR 2

Graham McKenzie-Smith[1]

Introduction

The Aust Army Ordnance Corps (AAOC) in the World War 2 was one of the corps which supplied the Army with the materials it needed to live, move and fight. The Aust Army Service Corps (AASC) supplied the consumable items, such as food and fuel, while the Royal Aust Engineers (RAE) and Corps of Signals maintained supply branches to distribute the specialist engineer stores and signals equipment. AAOC supplied the ammunition as well as the non-consumable items for which the receiver was accountable. These include the weapons, munitions and vehicles as well as the tents, knives and forks, clothing and the spare parts to maintain the vehicles and equipment. AAOC did not generally undertake the distribution of their stores to units as the transport function was undertaken by AASC.

AAOC also initially was responsible for maintenance and repair of vehicles and ordnance items but this function transferred to Aust Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (AEME) in late 1942 when the ordnance workshops were split off to the new Corps, so the Ordnance Workshop units will be covered in a subsequent article on the AEME. Initially the supply of vehicles was an AASC function but this transferred to AAOC in 1942, so the vehicle units of the AASC have been included.

AAOC Headquarters

The supply of ordnance items was the responsibility of the Director of Ordnance Services (DOS) (Brigadier) and his directorate was part of the MGO Branch at AHQ. He was represented at each ArmyHQ and CorpsHQ by a Deputy Director of Ordnance Services (DDOS) (Colonel) and at each DivHQ by an Assistant Director of Ordnance Services (ADOS) (Lt Colonel). Some smaller formation HQs had a Deputy Assistant Director of Ordnance Services (DADOS) (Major). In each case the officer had a small staff and tended to move with the formation HQ. Although he controlled the field ordnance units attached to the formation, his main role was as the adviser to the formation commander on ordnance issues.

Each L of C HQ also had a DDOS or ADOS depending on their sise and their role was more advisory, as the depots in their area were directly under control of the DOS, working through the Base Ord Depots which controlled each stores group. Initially each ordnance HQ also had a Chief Ordnance Mechanical Engineer (COME) who controlled the workshops, but they transferred to AEME in December.

Base and Advanced Ordnance Depots

In World War 1, the AIF relied upon the Royal Army Ordnance Corps (RAOC)[2] system for the supply of all ordnance items, except a small range of Australian items such as clothing. The AIF brought back a wide range of ordnance items, so between the wars the Army relied upon these 'mobilisation reserves' for war-like stores and were not allowed to build up stocks of

[1] Graham has been researching the Australian Army in the Second World War for many years and the Army History Unit will publish *The Unit Guide* in 2016/17. This six-volume set will give a short profile of all 13,600 units in the Australian Army during this period. This article for *Sabretache* is built around the introductions to the various types of AAOC units that are individually profiled in *The Unit Guide*.

[2] Strictly speaking not 'Royal' until 1918, but referred to as such here for convenience.

items that the bureaucrats deemed to be readily available from industry in times of war. 1939 saw the civilian manned Aust Army Ordnance Department (AAOD) understaffed, mainly by overage men and there were few trained AAOC men in the militia, and even fewer in the permanent force.

Again the Second AIF planned to rely on the RAOC system while in the Middle East, so initially only an Ordnance Stores Company was formed, to work in the RAOC depots. At this time RAOC (and AAOC) worked on the basis that depots had relatively small HQs and were mainly manned by detachments from an ordnance stores company. Over the next year several other ordnance stores companies were formed, along with the HQ for a Base Ordnance Depot. Several Advanced Ordnance Depots were formed as temporary units (HQ only) for specific roles, but were disbanded when that role finished.

In Australia, the available AAOC soldiers were added to the civilian manned depots, but they still had trouble coping with the demands of the AIF and expanding militia, until the AAOD was 'militarised' in May 1941 and all staff joined the Army. A single AMF Base Ordnance Depot (BOD) was formed in Melbourne, which in March 1942 absorbed the similar AIF depot, recently returned from the Middle East. All the ordnance depots were organised along similar lines. The Base Ordnance Depot was organised into separate sub-depots. No1 Sub Depot carried the spare parts and assemblies for wheeled and tracked vehicles and after AAOC took over the supply of vehicles from AASC, it also carried the complete vehicles. No2 Sub Depot carried clothing and general stores, including camp stores, while No3 Sub Depot carried armaments and technical stores. The fourth sub depot was the Returned Stores Depot which accepted unserviceable equipment and used stores which were either repaired and returned to the appropriate sub depot or went for disposal. This structure was reflected in all depots (base, advanced or forward) and the sub-depots were often at different locations around DepotHQ, each with several dispersed storehouses.

The pre-war ordnance depots were mainly in the capital cities, close to the coast, so in March 1942 Advanced Ordnance Depots (AOD) were established away from any potential invasion areas and they took over the main storage and distribution role. As most of the factories producing ordnance items were in the city areas, the capital city depots became Central Ordnance Depots (COD) with the role of distributing controlled raw materials and then receiving manufactured items, before they were sent to the base or advanced depots for storage or distribution. At this stage the COBs still controlled the AODs in their state. After issues with the depots in some states being 'territorial', all ordnance stores came under control of LHQ in March 1943 and the sub-depots of the original BOD became Base Ord Depots in their own right which took control over the distribution of their stores groups in all depots, so they could move stores between depots to meet changing requirements. The CODs also became Base Ord Depots, but they concentrated on the receipt of items from industry and distribution of them to the other depots as instructed from the controlling BOD.

AODs were formed at Toowoomba (Qld), Muswellbrook (NSW), Bathurst (NSW), Melbourne (Vic), Hobart (Tas), Keswick (SA), Midland Junction (WA), Katherine (NT) and Port Moresby (NG). Later AODs were added at Charters Towers (Qld), Tolga (Qld) and Milne Bay (NG). Many AODs also formed Forward Ordnance Depots (FOD) when they had troop concentrations away from the main depot area and these depots also adopted the four sub-depot structure, with the relative strength of each sub-depot determined by the circumstances in each area. As the Army advanced in New Guinea, a FOD might be established, expanded to an AOD, then reduced back to a FOD when the area became a backwater.

All of these depots were manned by detachments from the many Ordnance Stores Companies with the detachments intermingled in depots, often with the detachments having little contact with their company HQs. A various times during 1944 these companies were disbanded and the detachments joined their depots which were reorganised. This reorganisation saw the formation of modular sections that could be transferred between depots if required by changing workloads. The sections included HQ Sections, MT Spares Sections, Clothing and General Sections, Technical Stores Sections and Provision Sections which provided the HQs for each sub depot, as well as Clerical Increments and Stores Increments which provided extra manpower as required. Under this structure an AOD could have one or more of each type of section.

Field Ordnance Units

Ordnance items were made available to units through a network of AODs and FODs throughout Australia and the base areas. Although these changed location from time to time, they were static units. One of the roles of the field ordnance units was to move with the field army carrying a small stock of fast moving ordnance items, and to act as the supply channel for other replacement items as required. The most common role of these field ordnance units was to work with the field workshops by carrying and distributing the spare parts, assemblies and consumables used to repair and maintain the army's equipment.

For the AIF, the initial field ordnance units were sub-units of a single Ordnance Field Park, a corps unit with sections that were detached to work under the 'distant control' of Fd Pk HQ. The subunits evolved in the Middle East to form three Corps Sections with three officers and 57 other ranks (3/57) which were attached to the Army Field Workshops, nine Division Sections (1/14) attached to each of the Recovery Sections which were evolving into brigade workshops, and three Reserve Vehicle Sections (1/42). These sections came together in early 1942 to form Army Ordnance Field Parks (7/150) to work at the corps level and Division Ordnance Field Parks (4/60) to work with the divisions.

In Australia, two Ord Fd Pks were raised as corps troops but in early 1942 these were reorganised to also form two Army Ord Fd Pks and nine Div Ord Fd Pks, while nine Independent Brigade Group Ordnance Field Parks were formed for the smaller states. The Div Ord Fd Pks designated for the corps troops were soon split into similar Indep Bde Gp Ord Fd Pks. The greater spare parts requirement for the armoured division dictated a larger structure, with separate Armoured Brigade Group Ordnance Sub Parks for each brigade, while DivHQ was serviced by a Division Section of the Armoured Corps Ordnance Field Park. The Div Ord Fd Pks designated for the motor divisions were soon reorganised to reflect the armoured division's ordnance structure, as were the Indep Bde Gp Ord Fd Pks allocated to the motor brigades. Briefly the armoured ordnance sub parks and workshops were combined to form Armoured Brigade Group Ordnance Companies, but when AEME took over the workshops, the residual ordnance unit became an Armoured Brigade Group Ordnance Field Park.

The numbered Div Ord Fd Pks were renamed after their division in November 1942 and until December the structural changes for ordnance field units were made in parallel with similar changes in the ordnance workshop structure. When AEME was formed to take over all workshop functions, the changes got out of step. In June 1943, the Army Ord Fd Pks became Infantry Troops Ordnance Field Parks (5/108) with separate Ord Veh Pks taking over the supply of vehicles. The Div Ord Fd Pks were disbanded and their brigade sections (and the Indep Bde Gp Ord Fd Pks) expanded to become Brigade Ordnance Field Parks (1/21). As the

armoured divisions were reduced to armoured brigade groups, individual Armoured Regiment Ordnance Field Parks were raised for each regiment. When beach groups were raised in 1944 to assist amphibious operations, Beach Ordnance Detachments (4/65) were formed to supply all items until the depots were established ashore.

Ordnance Ammunition Units

Pre-war ammunition stocks were held in dispersed depots manned by the civilian ordnance department with the reserve stocks in the Albury (NSW) area. War saw an increase in ammunition production and new depots were established, with AAOC Ordnance Ammunition Sections formed to man them, which evolved into Ordnance Ammunition Companies. One such company was formed for the AIF, along with a nucleus Base Amn Depot, and the two worked with RAOC ammunition units in the Middle East.

In Australia the Base Ammunition Depot (BAD) was formed in March 1942 as a single large HQ to control the reserve stocks at Albury and after they absorbed the AIF unit which had returned from the Middle East, they divided into three BADs at Albury (NSW), Tocumwal and Bogan Gate. In early 1942 a series of Advanced Ammunition Depots (AADs) were formed as HQs for the dispersed ammunition depots in each state. These were located at Hughenden and Wallangarra (Qld), Denman and Marangaroo (NSW), Mangalore (Vic), Keswick (SA), Guildford (WA), Adelaide River (NT) and Port Moresby (NG). The depots themselves continued to be manned by men detached from the Ordnance Ammunition Companies until late 1943 when those units were disbanded and the men taken on strength of their depots. Most of these AADs developed a series of Forward Ammunition Depots (FADs) to manage forward stocks and several of these in New Guinea became new AADs. Many ammunition types were manufactured around Melbourne (Vic) and Ordnance Ammunition Reception Depots were established to receive and test ammunition before it was issued to a depot for storage and distribution. Each AAD and FAD had three sub-depots that were well separated from each other, but unlike an Advanced Ordnance Depot, each sub-depot contained all types of ammunition as insurance against any depot being destroyed by accident or enemy action.

Ammunition is subject to damage, either in storage or in transit and ammunition depots usually included a workshop component capable of repairing such damage. In mid-1942 a specialised Ordnance Ammunition Repair Factory was formed which sent detachments to the major depots. In response to some damage issues in New Guinea, several Mobile Ammunition Repair Shops (1/13) were formed in late 1942 and then others were formed for NT and WA.

Other Ordnance Units

A variety of other ordnance units operated during the war. In late 1944 the Returned Stores Sub Depots of the Ordnance Depots became separate Returned Stores Depots which continued to take stores that had been handed in by units and restore them for re-issue to the depot stock or prepared them for disposal. At the end of the war some of these became Disposal Depots.

By the time that AAOC took over the supply of motor vehicles in October 1942, the impressing of civilian vehicles had virtually ceased and AASC closed their Vehicle Collection Centres while their Vehicle Reception Depots were replaced by AAOC Vehicle Preparation Detachments. The vehicle part of No 1 Sub Depot of each Ordnance Depot was separated in 1943 to form Ordnance Vehicle Parks. To hold new watercraft delivered from industry, Ordnance Small Craft Parks were in March. Each worked with a Water Transport (Small Craft) Holding Company which was the RAE unit that operated and maintained the craft held by the ordnance unit.

Ordnance Port Detachments were first formed in the Middle East to monitor and safeguard ordnance stores being handled at Port Said and Suez. The Base Ord Depots at Melbourne (Vic) and Sydney (NSW) had shipping and transit sections based in the docks area and in mid-1943 these became separate Ord Port Dets. Similar units were raised in mid-1944 to accompany 1 Aust Corps on future operations.

The ordnance depots dealt with many hundreds of thousands of line items, from knives and forks to complete tanks and stock accounting was an important and complex business. The level of stock for each item in each depot was calculated using estimates of usage rates, the population of troops and equipment being serviced and the lag time before re-supply could be expected. These varied for each line item and over time. There was little prior experience of provisioning in 1939 and the Provision Sections evolved from 1942. Some items of an officer's uniform or accoutrements were not supplied by the army and individual officers were required to purchase these at their own expense. Such items included complete dress uniforms, Sam Browne Belts and swagger sticks, and many officers chose to buy uniforms of better quality (or fit) than were available on general issue. AAOC manned various Officers Shops in the Middle East and in troop concentration areas in Australia where these items could be purchased.

Although most army purchases were made centrally, Local Purchase Offices were established in the Middle East to co-ordinate the in-country purchases. In November 1943 similar offices were opened in each state capital (except Victoria). There are few details available of the various tent units but most tents were manufactured locally from canvas imported from India and the Tent Proofing Unit gave waterproofing treatment to new tents and periodically re-proofed tents after extended use. The Tent Colouration Units could give similar treatment on a mobile basis but mainly painted tents on site to camouflage them. The Proof and Experimental Sections carried out pre-acceptance testing of armaments and ammunition.

AAOC Training Units

Initial training of AAOC recruits was done in AAOC Wings which were part of each state's recruit training organisation and at various times in 1941/42, specific AAOC Training Depots were established in each command. These were centralised at Hume (Vic) in March 1943. AAOC Schools were established in the Middle East and Australia to provide the higher education to officers and NCOs on ordnance and accounting subjects.

'To the Warrior his Arms'

At the end of hostilities in August 1945, the AAOC had grown to have some 26,000 all ranks. In Australia they controlled some 20 million square feet of undercover storage and thousands of acres of field storage facilities. They monitored some 400,000 line items of stores and equipment, including 480,000 tons of ammunition and 14,000 vehicles. Throughout the war they kept the 'warriors' armed for the job.

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The corps history is *'To the Warrior his Arms': A History of the Ordnance Services in the Australian Army* by Maj John Tilbrook and was published by the Corps Committee in 1989.

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THE DARWIN CABLE GUARD: PART 2 – SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

Major Paul A Rosenzweig (ret'd)[1]

While centenary commemorations are honouring practically every Great War anniversary, the service of a small garrison in Darwin which defended a vital communications link with Great Britain has been overlooked. Part 1 considered the creation of the Darwin Cable Guard during a time of German colonial expansionism in the region, and its brief period of 'active service' as Darwin itself was vulnerable to enemy attack. The Great War overtook and subsumed the service of the Cable Guard – with the later emphasis on heroism and sacrifice in the historiography of World War 1 and the creation of an Anzac legend, the history and origins of the Cable Guard were almost lost.

This article considers the service of the AIF volunteers contributed by this reserve body in Darwin, of whom two were decorated and at least six honoured for their sacrifice in two world wars.

AIF Service

Noted shooter **Bert (Albert Johnson) Morris** was a corporal in the Darwin Cable Guard when he enlisted, one of the first to volunteer. Born in Auckland, he had served as an apprentice in Fiji and was a member of the Fiji volunteers for three years, and was then a founding member of the Cable Guard in 1912. He enlisted on 22 September 1914, aged 26, served with the 4th Battalion as a corporal, and later with the 8th Field Ambulance as a sergeant, and was cited for 'gallant services rendered'. His fate at Gallipoli was initially misreported: Harry Pott received a letter claiming that Morris had lost a leg, but Leslie Giles saw him in hospital at Heliopolis and was able to verify that he had only been wounded in the leg.[2] Bert Morris returned to Australia in January 1919.

Vernon Clifford Lanyon, always able to 'find the bull' with his first scoring shot, made his own way to Adelaide on the SS *St Albans* in December 1914 to join the 27th Bn AIF. With three years' Cable Guard experience behind him, Vern Lanyon was made an acting sergeant and embarked on 23 June 1915.[3] At Gallipoli, he entered the trenches at Cheshire Ridge on 12 September; within the first day the battalion lost one officer and sixteen men to shrapnel and rifle fire. A week later, Lanyon himself received a severe shrapnel wound to the chest and subsequently died of his wounds.

The first batch of Northern Territory volunteers to leave Darwin was raised and commanded by Cable Guard commander **Captain Robert James Lewis** (see Fig.1). The 'Northern Territory Contingent, Australian Imperial Expeditionary Force' sailed for Brisbane on 26 April 1915 aboard the SS *Chang Sha*, and most were assigned to the 25th Bn AIF, of which Lewis

AWM = Australian War Memorial
NAA = National Archives of Australia
NTG = *Northern Territory Gazette*
NTTG = *Northern Territory Times and Gazette*

[1] Paul Rosenzweig is a retired Army officer, medal collector and non-professional military historian and biographer, with a long connection to the Northern Territory.
[2] NTTG 20 April 1916: Private H B Pott, undated letter.
[3] AWM: image no. P09220.003.

was Adjutant. Incoming Cable Guard commander, Sgt Willy Hare observed of Lewis:

> He is essentially a soldier, and this is not the first time he has voluntarily given his services to his country, for it must be remembered he has had long experience in the British army and he served with distinction throughout the South African campaign.[4]

After training, most of this 'Chang Sha contingent' embarked in Brisbane on HMAT A60 *Aeneas* on 29 June 1915 for service at Gallipoli. Just as the pre-war activities and shooting results had been recorded by correspondents in the local newspaper, this tradition continued through their AIF service, the Darwin boys keeping track of each other and providing through their letters home an accurate reporting network for the families back home. One wrote of Robert Lewis:

> He has been a very good pal to me and I must say I like him very much. This kind of life brings out a lot of the best in men.[5]

Fig.1: Capt Robert James Lewis (1873-1916) – veteran of the 13th Hussars (mentioned in the despatches of General Baden-Powell for good work in the Relief of Ladysmith), an officer of the 26th Signal Company, Australian Engineers (1908-12), Captain of the Rifle Club and Darwin Cable Guard (1913-15), Recruiting and Enlisting Officer for the AIF (1914-15), and commander of the 'Northern Territory Contingent, Australian Imperial Expeditionary Force' in 1915 (Northern Territory Library image PH0341/0001; used with permission).

In anticipation of an attack on Messines in June 1916, Lewis was commanding D Company of the 25th Bn, with several of the Chang Sha contingent under his command. The official historian noted: 'German sniping was bold and accurate'. Early on the first morning in the trenches opposite Messines, Lewis was shot in the head by a sniper while undertaking a reconnaissance over the parapet. His replacement was similarly shot, several trench periscopes were shattered, and the commanding officer was narrowly missed by four bullets from the same sniper.[6]

A letter from Harry Pott first advised Territorians of the death of Capt Lewis.[7] The Administrator Dr Gilruth reported: 'His death was deeply regretted by the whole Service, which lost a valuable officer and an esteemed colleague'.[8] The editor of *The Northern Territory Times and Gazette* wrote, 'Letters from the front from time to time spoke in glowing terms of the soldierly qualities of the deceased officer, who has died, as probably he would have wished, fighting for his country's honour and liberty.'[9]

[4] NTTG 29 April 1915, p.15. He held a six-clasp Queen's South Africa Medal, and was mentioned in the despatches of General Baden-Powell for good work in the Relief of Ladysmith. During WW1, Lewis had four brothers on active service in British regiments.
[5] NTTG 23 March 1916: LT C F Allen, letter dated 5 December 1915.
[6] C.E.W. Bean, *The Australian Imperial Force in France 1916*, 8th edn, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1939, pp.326 and 666.
[7] NTTG 5 October 1916: PTE H B Pott, letter dated 1 July 1916.
[8] HHA (1917).
[9] NTTG 6 July 1916: editorial.

Leslie Henry Alfred Giles, inaugural Captain of the Rifle Club and Cable Guard (1912-13), also served at Gallipoli with the 25th Bn, as a lance corporal with B Company. His older brother Felix Gordon Giles, an original 10th Bn company commander, wrote from Gallipoli to his family in the Northern Territory:

> I see Leslie could not contain himself any longer and collected a few others and hurried off … he wouldn't be satisfied unless he was in the thick of it where the shooting is done.[10]

In April 1916, the editor of *The Northern Territory Times* wrote, 'The Giles family has done its duty to the Empire splendidly'.[11] From Egypt, Harry Pott wrote: 'I see by the papers that Les was wounded but his was not as bad as mine'.[12] Another mate noted that Giles was, 'shot in the breast but his pocket book saved him'.[13] Pott wrote in another letter:

> Leslie Giles had a narrow squeak, too, the other day. He was hit with a shrapnel bullet and the book he had in his pocket made it glance off. It just grazed his left ribs and made them sore for days after.[14]

In hospital at Mena and then at Helouan, Giles received packages containing plum pudding, pipes, tobacco, cigarettes, milk, cocoa and sweets from his family and Mrs Gilruth whose husband the Administrator had presided over the Cable Guard in an honorary capacity.[15] Giles was recommended for a commission, but was wounded at Pozières on 30 July – by shrapnel in his right thigh during a 'dinkum' bayonet charge. It was, he wrote, 'not at all a place in which insurance companies would like to see their policy holders'.[16] On his return to Darwin in 1919 he resumed his employment as Receiver of Public Monies; he was Government Secretary and Deputy Government Resident in the 1930s, and was wounded-in-action for a third time – during the first Japanese raid on Darwin on 19 February 1942. He was Acting Administrator briefly in 1946, and continued as Government Secretary until retiring in 1947, being one of the Territory's longest serving and most effective public servants.

Another of the Chang Sha men at Gallipoli with the 25th Bn was the Maltese **Anthony Xuereb**[17] of the Survey Department, who had served with the Cable Guard for eight months when he enlisted on 26 April 1915. On his return in 1919, he resumed his employment as an Assistant Surveyor. In the period before the bombing of Darwin he supported the Administrator Aubrey Abbott at Government House. Mrs Abbott later recalled that Tony was, 'the most perfect draughtsman, who in the goodness of his heart used to make our dinner tables famous by his exquisite writing of menus and place-cards'. Xuereb was intimately involved in the evacuation of women and children from Darwin in 1941-42, and was then in Alice Springs to look after them there.

Sidney James Lauder enlisted on 29 July 1915, aged 18.[18] He was given an enthusiastic send-off by his fellow bandsmen from the Darwin Brass Band and was presented with a safety razor as a mark of their esteem. Lauder served at Gallipoli with the 15th Bn from September until the

[10] NTTG 18 November 1915: CAPT F G Giles, letter dated 20 August 1915.
[11] NTTG 6 April 1916: editorial.
[12] NTTG 20 April 1916, p. 12: PTE H B Pott, undated letter.
[13] NTTG 30 December 1915: PTE W H Barker, undated letter.
[14] NTTG 16 March 1916: PTE H B Pott, letter dated 16 October 1915.
[15] NTTG 20 April 1916: LCPL L H A Giles, letter dated 18 February 1916.
[16] Base Records Telegram dated 31 August 1916; NTTG 14 September 1916: LCPL L H A Giles, letter dated 5 August 1916; NTTG 19 October 1916: LCPL L H A Giles, letter dated 24 July 1916.
[17] HHA (1917); HHA (1920), p.31; Mrs Hilda Abbott's Diary, p.63.
[18] AWM: image no.P05138.001.

evacuation. Of his introduction to life at the front, Sidney wrote to a friend in Darwin:

> The first day I was put on pick and shovel, and after working for about five minutes Johnny Turk sent over an 8 inch shell which landed three feet away from where we were working and did not explode. I can tell you I was bluffed that day, but I soon got used to them.[19]

Lauder spent Christmas at Lemnos, and transferred to the 47th Bn at Tel-el-Kebir on 9 March 1916 during the 'doubling' of the AIF. In France on 9 July, he received a gunshot wound to the back and was sent to the Red Cross Hospital at Hove in Brighton. He wrote: 'The wounded have to wear a gold stripe on the left arm, so you can guess I have one'.[20] After recuperating he transferred to the 25th Bn on 9 April 1917, and on the night of 3-4 May was wounded a second time, in the arm and extremities. He rejoined his battalion in Belgium, but on 30 October 1917 was killed-in-action near Ypres.

The service of rifle club Gold Medal winner in 1912 **Harry Bunce Pott** was recorded by the *Northern Territory Times* editor: 'He was among the first in the N.T. to volunteer for the front when the great call came'. Pott was with Giles in B Company of the 25th Bn. It was also said of him: 'his skill as a rifle shot soon marked him out as a specially valuable unit in the long months of grim struggle on the Gallipoli Peninsula'.[21] Harry was soon reported to be 'sniping at the front', one of just two chosen from his company to be a sniper for the brigade[22] – on his way to becoming the Northern Territory's equivalent of Billy Sing. During a lull in the fighting in September, he wrote a letter to his mother:

> While I am writing this bullets are whistling overhead, but we were not here a day before I got used to them, and we do not take a bit of notice of them now.[23]

He later wrote with pride: 'The snipers did very good work on the Peninsula, and we accounted for over 140 Turks'.[24] Pott was wounded slightly when a bomb exploded nearby: 'I have been hit in the leg with a bit of a bomb, but it only bruised the leg just below the knee'.[25] Pott's reputation as a sniper grew: at a sniper school in France in 1916 he ranked sixth amongst some 700. He suffered multiple gunshot wounds at Pozières on 29 July however, and while he lay wounded in No Man's Land he started a letter to his mother:

> Hit in the side. No bandages to put on. Only three men left to go for stretcher bearers. So far none turned up. No water since daylight. Kindest regards to all the boys. Cannot move much – very hot. Wound getting very painful.

After lying there abandoned for two days, he closed off his letter:

> Been waving S.O.S. signs all day. Cannot move. Have been hit in the spine as well. Hope someone turns up to-night – 56 hours without water or food. Only able to suck grass stems that are close to me. Fritz bombarded all night and pretty well all day. Mortification has set in. Good-bye and God bless you.[26]

Harry was eventually recovered and evacuated to hospital in Boulogne on 2 August, barely alive, however he succumbed to his wounds on 10 August 1916, aged 25.

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[19] NTTG 20 April 1916: PTE S J Lauder, undated letter.
[20] NTTG 2 November 1916: PTE Private S J Lauder, letter dated 7 September 1916.
[21] NTTG 24 August 1916, p.9: editorial.
[22] NTTG 30 December 1915: PTE W H Barker, undated letter.
[23] NTTG 16 December 1915: PTE H B Pott, letter dated 24 September 1915.
[24] NTTG 20 April 1916: PTE H B Pott, undated letter.
[25] NTTG 16 March 1916: PTE H B Pott, letter dated 16 October 1915.
[26] NTTG 16 August 1917: PTE H B Pott, letter dated 10 August 1916.

Having enlisted on 6 May 1916, aged 25, the former Cable Guard commander **Anthony William Hare** served on the Ypres Salient in 1917 as an acting corporal in the 52nd Bn. With him was Pte William John Williams, a Boer War veteran from Darwin, who was killed in action on 7 June. And from October he was joined by fellow Cable Guard member Felix Spain. Willy Hare was also a regular correspondent: he wrote of France ('The whole place is terribly muddy'), the artillery ('we rather like hearing our own guns bark') and the shelling ('I have been twice covered with mud by exploding shells').[27] His communiqués ended abruptly with his death at Villers-Bretonneux on 24 April 1918.

1916 – Cable Guard reactivated

In 1916 the Guard's duties took on more of a local security focus, rather than the original reason for its creation – defence of the British-Australian Telegraph Company submarine cable landing station. Among the instructors in 1916 was **Lieut Eli Barker**, aged 36. He was a former Queensland Mounted Infantry trooper in 1897-00 and a second lieutenant with the 14th Light Horse Regiment in 1907-09,[28] reactivated as an instructor on 2April 1916:

> A good many interested spectators may be seen watching the Cable Guard at their drill in the Town Hall. Under Lieut. Barker's tuition the boys are making rapid progress in acquiring a knowledge of the rudimentary details that go to the making of a modern soldier.[29]

Among the new members trained by Barker was **Maurice Holtze**, who lived within the grounds of the Darwin Botanic Gardens. He was the grandson of the botanist Maurice Waldemar Holtze ISO (1840-1923) who had come from Hanover in 1872 and was government gardener of the Palmerston Botanic Gardens from 1878 to 1891.[30] He and his eldest son Nicholas pioneered tropical agriculture in the Northern Territory, and the family name is today widely commemorated in the Top End. Nicholas Holtze succeeded his father in 1891 as curator of the Darwin Botanical Gardens, and also served as Government Secretary and Acting Government Resident. For a Red Cross gymkhana in October 1916, the Cable Guard paraded from the Town Hall to the Cricket Oval, where they were inspected by Colonel Sands: Pte Holtze was judged to have the 'Cleanest and best turnout' of the contingent.[31]

An original member of the Cable Guard from 1912, Sidney's brother **Arthur Boyce Lauder** enlisted on 6 May 1916, aged 21. He was wounded in France in June 1918 while serving with the 25th Bn, and then joined the 9th Bn in November 1918. After his return to Darwin in April 1919, he worked for A.E. Jolly and Co as a truck driver. He married Thelma Croft in 1922 and they named their only child, born in 1930, 'Sid' after his late uncle Sidney James Lauder who had been killed near Ypres in 1917.

After Willy Hare's departure in May 1916, **Frederick Thomas Askins** was appointed Acting Officer Commanding with the rank of honorary captain in the Commonwealth Military Forces. Fred Askins had started with the SA Government Administration in the Northern Territory in 1908 and then, following the transfer of control on 1 January 1911, was a Commonwealth public servant in the office of the Government Secretary. By 1916 he was Chief Clerk and Officer-in-Charge of the Accounts Branch, noted in the press as a 'capable and courteous

[27] NTTG 17 May 1917: CPL A W Hare, undated letters.
[28] *The Brisbane Courier*, 4 September 1907, p.2; NTTG 5 October 1916, p.20. Served QMI from 16 September 1897 to 22 November 1900; and 14LHR from 16 August 1907 to 20 March 1909.
[29] NTTG 5 October 1916, p.20.
[30] Holtze sought naturalisation in 1879, aged 44, and swore his oath of allegiance in 1883 – NAA: A711, 998B, item barcode 3178911; A711, 1708, item barcode 3181669. He was awarded the Imperial Service Order in 1913.
[31] NTTG 26 October 1916, p.15; NTTG 2 November 1916, p.21.

officer'.[32]

Like Lewis and Hare before him, Askins also served as the Darwin Recruiting and Enlisting Officer for the AIF, and his signature may be found on the attestation papers of volunteers such as **Joseph King** who enlisted in Darwin on 5 June 1916, aged 34, after serving in the Cable Guard for three years. King was described by the newspaper editor as 'a virile individuality' and 'a fine stamp of a man physically, of the best Anglo-Saxon type'. Having announced his intention to enlist, it was said of him:

> when he reaches the firing line it may be taken for granted that he will do his bit with the best. Good luck to him, and to all others who answer the call. Like many others Joe King is sacrificing good prospects and material comforts for the sake of what he feels to be his duty.[33]

This batch of volunteers enlisted by Askins sailed for Brisbane on the SS *Montoro* on 5 June 1916. King embarked with 4th Pioneer Bn reinforcements on 21 October and in France met up with fellow Territorians Pte John Alfred Robert Linde (previously a tin and wolfram prospector in the outback), Cpl William Mansfield (subsequently awarded the Military Medal), and the Filipino-Australian Pte William Gar (killed on 30 November 1916). The pioneers had entered the line near Armentieres in June and each month the battalion's casualty list grew longer, running to eight pages in the war diary for August. As he had previously done, Joe King continued as a regular correspondent using the pen-name 'Jo-King', sending home humorous anecdotes and snippets of news about the Northern Territory boys he ran into. King received a shrapnel wound to the neck in Belgium on 21 October 1917.

Meanwhile back home during 1916, Darwin's security was again under threat – not from a German raider but instead through incidents of 'street disorder' which could not be managed effectively by the five constables stationed in Darwin. A greatly enlarged workforce had come north to the railway and the meatworks, and this often led to open brawling.[34] The police responded and the matters were dealt with in court, but for a short period in 1916 the Darwin Cable Guard was reactivated. Capt Askins re-issued Defence-branded rifles to members on 20 May, and they were mobilised for street patrol duties.[35] Sometimes just the mere presence of armed uniformed soldiers was enough to quieten the crowds. On one Saturday night in December 1916 there was reportedly 'an atmosphere of expectancy in the crowds standing about' near the Terminus Hotel, when an armed Cable Guard patrol came by – 'the evening passed off without any disturbance worth mentioning'.[36]

Askins relinquished his duties mid-year on medical advice, and was succeeded as Acting Officer Commanding by **Gerald Hill**.[37] Hill announced that legal proceedings would be instituted for the recovery of all arms and equipment on loan to the Darwin Rifle Club from the Defence Department, excepting only that which had been issued to members of the Darwin Rifle Club since 12 February 1916, and to members of the Cable Guard since 20 May 1916.[38] Askins left Darwin in October 1916; he retired in 1948, and wrote three manuscripts reflecting on his life in the NT.[39]

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[32] NTTG 5 October 1916.
[33] NTTG 1 June 1916: editorial.
[34]See for example Christie, M (2000) 'Greek Migration to Darwin, Australia, 1914-1921'. *Journal of Northern Territory History, 11*, pp.1-14.
[35] NTTG 1 June 1916, p.12: Government Notice 1353-16.
[36]NTTG 14 December 1916, p.11.
[37] *The Brisbane Courier*, 4 September 1907, p.2.
[38] NTTG 15 June 1916, p.10: Government Notice 354.16 dated 29 May 1916.
[39] 'Retrospection' (an autobiography from 1908-18); 'Dark Night, What of the Dawn: History Story of Australian

Askins was succeeded as Military Registrar and AIF Recruiting and Enlisting Officer by Lieut Eli Barker. Recruitment continued apace, but not all of Darwin's citizens were swept away with patriotic fervour. On 2 October, Albert Henry Swanson, a billiard maker from Pine Creek and member of the Australian Workers Union (AWU), declared publicly with 'revolting and offensive' language that he would not fight for the King. Swanson was the first to be prosecuted under the *War Precautions Act, 1914-16*, for unlawfully attempting to cause sedition among the civilian population of Pine Creek, receiving six months in jail and a £100 fine. In response, on 19 October William Ryan led thirty AWU members to the Military Registrar's Office in Darwin, throwing mud at the building. Lieut Barker called out the Cable Guard, and Ryan was arrested and charged under the *Police Act*, receiving one month in jail and a fine of £9/2/-.[40]

1917-18 – Winding down

As the 'security situation' in Darwin settled, by the end of February 1917 Barker had recalled all Cable Guard rifles and equipment.[41] He then commanded the Cable Guard from 1 March, with the rank of temporary captain. The Guard returned to its pre-war footing of scheduled training, with weapons only issued when required. During one such activity in June 1917, Reg and Harold Beckett (aged 18 and 17 years) attracted some fleeting notoriety when some large saltwater crocodiles were menacing bathers off the foreshore at Mindil Beach, near the meatworks plant. It was recorded that the Beckett brothers,

> made a sortie with their military rifles and managed to cut off the retreat of one reptile. A couple of well directed shots settled him.[42]

Another security-related role performed by Cable Guard members was to act as guards while the road to East Point was being cleared. In July 1917, Darwin Town Council agreed that those Cable Guard members who had acted as guards would receive a bonus: £4/8/- was allocated to be divided among them proportionately to the service rendered.[43]

At the end of 1918, the local unionists used the unrest of Darwin workers to exert their authority over the Administrator Dr Gilruth, which culminated in the so-called 'Darwin Rebellion' (which was in fact little more than a dramatic disturbance).[44] On 18 December, some 400 workers marched from Vestey's Meatworks to Government House. As Dr Gilruth talked with the demonstrators the crowd surged forward over the fence to hear him; there were a few scuffles but the crowd promptly dispersed. Although the police had been reinforced by 40 Special Constables carrying batons, most of them were held in reserve at the nearby Police Station. Cable Guard members were also on standby, but no intervention was required. The Guard's duties progressively wound up as the following year progressed, and Barker completed his term as commander on 10 November 1919.

A decade later the spirit of the Cable Guard was revived after naval fuel oil tanks were constructed: four were completed by 1928, and a further two by 1933. In 1930 the Military

(Northern Territory) Natives 1605–65'; and 'Footprints on the Sands of Time: A History Story of the Northern Territory of Australia'.

[40] NTTG 2 November 1916.

[41] NTTG 1 February 1917, p.11: Government Notice 24-17.

[42] NTTG 14 June 1917, p.13.

[43] NTTG 5 July 1917, p.5.

[44] Alcorta (1984); Powell (1982); NAA NT, CRS A3, item 1919/1031 – Gilruth to the Minister for External Affairs, 18 December 1918 and Evidence of Colonel Johnston, Minutes of Evidence, p.381; Colonel J L Johnston to the District Commandant, 1 Military District (Brisbane), 18 December 1918; Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers, Report on the Northern Territory Administration, number 28 of 1920, p.9.

Board had decided that the Thursday Island garrison would be relocated to guard these tanks – an advance party known as the 'Darwin Detachment' arrived in September 1932, barracks were erected, and coastal gun positions were built. Soon there was a 'Darwin Garrison' in place in case of an enemy threat arising. Ironically, the threat this time came from a 1914 ally whose imperial flags had festooned the 'smoke nights' and parades of the Darwin Cable Guard.

Further volunteers

Jack (John Lindley) Kellaway, one of the Rifle Club and Cable Guard auditors in 1913-14, was not able to enlist in the AIF until 19 March 1917 after he had turned 21: he served in France with the 3rd Machine Gun Bn.

Reginald James Beckett enlisted on 3 November 1917, aged 18, after three years in the Cable Guard. He served in Palestine with the 4th Light Horse Regt and was wounded in the right elbow at Damascus in October 1918. After the war he was a Guard at the Darwin Gaol and Labour Prison. Probably the last Cable Guard member to volunteer was his brother 19 year old **Harold James Beckett**, on 14 October 1918 with his parents' permission – but he served just 72 days with No.1 Depot Battalion before being discharged on 24 December on account of the demobilisation of the AIF.

Reg and Harold's father was Mr James Thornton Beckett, the Chief Protector of Aborigines. In June 1915 Beckett had reported to the Administrator:

> One of the Cable Guard in Darwin is a half-caste; according to Captain Lewis, he is one of the smartest and most reliable young soldiers in the Corps. His white comrades think highly of him, for, in addition to his general military efficiency, he is a fine shot and a good all-round athlete and sport.[45]

It is generally considered that Beckett was reporting on Willie Allen, although it is equally possible he was referring to Felix Spain, a fireman with the Public Works Department and member of the Guard since March 1915, who was actually of Filipino-English parentage.

Willie Allen[46] had been born to a Larrakia woman in 1886, and was active in athletics, cricket, rifle shooting, horseracing and Australian Rules Football with the Waratahs club. He had served for three years with the Cable Guard before applying to enlist on 8 December 1917, aged 33. He was sworn in by Capt Barker, and was in a contingent farewelled on 20 December. Allen served with the 11th Light Horse Regt and, after his return in July 1919, settled in Queensland with his wife and family.

When **Felix Beato Puerte Spain** enlisted on 8 November 1915, aged 21, he correctly stated that he was a 'natural born British Subject' – his mother was English and his father Dionisio Antonio Puerte Spain (1862-1926) was a Filipino diver who had been naturalised in Queensland prior to federation.[47] Felix served with the 52nd Bn on the Ypres Salient with Willy Hare, and from 20 May 1918 with the 49th Bn on the Bouzencourt Line where he received gunshot wounds to the shoulder. He married in London, and embarked for Australia with his wife and child on 27 March 1920.

Felix Spain's circumstances demonstrate why little information exists regarding the Darwin Cable Guard, and why very few relics have survived. When he died in Darwin on 17 December

[45] Report by the Chief Protector of Aborigines dated 19 June 1915, *in* HHA (1917), p.28.
[46] *Northern Territory News*, 21 April 2011.
[47] See *Sabretache* vol.55, no.2 (June 2014), pp.17-29.

1966, aged 74, apart from his AIF service he had lived in Darwin continuously for 73 years. His Great War entitlement was the standard pair of medals, plus a 'Wound Stripe' and the 'Discharged Returned Soldier Badge'. He survived the 1937 cyclone, but evacuated his family after the first Japanese bombing raids and lived in Glebe, NSW for the duration of World War 2, working for the Allied Works Council. Felix lost his medals, badges and discharge certificate: 'House bombed to the ground' he wrote in one statutory declaration in 1944, and 'my first war campaign medals were taken from by home by an unknown person' he wrote in another in 1966.[48]

His brother Hignio ('Harry') Spain, winner of a Rifle Club trophy in 1912 for the highest score by a new member, was a waterside worker on 19 February 1942 and, survived the Japanese raid, whereas their older brother Catalino and brother-in-law Ricardo Conanan were not so fortunate.[49] But even before the bombing, Darwin residents had lost their possessions several times over. Felix and Harry's only sister Lizzie had married Mounted Constable Joe Green in 1924, a decorated AIF veteran of Gallipoli and the Anzac Mounted Division. Joe lost his uniforms and discharge certificate when their timber and corrugated iron home, typical of Darwin residences of the time, burnt to the ground in 1928. Other veterans lost photographs, documents and medals, and many official records were lost, in the great cyclone of March 1937. Smaller cyclones followed, with great devastation again being wreaked in December 1974 by Cyclone Tracy. It is little wonder that almost no early records, photograph albums or other ephemera have survived.

Honours

During the Great War, 28 decorations were conferred upon twenty Territorians, of whom two were Cable Guard members.

James Veitch Hay[50] from Edinburgh had seen four years' service in the East Lothian and Berwickshire Imperial Yeomanry in the Scottish lowlands, and in Darwin worked as an ironmonger. When he left in 1915 to enlist in the 10th Light Horse Regt, his Cable Guard colleagues presented him with a wristwatch. Hay's troop was providing the right flank guard to the regiment's advance on Jenin on 20 September 1918 when the troop commander led a mounted charge against a large body of enemy troops at Kefr Adan. Sgt Hay 'displayed great coolness and gallantry' during the charge, which resulted in the capture of nearly 1,000 prisoners; he was awarded the Military Medal and was ultimately commissioned.

David John Whiteford,[51] a store assistant and rifle club Silver Medal winner in 1912 (second to Harry Pott), held the rank of sergeant in the Cable Guard when he enlisted in Adelaide on 30 September 1915, aged 23. He served as a lance corporal on the Somme with the 3rd Division Signal Company, Australian Engineers. He received the Military Medal in July 1918 for 'devotion to duty and gallantry in action' near Sailly-le-Sec prior to the German attack on Hamel – his recommendation noted that Whiteford showed 'disregard of danger' and 'bravery in the face of danger'.

[48] NAA: B2455, item barcode 8087909 – Statutory Declaration by F Spain dated 28 December 1944; B2455, item barcode 8087909 – Statutory Declaration by F Spain dated 6 April 1966.
[49] See *Sabretache* vol.55, no.4 (December 2014), pp.4-16.
[50] NTTG 14 January 1915, p.12; *London Gazette* of 3 July 1919, Third Supplement No 31430, p.8357; AWM: recommendation for the DCM dated 23 December 1918.
[51] NTTG 10 October 1912, p.2; NTTG 13 March 1913, p.5; *London Gazette* No 30797, 4th Supplement dated 16 July 1918, p.8333.

Commemoration

Felix Spain and Arthur Lauder were the first to be recorded as volunteers from Darwin – on a Public Works Department Honour Roll unveiled by the Administrator on 13 May 1916.[52] By 1916, some 82 government employees had departed for active service: with such a significant contribution the Superintendent of Public Works expressed his hope that the Honour Roll should be a reminder to all that, 'when duty called, the "Public Shirks" … did not shirk the grandest call of all – that of their Empire'.[53]

Local commemoration

Billy Berghoefer, the Rifle Club's Deputy Captain and Master of Arms and Ammunition, was a key contributor to the Soldiers' Memorial Fund which led to the erection of the Soldiers' Monument (Darwin Cenotaph).[54] Unveiled on 24 April 1921, the monument bears the names of five former Cable Guard members who did not return (see Fig.2):

- ✠ 1735 Acting Sergeant Vernon Lanyon, 27th Bn AIF: severely wounded in the chest at Gallipoli on 18 September, and died of his wounds on the hospital ship *Maheno* on 19 September 1915, aged 21. In 1968, 'Lanyon Terrace' in the Darwin suburb of Moil was named in his honour.[55]
- ✠ Captain Robert Lewis, 25th Bn AIF: killed in action west-southwest of Messines in Belgian West Flanders on 18 June 1916, aged 42.
- ✠ 1051 Private Harry Pott, 25th Bn AIF: wounded-in-action at Pozières on 29 July, and died of his wounds in hospital in Boulogne, France on 10 August 1916, aged 25. In 1968, 'Pott Street' in Moil was named in his honour.[56]
- ✠ 2768 Private Sidney Lauder, 25th Bn AIF: killed near Ypres, Belgium on 30 October 1917, aged 20. In 1991, Litchfield Council registered 'Lauder Road' in memory of the Lauder family – James and Edith Lauder and their sons Arthur and Sidney, Cable Guard and Great War veterans.[57]
- ✠ 2673 Private (Acting Corporal) William Hare, 52nd Bn AIF: killed in action at Villers-Bretonneux on 24 April 1918, aged 27. In 1968, 'Hare Street' in Moil was named in his memory.[58]

Anzac Day in 1918 had been observed in Darwin with a procession of eighteen returned soldiers, followed by a memorial service to the fallen at Christ Church:

> While it was probable that there were few, if any, in the large audience who had not lost friend or relative in the war, the presence of Mrs. R. J. Lewis, with her little daughter, whose gallant husband and father, Capt. R. J. Lewis, fell in France; of Miss Lauder in the choir, who since last Anzac Day has lost her brother Sidney … presence of these whose loss is irreparable, rendered the service increasingly solemn, and brought home keenly to all the price which the women who remain at home have to pay.[59]

[52] NTTG 25 May 1916, p.16.
[53] NTTG 18 May 1916, p.12.
[54] Originally established in 'Liberty Square' opposite Government House; relocated to the Civic Centre in 1970, and moved to its present location in Bicentennial Park in 1992.
[55] NTG 42, dated 25 September 1968.
[56] NTG 42, dated 25 September 1968.
[57] NTG 42, dated 23 October 1991.
[58] NTG 42, dated 25 September 1968.
[59] NTTG 27 April 1918, p.15.

Fig.2: The Darwin Cenotaph bears the names of five members of the Darwin Cable Guard: Anthony William Hare (52nd Bn); Vernon Clifford Lanyon (27th Bn); and Sidney James Lauder and Robert James Lewis (25th Bn). Harry Bunce Pott (25th Bn) is listed on another panel (author's photo).

Mrs Lewis did not see the unveiling of the Soldiers' Monument: her husband's death had followed just three months after the death of her brother Archibald at Rutherford Camp in West Maitland, NSW on 30 March 1916. She left Darwin in 1919, with her daughter who had been born just after Capt Lewis had departed on active service.

Willy Hare was also honoured in the Darwin Methodist Church on 25 May 1919 when a memorial tablet was unveiled by the congregation, which held 'a deep sense of obligation to do the memory of the hero this appropriate honor'.[60] The memorial was placed on the harbour side, near the seat Hare had previously occupied. Vern Lanyon had joined the South Australian 27th Bn, which had effectively been raised from the pre-war 74th Infantry Regt based in the southern suburb of Unley (of which Willy Hare had been a member in 1910-13). Accordingly, Lanyon's name is included on the Roll of Honour in Unley Town Hall.

Commemoration overseas

Vern Lanyon was buried in the East Mudros Military Cemetery on Lemnos Island, Greece. In France, Willy Hare was buried in the Adelaide Cemetery in Villers-Bretonneux, in Plot III which comprises almost completely Australian graves. Harry Pott was buried in Boulogne Eastern Cemetery in Boulogne-sur-Mer. His cousin Sgt Jack Pott RMLI from Deal was less fortunate. Soon after his arrival at Gallipoli, Harry had received news that his cousin had died of wounds on board HMS *Revenge* in the Dardanelles – having died at sea with no known grave, his name is listed on the Chatham Naval Memorial.[61]

In Belgium, Sidney Lauder's remains were exhumed from their original burial location in the field and were reburied in Aeroplane Cemetery northeast of Ypres. Leslie Giles and Barney Allen represented the Darwin community at the funeral of Capt Robert Lewis: he was buried south of Ypres in a field not far from an old deserted farmhouse. Giles observed that the surrounding country was wooded and hilly, 'in feature not unlike parts of the Territory I knew'. Giles wrote home about Lewis:

> He was about the best liked officer in the Battalion … The Territory lads will miss him, as he

[60] NTTG 31 May 1919, p.16.
[61] NTTG 16 December 1915: PTE H B Pott, letter dated 24 September 1915: CH/8150 Sergeant John William Pott, Royal Marine Light Infantry, died of wounds 15 May 1915.

> always had a good word for any of us and was always glad to hear any Territory news. It will be a great blow to his wife, and he was so anxious to see his little daughter, who was born about the time of the evacuation of Gallipoli. Capt Lewis was a soldier before anything else, and he has a true soldier's grave.[62]

Joe King, who described the Western Front as 'hell stirred up', also reported on Capt Lewis:

> I have seen the grave of Capt. R.J. Lewis, who was our Cable Guard OC in Darwin. It is marked with a beautiful wooden monument and inscribed.[63]

This site became known as La Plus Douve Farm Cemetery; his widow Gertrude chose the headstone text, 'HE WAS A VERY BRAVE AND GALLANT GENTLEMAN'.

National commemoration

These five Cable Guard members are commemorated on the Australian War Memorial's Roll of Honour: Lanyon, the first Cable Guard Anzac to fall, on panel 110; Lauder, Lewis and Pott on panel 105 (see Fig.3); and Hare on panel 155. On panel 185 is listed Lewis's brother-in-law, Staff-Sergeant Archibald Septimus Boniface Tait, Australian Army Dental Corps.

Fig.3: The name of Captain Robert James Lewis (1873-1916) on the Australian War Memorial's Roll of Honour: he was killed-in-action while serving with the 25th Bn AIF at Messines on 18June 1916, aged 42 (author's photo).

WW2 commemoration

Three decades after the Cable Guard had been created one of its members was reported as 'missing', becoming the sixth Cable Guard member to be commemorated on the national Roll of Honour: NG4002 Rifleman Harold James Beckett, New Guinea Volunteer Rifles AIF (panel 72).[64] Harold Beckett had volunteered on 21 January 1942, possibly the only Darwin Cable Guard veteran to serve in WW2. After the Japanese occupation of Rabaul, Beckett was taken aboard the SS *Montevideo Maru* for transfer to Hainan Island. On 1 July 1942, this cargo ship was struck by torpedoes from the American submarine USS *Sturgeon* (SS187) and sank off Luzon, Philippines: of the 1,053 prisoners on board, there were no survivors. Beckett was later formally recorded as 'presumed dead' and on 4 August 1947 was administratively transferred to the AIF and given the number 'NGX465' with effect from 22 January 1942.

To honour the World War 2 fallen volunteers from Darwin, a bronze plaque was affixed to the base of the Darwin Cenotaph. Despite his earlier Cable Guard service, Beckett was not a

[62] NTTG 24 August 1916: LCPL L H A Giles, letter dated 19 & 30 June 1916.
[63] NTTG 20 July 1918, p.22: PTE J King, undated letter.
[64] NAA: B883, 'NGX465', item barcode 5881782.

Darwin enlistee in WW2 and was therefore not included on the plaque. He is however commemorated on the Rabaul Memorial to those without a recorded grave, in Rabaul (Bita Paka) War Cemetery, Papua-New Guinea (panel 29).

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The legacy of the Darwin Cable Guard can be seen in the Darwin Garrison of the 1930s – still a land-based defensive organisation based on a principle of static defence, although 'up-gunned' as a coastal battery. The Darwin Mobile Force followed, with a slight change in concept, but far-ranging mobile defence only came with Prof Bill Stanner's North Australia Observer Unit. This concept again manifested itself through two Army Reserve units which existed in Darwin in the 1960s and 1970s, culminating in the creation of the North West Mobile Force on 1 July 1981 as a Regional Force Surveillance Unit – responsible for wide-ranging reconnaissance, surveillance and reporting in northern and north-western Australia.

The brief contribution of the Darwin Cable Guard to Australia's national defence, particularly its period of active service, was quickly overtaken by the circumstances of the Great War. With the scale of commemoration required at war's end, the Cable Guard was simply overlooked. A new generation joined the Darwin Rifle Club, shooting beside returned AIF veterans, and the old Guard gradually faded from living memory. But for some names on granite memorials and bronze honour roll panels its existence today might be altogether forgotten. In fact, were it not for the Great War these men would have gone unrecognised and their contribution to Australia's defence forgotten.

References (Parts 1 and 2)

A complete list of references was published with Part 1.

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MUSEUM SCENES

Paul Skrebels

Polish Army Museum, Warsaw

Photos p.31, *(top to bottom, left to right)*: Polish Hussar armour, including the famous wings, 17th century; Saxon Guard Grenadier uniform (Polish Royal Guards), c.1730; Polish cavalry equipment at the outbreak of WW2; Marionettes used by concert parties, Polish Army in the UK, WW2; German *Hetzer* assault gun wrecked and abandoned in Warsaw, 1945; Ilyushin Il-10 attack aircraft (successor to the Il-2 'Shturmovik'), Polish People's Air Force, 1950s.

Bundeswehr Museum of Military History, Dresden

Photos p.32, *(top to bottom, left to right)*: Infantry versus cavalry, Thirty Years War (1618-1648); Coat of a wounded Hessian officer, Seven Years War (1756-1763); Captured French mitrailleuse, Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871); Ultimate *Volksturm* tank-killer?! WW2; The effect of modern artillery – splinters from a bursting shell caught in a moment of time; Pillboxes from 20th century fortifications; German Army 'Wolf' vehicle damaged by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan, c.2006.

(All photos by the author.)

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POLISH ARMY MUSEUM, WARSAW

(see p.30 for captions)

BUNDESWEHR MUSEUM OF MILITARY HISTORY, DRESDEN

(see p.30 for captions)

COLLECTORS' CORNER

DONATED GERMAN WORLD WAR ONE HELMET

Roland Millbank

This German helmet was gifted to Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle NSW. The Cathedral is a recognised war memorial. Before going on public display it would be helpful to know something of the history of the regiment it belonged to originally. The helmet arrived at the Cathedral with only a history of the people who gave it (second-hand).

Editor's note: The helmet appears to be the standard 'Prussian' infantry version of the M1915 wartime-manufacture Pickelhaube with grey steel fittings and removable spike (here not present). However, readers will note the cloth cover sitting alongside, which was worn over the helmet, with the regimental number '22' in green. Any information on the unit and its service will be most welcome.

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THE ATVARA MONTAGE COMMEMORATIVE PAINTING

John Williamson

Montage painting by Noel Barnes, aviation and military artist, Western Australia, celebrating the activities of the Special Duties squadrons and the agents they delivered to and picked up from occupied Europe, on public display in Melbourne and elsewhere. Depicted are the aircraft – a Lysander, Hudson and Halifax – and personnel involved, and the crests of the two squadrons, Nos 138 (SD) and 161 (SD).

During World War 2 the Royal Air Force (RAF), in close collaboration with Special Operations Executive (SOE) and sometimes with Special Intelligence Service (SIS), operated two highly secret 'Special Duties' (SD) Squadrons, No.138 (SD) Sqn and No.161 (SD) Sqn, flying out of the equally secret airfield, RAF Tempsford in Bedfordshire, England.

The dangerous task of these élite air crews was to fly alone on moonlight nights into enemy occupied Europe to deliver SOE-trained male and female agents (known as 'Joes') and war supplies in canisters and packages, to awaiting resistance forces on secretly arranged, tiny lantern-lit Drop Zones (DZs). These 'deliveries', involving dangerous low-altitude night-time searching for the DZs, took place either by parachute from four-engined bombers, or via small Lysanders or even twin-engined Hudson bombers (see Figure). The smaller aircraft would actually land on these tiny DZs, disgorge their cargo and pick up valuable personnel and/or documents and take off again!

The ironclad secrecy crucial to these operations demanded élite standards of airmanship and navigation plus nerves of steel. Not all operations succeeded; some 600 of these multi-national SD aircrews gave their lives during WW2 (including some 35 RAAF airmen), caught by German night fighters, by Flak or by bad weather. Again, this secrecy resulted in military history completely ignoring the service, sacrifices and significant contribution to the war effort of these airmen for some 40 years post-war. Even the rest of Bomber Command, of which these two SD Squadrons were a part, knew nothing about their existence or activities and the families of these airmen were unable to find out what had happened to their lost loved ones. (Some mothers died believing their sons still to be alive.)

Many of the gallant Joes also lost their lives in the crashes, but also subsequently as agents following Gestapo capture, torture and execution (including female agents). Their moving stories were released post-war, some becoming household names and recipients (often posthumously) of high gallantry awards. But the equally gallant crews remained unrecog-nised for decades.

Two organisations are now dedicated to the uncovering of the achievements and the commemoration of these crews, namely the foundation 'Tempsford Veterans and Relatives Association' (TVARA) – with ceremonies twice annually on the old RAF Tempsford airfield in the UK since 2000 – and here in Australia, the 'Australasian Tempsford Veterans and Relatives Association' (ATVARA) since 2012.

ATVARA's most recent commemorative undertaking, apart from our annual ATVARA Commemorations at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance each July, was the commissioning of a Montage Painting with a focus upon the gallant crews (see Figure). This was painted by the aviation artist Noel Barnes. It had its first public showing at the 2016 Annual ATVARA Commemoration Ceremony, at the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance, on Sunday 10 July. Any reader wishing to join in our commemorations, either veteran, relative, descendant or friend, would be warmly welcomed. Contact Dr John Williamson, honorary ATVARA convenor, on jaws_w@bigpond.com or 03 9598 8921.

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COLD FEET, COCOA AND COURAGE: AUSTRALIAN STRETCHER-BEARERS IN 1916

Mark Johnston

On the eve of the Gallipoli campaign, stretcher-bearer Pte Jocelyn Carr of the 1st Field Ambulance wrote in his diary: 'Am almost wishing I was doing the real work of fighting as we seem to be only hangers on to the army who do the real work. However am quite sure the stretcher bearing when it comes will be strenuous enough.' Just two days after the landing, Carr could write of a transformed reality: 'Splendid tributes being paid by troops and naval men to the Field Ambulances. Some called us chocolate soldiers on boat but now they cannot say too much to us.'[1] At Gallipoli stretcher-bearers, whether ambulance bearers like Carr and 'Jack' Simpson, or regimental bearers within combat units, won a high reputation. This was largely because they established and held to the principle that wherever the infantry went, they went.

That 'cold-footer' stigma did not disappear entirely. For example, Syd Banks-Smith, a bearer who saw some intense and frightening action at Gallipoli, left the 5th Field Ambulance in 1916, and justified it in a letter: 'I am no more a red cross man now. I've pulled that symbol off my arm and not with reluctance as I have a sort of idea that we are not considered among the gallants.'[2] As this suggests, when the Australians' main theatre of operations moved to the Western Front in 1916, stretcher-bearers' reputation was in a psychological no man's land. Some had won medals for bravery and were highly respected at all levels, but like the fighting Diggers, they had to re-establish their reputation in the new conditions. The demands of the year's campaigning would be immense, for approximately 30,000 Australians would be wounded that year. Many, perhaps most, of these casualties were able to walk from the field rather than be carried on a stretcher, but even taking a conservative estimate of 33 per cent of all wounded as stretcher cases, this means that stretcher-bearers carried some 10,000 Australians to help in 1916. Moreover, many of these men were carried by more than one stretcher 'party': casualties were often carried in relays, especially in the innumerable cases when conditions were difficult. Hence the number of 'hand carries' or 'carries' by stretcher in 1916 number in the tens of thousands.

The Australians' full initiation to fighting on the Western Front came at Fromelles in France on 19-20 July 1916. On that night the recently formed 5th Australian Division suffered 5,533 casualties in attacking well-prepared German defences. The Australians temporarily captured some territory but had to withdraw. Fromelles signalled what the Western Front would bring in suffering, appalling conditions, incompetent leadership and, most relevant here, the difficulties of casualty evacuation. The 5th Division history acknowledged that 'the bearers of the field ambulances, the medical officers, and the regimental stretcher bearers worked throughout the night and the following 24 hours in positions of great danger and difficulty.' Congestion in the trenches leading back from the front left bearers' knuckles 'bleeding from repeated knocking against the sides of the narrow trench'.[3] Charles Bingham, an ambulance bearer at Gallipoli and Fromelles, later recalled that the mud in the Fromelles trenches was six to eight inches deep, rendering stretcher-bearing 'bloody hard work'. Consequently, as soon as they could, the bearers left the trenches with their stretchers, 'got on top and walked with them,

[1] AWM PR00462, Pte J. Carr, 1st Field Ambulance (hereafter Fd Amb), diary, c. 15 April 1915 and 27 April 1915. In this article, footnotes are provided only for quotations. More detail is available in the author's book *Stretcher-Bearers: Saving Australians from Gallipoli to Kokoda*, Cambridge UP, Port Melbourne, 2014

[2] AWM PR90/138, Pte S. Banks-Smith, 5th Fd Amb, letter 20 May 1916

[3] A.D. Ellis, *The Story of the Fifth Australian Division*, Hodder and Stoughton, London, n.d., pp.110-11

and took a chance.'[4] Despite these daring and exhausting labours, and assistance from New Zealand and British personnel at Fromelles, helpless men lay beyond the bearers' reach in No Man's Land, many 'raising their limbs in pain or turning hopelessly, hour after hour, from one side to the other.'[5] Whereas Australian casualties in this war usually ran at a ratio of about four wounded and died of wounds to each man killed, at Fromelles the ratio was less than 1.5:1. An unusual number died in No Man's Land from lack of assistance or on being hit again after becoming immobilised. A lack of bearers was another factor, caused in part by the faulty policy of sending bearers in alongside the attackers. For example of the 60th Bn's 16 bearers who went over the top, nine were soon knocked out. Ambulance bearers suffered few casualties at Fromelles – they were not mixed in with the regimental bearers as at Gallipoli – but Australian regimental bearers possibly had heavier casualties there than in any other World War 1 battle.

Both sides' gunners ceased firing from exhaustion at midday on 20 July. The combatants began arranging a truce, but the Australian commander forbade it. Both sides resumed firing, thus preventing stretcher-bearers from being sent out. However, in the words of Charles Bean, the official historian: 'Then was seen, along the whole front of the 5th Division, that magnificent tribute of devotion which the Australian soldier never failed to pay to his mates. For three days and nights, taking the chance of wounds and death, single men and parties continued to go out in answer to the appeal from No-Man's Land.'[6] Bean mentions Corporals William Brown and William Davis, who between them brought in six men under fire in the daylight. As they carried the last of them over the trench parapet a bullet severely wounded Brown and killed the casualty on the stretcher. Sgt Simon Fraser of the 57th Bn described this unofficial stretcher work in a letter home:

> I must say Fritz treated us very fairly, though a few were shot at the work. … It was no light work getting in with a heavy weight on your back, especially if he had a broken leg or arm and no stretcher-bearer was handy. One foggy morning … we could hear someone over towards the German entanglements calling for a stretcher-bearer; it was an appeal no man could stand against, so some of us rushed out and had a hunt. I came across a splendid specimen of humanity trying to wriggle into a trench with a big wound in his thigh. He was about 11 stone weight, and I could not lift him on my back; but I told him to lie quiet while I got a stretcher. Then another man about 30 yards out sang out 'Don't forget me, cobber.' I went in and got four volunteers with stretchers, and we got both men in safely.'[7]

That call, and the response of Fraser and others, are indelibly linked to the public image of the battle. This is especially due to Peter Corlett's statue entitled 'Cobbers', which shows Fraser carrying a wounded man. It is fitting that the enduring monument of the first Australian battle on the Western Front commemorates an Australian rescuing a wounded mate.

By holding stretchers above their heads, some bearers appealed to the Germans' mercy, but this was dangerous. Germans shot down some stretcher-parties and also an Australian wandering blind between the lines. This caused much bitterness, though the Germans apparently believed that their enemy was doing the same. The 5th Division history accuses Germans of allowing Australian wounded to lie near their parapet as a decoy to stretcher-bearers, who were fired on. It says too that an unarmed Australian who approached a German stretcher party for help with a severely wounded mate was shot dead. Under cover of darkness on 20 July many stretcher-bearers were able to proceed, and rescued some 300 men. Other

[4] AWM S00813 Interview with Charles Bingham (ex-14th Fd Amb), 1984
[5] C.E.W. Bean, *The Australian Imperial Force in France 1916*, 8th edn, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1939, p.437
[6] Bean, *The Australian Imperial Force in France 1916*, p.440
[7] Ibid, pp.440-41

wounded men awaited rescue from No Man's Land for up to five days, surviving on the water bottles and rations of the dead around them. But for most, rescue came.

When regimental stretcher-bearers reached their casualties on the field, they were required to halt serious haemorrhage, apply a splint where necessary and apply dressings to protect the wound. They usually did this with remarkable speed and efficiency. Apart from this first aid, they often sought to ease the patient's discomfort with reassuring words. An infantry lieutenant wounded in the Fromelles area in July wrote home about the experience, which he clearly thought was typical:

> You get hit with a terrific force and knocked flying. Then the stretcher bearers [apply] first aid, then the long stretcher ride through the winding communication trench to our regimental doctor in supports. Then stretcher again for another two miles, a tiresome journey under fire all the way, but our 'bearers' are great and care for nothing. 'Are you comfortable brother' and 'have a cigarette brother' and no regard for shells or bombs.[8]

A bearer noted that 'Conversation was a great help and mutual support; the four men of the squad, with their patient, formed (so to speak) a social *unit of courage*'.[9]

No encouragement could prevent some psychological casualties among bearers. Pte Theodore 'Joe' Christie of the 56th Bn suffered 'severe shellshock' in July 1916 after an explosion blew in a dugout in which he was sheltering and killed four other men. One of them was a mate and fellow stretcher-bearer whose brains were spattered over Joe's face. While Christie was convalescing in hospital a psychiatrist asked him to write about his experiences. In 'The Pump of Fromelles' Christie wrote of a water pump at a French farm-turned dressing station, a common destination for many stretcher-borne casualties. One passage ran:

> Red-cross men moved in and out among the prostrate forms, caring not that the day ran into so many hours, so long as lives might be saved … Exhausted stretcher-men, worn out with carrying heavy burdens through the tortuous maze of trenches, went to the pump for their own refreshment or to satisfy the oft repeated cry of the dying 'For the love of Heaven just give me one more sip.'

Christie also described an inescapable ingredient of the stretcher-bearers' work: 'Blood, human blood, was there in plenty: it was oozing from the wounds, it was splashed on the wall, it was smeared upon the pump handle itself, it mingled with the water in the trough and overflowing ran in and out of the stretchers to thicken with the blood there and form a pool where the ground was low.'[10]

The battle of Pozieres was even bloodier than Fromelles for the Australians involved. The 23,000 casualties they sustained in six weeks meant hellish work for stretcher-bearers. When the battle began, on 23 July, one busy bearer was Pte Arthur Adams, a Gallipoli veteran and member of 13th Field Ambulance. He told his diary: 'Move to the trenches at 2pm and find business very brisk. Carry all night through Sausage Gully.' Next day he wrote: 'Carry all day to the Aid Post of 11 and 12th Batt and have some wonderful escapes from high explosive shells.' And on the third day: 'Keep going all day and only got about 2 hrs sleep and on again all night. Simply hell.'

One member of Adams' squad was hit in the head but was saved by his steel helmet, now becoming standard Australian headgear. Only on 27 July were they given a spell. On returning

[8] AWM 1DRL/358, Lt R. Horniman, 4th Bn, letter 10 July 1916
[9] Quoted in A.G. Butler, *The Australian Army Medical Services in the War of 1914-1918*, vol.2, AWM, Canberra, 1940, p.282
[10] AWM MSS2010, Pte T. Christie, 'The Pump of Fromelles', p.2

to the front on 6 August, Adams wrote of 'thousands of casualties' while working Sausage Valley. On 7 August one bearer had his hand blown off, 'but the rest are very lucky'. He saw the 'awful sight' of 41 men killed or wounded by one shell. Adams wrote only a brief entry for 8 August: 'Quieter day tho some awful cases come through'.[11] They were his last written words, for the 28-year-old died of wounds the following day.

Infantry lieutenant John Raws had been helping wounded reach a dressing station at Pozieres when approached by one of his men, who believed his cobber was lying out in the barrage somewhere in the village. Raws wrote that 'I would have given my immortal soul to get out of it, but I simply had to go back with him and a stretcher-bearer.' They spent two fruitless hours looking among the dead. 'The sights I saw during that search,' he recalled, 'and the smell, can, I know, never be exceeded by anything else the war may show me.'[12] Raws' personal testimony and suffering are discussed in many works, but similar sights and smells confronted his accompanying stretcher-bearer, and thousands like him as part of their everyday work.

The Pozieres diary of ambulance bearer Septimus Elmore is illuminating on that everyday work. On 26 July, his first day there, he recorded 'some "warm" carries.' The subsequent entry, written in a trench, mentioned 'very hot' nocturnal carries from a Regimental Aid Post through heavy bombardment. These were about 1¼ miles from the trenches down a route he called 'Shrapnel Valley', 'Death Valley' or 'Toute-de-suite', after which they handed over to bearers and medical personnel at a relay station, who treated casualties before passing them down 'Sausage Valley' road on two-wheel stretcher carriages to horse ambulance wagons. These took them to field ambulance cars ('Fords') for onward transport. Elmore saw 'heart-breaking cases' among men 'sent on their way to die in agony', as stretcher-bearer Tom Richards put it.[13] For Elmore's party, the return journey after carrying a patient was better, 'for the four of us have only an empty closed stretcher between us, so we can hop into a shell crater or the partially constructed sap' on hearing shells approaching. Through the night they had draughts of hot cocoa, without which 'I am afraid our strength would give out under the severe nervous and physical strain, as stretcher-bearing is heavy work.' While resting on 5 August, Elmore visited a mate at a neighbouring unit and discussed post-war plans. 'My experience has been such lately', he reflected, 'that I am content to live for the present – a man lives many lives in a day in a battle like the Somme.'[14]

Pte Leonard Bryant of the 2nd Field Ambulance described such work on 24 July, when 'the track was strewn with both German and our dead and could not be buried on account of incessant artillary barrages from Fritz – while carrying the wounded back we were continually shelled having many narrow escapes.' He barely evaded death near his dugout a few days later, when a shell shattered the arm of another bearer just 10 metres away. The man had been 'making a cross for one of our dead comrades'. All around the dugout lay 'rotting and stinking' dead. On 15 August, when the '2nd Circus' (Field Ambulance) was in the line at Pozieres for the third time, shells and rain fell all night. Then at 5am Bryant's squad carried a casualty from the front line: 'heavy carrying through wet clay and chalk over huge crater holes … it was 2 miles carry'.[15] The following day he worked 12 hours straight near the Chalk Pit.

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[11] AWM 1DRL/0004, Pte A.J. Adams, 13th Fd Amb, diary 23-25 July, 6-8 August 1916. He was attached to 12th Fd Amb on 6-8 August

[12] Bean, *The Australian Imperial Force in France 1916*, p.659

[13] AWM 2DRL/0786, Pte T. Richards, 1st Fd Amb, diary, 9 August 1916.

[14] AWM MSS1825, Pte S. Elmore, 6th Fd Amb, diary, 27 & 28 July, 5 August 1916, 27 September 1917

[15] AWM PR00142 Pte L. Bryant, 2nd Fd Amb, diary, 24 & 27 July, 15 August 1916

Pozieres village was reduced to rubble. A 21st Bn rifleman saw that amidst the ruins lay 'dead men everywhere, some on stretchers with the stretcher bearers lying dead beside them.'[16] The battalions that entered the Pozieres fighting in July had 16 bearers on strength, while those entering in August each allotted an additional eight. The 24th Bn history acknowledges that 'Pozieres provided our regimental stretcher-bearers with a task utterly beyond their powers', and that in this battle 'a hundred bearers per Battalion would have been more in keeping with requirements.'[17] By the unit's second day, just four of its 16 bearers were still unharmed. Riflemen helped with the wounded, and the transport section volunteered as bearers; some were killed at this work. After hours on this job, some had so strained their hand muscles that they could no longer grip the stretcher handles. Numbers were so limited that they were lucky if they could maintain two bearers per stretcher. Bearers also showed humanity in carrying enemy wounded from the field.

For all bearers, full-time or part-time, 'the terror of the barrage remained, and the great length of the bearer carry made clearance a terrible problem still.'[18] So did the fact that some casualties waited days to be collected and have their maggot-infested wounds treated. A machine-gunner who survived Pozieres wrote to his father soon afterwards: 'The Stretcher-Bearers are I think the bravest crowd of the lot. I've seen men carrying wounded at a walking pace, through a heavy barrage of fire, through which one would think it would be impossible for any man to live, and return the same way and carry on again, as if it was part of an ordinary day's work.'[19] The diary of Pte Cedric Dunlop of 4th Bn included a similar tribute:

> Daylight dawned and then we could see the horrors. Mutilated men being carried or helped in, dead and dying lying everywhere. Our stretcher bearers to the last man all deserve the V.C. Under this terrific fire they were binding men up and carrying them to the dressing station and so they kept at it for the 6 days we were there without a spell or sleep until they were in the last stages of exhaustion. I take off my hat to them and feel proud that I am an Australian.[20]

Many other infantryman would have agreed with these estimates, but no Australian stretcher-bearers received a Victoria Cross during the war. Pte Martin O'Meara won a VC in August 1916, and though often described as a stretcher-bearer, officially he was not one. He was in the 16th Bn's Scouting Section. However, according to Lieut Lyne of the same battalion, he would 'efficiently and cheerfully … fill in his time bringing in wounded under all conditions.' Between 9 and 12 August 16th Bn captured and held vital ground but in doing so suffered 39 killed, 348 wounded and 19 missing. Enemy and 'friendly' artillery blasted their positions. O'Meara was active throughout this ordeal, carrying in at least 20 casualties from No Man's Land in conditions one eyewitness called 'indescribable'. Another said that O'Meara worked amidst shrapnel and machine-gun fire that was 'intense beyond description.' On his own initiative this five-foot-seven-inch tall dynamo also braved 'a perfect hail of shells' to stagger up to the line with ammunition, grenades and provisions, and then bring out wounded on the return trips. When one man was buried in a section of trench which other Australians had just evacuated, 'O'Meara, despite the overwhelming fire, at once rushed to the spot, extricated the buried man and thereby saved his life.'[21]

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[16] Quoted in N.C. Smith, *The Red and Black Diamond*, Gardenvale, 1997, p. 45
[17] W.J. Harvey, *The Red and White Diamond*, Alexander McCubbin, Melbourne, 1920, pp.97, 104
[18] Butler, *Australian Army Medical Services*, vol.2, pp.60, 63
[19] Mitchell Library MLMSS 1186, L/Cpl R. Richards, 5th MG Coy, letter, 31 Aug 1916
[20] AWM PR00676, Pte C. Dunlop, 4th Bn, diary July or August 1916
[21] Eyewitness accounts of O'Meara at Pozieres: AWM Honours and Awards – Martin O'Meara. AWM 4/23/33/9, 16th Bn war diary, August 1916

Even after 16th Bn was relieved, O'Meara went forward again through shelling and rescued two more casualties. For his conspicuous bravery over these four days, O'Meara received the Victoria Cross, although he may not have received a VC later in the war. As a result of a directive issued by the British high command in late August 1916, Australians in France were told: 'Instructions have been received that in future the V.C. will only be given for acts of conspicuous gallantry which are materially conducive to the gaining of a victory. Cases of gallantry in life saving, of however fine a nature, will not be considered for the award of the V.C.'[22] Later British clarifications implied that stretcher-bearers might in fact be eligible, and indeed British stretcher-bearers received VCs in both world wars. Australians did not, and not for any lack of suitable candidates who were given other awards.

Capt Ben Leane of the 48th Bn experienced the full horrors of Pozieres, where he saw men blown to pieces – the 41 that Adams mentioned were of Leane's battalion – and described casualties being unwittingly trodden into the mud. But amidst his evocations of ghastliness, he was struck by 'the respect paid to stretcher bearers by both sides. Our fellows go right out into the open under cover of an old white rag, and pick up wounded and carry them to the rear without having a shot fired at them. Of course we give the Germans the same privilege.'[23]

At the end of August the weather changed, and 'dust was replaced by mud'. This prohibited evacuation through the trenches, which in some cases were too narrow to permit stretchers anyway. Bearers took to carrying white cloth, if red crosses were unavailable, as a means of alerting the enemy that they were carrying wounded. If the Germans saw these flags they usually respected them. Septimus Elmore first noted the 'recent practice' of using white flags on 24 August. He remarked too that flags protected men from rifle and machine-gun fire, but not shells, the main cause of casualties. The following day, stretcher-bearer Pte Edward Munro, enduring his first day in action, saw some seven bearers killed by shells, their raised white flag offering no protection. When Charles Bean first saw a procession in which one of the bearers carried a flag, he did not have a camera to take a photo. Shortly afterwards he met his cousin, an infantry lieutenant at Pozieres. Within hours of the meeting he heard that the cousin had been mortally wounded. Stretcher-bearers had carried the cousin under a white flag. Bean then did all he could to obtain a photo of bearers with the flag. The resulting photo was suppressed as being bad for morale, but fortunately survived the war.[24]

Pte Walter Hopwood, who had been a bearer at Gallipoli, endured '7 days of hell' at Pozieres in July. He had about seven hours' sleep in five days. The ordeal continued in August. He was a reluctant bearer, having applied six times to be transferred to the engineers. Meanwhile, an Australian engineer, Alan McGregor, wrote that after an explosion at a field kitchen that killed or wounded 40 men, 'The stretcher bearers got them away to doctors quick and lively, by jingo those fellows [in] the Field Ambulance are great'. His next point helps explain Hopwood's restlessness: 'I have heard them called cold foots.' However, McGregor continued: 'They will go out anywhere in no mans land under a barrage of fire and bring them in. They are doing it every day no matter how heavy the fire is … it is the worst job in the British army.'[25] Hopwood, who may have agreed, still gave all that could be demanded – he was unsuccessfully recommended for a Military Medal, in part for doing extra work voluntarily. Bean says that at Pozieres the stretcher-bearers 'were moved by an inward desire to show to the combatant troops

[22] A.G. Butler, *The Australian Army Medical Services in the War of 1914-1918*, vol.3, AWM, Canberra, 1943, pp.1045-46
[23] AWM 1DRL/412, Capt B. Leane, 48th Bn, diary, 1 September 1916
[24] J. Gooding, 'Angels' Work', *Wartime* 64, Spring 2013, pp.47-50
[25] Spr A. McGregor, 2/12th Fd Coy, diary 8 July 1916, from the author's collection

that they shared the worst dangers', and that in so doing they 'drew on themselves the special admiration of their mates'.[26] When the commander of I Anzac Corps, General Birdwood, mentioned stretcher-bearers to a gathering of 1st Division men in August, a round of cheers went up. Tom Richards heard this, and while working with a field ambulance during the battle recorded similar comments from common soldiers. One told him that every battalion bearer should have the Victoria Cross. 'The men all love them', Richards claimed, 'and sympathise with them in their hard and terribly trying work.'[27] The 'cold-foot' stigma lingered, but took a battering.

Bearers were praised by patients, and the admiration was mutual. Pte Robert McKerlie, a 13th Bn stretcher-bearer, wrote on 30 August, in the aftermath of the battalion going over the top amidst rain: 'it is heavy work with the stretchers but the majority of the chaps that were wounded were very patient and did not complain of anything.'[28] Many wounded became stuck in the mud and had to be dug out; usually the Germans were sympathetic to the Australians waving flags above these casualties. On 30 August there was even a brief informal truce. Headquarters frowned on white flags and truces, but front-line troops knew little of any such prohibitions and would have ignored them rather than see their mates die. Opposing bearers each took one side of No Man's Land and handed over any of the other's wounded on their territory or informed the opponent of the location of wounded awaiting rescue.

By the time McKerlie and his fellow bearers had been pulled out of the line with their unit after 48 hellish hours, they looked like 'a lot of scarecrows covered with mud from head to foot', but they had brought out all their wounded.[29] The official medical historian closed his account of Pozieres, 'the most terrible trial by battle to which the Australian force was exposed in the Great War', by discussing the white flags and truces that sounded a 'human note of mutual respect.'[30]

The trials of 1916 did not end at Pozieres. As the year came to a close, mud became an ever greater problem. Regimental bearer Roger Morgan, a bearer with the 2nd Bn, was moved by the fate of casualties carried into an RAP at Flers in November: 'The wounded were in a terrible state, frozen and covered with mud. Had a job to find their wounds as they were covered, bandages and all by mud, poor beggars, a wounded man has not much chance in a sector like this.' He asserted that 'War in winter time in this country is not War its murder.'[31] That term was appropriate for the fate of two Australian stretcher-bearers, shot as dawn found them working to save wounded near the German wire at Flers on 5 November.[32]

In late December 1916 the 2nd Bn arrived at Gueudecourt, which Roger Morgan said deserved its reputation as the worst area on the Western Front. He declared the evacuation of casualties 'a huge problem here, as bearers, even 6 men to a stretcher get bogged'. Three days later, on Christmas Day, he experienced it first-hand. He was about to have Christmas dinner, comprising a morsel of cake and cup of coffee, when he was ordered to go to the line, where young Cpl Jack McLoughry had been sniped in the abdomen. 'I was to take morphia and Hyperdermic up to where he lay,' Morgan recalled, 'and give him an injection as they could

[26] Bean, *The Australian Imperial Force in France 1916*, p.519
[27] AWM PR00626, Pte T.J. Richards, 1st Fd Amb diary, 7 & 13 August 1916
[28] AWM PR90/122, Pte R. McKerlie, 13th Bn, diary, 29-31 August 1916
[29] Ibid
[30] Butler, *Australian Army Medical Services*, vol.2, pp. 63-4
[31] AWM 2DRL/0218, Pte R. Morgan, 2nd Bn, diary 29 October, 1 November 1916
[32] Bean, *The Australian Imperial Force in France 1916*, p.908n

not keep him on the stretcher, poor beggar, in his agony.' Morgan felt 'at a loss to describe the trip' to where bearers had managed to carry McLoughry. 'Many times we were waist deep in mud and water and at the best it was almost up to the knees.' Enemy shells came close as they plugged along. They found six bearers still struggling slowly with the stretcher. Morgan injected the morphia, which gave some relief to McLoughry before he died back at the Ambulance. For this death Morgan blamed the difficulty of getting a man wounded in the morning to help by the afternoon. He concluded, 'The bearers are almost super-human but the odds were too great.'[33]

The 5th Division history recounts that in December bearers in the Delville Wood area

> soon found that the communication trenches, being knee-deep in slush, were quite useless for their work and that the 'carry' overland was one of extraordinary difficulty. From the regimental aid posts to the Advanced Dressing Station the distance was about 2½ miles, and stretcher cases could be conveyed over this only by numerous relays of bearers, so that thirty-six men were needed to evacuate one wounded man from the regimental aid posts, and it took them about seven hours of the most exhausting efforts to cover the 2½ miles of loathsome mud which bogged them at every step.[34]

Bean called the muddy conditions of late 1916 'the worst ever known to the First A.I.F.', and explained that Brigadier-General Glasfurd, mortally wounded, was ten hours on the journey.'[35] Duckboards were a vital aid to ambulance bearers but did not go right up to the front.

Ambulance bearer Pte Bert Reynolds had a cold throughout the three months he spent in the area, partly because his feet never stayed dry for even five minutes a day. In this sense only, ambulance bearers were 'cold-footers'. Capt Keith Doig, a doctor in the 8th Field Ambulance, wrote in November 1916 that this term was unjust, given the bearers' strenuous and dangerous work. Moreover, the bearers were conscious that they were not carrying a sack of flour but a wounded man, for whom 'every slip means pain'.[36] Ironically, 1916 ended with many bearers carrying soldiers who were suffering from cold feet: 'trench foot' was a painful affliction. However, 1917 would bring more casualties than 1916. The bearers would win praise anew as they relieved suffering and saved lives at places such as Bullecourt, Messines and Ypres.

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OBITUARY

Professor Jeffrey Guy Grey (19 March 1959 – 26 July 2016)

Colleagues and friends the world over were shocked to learn of the sudden death of Prof J.G. Grey, one of Australia's foremost historians. Jeff was not only a productive writer and respected scholar, but was an energetic and influential teacher, a patron to a generation of younger historians, and a figure of international renown among historians of war.

Jeff came from a military family (his father, Major-General Ron Grey, survives him) and grew up as an 'army brat'. The Greys lived in Canberra for much of Jeff's adolescence and he attended Canberra Boys' Grammar School and went on to study at the Australian National University, from which he graduated in 1983. In the same year he began as a Teaching Fellow

[33] AWM 2DRL/0218, Pte R. Morgan, 2nd Bn, diary 29 October, 1 November, 22 & 25 December 1916
[34] Ellis, *Story of the Fifth Australian Division*, pp.148-49
[35] C.E.W. Bean, *Anzac to Amiens*, AWM, Canberra, 1946, p.267
[36] AWM PR00317, Capt K. Doig, 8th Fd Amb, letter 19 November 1916

in the Faculty of Military Studies at RMC Duntroon and completed his PhD in 1986. After a brief spell in the Historical Section of DFAT, he rejoined the University of NSW at the Australian Defence Force Academy in 1988. There he remained for almost his whole career, becoming Professor in 2003. Jeff taught thousands of midshipmen and cadets in the Department of History and later the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. His teaching, always confident and challenging, was informed by a profound grasp of the history of warfare across several centuries and most continents, rigorous and demanding but compassionate and understanding when required. His reputation as a supervisor of higher degrees kept him in constant demand, and he enhanced the School's reputation in Australia and beyond.

A cogent and stylish writer, Jeff published 26 books and edited collections, and uncounted articles, reviews and addresses. He wrote widely and influentially: on the Korean and Vietnam wars, biographies, and *A Military History of Australia*, the first such study. Perhaps his most mature work was *A Soldier's Soldier*, a biography of Lieutenant-General Tom Daly, whom he knew and admired, as he knew practically every senior officer in the Army over thirty years. Jeff wrote the official history *Up Top* (on the RAN in SE Asian conflicts) and the official history of Australia's involvement in the Confrontation with Indonesia. For the former he made friends of sailors, and for the latter made remarkable connections among Indonesia's senior officers. He had a gift for making big projects happen. He and UNSW colleagues edited successive editions of the *Oxford Companion to Australian Military History*, and the extensive Oxford *Australian Centenary History of Defence*, published at the turn of the century, for which Jeff wrote the volume on the history of the Army. In May 2016 the final volume appeared of the *Oxford Centenary History of Australia and the Great War*, which Jeff not only instigated but also wrote the volume *The War with the Ottoman Empire*.

Jeff had a profound influence on the Australian army's awareness of its history. Besides educating aspiring officers for over thirty years, he developed a close relationship with the Army History Unit, supervising the PhD of its head, Roger Lee. Jeff and Peter Dennis ran a series of Army history conferences, at which historians from all over the world – many Jeff's friends – spoke. An unusual Australian military historian, Jeff's reputation transcended Australia: in many ways it was stronger overseas. He called on a wide network of colleagues, and especially in North America and Britain, in editing journals in four nations, including the UNSW-based *War & Society*. In 2000-2002 Jeff held the Major-General Matthew C. Horner Chair of Military Theory at the Marine Corps University, Quantico, Virginia, and had long been an active member of the US-based Society for Military History. In 2015 he became the first non-American President of the Society. At its last annual congress, held in Ottawa in April, Jeff was greeted warmly, fêted as a respected figure in the field of military history internationally.

At UNSW Canberra Jeff created the Australian Centre for the Study of Armed Conflict and Society, an inter-disciplinary group reflecting his broad scholarly interests, the fruits of which will outlive him. His most important legacy may turn out to be the cohort of graduate students he supervised, inspired and assisted. They will continue Jeff's broad interests and high standards in research and publication.

Jeff is survived by his first wife, Gina, and their adult children Victoria and Duncan, and his wife Emma, with whom he had a son, Sebastian, aged 5. They and many friends, colleagues, students and readers are now bereft.

Peter Stanley

TWO MILITARY HISTORY VIGNETTES

Rohan Goyne[1]

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST NAVAL ACTIONS DURING WORLD WAR ONE

This first vignette looks at the first actions of the Royal Australian Navy during the First World War. The first involves the *Alvina*, which intercepted the German merchant ship the SS *Pfalz* on Port Philip Bay on 5 August 1914; the second is the dispatch of RAN reservists by road to capture the German liner *Oberhausen* at Port Huon in Tasmania, also on 5 August 1914.[2]

There has been considerable attention on the first shot fired during the war from Fort Nepean at the SS *Pfalz*, but little or no attention to the actions of crew of the *Alvina* to stop the ship itself as part of its examination duties. This constituted the first offensive action by the fledgling Australian navy during the First World War.

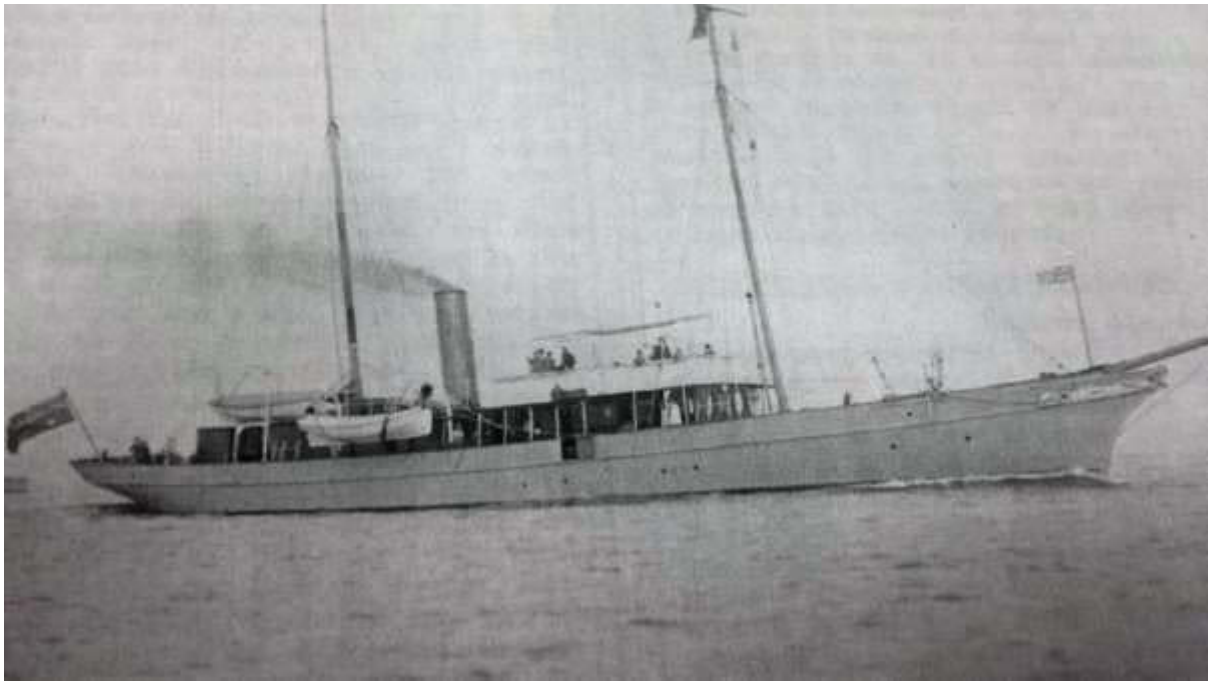

Fig.1: The Alvina in her wartime role as an examination vessel (State Library of Victoria, H91.325/1078)

The *Alvina*

The *Alvina* was a 194 tons-gross steamer built in 1887 in Southhampton.[3] The *Alvina* was the most unlikely vessel of the RAN to be the first into action. It was the pilot vessel on Port Philip Bay at the outbreak of war, and was also tasked as an examination vessel for the Bay. She was not commissioned into the Navy, instead she was requisitioned.

The official history discusses the actions of the *Alvina* thus:

> The *Pfalz* arrived off Portsea at around 10 a.m. A launch then came along side with an officer from the Examination Service, which, when war seemed imminent, was established under control

[1] Rohan Goyne is an author and a Petherick Reader at the National Library of Australia, who now researches and writes under the title, Military History Vignettes (MHV).
[2] The *West Australian*, Thursday 6 August 1914, p.7.
[3] J.H. Straczek, *The Royal Australian Navy: Ships, Aircraft and Shore Establishments*, Navy Public Affairs, Sydney 1996, n.p.

of the Naval Board, its object being to provide a patrol to guard of the entrance to the port and to examine all inward- and outward bound-vessels. When the *Pfalz* was examined, advice of the outbreak of war had not been received, so there was no legitimate reason for stopping her, and she was given leave to proceed.[4]

SS *Oberhausen*

The German liner *Oberhausen* was loading 750,000ft of timber at Port Huon. Following the receipt of official notification of the outbreak of war in Hobart, the District Naval Officer, Commodore A. Dun, moved to detain the Oberhausen. Dun ordered ten men of the naval reserve who had been called out on 2 August 1914 under the command of Sub-Lieutenant Russell Young to Port Huon. The party were armed with rifles and departed Hobart in two motor cars at 3.30pm on Thursday, 5 August 1914.[5]

The party's orders were to take possession of the *Oberhausen* and bring her to the naval pier at Hobart. The earliest actions by the Australian Navy on the 5 August 1914 were by a vessel requisitioned into it and another by a party of eleven naval reservists via road from Hobart. The navy would go on to take part in most theatres of the first global conflict.

THE BUNGENDORE BOYS: FIGHTING THE BOER

This second vignette examines the Boer War Roll of Honour for the Bungendore district of NSW against the Boer War Nominal Roll provided on the Commonwealth Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) website of the Australian War Memorial (AWM).[6]

Bungendore is a village of currently around 3,000 people located between Queanbeyan and Bateman's Bay on the Kings Highway in New South Wales. The author discovered the roll of honour hanging in the village's Memorial Hall while visiting in 2015.

The Roll of Honour contains 21 names of men from the Bungendore district who on the face of it served in the Boer War (*see figure at right; author's photo*).

The table below cross-references the names on the Roll against the available data from the AWM Boer War Nominal Roll on the DVA website.

	Veteran	**Nominal roll details**
1.	Walter Montgomery Bell	1st Australian Horse – invalided to Australia 19/11/1900
2.	A.D. Campbell	Not listed on Nominal Roll

[4] A.W. Jose, *The Royal Australian Navy 1914-1918, Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918*, vol.9, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1928, Appendix no.11, 'The Capture of S.S. *Pfalz*', p.547.
[5] The *West Australian*, Thursday, 6 August 1914, p.7.
[6] www.dva.gov.au (site accessed 2015).

3.	William Henry Guy	5th Battalion Australian Commonwealth Horse
4.	J.T. Haydon	Not listed on Nominal Roll
5.	John William Haydon	Trooper, Sn 334, 1st Australian Horse
6.	James Hopkins	Private, A Squadron, NSW Mounted Infantry
7.	Walter Joseph James	Private, 1st Australian Horse, Died Bloemfontein 04/05/1900
8.	John Blenner McJannett	Sn 462, Private NSW Mounted Rifles, Invalided 30/8/1900
9.	William Vincent McJannett	Sn 146, Australian Horse
10.	Samuel Curtis Masters	Lance Corporal, Sn18, 2nd NSW Mounted Rifles
11.	Edgar Lionel Moody	Sn 1083, Trooper, 1st Australian Horse
12.	T.E. Overend	Sn 387, Corporal, D Squadron, 5th Battalion, Australian Commonwealth Horse
13.	W. Overend	Not listed on Nominal Roll
14.	James Bunbury Osborne	Lieutenant, 1st Australian Horse
15.	Alexander Powell	Sn1436, Australian Imperial Bushmen
16.	Henry David See	Sn 1090, Trooper, 1st Australian Horse
17.	G.W.J. Stackpole	Not listed on Nominal Roll
18.	O.A. Taylor	Sn 3094, 3rd NSW Mounted Rifles
19.	Thomas George Taylor	Sergeant, Sn 724, 2nd NSW Rifles
20.	J. Wells	Not listed on Nominal Roll
21.	Joseph James Winter	Trooper, No.1104, 1st Australian Horse

After cross-referencing the names on the Roll of Honour with the Boer War Nominal Roll the following is revealed. From the 21 men listed for Bungendore on the Roll of Honour, five are not listed on the Nominal Roll, which represents approximately a 25% inconsistency in which the details do not match the preliminary primary source. Therefore, further examination of other primary and secondary source documents would be necessary to confirm the Boer War Roll of Honour. Indeed, other names may also have been omitted from the Roll of Honour by innocent mistake.

Of the 16 names on the Roll of Honour verified against the Nominal Roll in this study there was one officer and fifteen other ranks. One of the soldiers died in South Africa and two others were invalided. There was also not one unit alone to which all the men were recruited.

The contribution from the Bungendore district to the Boer War contingents provides the opportunity for others to do further more detailed research and retelling their individual stories for the future anniversaries of the conflict.

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PROPAGANDA EATS ITSELF: THE *BULLETIN* AND THE BATTLE OF BROKEN HILL

Brendan Whyte[1]

The 'Battle of Broken Hill' is a well-known Australian domestic incident of the First World War.[2] On 1 January 1915, in local atmosphere heated by anti-war militancy, union agitation at mine layoffs and the continued employment of Germans and Austrians in the mines, two Muslim Afghans from the Broken Hill cameleer camp took out their own longstanding personal grievances on the community by attacking, on the outskirts of the town, the train hired by the Manchester Unity Order of Oddfellows friendly society to carry townsfolk to its annual New Year's Day picnic at Silverton. A passer-by and two passengers on the train, one a teenage girl, were shot and killed, and six more, including women and children, wounded. The attackers fled back towards the town, where they were soon holed up by a posse of police, military reservists and civilians. A fourth man, a bystander, was killed by a stray bullet, and a seventh victim wounded, during this final gun-battle in which the two Afghans were also killed. Because the Afghans flew a Turkish flag during the attack, it has been regarded not only as the sole enemy attack on Australia's soil during the First World War, but also, in more recent times, as Australia's first act of terrorism. The Turkish flag also caused the Afghans to be considered Turks themselves, although they appear to have originated from British India or Afghanistan.

The event has built up a certain mythology in the century since it occurred, and has been the subject of a film and three novels.[3] The various sites in Broken Hill associated with the incident have been marked with heritage trail signage, and the Silverton Railway Company's museum displays several items, including one referring to a clipping from the *Ballarat Courier* that the museum received, claiming that the incident, much inflated for propaganda purposes, was even reported by German newspapers of the time. This information intrigued me, and while I tracked down the *Ballarat Courier* piece, the supposed German articles to which it and the museum refer eluded me. What I have since discovered, however, shows that not only was this German knowledge of the event completely fictitious, but also that this supposed example of the gullibility of the German public in fact originated as a parody in a Sydney weekly, and was spread through the country by mainly regional and small-town newspapers who failed to check their sources, or simply forgot it was a joke. The story found a ready audience overseas as well, with reprints in English and American papers finding their way back to Australia to resurrect and reinforce the story. Indeed, the story did not wear out its welcome until the 1950s.[4]

The story begins with the Sydney weekly, *The Bulletin*, a magazine first published in 1880, focusing on politics and business, but including some literary content along with cartoons and

[1] Dr. Brendan Whyte is Assistant Curator of Maps at the National Library of Australia. Email bwhyte@nla.gov.au
[2] Ernest Scott, *Australia during the war, The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–1918*, vol.11, 7th edn, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1940, pp.111-12.
[3] Robin Levinson's 1981 film *The Battle of Broken Hill*; Omer Ertur, *A prelude to Gallipoli: the battle of Broken Hill 1915*, self-published, Oregon, 2005, and reissued in bilingual English/Turkish version as *A day of terror in Australia: the conspiracy that brought Anzacs to Gallipoli*, Donkişot Güncel Yayınlar, Istanbul, 2009; Chris McCourt, *The cleansing of Mahommed*, Fourth Estate, Sydney, 2012; and Nicholas Shakespeare, *Oddfellows*, Vintage, Sydney, 2015.
[4] This paper draws heavily on the recent digitisation of Australian and New Zealand newspapers by the National Libraries of those two countries, the former under the auspices of the *Trove* project, a one-stop portal for the content of Australian libraries. Due to copyright, Australian digitisation stops in the mid-1950s, but the story may well have continued to be reprinted since then in various places.

illustrations.[5] In the fortnight following the 1915 picnic train attack, the magazine published three typically humorous pieces that made reference to the attack: the first two poking fun (from the safety of sophisticated twentieth-century Sydney society) at Broken Hill's militancy and continued lawless nineteenth-century wild west atmosphere; the third more specifically satirising the attack itself.

*

Thursday 7 January 1915, p.11

The Outbreakings of Broken Hill.

BROKEN HILL is a place where strange things happen. It is a sort of an outlaw town. All its trade is with Adelaide, because its railway connects with Adelaide. It lies within a few miles of the South Australian border. But the Government at Adelaide has no control over it, because it is located in New South Wales. And New South Wales has very little control, because the railways from Sydney to Cobar and Hay, which are the most adjacent pretence of communication, stop some hundreds of miles short of the Barrier.[6] The Sydney Government will put up with a lot from Broken Hill rather than try to maintain order. The business costs too much. Consequently, except when the Government at Sydney becomes wild, and starts to dash things about and go over the speed limit, the miner at Broken Hill – who is largely a Cousin JACK,[7] otherwise an Ancient Briton from Cornwall – is very much a law unto himself. He is a good-humored and casual kind of law, still there are times when his methods make the community tired. He is too much like BRET HARTE'S Outcasts of Poker Flat.[8] As a case in point, it was decided last Sunday (there is no real Sunday on the Barrier) at a Trades Hall meeting, that, the mining industry being slack, the single men should go out in a body on Monday, and 'demand immediately handsome contributions' from the local commercial firms. What would happen to the local firms if they didn't put up the money wasn't mentioned, but in a wooden town there are many chances. All would probably depend on the size of the gap between Broken Hill and Cobar, where the railway from Sydney ends. The proposition could hardly be called bushranging, for bush is scarce in those parts, but it might possibly be defined as slag-ranging, or robbery-under-tailings.[9] Also it might be called violent beggary. New South Wales would save itself a lot of small troubles if it handed over Broken Hill and the Ancient Britons thereof to South Australia, so that the one Government which has railway connection to the Ancient Briton would be responsible for his welfare. The grand old silver city is a difficult place to manage from afar off. It stops paying rent at the first sign of unrest. It has strange spasms and strange breakages. It is always flying off the handle. When a few of its people went away to fight for Australia against the Germans a crowd gathered at the railway station and called them murderers. And when two Turks ran amok a crowd wrecked the local German Club by way of getting square with the two dead Turks. Hysteria and mob law appear to be the characteristics of this lonesome settlement, which has run wild in the desert.

[5] Bought by Consolidated Press in 1961, the magazine shifted to a news format, but despite being Australia's longest running magazine, incurred increasing losses and finally folded in 2008.

[6] A term for the town, and its surrounding region, referring to the Barrier Ranges, the ore-rich hills in which Broken Hill lies.

[7] Slang term for a Cornishman.

[8] Francis Bret[t] Hart[e] (1836-1902), American author of popular novels of the California gold rush period. American consul in Krefeld, Germany (1878), and Glasgow (1880), he settled in London in 1885, where he died. One of his most famous short stories 'Outcasts of Poker Flat', features a secret society attempting to reverse the declining financial and moral fortunes of the settlement of Poker Flat by deciding who to exile and who to kill.

[9] A jest on *Robbery Under Arms*, the classic Australian novel of bushranging, by Rolf Boldrewood (pseud. of Thomas Alexander Browne), serialised in the *Sydney Mail* 1882-83 and published in book form 1888.

Thursday 14 January 1915, p.7

> Racketty Broken Hill harvested some of the crop of its own sowing on New Year's Day,[10] and promptly sowed some more. When it gets into trouble the big isolated mining town's instant idea is to claw its own way out – as, for instance, when, not having got all the Government relief work it asked for, it held up all the Government trams for one hour, for a start; or as when, the water having been turned off from certain houses for non-payment of rates, a mass meeting called for volunteers, who, armed with picks and shovels, opened up the streets and simply turned it on again. Breathing that sort of air, a couple of Turks, who had been prosecuted for slaughtering without a licence, clawed back in the local manner – with trimmings. Nailing the flag of the Unspeakable to their ice-cream cart, they dropped into a trench alongside the railway line for a water-main, and with a couple of rifles poured bullets into a crowded picnic train that was running to Silverton. Incidentally they picked off a man who happened to be passing on a bicycle. When the train had got out of range they retired round the hilly outskirts of the town, and put up a willing defence against police and civilians from behind a clump of rocks. When the Red Cross had picked up the pieces the ice-cream insurrection was found to have left behind it five corpses, including one of the Turks, and seven more or less badly wounded, including the other Unspeakable. By the time the casualties had been tallied Broken Hill was a very mad town again, and ready to knock the head off anybody who couldn't swear he had no foreign blood in him. For a start it burned down the German club while it howled 'Rule Britannia,'[11] and was only headed off an attack on a so-called Afghan settlement – known as the Camel Camp – with great difficulty. Then it wiped the dust out of its eyes, cut its crib, and went to the Trades Hall to talk about the universality of Labor and the brotherhood of man.

Thursday 14 January 1915, p.8

> The dailies seem to have suppressed all reference to the way in which the news of the attack by two Turks on a Broken Hill excursion train was received in Hogmany.[12] The following official statement was issued in Berlin, where the news created great enthusiasm:—
>
> A notable success has been achieved by our arms in Australia, near Broken Hill, where a force of Turks surprised and put to flight a superior force which was being transported by rail. Forty of the enemy were killed and 70 wounded;[13] the casualties amongst the Turks being only two killed. Broken Hill is an important mining centre and port on the west coast of Australia. The success of our arms practically assures the control of the valuable metal mines in the neighborhood, and leaves the way open for an attack on Candbris, the capital of Australia, and its most strongly-fortified centre; although owing to the flooded condition of the country an attack may be impossible until next spring.

Somewhat oddly, this obvious satire seemed to be taken seriously in some quarters, and newspapers began to reprint the invented hyperbole as a true example of Germany's propagandistic mendacity. The first to do so appears to have been South Australia's *Burra Record* (Wed 27 Jan 1915, p.5). No reference to the *Bulletin* was made, and the item sits among other real news, with only the terms 'Hogmany' and 'Candbris' alerting the reader that something might be amiss (surely the Teutonic penchant for exactitude could not have been so sloppy?). Two days later, the *Federal Standard* in Chiltern, Victoria (Fri 29 Jan 1915, p.3) reprinted the piece, 'correcting' Hogmany to Germany. Subsequent papers, such as the *West Coast Sentinel* (Streaky Bay SA, Sat 6 Feb 1915, p.6), and

[10] Racketty: a pun on racket as both 'a noisy disturbance' and 'an illegal enterprise carried on for profit'.
[11] The well-known British patriotic song, from the 1740 masque *Alfred*, words by James Thompson, music by Thomas Arne.
[12] The *Bulletin*'s pet and punning name for Germany during the war, the connection in this instance of the Scottish New Year's eve celebration (more usually spelled Hogmanay) with the date of the picnic train attack being purely coincidental.
[13] Both exactly ten times the real figures.

Kangaroo Island Courier (Kingscote SA, Sat 20 Feb 1915, p.2) would drop the first of the *Bulletin*'s two introductory sentences completely, but retain 'Candbris'.

In February the story crossed the Tasman, where almost two dozen New Zealand papers, including dailies in all four main cities, picked it up:

Star (Lyttleton, Tue 9 Feb 1915, p.4, quoting its source as the *Napier Telegraph*)
Hawera & Normanby Star (Wed 10 Feb 1915, p.8)
Wairarapa Daily Times (Masterton, Wed 10 Feb 1915, p.4)
The Press (Christchurch, Wed 10 Feb 1915, p.6)
Poverty Bay Herald (Gisborne, Thu 11 Feb 1915, p.2)
Otago Daily Times (Dunedin, Thu 11 Feb 1915, p.5)
Evening Star (Dunedin, Thu 11 Feb 1915, p.6)
Timaru Herald (Thu 11 Feb 1915, p.6)
West Coast Times (Hokitika, Fri 12 Feb 1915, p.2)
Taranaki Daily News (New Plymouth, Mon 15 Feb 1915, p.4)
Nelson Evening Mail (Tue 16 Feb 1915, p.7)
North Otago Times (Oamaru, Tue 16 Feb 1915, p.4)
Waikato Times (Hamilton, Tue 16 Feb 1915, p.7)
Mataura Ensign (Wed 17 Feb 1915, p.5)
Grey River Argus and Blackball News (Greymouth, Sat 20 Feb 1915, p.4),
Auckland Star (Tue 23 Feb 1915, p.4)
Inangahua Times (Wed 24 Feb 1915, p.2)
Northern Advocate (Whangarei, Wed 24 Feb 1915, p.5)
The Dominion (Wellington, Fri 26 Feb 1915, p.4)
Malborough Express (Blenheim, Wed 3 March 1915, p.4)

Only the *Thames Star* (Sat 20 Feb 1915, p.4), *Wairarapa Age* (Masterton, Tue 23 Feb 1915, p.4) and *Ohinemuri Gazette* (Wed 24 Feb 1915, p.3) indicated that the piece was not for real, prefacing their copy with the vague citation: 'A weekly contemporary writes in sarcastic vein:—...'. Curiously, the *Gazette*'s staff then reported the item in full again six days later (Mon 1 March 1915, p.3) without this lead-in, as if this time the story were true!

Back in Australia, the item only became widely-circulated in March, well after its rounds of our trans-Tasman neighbour. Initially it ran in *The Sun* (Sydney, Fri 5 March 1915, p.4), with the *Bulletin*'s tongue-in-cheek preface replaced with 'Mrs H. Philipson, of Lowe-street, Marrickville, has supplied us with a characteristic German story of the Broken Hill shooting. The following is the official statement issued in Berlin, amid – we are told – great enthusiasm:—…'. Presumably Mrs Philipson clipped the item from the *Bulletin,* and sent it to the *Sun*, intending it for the joke column (to which readers were able to submit jokes clipped from other papers). One can only guess that the column's editor (or the mailboy opening the incoming mail) mistakenly passed the clipping to the war news editor. But the joke was now treated in Australia as fact, and more than a dozen Victorian and NSW papers picked up the item, reprinting it with only a minor change in the introduction: 'Mrs. H. Phil[l]ipson, of Lowe-street, Marrickville, N.S.W., has supplied the Sydney "Sun" with a characteristic German story...'. These papers included:

Bairnsdale Advertiser and Tambo and Omeo Chronicle (Vic, Wed 10 March 1915, p.2)
Willaura Farmer (Vic, Thu 11 March 1915, p.2)
Hamilton Spectator (Vic, Thu 11 March 1915, p.4)
Broadford Courier and Reedy Creek Times (Vic, Fri 12 March 1915, p.3)
Creswick Advertiser (Vic, Fri 12 March 1915, p.3)
Gippsland Mercury (Sale, Vic, Fri 12 March 1915, p.3)

The Newsletter: an Australian Paper for Australian People (Sydney, Sat 13 March 1915, p.1)
Rutherglen Sun and Chiltern Valley Advertiser (Vic, Tue 16 March 1915, p.2)
Bealiba Times (Vic, Fri 19 March 1915, p.3)
Mildura Cultivator (Vic, Sat 20 March 1915, p.10)
Dungog Chronicle, Durham and Gloucester Advertiser (NSW, Fri 26 March 1915, p.10)
Alexandra and Yea Standard and Yarck, Gobur, Thornton and Acheron Express (Vic, Thu 1 April 1915, p.3)
Burrowa News (NSW, Fri 2 April 1915, p.3)
Gosford Times and Wyong District Advocate (NSW, Fri 2 April 1915, p.2)
Raleigh Sun (Bellingen, NSW, Fri 2 April 1915, p.2)
Riverina Recorder (Balranald & Moulamein, NSW, Wed 7 April 1915, p.3)
Windsor and Richmond Gazette (NSW, Fri 16 April 1915, p.7)

By the time the article was reprinted by the *West Wimmera Mail and Natimuk Advertiser* (Vic, Fri 16 April 1915, p.4), this citation had become more vague: 'A resident of Marrickville, N.S.W., has supplied the Sydney Press ...'.

Others such as

Western Champion (Parkes, NSW, Thu 11 March 1915, p.3)
Laura Standard (SA, Fri 12 March 1915, p.2)
Numurkah Leader (Vic, Fri 12 March 1915, p.3)
Richmond River Herald and Northern Districts Advertiser (NSW, Fri 12 March 1915, p.8)
Tungamah and Lake Rowan Express and St. James Gazette (Vic, Thu 18 March 1915, p.2)
Benalla Standard (Vic, Fri 19 March 1915, p.3)
Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate (NSW, Fri 19 March 1915, p.3)
Euroa Advertiser (Vic, Fri 19 March 1915, p.4)
Avon Gazette and Kellerberrin News (Sat 20 March 1915, p.2)
Colac Reformer (Vic, Tue 23 March 1915, p.2)
Bendigo Advertiser (Vic, Fri 26 March 1915, p.5)
Moora Herald and Midland districts Advocate (WA, Tue 30 March 1915, p.2)
Yackandandah Times (Vic, Thu 1 April 1915, p.2)
Port Augusta Dispatch, Newcastle and Flinders Chronicle (SA, Fri 2 April 1915, p.4)
North Western Advocate and Emu Bay Times (Tas., Mon. 5 April 1915, p.1)

continued to use it without citation as an official German despatch, some to show 'how the people of Germany are "fed up" on lies',[14] or simply note it (in a curious and unintended reference to the *Bulletin*'s original – but no longer reprinted – 'hogmany' pun) as a 'literary haggis, a confection of lies, humor and ignorance'.

Other sources of the story were claimed in later reprintings:

Woomelang Sun and Lascelles and Ouyen Advocate (Vic, Fri 26 March 1915, p.2)
Koroit Sentinel and Tower Hill Advocate (Vic, Sat 27 March 1915, p.2)
Ovens and Murray Advertiser (Beechworth, Vic, Wed 31 March 1915, p.4)
Camperdown Chronicle (Vic, Thu 1 April 1915, p.1)
Heyfield Herald (Vic., Thu 1 April 1915, p.3)
Lilydale Express (Vic, Fri 9 April 1915, p.4)

[14] 'Fed up' in the sense of 'being fed with', rather than that of 'being disgusted or bored'.

Oakleigh and Caulfield Times, Mulgrave and Ferntree Gully Guardian (Vic, Sat 10 April 1915, p.4)
Illawarra Mercury (Wollongong, NSW, Tues 13 April 1915, p.1)
Dandenong Advertiser and Cranbourne, Berwick and Oakleigh Advocate (Vic, Thu 27 May 1915, p.2)
Morwell and Yinnar Gazette (Vic, Fri 18 June 1915, p.2)

all quoted it as a clipping sent to the *Pittsworth Sentinel* in Queensland by a reader.[15]

The *Grenfell Record and Lachlan District Advertiser* (NSW, Fri 19 March 1915, p.6) meanwhile cited the source as 'an exchange from San Francisco',[16] and at least one paper, the *Great Southern Leader* (Pingelly, WA, Fri 12 March 1915, p.3), claimed the report originated not in Berlin, but in Turkey!

Meanwhile, as these papers were all reprinting the piece verbatim with various introductory statements, Perth's establishment paper, *The Daily News* (Fri 5 March 1915, p.9), also taking the piece at face value, editorialised on it uniquely and at some length, as an example of the depths to which German propaganda had sunk:

AUSTRALIA INVADED

TURKS MARCHING ON CAPITAL

Big Victory at Broken Hill

THE ARCH-LIAR'S LATEST,
AND PROBABLY HIS BEST.

We have had occasion recently to remark that the German chronicler was a liar. That seems to be an altogether inadequate description of the man who, on the authority of the cable man, has set Berlin rejoicing, and making high holiday. He seems to be a romancer of the rarest order. He is clever, ingenious, and certainly most highly imaginative. He has a capacity for bu[i]lding up a story which looks convincing enough out of the most trifling Incident. He can make victories out of vapor, and the only essential ingredient for a successful Invasion story is a street disturbance. And, better than all, he is an excellent news-getter.

Australians would probably resent it if they were told that Berlin had a better correspondent at Broken Hill than all the Press of the Commonwealth, but so it seems. A little while ago something happened at Broken Hill. Australia read that a couple of Turks ran amok, and attacked an excursion train. They believed it, and promptly forgot it. But Berlin knows better. It had a holiday and was enthusiastic. Their correspondent made a much more readable story, and, stamped with the seal of officialdom, It came out like this:—

'A notable success has been achieved by our arms in Australia, near Broken Hill, where a force of Turks, surprised and put to flight a superior force which was being transported by rail. Forty of the enemy were killed and seventy wounded; the casualties among the Turks being only two killed.

'Broken Hill is an important mining centre and port on the west coast of Australia. The success of our arms practically assures the control of the valuable metal mines in the neighborhood, and leaves the way open for an attack on Candbris, the capital of Australia, and its most strongly fortified centre, although owing to the flooded condition of the country, an attack may be impossible until next spring.'

This is surely the most notable achievement of the Arch-Liar to date. He may do better later on. He seems to be improving with practice.

[15] Sadly, no issues of the *Pittsworth Sentinel* from this period survive, either with the Pittsworth publisher, the town's historical society, the Queensland State Library or the National Library of Australia.
[16] I have been unable to confirm this, as no San Francisco papers for March 1915 are currently freely available online.

While the *Beverley Times* (WA, Sat 13 March 1915, p.2) reprinted this in toto 'clipped from the "Daily News"', across town in Perth, the sensationalist *Truth* (Sat 13 Mar. 1915, p.4),[17] could hardly contain its glee when it, apparently the only paper in all Australia to realise or remember the true origin of the story, pointed out how the *Daily News* had fallen victim to its own pomposity:

> 'Ringtail' Journalism.[18]
>
> 'Daily News' off its Chump.
>
> Quotes Satire from Sydney 'Bulletin'
>
> And Labels Same 'German Official Report.'
>
> Towards the end of last week the 'Daily News' excelled itself – a great feat, be it said. Young nippers who should be at school were they not eating moth holes in the Education Act, were running about the streets of Perth screaming 'Daily News. Great Australian victory over the Turks.' Unsuspecting citizens, whose patriotism for Australia is stronger than their regard for the 'Daily News,' fumbled for a brown and invested it in the article on sale.[19]
>
> Great was the disgust and warm the anathema when the average unsuspecting citizen found the low commercial level that the paper had plumbed. Nary a word appeared on the cable page explaining why these news urchins were chinwagging about Australia's Great Victory Over The Turks. Indeed, the cable page was devoted mostly to the advertising of remnant sales in Perth commercial houses. Page 8, however, contained some casual reference to the Turks having invaded Australia, and their 'big victory' at Broken Hill was announced in one of the headlines. Then followed some letterpress quivering with delirious abuse of the German chroniclers of the war, and to clinch the argument that the German liar is more profound than all other liars, the 'News' fell over its own feet.
>
> The public will remember that about the New Year a couple of mad Turks fired on a trainload of picnickers at Broken Hill, and that the murderers were afterwards shot by the police and military. The Sydney 'Bulletin,'' in satirical mood, published a palpable skit on the affair, with an explanatory note that the German official version would probably pan out on similar lines.
>
> And now, word for word, our noble 'Daily News' publishes that skit as it appeared in the 'Bulletin,' and coolly asserts that it was the German official report of the occurrence, as supplied by the Berlin correspondent at Broken Hill! And its newsboys in the streets announce that Australia has had a great victory over the Turks'. Has the paper gone clean off its chump, or what? In order to emphasise the 'ringtail' tactics of the 'News,' we quote the article complained of, which is a travesty on journalism. It runs thus:—
>
> [The *Truth* here inserted the *Daily News* piece in its entirety]
>
> The four lines of comment at the conclusion of the 'Bulletin-cum-German-official' paragraph are hilariously amusing. They fit this latest exploit of the 'News' as a ringtail journal so beautifully that we hereby apply them to the Lovekin paper in connection with this horrible distortion of facts, and leave it at that.[20]

Somewhat belatedly, the *Westralian Worker* (Fri 26 March 1915, p.7) also delighted in dobbing in its more distinguished daily rival:[21]

> Amusing Blunder.
>
> 'Daily News' Falls ln.

[17] The WA edition of John Norton's Sydney paper of the same name. Presumably the paper's Sydney connection helped uncover the *Daily News*' gullibility.
[18] Ringtail: In Australian slang a coward; in the US, a violent, drunken, swaggering braggart.
[19] Brown: slang for a penny.
[20] Arthur Lovekin (1859-1931), managing director, editor, and from 1916 sole owner, of the *Daily News*.
[21] A weekly Labor party organ, published in Kalgoorlie 1900-12 then Perth 1912-51.

'Invasion of Australia.'

A week or two after the tragic affair at Broken Hill, when several excursionists were shot dead by a couple of Turks, the Sydney 'Bulletin' published an amusing skit, purporting to be an account of the affray as published in a German newspaper. Following is an excerpt from the skit in question:—

[The *Worker* here inserted the second paragraph of the *Bulletin*'s piece]

This, of course, is delightful nonsense, the touch about the flooded condition of Canberra being a typical instance of 'Bulletin' humor. It is conceivable that some practical joker should attempt to pull the leg of some paper or other, but it is quite inconceivable that any paper should have been taken in by such obvious guff. The 'Otago Daily Times,'[22] published at Dunedin, fell in, however, with a loud splash and severely wet both of its feet, not to mention those of the editor and the office boy. The Perth 'Dally News,' of course, had also to distinguished itself so it promptly put five headings on to the ' Bulletin' fairy story in the following fashion:

AUSTRALIA INVADED.

TURKS MARCH ON THE CAPITAL.

BIG VICTORY AT BROKEN HILL.

THE ARCH LIAR'S LATEST.

AND PROBABLY HIS BEST.

The Rip Van 'Snooze' affixed a few intelligent comments of its own,[23] before sending the newsboys into the streets yelling 'Full Account of the Invasion of Australia.' These comments are excruciatingly funny, and the whole affair stands out as the biggest journalistic farce since the now defunct Fremantle 'Mail' immortalised the 'Grocer's Boy Called Cott.'[24]

> We have had occasion recently, said the 'News' solemnly, to remark that the German chronicler is a liar. That seems to be an altogether inadequate description of the man who, ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE CABLEMAN, has set Berlin rejoicing and making high holiday. He seems to be a romancer of the rarest order. He is clever, ingenious and most certainly highly imaginative … This is surely the most notable achievement of the archliar to date. He may do better later on. He seems to be improving with practice.

And it is this intelligent sheet that sets itself up as a keen critic of the Scaddan Government and all its works![25]

But despite the best efforts of both the *Truth* and *Worker*, the *Bulletin*'s satirical piece had, like Frankenstein's monster, by now taken on an unstoppable life of its own. Besides the supposed origins from Marrickville, Pittsworth, San Francisco and Turkey, already noted, the story had also swum to England, from where it was to return back to Australia as English 'news' via Australia's own soldiery. Innocently abetting this relabelling of the story as English was Victoria's *Ballarat Courier* (Thu 13 May 1915, p.2):

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[22] As noted above: Thu 11 Feb. 1915, p.5.

[23] Allusion to Rip van Winkle, hero of Washington Irving's 1820 tale, who slept for 20 years; hence 'a person with utterly antiquated ideas or information'.

[24] The *[Fremantle / Evening] Mail* was a short-lived paper published 1903-10. The Perth *Daily News* (Wed 28 Nov 1906, p.1 & Sat 1 Dec 1906, p.14) mocked its 'evening contemporary' for misinterpreting a cablegram about a British grocers' boycott of a soap cartel as 'Owing to the action of a grocer's boy, named Cott, the Soap Trust combination have lost £1,500,000' (see also *West Australian*, Perth, Wed 28 Nov 1906, p.7 & Sat 11 Feb 1950, p.24).

[25] John Scaddan, (1876-1934), elected to the WA state parliament on a Labor ticket in 1904. He became party leader in 1910, winning the October 1911 election, with a 2/3 majority in the lower house, and that of 1914, with a majority of just two. Scaddan implemented many policies benefitting wage-earners under the banner of 'state socialism', but, dogged by several controversies, resigned in July 1916.

> A decidedly humorous story is embodied in a letter from Pte H. Bradbury, of the 14th Battalion, to his mother, Mrs Bradbury, of Leith street, from Heliopolis, Egypt. He states that he read in an English newspaper an account of the shooting sensation at Broken Hill on New Year's Day, when two demented Turks fired on picnic train.[26] The story, as reproduced, was translated from German paper, and read as follows – 'It is very pleasing to report the success of our arms at Broken Hill, a seaport town on the west coast of Australia. A party of Turks fired at armed troops that were being transported by rail to the front. The enemy lost 40 killed and 70 wounded. The total loss of the Turks was two killed. The capture of Broken Hill opens up the way to Canberra, the strongly fortified capital of Australia. Owing to the flooded condition of the country an attack will not be possible until the spring.' Pte Bradbury adds that Col. Courtney is well pleased with the men under him, and that the men entertain the highest regard for their commander.

This version, referencing Private Bradbury's epistle to his mother, was then reprinted widely, although usually omitting Mrs Bradbury's Leith street address, by regional papers in Victoria and even WA (the *Westralian Worker* was surely beside itself by now). This Chinese whisper chain included:

Maryborough and Dunolly Advertiser (Vic, Fri 14 May 1915, p.2)
Mortlake Dispatch (Vic, Sat 15 May 1915, p.3)
Kyneton Guardian (Vic, Tue 18 May 1915, p.3)
Warracknabeal Herald (Vic, Tue 18 May 1915, p.5)
Kalgoorlie Miner (WA, Mon 31 May 1915, p.4; the only one to cite the article as originally printed in the *Ballarat Courier*)[27]
Kalgoorlie Western Argus (WA, Tue 1 June 1915, p.17)
Southern Times (Bunbury, WA, Sat 5 June, p.2)
Albany Advertiser (WA, Sat 26 June 1915, p.4)

Then after six months of respite, the story was picked up once more, over a year after its original newspaper appearance in Burra, by the neighbouring *Wooroora Producer* (Balaklava, SA, Thu 20 Jan 1916, p.3), *Northern Argus* (Clare, SA, Fri 28 Jan 1916, p.3) and *Blyth Agriculturalist* (SA, Fri 28 Jan 1916, p.3).

That seemed to be it for the duration of the First World War. But it would only take a little thing like a Second World War to resurrect the monster, and in, of all places, Broken Hill's own *Barrier Miner* (Sat 15 March 1941, p.4):

> Oh, Yeah?
>
> YOU'VE probably heard this one before, but it's such a gem of German propaganda that it bears repetition now that we are again at war with Germany.
>
> On New Year's Day 1915 a sensation, was caused when two demented Turks fired on a local picnic train. This is how a German paper described the affair:
>
> 'We are pleased to report the success of our arms at Broken Hill, a seaport town on the west coast of Australia. A party of Turks fired on armed troops that were being transported by rail to the front. The enemy lost 40 killed and 70 wounded. The total loss of the Turks was two killed. The capture of Broken Hill opens the way to Canberra, the strongly fortified capital of Australia.'

Once more the story did the rounds of regional papers (is it purely coincidental that no major metropolitan daily ran with it?). This time the perpetrators of the 'urban' myth included *Cessnock Eagle and South Maitland Recorder* (NSW, Tue 25 March 1941, p.8) and the nearby *Newcastle*

[26] I have been unable to locate the story in any English papers. It was certainly not in *The Times*.
[27] When I visited the Silverton railway museum in 2005, a small display panel noted that the curator had been sent a news clipping referring to the *Ballarat Courier*'s reporting of this item as originating in the German press. The clipping in question has disappeared, but it seems it must have been from the *Kalgoorlie Miner*.

Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate (NSW, Tue 27 May 1941, p.4). As what goes around, comes around, it is not surprising that the *Barrier Miner* was again to the fore shortly after (Thu 5 June 1941, p.1):

> NAZI VIEW OF 1915 PICNIC
>
> TRAIN TRAGEDY
>
> 'The Barrier Miner' recently reprinted a story circulated by the German press during the last war, in which an incident when two demented Turks fired on a picnic train on the way to Silverton was transformed into an attack upon a troop train. Broken Hill was described as a seaport on the west coast of Australia, and its capture was said to open up the way to Canberra, the strongly fortified capital of Australia.
>
> The same story was reprinted lately in the 'Cessnock Eagle,' when it was seen by Mrs. G. H. Waters, an old pioneer of the Barrier, who has forwarded the cutting to us.
>
> Mrs. Waters was especially interested in the picnic train story because she was a witness of the actual occurrence on New Year's Day, 1915.

After bouncing from the Barrier to the Hunter Valley and back to the Barrier, the story then ricocheted southwards to the Riverina, appearing in the *Narandera Argus and Riverina Advertiser* (Fri 6 June 1941, p.6) and *Jerilderie Herald and Urana Advertiser* (Thu 12 June 1941, p.2). That seems to have ended its airing during the second war, but there was at least one last hurrah, back in Broken Hill once more, when the *Miner*'s rival, the union-owned *Barrier Daily Truth* (Sat 10 Feb 1951, p.5) could not resist the last(?) word:

> Propaganda Has Its Funny Side
>
> Reports distorted under stress of war propaganda are sometimes so exaggerated that to one that knows the facts the results are pure comedy.[28]
>
> This was demonstrated yesterday when a conversation at the Trades Hall turned to the ever-green subject or the shooting sensation on New Year's Day, 1915, when two demented Turks fired on a local picnic train.
>
> One of the men observed that he had kept a clipping, which quoted a report of the incident as it appeared in a German paper that year.
>
> He then produced the masterpiece:
>
> 'We are pleased to report the success of our arms at Broken Hill, a seaport town on the west coast of Australia. A party of Turks fired on armed troops that were being transported by rail to the front. The enemy lost 40 killed and 70 wounded. The total loss of the Turks was two killed. The capture of Broken Hill opens up the way to Canberra, the strongly fortified capital of Australia.'

The *Bulletin*'s 1915 humour, which had immediately been hijacked and misinterpreted by the Australian, New Zealand, American and British press as a typical example of home-front propaganda actually being pedalled by the German and Turkish authorities on their own people, was still being passed off as a such in Australia, more than 36 years and two world wars later!

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SOCIETY NOTICES

Gallipoli Edition of *Sabretache*

British military historian Dr John Sneddon contacted Federal President Rohan Goyne about his article on Japanese Trench Mortars which was published in the Special Gallipoli edition of *Sabretache*. Dr Sneddon was preparing a chapter on trench warfare technology used on the

[28] The incredible irony being, of course, that the story *was* originally comedy.

Gallipoli Peninsula for a book being published by Helicon Press later this year and a literature search highlighted the Special Gallipoli edition. Rohan has provided to John several hard copies of the Gallipoli edition which John will place in the library collections of the University of Wolverhampton and the University of Leeds. Rohan and John are also collaborating on identifying the Japanese manufacturer of the trench mortars at Gallipoli and the origins of the 'disappearing' machine gun also used at Gallipoli. Rohan has supplied digital images of the trench mortar manufacturer's base plate and an as yet unpublished article on the disappearing machine-gun including digital reimages of the weapon in action on the Gallipoli peninsula. The lasting value and relevance of the Gallipoli issue of *Sabretache* are evidenced through networking such as this.

Rohan Goyne, Federal President

Membership Secretary – change of personnel

Gail Gunn has stepped down as Membership Secretary and that role is currently being filled by John Meyers and the Queensland Branch. Both Federal Council and the Editor wish to extend their thanks to Gail for her fine work over the last couple of years. The Editor in particular is very appreciative of her taking on the responsibility of mailing out the journal – a time-consuming and sometimes frustrating task – during her incumbency. Thanks also to John for stepping into the breach so promptly; please address all membership and subscription enquiries and matters pertaining to receiving the journal to him at mbhmus@bigpond.net.au.

Paul Skrebels, Editor

Society Conference – South Australia

Discussions are underway with the University of South Australia for a combined conference involving the MHSA and the University's Narratives of War research group. The likely date is November 2017. Watch this space for more news as it comes to hand.

Anthony F. Harris, A/Secretary, SA Branch

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PAGE AND SCREEN

Resources for the Researcher and Collector

South Australian member **Frank Garie** writes:

- Perhaps you might direct this snippet of information onto Queensland Mounted Infantry fans please: the following book contains several short references to various elements of the QMI who served in the 2nd Boer War. The book is an edited version of a Canadian war diary, and is much about life on the veldt and sickness: *Charlie's First War: South Africa, 1899-1900*, C.H. Tweddell, edited by Carman Miller, McGill-Queen's UP, 2014, ISBN 9780773544321, 246pp.

William Duperouzel in the UK has added this resource to his book *Somewhere in France*, which was reviewed in the June 2016 issue of the journal (p.61):

- I have re-launched my website so that the book is now available in pdf format on the internet (to share) together with my other book and lots of information re the Duperouzel family pilgrimage to the Somme, France last April: www.duperouzel.org.

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