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Sabretache



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SABRETACHE



THE JOURNAL OF
THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF AUSTRALIA

JULY, 1971

THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

(Founded in Melbourne in 1957)

AIMS OF THE SOCIETY

The aims of the Society are the encouragement and pursuit of study and research in military history, customs, traditions, dress, arms, equipment and kindred matters; the promotion of public interest and knowledge in these subjects and the preservation of historical military objects, with particular reference to the Armed Forces of Australia.

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SABRETACHE

**JOURNAL AND PROCEEDINGS OF
THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF AUSTRALIA**

(FOUNDED IN MELBOURNE IN 1957)

EDITED BY

B. J. VIDEON, A.A.S.A.



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EDITOR'S NOTES

SABRETACHE is late once again, not, this time, due to a shortage of material, although some was received after the normal closing time.

It is pleasing to see the effort that readers have made to share in the Society's work since my last plea for articles, and in this issue there is some very interesting material. I hope it can be kept up.

As a bonus I think this issue will be rather larger than usual, although without counting words, it is almost impossible to gauge the eventual size from the many and varied drafts submitted. Anyhow, I hope you will find it worth waiting for.

All we need now is a "rich uncle" so that we can start to print pictures again!

Keep up the good work, members (and, if you have a good picture, don't hesitate to send it in, just in case we can find a few extra dollars somewhere to print it).

B.J. VIDEON

* * * * *

THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE NURSING SERVICE
1940 - 1946

Per Ardua ad Astra

by Muriel K. Doherty R.R.C.

The Australian Air Force evolved from the Australian Flying Corps, a section of the first A.I.F. in 1915-16. At the end of W.W.I all A.F.C. Units were discharged on their return to Australia and a new Service formed on 31st March 1921. On 31st August that year the prefix "Royal" became effective. Two years later Royal Assent gave it equal status with the R.A.N. and the Australian Military Forces.

While nominally independent, the Medical Service was actually under the control of the Director General Medical Services Army until April 1940. The Station Sick Quarters were primitive. The first at Central Flying School, Point Cook (Vic.) was accommodated in a small hut but the sick and injured were invariably transferred to Repatriation or Civil Hospitals. The Casualty Section at Laverton Aircraft Depot, 6 miles away, was situated in the Guard House.

Neither Sick Quarters had an Xray plant nor Operating Theatre - all patients requiring Xray examination were transported to the Repatriation Hospital, Caulfield, 26 miles away.

As the Air Force expanded there was a perpetual struggle for finance. A portable machine to cost E500 was requested. How could the D.G.M.S. Army recommend something which was not provided for its own Medical Corps? A plant to detect fractures in component parts of aircraft material suspected of being of faulty manufacture could also be used to Xray suspected fractures in human bodies!

The possibility of a crash involving loss of life and the ensuing public criticism if there was no adequate provision for the treatment of the injured was put forward to emphasise the need for Station Sick Quarters. It was therefore decided that each Air Force Station should be provided with this facility mainly for treatment following a potential crash.

The revolutionary idea that a professional Nursing Service be established at that time was out of the question!

In 1936 the then Director of Medical Services Air demonstrated at Point Cook and Laverton that surgical operations could be performed, patients properly cared for and money saved by the introduction of such a Service.

A case of appendicitis was admitted. He summoned the Surgeon and engaged two civilian Nurses. The operation was successful and the patient made an uneventful recovery. The next, a strangulated hernia was performed with equal success.

The D.M.S. paid the Nurses out of his own pocket for the privilege of demonstrating that with a qualified Nursing Staff, the Air Force could provide an efficient Service. However his efforts came to naught owing to prejudice against female Nurses, the absence at that time, of similar facilities on the Army Medical establishment and the anticipated expense.

With Hitler on the march and the recently re-activated Australian Army Nursing Service already heavily committed, the matter of an Air Force Service could no longer be deferred.

Following his appointment as D.G.M.S. R.A.A.F. in June 1940 Air Vice Marshal T.E.V. Hurley C.M.G., V.D., M.D., M.S., F.R.C.S., F.R.A.C.S. with his usual vigour moved quickly. Trained Nurses would not cost any more than male Nursing Orderlies and they would be invaluable in training them, thereby increasing their efficiency for their work particularly on smaller Medical Units and outlying posts for which female Nurses would not be provided. Further, the morale of the R.A.A.F. as a whole would greatly benefit by knowing that in the event of sickness or accident, an efficient Medical and Nursing Service of their own was available.

The Minister for Air gave his approval but before the Service became viable a serious outbreak of infections - "Puckapunyal" throat, influenza, mumps and rubella, swept through the Units. The Nursing Orderlies carried on valiantly but the numbers were large and conditions crude. Sixteen qualified civilian Nurses were appointed - 4 to Laverton, 2 Point Cook, 5 Engineering School, Ascot Vale (Vic.) and 5 to Richmond, (N.S.W.).

The R.A.A.F. Nursing Service was inaugurated as an integral part of the R.A.A.F. on 26th July 1940. The Matron-in-Chief, Miss M.I. Lang, at the time Matron of the Police Hospital, Melbourne, had been on active service during W.W.I. With the rank of Group Captain she was appointed on July 26th to R.A.A.F. Headquarters in the Directorate of Medical Services to initiate and administer the Service and act in an advisory capacity to the D.G.M.S. It was largely due to her high ideals, untiring efforts, keen judgment and charming personality that the Service reached the high standard for which it became noted.

Modelled on the Princess Mary R.A.F. Nursing Service, the first members were selected from applicants on the Australian Army Nursing Service Reserve, from the continuous flow of volunteers and those civilian Nurses engaged for the emergency who wished. Miss Mary Greening, one of the latter, was appointed (No. 14) on 19.8.40 with the rank of Sister and attached to the Matron-in-Chief's office for clerical duties.

The ranks were equivalent to those of the R.A.A.F. - Principal Matron, Wing Commander; Matron, Squadron Leader; Senior Sister, Flight Lieut.; Sister and Staff Masseuse, Flying Officer. R.A.A.F. titles were not used in addressing members.

Between November 1943 and the second half of 1944 an accredited representative (Principal Nursing Officer) of the Matron-in-Chief was appointed in each State and Territory. The situation in N.S.W. was unchanged for I had been appointed Principal Matron in May 1942.

When the Service was announced I was ensconced as Sister-Clerk in the office of the Principal Matron A.A.N.S., 2nd. Mil. District N.S.W. having been called up on 6th October 1939 from the Reserve. In 1940 I was unexpectedly offered the position of Matron in the new Service which the D.G.M.S. Army said was equivalent to P/M and second in seniority in the Commonwealth. I accepted, but getting out of the Army was infinitely more difficult than getting in!! Had I acquired a husband the doors could not have opened quickly enough!

Finally I boldly decided a date and was almost airborne as I entered my office at No. 2 R.A.A.F. Recruiting Centre, Woolloomooloo, Sydney on September 16th 1940. In addition to my duties on behalf of the M.I.C. in N.S.W. and Queensland, I was appointed Matron of No. 3 R.A.A.F. Richmond, N.S.W., at the time a brick Administration building, a number of huts which served as Wards and a modern Service Hospital yet to be built.

Pending the formation of the W.A.A.A.F. in 1941, Mrs. Chas Walton (Aviatrix Nancy Bird) Commandant of the Australian Women's Flying Club in Sydney, selected four members of the Club who volunteered to act as Mess Stewardesses at the Sisters Quarters. They did a fine job eventually enlisting in the W.A.A.A.F.

Our establishment for Messmen and Labourers in the Hospital was often below strength. We frequently depended on "Fatigues" for domestic work at the weekends. One arrival had to bend his 6'6" to enter my office - Chips Rafferty had come to polish the floor. He cheerfully accepted my invitation to do some "high dusting" as well.

The Sisters served at Station Sick Quarters, Base Hospitals, R.A.A.F. Wings of Combined Services Hospitals, Convalescent Depots, Rehabilitation Centres and Medical Receiving Stations (Mobile Hospitals) in the Northern Territory and later New Guinea and other areas in the South West Pacific.

When the Empire Air Training Scheme was established in October 1940, a Sister was attached for duty with each Medical Escort Party accompanying R.A.A.F. trainees to Canada and the U.S.A. S/Nurse E.E. Ward was the first, embarking on 1st October 1940.

On February 19th 1942 at 9.45 a.m. the Service received its baptism of fire when Jap. planes roared over Darwin spilling death and destruction. Senior Sister (later Matron) M.J. Smith was in charge of R.A.A.F. S.S.Q. After the town and harbour had been pestered, the enemy turned their attention to the aerodrome. All bed cases had been transferred to the 119th A.G.H. some distance away. Within minutes of the alarm all walking patients and Staff with tin hats and respirators were evacuated to the slit trenches without a hitch. There was no panic.

Some 63 planes flying very low in perfect formation came over. Half an hour later they returned and blasted Station buildings with stick after stick of bombs for almost 40 minutes.

The all-clear sounded at 10.45 a.m. and the Sisters hastened to their action posts to attend to minor casualties and evacuate patients to the Army Hospital. Shortly after the alarm was given again (the sirens were now out of order) and twenty seven planes came over. One thunderous bomb exploded only 10 yards from their trench but all escaped harm. When the raiders reappeared the Sisters were ordered into an Army truck and taken to the bush. About 4 p.m. they proceeded to the 119th Hospital which was overflowing with Navy, Army, Air Force, Javanese and civilian wounded. After the most welcome cup of tea in their lives, they set to work. Matron Smith was awarded the Royal Red Cross for "Courage, exceptional ability and untiring devotion to duty".....

As the Japanese threat approached the mainland, the mobile M.R.S. were set up at strategic points under active service conditions. When the danger of invasion receded they were moved to New Guinea and elsewhere in the area.

In malarious and potential malarious areas from sunset to after sunrise the Sisters wore drab long sleeved shirts, with rank on shoulder straps, slacks, canvas gaiters, black boots, broad felt hat with pugaree and medical flash and fine mesh fly veils. During daylight normal indoor drab uniform, as usual.

The monotonous tinned rations often became No. 1 grouch among the patients in the tropics. One day at Port Moresby, Matron Moxham heaved a sigh of relief when a plane load of Red Cross extras - fresh meat, eggs and vegetables arrived. No complaints today, she thought, and was almost immediately greeted with moans about the egg powder custard they had for breakfast. It was the Corporal Cook's day off and his reliever was not quite cordon bleu. He insisted he had sent up scrambled eggs. On closer questioning he admitted he had added sugar and vanilla "to take the eggy taste off them!".

In July 1944 eyebrows were raised when smartly attired females appeared in drab shirts, safari jackets and slacks, canvas gaiters, black boots and blue field service caps. The first Australian Medical Air Evacuation Transport unit to undertake the medical care of casualties from forward operational areas had recently been formed. At the time I was Acting Matron-in-Chief and it was my privilege to be associated with its inception. One hundred members volunteered; selection was exceedingly difficult as requirements were exacting.

F/L F.W. Kiel was to take charge. Transport planes carrying troops, ammunition and supplies to forward areas returned with sick and wounded of the Allies and the enemy, sole priority being the condition of the patient.

The Nursing Section was modelled on the U.S. Flying Nurse Corps. Their training at the Hygiene Camp at Larundel, R.A.A.F. Medical Training Unit, Vic. included aviation medicine, tropical hygiene, aircraft recognition, air evacuation tactics, swimming, ocean and jungle survival, procedure for crash landings and the use of escape routes in enemy occupied territory over which they would fly. They learned also to observe the reactions of patients with certain injuries and diseases at various altitudes. To understand the correct use of oxygen masks a Medical Officer took them into a low pressure chamber where they were gradually deprived of oxygen, to simulate conditions of flight at 18,000 ft. under which the emotions vary considerably.

A flight team consisted of a Sister and one Nursing Orderly to each transport plane fitted with 3 tiers of stretchers along both sides to accommodate 18 to 24 patients. A complete medical kit was carried, including equipment for intravenous therapy and oxygen.

During the first 12 months the M.A.E.T.U. Sisters flew some 2,000,000 miles and evacuated about 8,000 patients.

It was an historical moment when in July 1944 Senior Sister N.I. Kendrick led her 14 Sisters at the Passing Out Parade of No. 1 M.A.E.T.U. before the D.G.M.S. Air and the Matron in Chief.

On September 6th 1944 Senior Sister Nancy McBean was escorting U.S. psychiatric servicemen when their Douglas Transport was forced to land in the sea in Humbolt Bay, Dutch New Guinea. The plane rapidly lost height

and orders were given to don lifebelts. S/S McBean and Nursing Orderly K.R. McDonald lashed the stretchers to their fittings and prepared for the crash. Some amphibious "Ducks" reached the plane and every patient was transferred safely. With the water flooding the fuselage S/S McBean jumped to safety. She was made an Associate of the R.R.C.

Tragedy struck the M.A.E.T.U. on September 18th 1945 when Sister Marie Craif of No. 2 M.A.E.T.U. was killed when the plane carrying 18 Army stretcher cases, including some ex-P.O.W. disappeared without trace between Biak and Merauke in Dutch New Guinea. In spite of a search by Dutch Officials who were in touch with natives in the area, no wreckage was found in sea or on land. S. Craig was presumed dead. Her Mention in Dispatches posthumously states "She rendered outstanding service as a Flight Nurse and at all times displayed outstanding skill and keenness and carried out her duties without regard for personal health or safety".

In December 1970, the wreckage was sighted and identified from the air in the rough mountainous area of the West Irian highlands.

The second fatality occurred on 15th November 1945. Sister Verdun Bernice Sheah of No. 1 M.A.E.T.U. lost her life when the aircraft crashed soon after take off on flying into a mountain about 100 feet from the summit, on its journey from Jacquinot Bay to Rabaul. All were killed instantly. The bodies were recovered in February 1946 and buried in the War Cemetery at Rabaul.

During their period of service with the original R.A.A.F. Nursing Service (1940-1946) three members received the decoration of the R.R.C. the first Military Order solely for women (1883); four became Associate Members (A.R.R.C.); eight were mentioned in dispatches and three received Good Service Cards. Eight Members who served in New Guinea during a specified period became eligible for the 1939-45 Star.

The Matron-in-Chief, upon whom the honour of Officer of the British Empire (O.B.E.) was conferred, retired on 14th November 1946. Her successor, Miss Joan McRae, had joined the Service in September 1941, was appointed Honorary Nursing Sister to the Queen in 1958, and in 1963 invested with the Royal Red Cross by H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh on behalf of Her Majesty. She retired with the rank of Group Officer in 1967 after sterling service.

Demobilisation of the original R.A.A.F. Nursing Service commenced in January 1946. Following an interim period, the new peacetime Service was inaugurated in 1948 and has carried on the grand tradition of the R.A.A.F. whose 50th Anniversary we celebrate this year.

* * * * *

THE 6th ARMOURED BRIGADE

by Major General R.N.L. Hopkins CBE
Retd.

The 6th Armoured Brigade formed part of the 2nd Armoured Division from May 1942 to February 1943. Its personnel were drawn from both South Australia and Victoria although the history of the formation, and its back ground, lie entirely in South Australia.

It is necessary to go back fifty years to trace the beginnings of this Brigade in the old 6th Cavalry Brigade which formed part of the 2nd Cavalry Division in Southern Australia. This had two Cavalry Brigades in Victoria with Divisional Headquarters at Victoria Barracks, St. Kilda Road, and the 6th with headquarters at Keswick, an inner Adelaide suburb.

Cavalry Divisional Troops were evenly divided between the two States. This meant that the South Australian brigade was really a Brigade Group as it had under command its own Battery of Artillery, Field Troop, R.A.E., Signal Troop, Cavalry Field Ambulance and Company of A.A.S.C. Moreover, the intricacies of Government finance meant that the 6th Cavalry Brigade, in a separate State, had its own budget allocation in which it was quite independent of its Divisional Headquarters. This was always a sore point with the G.S.O.l., Lieutenant Colonel W.P. Farr. And to make matters worse, the 6th Cavalry Brigade had an additional Light Horse Regiment attached. South Australia, in those days, raised four light horse regiments. Those belonging to the Brigade were the 9th from the northern part of the State with headquarters at Jamestown; the 3rd in the South-east centred on Mount Gambier and the 23rd based in Adelaide. The attached regiment was the 18th Light Horse which was allotted as a Divisional Cavalry Regiment to 3rd Division which was also split between Victoria and South Australia. The 6th was by far the largest Cavalry Brigade in Australia.

The writer became Brigade Major in 1923. The permanent staff of the Brigade contained as fine a team of instructors as existed anywhere. Most of these had rendered outstanding service during World War One and two of the Adjutants, Major Tom Darley and Lieutenant Rod McFarlane had gained their commissions on service. 'Bill' Read, the Brigade Serjeant Major, was a fatherly type who kept us all on the rails. A number of Staff Corps officers who served in 6th Cavalry Brigade went on to high rank and distinction. These included two Chiefs of the General Staff, Sir Henry Wells and Sir Tom Daly.

On the outbreak of war in 1939, the regiments were placed on a war footing; they were called up for full-time duty in 1941. Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Blackburn VC commanded the 18th Light Horse in the early days of the war; A.J. Caddy, who afterwards commanded 2/4th Armoured Regiment was an officer in 9th/23rd Light Horse.

The 6th Cavalry Brigade became 6th Motor Brigade in February 1942; this was another step in the steady mechanization of the cavalry which had been proceeding for some years. The 3rd, 9th and 18th Light Horse Regiments became Motor Regiments at the same time and the 18th was subjected to a further conversion to Machine Gun Regiment shortly afterwards.

In May of the same year, the 6th Motor Brigade became the 6th Armoured Brigade and moved to Victoria under its old commander Brigadier A.K. Wendt. At the same time, the 18th Machine Gun Regiment was converted to become the 12th Armoured Regiment. Two new armoured regiments were raised in Victoria for the 6th Armoured Brigade. It retained the 9th Motor Regiment as its motor infantry component and the 3rd Motor Regiment provided the Armoured Brigade Reconnaissance Squadron. Armoured Brigade Troops joined from Victoria.

The new 13th Armoured Regiment came from the conversion of the 13th Light Horse, of Gippsland fame, which had become a Motor Regiment on March 14th and an Armoured Regiment on May 8th. Things certainly happened fast in wartime. But 2nd Cavalry Division was to be one of the new 'light' Armoured Divisions patterned on the Middle Eastern formations which followed Rommel in principle. These contained one armoured brigade and one motor brigade with the usual divisional troops.

The third regiment of the Brigade was the 14th which was also Victorian in origin and came from the conversion of 104th Motor Regiment. This in itself seems simple enough but the background of the unit was, in fact, most complicated. It began with the 17th Light Horse (Machine Gun) Regiment, once based at Bendigo, which threw off its 'C' Squadron, on May 1st 1941, under command of Major E.P. Seymour, to become the 4th Armoured Regiment. The squadron moved to Ballarat and was brought up to regimental strength by the allocation of universal service personnel. Seymour became a Lieutenant Colonel and took his regiment, equipped with Machine Gun Carriers to join the 6th Infantry Brigade on the Dandenong Eastern Defence Line. Later on, the regiment served as forward defence troops on the Barwon Heads - Torquay beaches but re-organization once more was in the air. Owing mainly to lack of A.F.Vs, the 4th Armoured Regiment, on March 9th, became the 104th Motor Regiment; but on June 22nd it returned to armour as the 14th Armoured Regiment in the 6th Armoured Brigade.

Initial locations of the Brigade were :

H.W. 6th Armd Bde	GEELONG
12, 13 and 14th Armd Regts	GHERANG (near WINCHELSEA)
3rd Armd Bde Recce Sqn	MT. MARTHA
9th Motor Regt	MT. MARTHA

Brigadier Wendt left the Brigade shortly after it moved to Victoria and Colonel R.F. Monaghan, a Duntroon graduate and cavalry specialist, came in as 2nd-in-command and acting commander. The 6th Armoured Brigade

was able to move into Puckapunyal in July in place of the 2nd Armoured Brigade which had moved to Singleton ready to participate in the 1st Armoured Divisional Manoeuvres which were being held in the north-west of New South Wales. The 6th received American M3 medium (General Grant) tanks in August 1942 and reached a high state of efficiency. Brigadier F.E. Wells assumed command in November 1942.

The strategic situation changed rapidly during 1942. Japan had entered the war late in 1941 and her forces had over-run Malaya, the Philippines and the Dutch Indies by March 1942. Although this wave of conquest swept across the islands north of Australia, it received its first check in the Battle of the Coral Sea and, later, was to be further checked at Guadalcanal and in New Guinea. By December 1942 it could be accepted that the Japanese threat to the eastern seaboard of Australia had become remote. The large forces organized against this threat were no longer needed in a defensive role.

So quickly had the picture changed that the 2nd Armoured Division was scheduled for disbandment in February 1943. This, naturally, included the 6th Armoured Brigade. Although most of the units of the Brigade disappeared in the subsequent re-organization, the 13th Armoured Regiment, brought up to strength by personnel from 14th Armoured Regiment, joined the 2nd Armoured Brigade which now formed part of the 3rd Armoured Division stationed in Southern Queensland.

Personnel from Headquarters, 6th Armoured Brigade and the Armoured Brigade Signal Squadron went over to the new 4th Armoured Brigade which was being constituted for tropical service; they became, in effect, the brigade headquarters and signal squadron for the new formation.

Sources:

"Tank Tracks" - War History Committee of
2/4th Armoured Regiment.

"Military Forces in Victoria" - G.R. Vazenry.

"List of Cavalry, Motor and Armoured Units
raised in World War II" - Central Army Records
Office.

Colonel E.P. Seymour's and the writer's
personal notes.

* * * * *

THE EVOLUTION OF THE VICKERS MEDIUM MACHINE GUN

by Capt. G.R. Gronow (R.A.Inf.C.)

Prior to the introduction of the General Purpose Machine Gun in the early 1960s many C.M.F. units were equipped with the Vickers Medium Machine Gun. Under the Tropical Establishment of that time the Infantry Battalion had a Machine Gun Platoon as one of four Platoons in Support Company. The other Platoons were Mortars, Signals and Assault Pioneers. The Machine Gun Platoon was commanded by a Captain and had a strength of one officer and thirty-four O.R.s. Platoon Headquarters consisted of the Platoon Commander, the Platoon Sergeant, a batman, one driver and a storeman. It was equipped with one quarter ton GS vehicle and one half ton Trailer. There were three sections each of one Sergeant, two Corporals, five Machine Gunners, a driver and a range-taker. Each Section was equipped with one quarter ton GS vehicle and one half ton trailer, together with two Medium Machine Guns, one Light Machine Gun and one rocket launcher. The Battalion therefore had six Medium Machine Guns available to it. Twenty-eight thousand five hundred rounds were carried in belts as first line ammunition for the Medium Machine Guns and the reserve was nineteen thousand five hundred rounds. Thus each gun carried nineteen belts of 250 rounds per belt. There was a reserve in respect of each gun of thirteen belts of 250 rounds. The ammunition was .303 inch calibre and the range of the weapon using mark VII ammunition was 2,800 yards and using mark VIIIZ ammunition was 4,500 yards. The latter ammunition was used on war service only.

The cyclic rate of fire of the Vickers was 550 rounds per minute, but for tactical use the rapid rate of fire was one belt per minute and normal rate of fire was one belt in two minutes. This was done by firing bursts of 25 rounds or firing for approximately four seconds. The weapons were fired in pairs. Each Section would fire at ranges of up to 1,500 yards. Using two Sections it was possible to engage targets at ranges of up to 2,500 yards. It was rare to sight guns singly but this was sometimes done in very dense jungle country. The Platoon had an internal communications net which enabled fire to be co-ordinated.

The Vickers had two disadvantages. It was very heavy and it required water to cool the barrel. The General Purpose Machine Gun overcame both of these disadvantages, but it does not have the range of the Vickers.

The Author commanded the last Medium Machine Gun Platoon in Melbourne University Regiment at the Annual Camp of 1960. At that time the Platoon had a strength of 77 all ranks and was equipped with nine Vickers Machine Guns. Immediately after Camp the Platoon was disbanded as the Vickers was withdrawn from Service.

Early Development of the Machine Gun:

It appears from the earliest days of fire arms that attempts were made to manufacture weapons to produce rapid fire. The earliest types of weapons were apparently known as Organ Guns and they consisted of from six

to ten barrels grouped around a centre barrel or in a row side by side. These barrels could be fired simultaneously or in rapid succession by means of separate locks or a single lock and a quick match. Stoppages were frequent and uncontrolled firing common.

A later development of this type of weapon consisted of a series of muskets mounted side by side and fired as above but these were very clumsy and apparently of little use. At the time of the Renaissance, revolving fire arms were introduced. These however, soon became dangerous because the barrel and the chambers were poorly aligned. This was caused by lack of engineering technique and the development of the modern machine tool as we know it. It was only after the development of the modern machine tool and the solid drawn brass cartridge case that the manufacture of the modern machine gun could be commenced. The development of a usable percussion can in 1807 with further refinements in 1816 also assisted in the development of the Machine Gun. Up until as late as 1830 efforts were being made to improve the organ gun principal. I have been able to ascertain some details about some of the early Maching Guns which are set out hereunder:

Puckle Machine Gun:

This weapon was the forerunner of the Gatling and was made in England by one James Puckle. It was patented in London in 1718. The weapon was extensively tested and used by both the Navy and the Army. The weapon used a flintlock ignition and had a revolving block which fired square bullets. Other useful weapons that followed in the early Nineteenth Century were the Ripley Machine Gun, the Ager "coffee mill gun" and the Williams machine gun.

The Gatling:

This was the first practical machine gun and it was designed by Dr. R.J. Gatling of Chicago in 1862. It was not automatic and it consisted of a series of 6 to 12 barrels mounted in a circle round a central axis. The firing mechanism was operated by a handle which caused the barrels to rotate. The rate of fire was therefore controlled. The ammunition was mounted in a drum above the mechanism and dropped by gravity into the mechanism. Feed started at the top and continued until the round was fired at the lowest point of the circle. Ejection was then commenced and continued until the top was reached again. This gun was used extensively in the American Civil War being operated only by employees of the Gatling Gun Company, not by soldiers. The gun was reliable and accurate. It was said that European powers paid little attention to this new weapon. The principle used in this gun was again tried in 1945 using an electric motor or gas turbine to turn the barrels.

The Montigny Mitrailleuse:

The first machine gun to attract the general attention of Armies in Europe was the Montigny Mitrailleuse. It was introduced into the French Army by Napoleon the Third apparently on the eve of the war with Prussia

in 1870. This weapon fired grape shot and was very clumsy. Its handling was completely without tactical knowledge or regard to the characteristics of the weapon. It was originally a Belgian gun invented by a Belgian Army Officer but manufactured in France. It consisted of thirty-seven barrels mounted on an outer tube. Ammunition was inserted in a perforated steel plate which acted as the chamber. The thirty-seven barrels could then be fired almost simultaneously by turning the handle. The fastest rate of fire obtained with this weapon was 444 round per minute. However, mismanagement of this weapon caused it to fall into disrepute and it has been said that this mismanagement adversely affected all machine guns at this period.

The Feld:

In 1871 the Feld was introduced into the war by the Bavarian Army and it was a similar type of weapon to that mentioned in the paragraph above, except that it had twenty-four barrels. The gun worked by a crank and fired about three hundred rounds per minute. Its maximum range was between 1300 and 1400 metres. The ammunition was of poor quality and caused frequent stoppages and barrel overheating. This caused the barrel to warp and meant that it had to be frequently replaced. This gun also led to machine guns being generally disregarded in European Armies for many years after the war.

The English Attitude:

In 1871 the English Army and Navy decided to purchase a number of Gatling Guns for use in the defence forces. The .65 gun was adopted by the Navy and the .45 gun was used for service in the Army. At this time the Gatling gun was the most universally used of all the foregoing machine guns and was used by such countries as Turkey, Morocco, Egypt, China, Japan. Russia was apparently the biggest user of the Gatling gun outside of the United States. The Gatling, despite its wide use, was far from a satisfactory weapon as its maximum rate of fire was approximately 180 rounds per minute and stoppages were frequent because of poor ammunition.

Nordenfeld - Palmcrantz:

Between 1880 and 1884 the Swedish Nordenfeld-Palmcrantz and the Gardner guns were developed. Both these guns somewhat resembled the old organ guns in that they both consisted of a row of barrels which were fired rapidly one after the other. The Nordenfelds were operated by a lever and the Gardner by a crank handle. Both guns were gravity fed. The Gardner was later developed to a stage where only two barrels were used. At this stage of development of the machine gun, all guns were hand operated and mostly gravity fed.

The Maxim:

With the introduction of the Maxim Machine gun by Mr. Hiram S. Maxim, an entirely new principle of operation was introduced. The Maxim gun was

one of the most remarkable inventions ever made, if only because it was the first gun that was practically perfect and did everything that its inventor claimed for it. The gun fired at the rate of between 600 and 700 rounds per minute and it adopted the principle of using a single barrel using the recoil force from the fired round to operate the mechanism. The development of smokeless gunpowder which had a controlled burning rate and gave a higher chamber pressure and velocity to the round than before made the adoption of this principle possible. The weapon had a new type of feed system to replace the old system of a hopper or magazine above the guns. The feed system was by way of a canvas belt to which metal clips were fitted to hold the round in place. This belt was fed through the gun by the action of the mechanism. The gun was first publicly shown in 1885 and was an immediate success and attracted worldwide attention. A development of this gun was the large calibre Maxim which fired an explosive shell a little over a pound in weight. This was the forerunner of the Pom-pom and is basically the same as the Multiple anti-aircraft guns used on warships in the Second World War. The development of the Browning weapons in America followed closely upon Maxim's achievements.

The Vickers:

After the patents on the Maxim machine gun expired, the Vickers Company in England who had manufactured the original Maxim, began to develop the gun even further. The principle remained the same and the gun was only changed in outside appearance. The first Vickers gun produced changed only inasmuch as the principle of assistance by gas at the muzzle was adopted. Later the lock and other portions of the mechanism were changed slightly in form and the action was reversed or rather inverted. However, the guns produced in no way increased fire power over the Maxim, but they were lighter and easier to handle than the Maxim.

Hotchkiss:

The Hotchkiss was an invention of an American Engineer resident in France in about 1878 and in its original form, it did not resemble the Hotchkiss as it was known in the Second World War. It however resembled the Gatling in form. It was operated by a handle in the same way as the Gatling and was in fact, a revolving cannon. It was used by French forces, particularly in ships. The modern Hotchkiss is completely different from the earlier model and is described as the gas engine type, that is, a portion of the gas generated by the explosion of the charge is allowed to escape through a valve in the barrel before the projectile leaves the muzzle. This gas is used to drive back a piston thereby supplying the necessary power to operate the mechanism. This type of weapon is not water cooled and, as a result, is not capable of the sustained high rate of fire of the Vickers medium machine gun.

Conclusion:

It is interesting to note that in the early development of the machine gun it was regarded more as an artillery piece than an Infantry Unit weapon. However, during the 1914-18 war the machine gun was extensively used to support Infantry and later became an Infantry weapon. It was also adapted for use in aircraft. The weapon was extensively used in the Second World War and also in the Korean campaign.

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LIEUT. COL. De LANCEY FORTH

Submitted by Rex Clark

Many Australians who commenced their service with Australian units were later commissioned into British Units, where they gave gallant and distinguished service. There are also many former British soldiers who have given similar service to Australian units. The service of such officers and men are of great interest and the following on Lt. Col. De Lancey Forth is an example of gallant and distinguished service of an Australian with a British unit.

Lieut. Col. De Lancey Forth, who died in Alexandria (Egypt) in 1933, was the eldest son of the late Mr. de Lancey Forth and Mrs. de Lancey Forth, of Fairlie House, South Yarra (Vic.). He was born at Dwaroon, near Warrnambool, in 1879. He enlisted in the Queensland Bushman's Corps during the South African war, was twice recommended for a commission, and was eventually gazetted to the 3rd Manchester Regiment.

In 1906 he was seconded to the Egyptian Army, and he took part in many campaigns in the Soudan. He commanded the 3rd Ben. (Imperial Camel Corps) in 1917-18, when he was three times mentioned in despatches. He was also awarded the Distinguished Service Order and Bar - these being particularly meritorious, as the commanding positions in the Camel Corps was probably the most difficult to fulfil during the Great War. Very few, if any, General Officers commanding other formations had much knowledge of employing an Imperial Camel Corps composed of Australian, New Zealand, British and Indian troops to the best advantage; so that when the brigade was called upon for operations on a large scale - which started with the capture of El Arish - the late Brig.-General Smith, V.C., who was in command, seldom had the

opportunity to employ the brigade against one position. Portions were usually used as storm troops, such as the 3rd Battalion, advancing on foot for five miles over open country in the frontal attack on Maghaba, in which they carried all before them. Next the charge over 900 yards up an open slope at Rafa with not a vestige of cover, capturing the redoubt at the point of the bayonet.

This is claimed to be the longest bayonet charge known in the history of war - not one man would have survived if the Turks had not failed to alter the sights on their rifles and machine-guns. There was also the charge against the famous tank redoubt at Gaza, and the men of the Camel Corps probably had the distinction of being the only unit to reach their objective. Other portions of the brigade were engaged in a similar way.

Capt. E.W. Dixon D.S.O. 3rd (Anzac) Camel Bn. gave the following account of actions at which he was present:

"Lieut-Colonel de Lancey Forth had command of the 3rd Bn. in its next big engagement - that at Tel-el-Khuweilfe. The G.O.C., 53rd Div., which was to make the assault, had asked that the Australians of the Camel Brigade be employed to protect the right flank. This duty was allotted to Lieut-Colonel de Lancey Forth's battalion. Before the break of dawn on the morning of November 6, 1917, just as the artillery barrage stopped, de Lancey Forth was leading his battalion to its allotted task - that of occupying the high hill which rose abruptly from flat country and which was to have been captured by the 1/1st Herefords.

Instantly recognising in the darkness that the almost impregnable hill was still in possession of the Turks, and that his battalion was isolated within a few yards of the enemy's rifles, de Lancey Forth gave the quickest order heard at the war, and retired his battalion in perfect order under heavy fire to the cover of a spur immediately in front of the Turkish position. If it had not been for the masterly manner in which he manoeuvred the battalion, few would have lived to tell the tale.

One of the infantry units was late at the point of assembly, and the 1/1st Herefords had been ordered to extend their front to the left. Unfortunately the order had been mistaken, and they performed a left wheel, throwing their right flank into our own barrage with almost total loss - de Lancey Forth's despatch bearer failed to return, hence the position. The battalion held their position on the spur against immensely superior numbers, and incessant machine-gun fire, which swept the whole position so that scarcely a stretcher-bearer could move without being shot down. De Lancey Forth had a narrow escape, as his horse was shot while he was in the saddle. The few men left in action would have probably been overwhelmed by the strong reinforcements which the Turks had rushed to the position - had it not been for the wonderful charge of the 2nd L.H.Bde. Machine-gun Squadron under Captain Cain, into a position which helped to keep the Turks in check.

De Lancey Forth next held position of the line at Auja River. The battalion was then retired to the canal to be built up to strength with reinforcements, as their numbers were so depleted that it was not possible to carry on. The companies of the battalion were placed at different positions at intervals along the canal, many miles apart. When eventually built up to strength the battalion returned to Palestine, there to once more be mounted on horses. De Lancey Forth was then given command of the Western Desert Forces and stationed at Sollum until 1920, when he was placed in command of the Frontiers District Forces, with headquarters at Cairo."

Besides the Distinguished Service Order and Bar he was awarded the Military Cross, the Order of the Nile, and the Order of the Mejidieh. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, for his exploration work in the Libyan Desert in search of the lost oasis of Zehzura. Service medals awarded were Queens South Africa, Khedives Sudan, 1914 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal with MID.

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THE BRITISH REGIMENTS IN AUSTRALIA

(from "SHORT HISTORY OF THE MILITARY FORCES IN NSW FROM 1788 to 1953" - - a publication intended for the troops of Eastern Command.

The Society has had directed to it several queries as to when various of the British Army units were stationed in Australia. The following summary from the above-mentioned publication may be of interest and lead to further reading.

<u>Regiment</u>	<u>arrived</u>	<u>departed</u>
Marines	January 1788	1792
N.S.W. Corps (raised locally in N.S.W. from 1791 to take the place of the Marines. In 1809 became the 102nd Regiment)		1810
73rd (Royal Highland) Regiment	1810	1814
46th (Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry)	1814	1818
48th (Northamptonshire)	1817	1824
3rd (Bufs)	1823	1827
40th (2nd Somersetshire)	1824	1829
57th (West Middlesex)	1825	1832
39th (Dorsetshire)	1827	1832
63rd (West Suffolk)	1829	1833
17th (Leicestershire)	1830	1836
4th (The King's Own)	1832	1837
50th (West Kent)	1833	1841
21st (Royal North British Fusiliers)	1833	1839
28th (North Gloucestershire)	1835/6	1842

<u>Regiment</u>	<u>arrived</u>	<u>departed</u>
80th (Staffordshire Volunteers)	1837	1844
51st (2nd Yorkshire (West Riding) Light Inf.)	1838	1846
96th (Manchester)	1841	1848
99th (Lanarkshire) (Wiltshire)	1843	1856
58th (Rutlandshire)	1844	1847
11th (North Devonshire)	1845	1857
65th (2nd Yorkshire, North Riding)	1846	1849
40th (2nd Somersetshire)	1852	1860
12th (Suffolk)	1854	1860
77th (East Middlesex)	1857	1858
50th (West Kent)	1866	1869
14th (Bucks) (P.O.W. Own West Yorkshire)	1867	1870
18th (Royal Irish) (From N.Z.)	1870	1870
Royal Artillery	1856	1870

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SOCIETY NOTICES

The Retiring Federal Secretary,
MELBOURNE.

Dear Sir,

ANNUAL ELECTION OF FEDERAL COUNCIL FOR 1971/72

I have to inform you that the following nominations were received by me by 30th June 1971.

Federal President: Mr. B.J. Videon

Federal Vice-President: Mr. J.K. Lyons

Federal Secretary: Mr. J.E. Price

Federal Treasurer: Mr. P.O. Lober

As no other persons were nominated, it will not be necessary to conduct a Ballot.

The above nominees will, therefore, assume office for 1971/72 at the Annual General Meeting to be held on 27th August, 1971.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) Andrew J. Ray,

A. J. RAY, LL.B.
Returning Officer

10th July, 1971.

SOCIETY LAPEL BADGE

Federal Council has pleasure in advising that, following representations by some of the Branches, it has been decided to issue a new lapel badge for the Society.

The badge will be taken from the Society's Coat of Arms, part of which appears in Sabretache, and should cost about 75 cents each. Size will be no larger than the R.S.L. badge, probably slightly smaller.

The older members will recall our earlier lapel badge, based on the formation sign of 21st Brigade Group H.Q. with colours reversed. The use of this badge was generally discontinued when it was found that the colour scheme sometimes led to it being taken for a badge of a religious organisation.

Will Branch Secretaries please advise Federal Secretary without delay the probable number of badges they will be requiring, so that an adequate supply may be ordered initially. Cash will be required as soon as badges are supplied to Branches.

Will members who are not in a Branch, and who require a badge, please send 90 cents to cover badge and postage. Remittances for these orders will be held by Federal Secretary until badges are available for mailing.

B. J. Videon,
Federal President,

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BRANCH NOTES

VICTORIAN BRANCH - NEW COMMITTEE

At the July Meeting the following were elected to the Branch Committee:

- President : Andrew Ray
- Secretary : Peter Thomas,
(7 Lindrum Road, Karingal, 3199).
- Treasurer : Alfred Festberg.

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A.C.T. BRANCH NOTES

by K.R. White

Since our last Notes we have elected a new President, enrolled a number of new members, and in all the Branch has moved forward in a satisfactory manner. Due to pressure of scouting activities our President, Neville Foldi was forced to resign and we elected Major John Frewen to take his place. John has the record, shared by Clem Sargent, of having been President of two Branches, first the founding President of the S.A. Branch and now President of the A.C.T. Branch. Clem, incidently, was President of A.C.T. Branch before moving to the West.

Among our new arrivals we were fortunate to obtain Maj. Rex Clark whose name is so well known to our members and already we have had the benefit of his knowledge in the publication of his latest book "1st Queensland Mounted Infantry Contingent in the South African War".

A recent event of note was the visit of our Federal Secretary, Mr. John Price, who spent a couple of days in Canberra late in April. John was a most welcome guest and was given the chance to meet a number of our members at the home of John Frewen where an informal meeting was held.

Speaking of Federal events, we in Canberra were lucky enough to be able to inspect the 50th Anniversary display of the R.A.A.F. at the Australian War Memorial, some of which was loaned to the R.A.A.F. by our Federal President, Barry Videon. It is a very fine display and the badge section of it certainly earns Barry a great deal of credit.

And now to the main event of our recent history. In March it was decided to hold an exhibition to raise funds and publicise the work of the Society. This decision culminated in an exhibition held on Saturday evening, 22nd May when we held a Wine & Cheese Night for over 100 guests. The evening was a great success, both financially and in all other ways and quite apart from a profit exceeding \$60 we hope to gain at least 10 new members over the next few months.

Examples of all medals won by Australian Servicemen over the years from the Maori Wars up to the present were displayed, in groups, including a number of V.C.'s, and, without a doubt this display attracted the attention of all those present. The display was prepared by Rex Clark and John Frewen after a massive research job in locating many of the groups. Other exhibits covered Australian Army badges, books, militaria, uniforms, weapons and war games. A most attractive model display was prepared by Don Goldsmith, featuring a model from every period of Australia's military history, starting with an aboriginal warrior greeting the First Fleet and going through some 60 models to the Vietnam War. This display created a lot of interest and quite a lot of conversation centred on the Victorian Mounted Infantryman with his hat turned up on the right hand side.

Mention must be made of the generous assistance given by a number of visitors from Sydney who presented a fine display of medals, photographs and military money. Their keenness in travelling 200 miles to assist us was much appreciated and served as a most useful point of contact.

Our June meeting was held on 21st June, attended by 9 members, and took the form of a review of the past, present and future activities of the Branch. A number of ideas were discussed which will greatly assist the future expansion of the Branch, and also assist the Society, as a whole, to improve its image in the community.

The meeting also appointed the Branch Secretary delegate to the Annual General Meeting of the Society in August and also Major Rex Clark was appointed Research Officer for the Branch.

Meetings are now being held monthly and interstate visitors are always welcome to our meetings. Contact may be readily made with our Secretary telephone 487497 (home) or 950361 (business).

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A.C.T. BRANCH RESEARCH OFFICER

The A.C.T. Branch wishes to advise that Major Rex Clark has been appointed Branch Research Officer. Rex is well known as an author, an authority on British and Foreign medals and an expert researcher on all military subjects. To ensure that Rex's ability is used to the utmost, and in view of the large volume of research material available in Canberra from such sources as the Defence Department, The National Library, The Australian War Memorial, The Royal Military College, etc. etc. etc., it has been decided to set up a Research Service, available to all members, regardless of Branch or location. The Service will also be available to non-members under certain circumstances.

All enquiries should be addressed to:-

The Research Officer, The Military Historical Society of Australia,
A.C.T. Branch, 140 Belconnen Way, SCULLIN, A.C.T. 2614.

To cover the cost of postage, stationery and other incidental costs it is proposed to charge a fee of \$1.00 per enquiry. The surplus funds raised will be used to further the aims of the Society, at both Branch and Federal levels.

It is hoped that all members will avail themselves of the Research Service and it is stressed that the Service will cover the whole field of Australian military history, which includes all three Services.

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AFFILIATED AND OTHER GROUPS ETC.

By B.J. Videon

AUSTRALIAN CARTROPHILIC SOCIETY: This Society seems to be away to a sound start, with (at last count) 27 members in 3 States of Australia, and a budding newsletter edited by the Honorary Secretary, Mr. Alan Grant, of 1031 Malvern Road, Toorak, Victoria, 3142.

If you wish to join, the annual sub is believed to be very small, and you can write to the Secretary, who will send you an application form, with price of membership mentioned. (I am not prepared to mention it in case the postage rate goes yet higher, and put the Society 'in the red' on its newsletter!). It looks like a very worthwhile organisation. Meeting nights are Tuesdays (first in the month) in the Melbourne suburban area.

AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA: This is a progressive body, obviously, as it recently organised a flying-boat trip to Cooma. This is no mean effort.

The Victorian Branch is also running a photography contest, and meets on Thursday evening, although this seems to be under threat due to lack of office-bearers.

Members interested should contact the Acting Secretary, Mr. I.D. McArthur, at 9 Edna Street, East Malvern, 3145.

MILITARY MUSEUM, SWAN HILL: Recently opened in Swan Hill's main street is a new military museum, conducted in a very businesslike fashion to capture a share of the tourist traffic in this historical area. For those who do not know, Swan Hill is situated in the North of Victoria, on the River Murray, about 6 hours by road from Melbourne. There is also a fine folk museum situated in a bend of the river, with buildings and exhibits from Victoria's past.

While the publicity for the Military Museum appears to the writer to be a little extravagant in some of its claims, it cannot be denied that the proprietors have done a fine job in selecting and displaying their material. It really is a credit to them, and the museum deserves to do well.

With adequate large premises into which expansion is projected, this could well become one of the largest military museums in Australia (The Australian War Memorial, of course, excepted).

I liked it so well, and its central situation, that it is hoped to hold early next year a convention of Branches of the Society at Swan Hill if it can be arranged. The road distances from Adelaide and Canberra would be about the same as those from Geelong and Melbourne, so that it is possible in theory for a lot of members to come to this meeting if it can be "laid on". More later!

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BOOK REVIEWS

By B.J. Videon

"NETHERLANDS ARMY REGIMENTAL BADGES" by B.C. Cats and C.P. Coenders, published by the Military Collectors Service, Lingedijk 29, KEDICHEM, Holland; card cover, 64 pages, Dutch Florins 9.50 (about \$A2.50 landed in Australia.) Size 9-3/8" x 6 1/4".

This is a most pleasant and useful little book, whether you are or are not a collector of Dutch badges. In it, the compilers or authors give a historical sketch of the development of Dutch badges from the end of the Second World War to the present day, and they then go on to

deal with each badge of a present regiment or corps, followed by some that have become obsolete or were never approved. Illustrations are photographic.

It is pleasing that they have illustrated and described the beret, collar and shoulder badges, so that those of us who have odd badges can know just what they are. The reason for the background of beret badges being a stylised "W" will also be news to the newer collectors.

This little book is bi-lingual (Dutch-English), and is well worth the modest price. We do not know of any Australian dealer handling it at the present time.

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"CANADIAN BADGES 1920-1950" by Daniel Mazeas, published privately by the author, who is a Member of the Military Historical Society; soft cover, 64 pages, 8½" x 5¼", price in Australia about \$4 but check with the Australian distributor who will be "The Armoury", 296 Brighton Road, North Brighton, South Australia, 5048.

Once again, it is good to see a book for badge collectors on badges of an overseas country. Perhaps one would have preferred to see M. Mazeas (a Frenchman) publishing a book on French badges, about which we know much less than Canadian. Nevertheless, this is a useful contribution in a convenient size, to the badge-collectors bookshelf.

Illustrations are line drawings, and quite well drawn for this purpose. It is particularly gratifying to see that the compiler has included in most cases an official General Order number to date the badge, or, in other cases, has quoted a year of introduction. He also gives the metal in which the badges appeared, and has shown important variations where they existed.

With generally six badges per page, this contains a lot of badges, and regrettably there is no index to help you find them. On the other hand, there is at the rear a useful Brief Lineage, which makes up for this lack. Once you have gone through this book thoroughly once, you will find it comparatively easy to go to any badge you require. Recommended.

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"BADGES OF THE BRITISH ARMY 1820-1960" by F. Wilkinson, Arms and Armour Press, 677 Finchley Road, Childs Hill, London NW2, England. Hard cover with colourful dust jacket, 8¼" x 5¼", English price £1.50 in U.K. only, Australian price not notified, but it probably will be available at all major bookshops.

This book is simply the previous soft-covered one put into a more permanent cover, and the publisher's claim that it has "a revised and expanded text" is somewhat misleading, as there is virtually no text whatever. As I said of the previous edition when reviewing it, it is a pity

that the title "Badges of the British Army" is not a true indication of the contents, there being badges of the R.A.F. and the Royal Observer Corps tucked into the somewhat confusing sequence of illustrations.

Illustrations of the older badges are rather few, considering the period covered, but those that are shown will be avidly inspected by the enthusiast.

Like all Arms and Armour publications, however, the quality of the paper and illustrations cannot be faulted, and for this reason, if for no other, this little book will be a useful addition to your shelves.

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"DIE ZINN FIGUR", monthly magazine of September 1970 of the "Klio" Deutsche Gesellschaft der Freunde und Sammler kultur-historischer Zinnfiguren; 28 pages, 8½" x 5-7/8", German text, illustrations. This looks like a useful and detailed journal for the tin figure enthusiast, with both historical articles and reviews of new figures. There are some commercial advertisements, but this is generally a non-commercial publication.

For further information write to Herr Albert Kneuttinger, 6621 Ludweiler-Warndt, Rich.-Wagner-Str., 29, West Germany.

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BOOK REVIEW

By Major J.B. Gale E.D., M.A.,
B. Econ. C.M.F.)

"THE STANDARD CATALOGUE OF ORDERS, DECORATIONS AND MEDALS AWARDED TO AUSTRALIANS", by M. Downey, Offset, Illustrated 40 pp. price \$2.50.

This small booklet, prepared by a member of the New South Wales Military History Society is the first medal catalogue to be published dealing specifically with medals awarded to Australians. It is concerned with the various types of medals and decorations in total and does not deal with the individual recipients. However although it lists all medals awarded to Australians from colonial days to the present, and contains illustrations of over 100 obverses and reverses, there is also much useful summary information about each type, the total of each medal or decoration awarded in each war and details of variants, bars and clasps, and recipient units in special cases of rarer issues.

A reasonable average price is quoted for each type of variant although this sort of information is very subjective and would vary according to condition of the medal and to the pricing technique of dealers. Quite considerable variations in price could be expected between overseas and local dealers, not necessarily in favour of the locals. Medals to Australians, particularly some of the older campaign medals, normally fetch a premium.

One interesting feature of the catalogue is the listing of certain medals awarded to Australians in campaigns not generally regarded as ones that Australia was involved in, such as the Natal Rebellion of 1906. No Australian unit fought in this campaign but about 100 Australians participated as volunteers and received the medal. Likewise about 2,000 Australians received medals for the New Zealand War 1860-66, mostly to troops but the crew of HMCS Victoria received the issue dated 1860-1861, probably the first Australian naval men to receive campaign medals.

There is also a useful summary of that relatively unexplored area, the service medals awarded to members of the pre-Federation State volunteer and auxiliary forces and it is most interesting to note that 7 gold and 8 silver medals were awarded by the Government of New South Wales "For Bravery in Resisting or Capturing Bushrangers".

This booklet, being a catalogue, will be reissued and updated from time to time because of increased prices - medals and decorations always appreciate in value - and no doubt will improve with each issue. There are some gaps such as the listing of certain decorations by wartime totals but not including periodical awards of the same decoration in Queen's Birthday and New Year's Honours Lists. These omissions will no doubt be rectified. As the author points out no medal book yet published has been without mistakes or points of contention, and his invitation for comments will surely be accepted by enthusiasts in what is a very specialized hobby.

The price is reasonable for a pioneering venture into the specifically Australian aspects of medal collecting, and the catalogue should be of interest to those who have a general interest in our military history as well as the specialist medal collector. Copies are obtainable from the Secretary, Military Historical Society of Australia, 156 Miller Street, O'Connor, A.C.T.

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BOOK REVIEW

By J.E. Price

"THE ORIGINS OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARMY MEDICAL CORPS", Jacqueline Gurner, The Hawthorn Press, 601 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic. 3000. 66pp. \$4.50.

In sixtysix pages, which includes appendices, bibliography and an index. Miss Gurner has written an excellent little book, telling us just how and why the R.A.A.M.C. was formed. It is an amazing story, for at the time the mighty British Army lacked an efficient medical force. The credit must go unstintingly to William Daniel Campbell Williams, a New South Wales medico, a serving Militia officer Staff-Surgeon with the New South Wales Artillery, and also honorary surgeon at Sydney's St. Vincent's Hospital. To quote Miss Gurner's words: 'with him, however, civil medical practise was always subsidiary to his Army interests'. He truly was the Founder of the Corps and its first Principal Medical Officer.

The book takes us with him, as he leads the NSWAMC detachment away to Australia's first overseas, military involvement, The Sudan, where the unit was praised by the Commander-in-chief, Egyptian Forces, Lord Wolseley. He brought the entire unit back 'better soldiers than when they went' as one contemporary newspaper is quoted to have said.

By the time the South African War was over, the AAMC, as it was now called, had reached adulthood, but it was left for the bloodbaths of the First World War for the service to acquire maturity. It did just that and as we know, reached greater heights in the Second World War, but this conflict is not covered by this book.

I found it a most absorbing story, a must for people interested in the humanitarian side of the Army, indeed, it would be a pity for persons interested in Military history generally, to neglect purchasing it, for I feel that due to its size it could lie unnoticed on a bookseller's shelf.

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BOOK REVIEW

By Alfred N. Festberg

SOUTH AFRICAN WAR HONOURS AND AWARDS 1899 - 1902

Reprinted 1971 by Arms and Armour Press, London. Price 10.60

THE WATERLOO ROLL CALL by CHARLES DALTON

Reprinted 1971 by Arms and Armour Press, London. Price 10.60

Historians will welcome the release of these two books. The former lists verbatim all the London gazettes dealing with the South African War.

Many an Australian name is found between these 140 pages, thus supplementing our medal rolls. In my opinion it is a 'must' for all those interested in that war.

The latter book gives not only the Order of Battle of the British Army on 18th June, 1815, but it also lists all the officers by regiments.

I find it strange that the Brunswick Corps was omitted; it was an integral part of the British Army and not part of the K.G.L. or the Hanoverian troops, both of which are included

Nevertheless it is a most valuable contribution to the Napoleonic Wars and once again readily available.

AUSTRALIAN AWARDS OF THE KING'S SOUTH AFRICA MEDAL

Prepared by Maj. R. Clarke.

Published by the Military Society of Puckapunyal.

Sole Distributors: Regal Coin Company Pty. Ltd.,
325 Collins Street,
Melbourne. 3000.PRICE \$4.00

Major Clark is to be congratulated for making this information available to the medal collector fraternity. But at the same time he is to be criticised for failing to indicate which bars the individual received with his medal.

I am sure that every collector will wish to obtain this fuedal roll.

Just received and to be reviewed in the next issue: THE MIGHTY EIGHTH by Roger A. Freeman, Macdonald, London.

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DESPATCHES

(Comments, queries and answers from readers)

From Mr. Robert Gray:

In the April 1971 issue of "Sabretache" I was interested in your Editor's Notes. In your comment you stated that "to get more members we require a better magazine". I do not agree with this statement. I know of a society in the U.K. that has a membership of over 400 and they only bring out a very modest newsletter and their subscription is also very low.

It is the type of member that you want to get to increase the membership, not the magazine. Over a long period of time I have written to many members of the Military Historical Society of Australia who have similar interests to mine and have in many cases never received a reply in spite of enclosing a S.A.E. I wonder what happens to the stamp?

In the January, 1970 issue there appeared a very interesting item by a Mr. J. M. Wilson under the heading "The Story behind the trophy of arms in Russell Hill Headquarters". In hopes of getting more information I tried to get in contact with this Mr. Wilson, but was unable to do so through the name and address that was given me. I enclosed a S.A.E. too.

On the 10th September, 1970 I sent you an item listing a few queries which I wanted to clear up on Mr. Wilson's articles. This appeared in the October 1970 publication of "Sabretache", but I did not receive a reply.

* * * * *

Information wanted

Can anyone supply me with the following information?

What was the design of the badge that was worn on the hat by members of the Australian Coronation Corps to the Coronation of King Edward VII?

What type of buttons did they wear?

Did they wear shoulder titles and if so what was the type worn?

In 1927 the 55th. Battalion received the territorial title "New South Wales Irish Rifles". (AAO 132/1927).

In 1930 the territorial title was changed to "New South Wales Rifle Regiment". (AAO 510/1930.) What was the reason for this change?

* * * * *

Nominal roll of South Australian
members of the Queen's Diamond
Jubilee Contingent.

Lt. Col. J. Rowell.	Tpr. H. E. Francis.
Capt. H. L. D. Wilson.	Tpr. J. E. Franklin.
Lt. J. Hay.	Tpr. J. F. Humphis.
Sgt. Maj. W. de Passey.	Tpr. C. A. Keane.
Sgt. J. E. Rowell.	Tpr. A. J. Kilsby.
Cpl. H. J. Meyer	Tpr. J. C. Kuball.
Cpl. D. A. Harrington.	Tpr. K. Macitosh.
L/Cpl. R. J. Kilsby.	Tpr. C. T. Major.
L/Cpl. J. McGillivray.	Tpr. T. J. H. Mitchell.
L/Cpl. G. E. Noblet.	Tpr. R. Sampson.

Tpr. W. E. Avery.
 Tpr. A. A. Baldwin.
 Tpr. A. E. Cook.

Tpr. J. E. Thyer.
 Tpr. G. J. Walter.
 Cpl. Tpтр. W.F.W. Davis.

* * * * *

AUSTRALIAN CORONATION CORPS

For King Edward VII.

Sth. Australian Detachment.

Sgt. J. C. Walter.
 Pte. S. R. Jones.
 Pte. H. E. Newbold.
 Pte. J. G. Clarke.
 Pte. A. E. Scott.
 Pte. J. W. Parsons.

Pte. T. W. Wilkins.
 Pte. M. J. Dew.
 Pte. S. H. Mayfield.
 Pte. J. Mounsey.
 Pte. W. Justice.
 Pte. E. W. Bristow.

* * * * *

From Mr. F. Garie (of S.A. Branch)

Could you please insert the following Errata in the next issue of Sabretache.

The following correction to my Fort Glanville article has been brought about by further research.

On page 101 line 19 & 20 Delete "it was at full strength ie, 50 men excluding officers".

Insert "there were 24 to 25 actual men or about $\frac{1}{2}$ strength, the limitation being due to finance".

When you were in Adelaide I asked you if you could find out the type of stencil used to print illustrations (sketches or photographs) for insertion in Sabretache. Could you please make enquires, as I have been hoping to support my Fort Glanville article with an illustration or two.

PAID MEMBERS' ADVERTISEMENTS

J. B. HIRSH BOOKS & MILITARIA, 12 HAWSON AVENUE, GLENHUNTLY, VIC. 3163.
Postal address: P.O. BOX 20, GLENHUNTLY, VIC. 3163.

Telephone: 211-5469 (All Hours).

I offer collectors the opportunity to acquire for their collection orders, decorations and service medals, badges, bayonets, helmets, uniform pieces, cigarette card sets, police helmet plates and cap badges, coloured postcards, selected publications and other items of a military nature.

This is a mail-order and personal selection service. The former offers subscribers (for \$1.00) 8-10 lists per annum; the latter invites collectors (and subscribers) to visit my place of business, situated at the rear of above address, at the following hours of business:

Monday-Friday: 12.30 p.m. - 8.30 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday: 10.00 a.m. - 3.30 p.m. All other times by appointment only. This ensures the caller that I am going to be in attendance at the appointed time.

At the present time, the mail-order service is offered only to subscribers in Australia. As it takes some 6-7 weeks for "SABRETACHE" to reach members in Europe and North America, and a further lapse of time before enquiries reach me for a list, I regret that I cannot answer any letters directly, in respect of above nature. The extent of stock, carried at the present time, does not suffice to answer enquiries from overseas.

For my own collection, and for resale, I require good quality pieces (mentioned above) - especially badges and items of interest connected with artillery (all countries).

WANTED TO BUY

Complete set of 52 cards of 'Australian Fighting Force Badges', published about 1942 by Sweetacres Sweets.

Colour patch for the Australian 22nd Garrison Battalion WWII.

Vietnamese made, United States and Australian unit patches - Helicopter and Army Aviation examples particularly.

WW II 'Wings' and 'Recognition' and other WW II service magazines.

David Vincent,
35 East Parade,
KINGSWOOD.
South Australia, 5062.

"MODELS TO ORDER

Having become bored with adding to my collection of some 500 cavalry figures 54 mm, I have decided to establish my worth in the commercial market.

Therefore I invite any collector to commission with me 54 mm figures, each original and complete, under the conditions below:-

1. The collector sends me a coloured picture of the figure required or writes asking if I have the figure in my reference books.
2. There is no time limit for delivery.
3. The collector pays in advance, and if he does not think the figure worth the money, he may demand a full or partial refund and he retains the figure.

I offer mounted figures for \$20 and dismounted figures for \$8.

If anyone is interested in lead figures about 12-14 inches high (Dismounted) for \$100, these will also be considered. These are made up in sections of sheet lead and then connected together to stand erect. Each one takes about a month's work.

Capt. J. C. Gorman,
Taliesin,
Queanbeyan 2620 NSW. "

* * * * *

WANTED

Wanted to purchase or to exchange. Medals and decorations of the British Commonwealth, but especially those awarded to Australian and/or New Zealand troops. I will willingly answer all correspondence.

Mr. H. Terry Jacobs, 8524 Central, La Salle, P.Q. Canada.

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WANTED FOR ADDITION TO ALREADY LARGE COLLECTION OF AIR FORCE RELICS.

Old Air Force recruiting and other posters, old flying maps mainly WW2 Australian, old flying helmets and goggles (not common WW2 British, U.S. types), air force women's uniform items, prewar R.A.A.F. uniforms.

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Queensland Scottish Glengarry Badge (W/M) 1890-96; Victoria Mil. Forces Glengarry Badge (Gilt) 1880 period; Pair 1902 period Australia Collar Badges (Bronze) type worn by contingent to Edward VII Coronation. All in fine condition

FOR

A 1939-41 Cameron Pattern 61st Bat. Queensland Scottish.

I also require other Australian or Asian Scottish.

Also for EXCHANGE only, a brass cap badge of the 2nd New South Wales Infantry - pre 1897, for early Australian Scottish Cap Badges or a Helmet Plate.

E. W. PEDLER,
24 West Beach Road,
KESWICH, S.A. 5053.

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FOR SALE

Japanese Invasion Notes, uncirculated 50¢, \$1, 10¢.

\$1.00 per set.

P. Varne, P.O. Box 136, BENTLEY, Western Australia, 6102.

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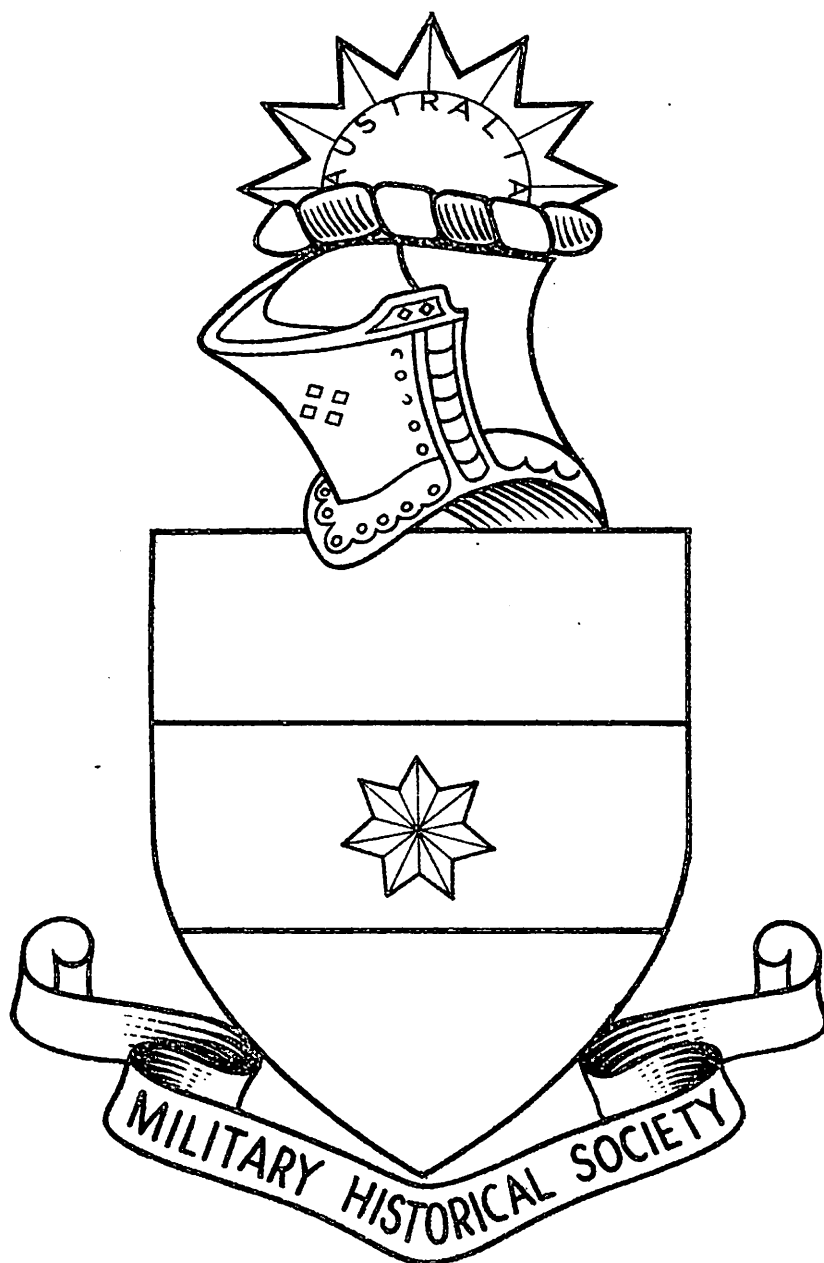
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 - A mediaeval helmet in Silver;
 - A 3 colour shield of Navy Blue, over Army Red, over Air Force Blue;
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