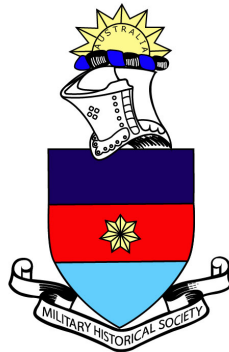


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Sabretache



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EDITOR'S NOTES

READERS will notice that SABRETACHE has a new Editor – Peter Kelly.

The first of my editorial duties must be to thank the outgoing Editor, Chris Coulthard-Clark, on behalf of all members of the Society for his invaluable assistance in the production of SABRETACHE in the past.

Chris has vacated the Editor's chair for personal reasons.

We wish him every success in his future forays into journalism.

Readers will also note that SABRETACHE has undergone a minor "facelift" in this issue.

This is to make the copy more easily readable and, hopefully, present stories in a more attractive manner.

THIS issue is also the first of a new page numbering for SABRETACHE.

In this, and in future issues, each copy of SABRETACHE will be individually numbered, instead of consecutively as has been the practice in the past.

CORRECTION

A PRINTER's devil crept into our story on Sgt. J.H. Daniel, DCM, MM, in the last issue of SABRETACHE.

We incorrectly recorded that Sgt. Daniel married Elsa Lillian Frur, in 1947. His bride's surname was Freer. Our apologies.

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Flt.-Sgt. Ian Innes, MM, RAAF

by W.H. CONNELL

ONLY four Royal Australian Air Force servicemen were awarded the Military Medal during World War 2. Here is how Flight-Sergeant Ian Innes won his MM.

FLT.-SGT. Ian Rossell Caple Innes was born in Sydney on January 28, 1922, and was educated at Sydney Boys' High School where he met Bob Page, who, as an Army captain in 1943, was to win the DSO for his part in Operation Jaywick – the raid on Singapore.

After joining the RAAF, Flt.-Sgt. Innes was sent to Canada where he underwent bombing, gunnery and air observers training.

As a Sgt. he departed Canada for the UK.

A summary of the method, operating at this time, of allocating airmen and crews to squadrons is interesting.

At an Operational Training Unit (OTU), various personnel would “crew up”, i.e. form a crew.

From this OTU the new crews would go on training and/or conversion courses before posting to a squadron.

This posting was “according to the luck of the draw”, crews being sent where the need was greatest.

In Flt.-Sgt. Innes's case, he was trained



★ **ABOVE: A 1945 studio portrait of the then Flying Officer Innes.**

on Wellingtons, did a conversion course on Halifaxes and was posted to a Royal Air Force Halifax squadron, Number 78.

On June 23, 1944, the Halifax bomber in which Flt.-Sgt. Innes was flying his second mission, was shot down after raiding Laon in France.

Of the seven crew members, five were captured and two, Flt.-Sgt. Innes and Flt.-Sgt. Foden, the mid upper gunner (MUG), remained free.

Flt.-Sgt. Foden was concealed in a chateau until freed by the Allies. This is Flt.-Sgt. Innes's story.

Whilst bailing out of the stricken aircraft Flt.-Sgt. Innes's adventures began.

Firstly, his boots were whipped off by the slipstream and then, during his descent, he narrowly missed a collision with an enemy night fighter which passed so close to him that it temporarily collapsed his canopy.

To finish off an already eventful descent he landed in the vicinity of an estaminet, breaking one of his toes.

After disposing of some of his equipment (his 'chute was tangled in wires) he ran from the area and hid in a haystack until dawn.

In the morning he saw a farmer coming to milk his cows. Relying on his school French, Flt.-Sgt. Innes approached the farmer, explained who he was and asked for some boots or shoes. The farmer, who turned out to be an ex-Poilu of WWI, gave him some food and a pair of German soldier's boots, which were too large.

Flt.-Sgt. Innes figured that his best chance was to make for the Swiss border, walking mainly in the daylight hours to facilitate navigation.

With his escape kit intact (comprising local currency, linen map, compass, hacksaw blade, tablets for energy and water filtration) he proceeded on foot to a large forest area near the small village of Cuvilly where he met an old woodcutter.

The old fellow, on learning of the predicament, took the Australian to his home.

There, the woodcutter's wife treated Flt.-Sgt. Innes's injured toe and gave him some home-made ointment to take with him.

Dressed in civilian clothes provided by his new friends he continued on his way.

The crossing of the bridge at Compiègne, in broad daylight, provided some anxious moments. This bridge was heavily guarded by the Germans and he

crossed by attaching himself to a group of workers.

At Montpreux, near Soissons, he was sheltered on a farm by the farmer's wife Charlot Dehu.

Monsieur Dehu was a POW.

Also at the farm were an Algerian, on the run from the Germans, and a Frenchman, Maurice Deceroi.

Deceroi, who later joined the FFI, married Charlot on the death of her husband. Charlot arranged a contact in nearby Maily-le-Camp with some friends of hers, the Goustille family.

However, a problem existed – how to get Flt.-Sgt. Innes to Maily.

To overcome this, a young girl cycled from Maily to collect him. Borrowing a bicycle from Charlot, Flt.-Sgt. Innes and the girl set off for the return journey. Although their ride was successful it was not completely without incident.

Flt.-Sgt. Innes had no papers and it was necessary, during stages of the trip, for the girl to use her feminine charms to distract over-inquisitive Germans.

The Goustille home turned out to be opposite a German barracks!

During his week-long stay Flt.-Sgt. Innes was hidden in the attic at night.

However, he moved about quite openly during daylight hours. At times he would be in one room in the house while Germans were having coffee in another.

Photos were even taken of him in the front garden of the house, facing the barracks, sitting at an outdoor table.

These were to be cemented in a wall, along with an account of his evasion so far, to be sent to his family if he was killed.

Whilst in the attic he experienced a daylight air attack by U.S. Lightning aircraft.

It was at Maily that Flt.-Sgt. Innes

first came in contact with the Resistance.

A man, posing as a painter, arrived to inform him that a bus trip to Troyes had been arranged for him and a USAAF officer, Lt. Glen S. Call.

At Troyes they would be passed on to the Maquis. The bus trip was another nerve-racking experience as a number of German soldiers were among the passengers. At Troyes the pair were boarded in a flat for a short time.

The owner's wife was understandably concerned about their presence and what would happen if they were discovered to have sheltered the escaping airmen.

As a result Flt.-Sgt. Innes and Lt. Call were moved to a nearby wine cellar. It was at this time that a message was wired to London informing the RAF that Flt.-Sgt. Innes was still at large.

Shortly afterwards his family in Australia was notified that he was safe, though still in enemy territory.

After a while Flt.-Sgt. Innes and Lt. Call were taken by truck to a Maquis encampment near Chatillon.

At this encampment there were about 50 Maquis, a U.S. radio operator and an English captain.

Four other escaping airmen, including Flt.-Sgt. Brian Raftery of the RAAF, were being sheltered. Two of these were badly burnt.

Anxious to return to the U.K. Flt.-Sgt. Innes requested permission to resume his "jaunt", to the Swiss border, accompanied by Lt. Call.

Another interesting and exciting interlude was the period spent with a British SAS group. This group, operating far behind enemy lines, was tasked to carry out raids on German convoys, railways and occupied villages, in jeeps armed with twin Vickers machine guns.

Flt.-Sgt. Innes and Lt. Call, acting as gunners on the jeeps, took part in several raids.

Flt.-Sgt. Innes's part in these raids is referred to in his citation. Whilst they were there, a famous figure in WW2 arrived to assume command of the Group.

He was Major Roy Farran, DSO, MC and two Bars.

Lt. Call is mentioned in Maj. Farran's book, "Winged Dagger".

After about three weeks, the SAS force was ordered to advance towards Germany to create more havoc with the enemy's supply lines. The two airmen left the group.

About 40 kilometres from the Swiss border Flt.-Sgt. Innes and Lt. Call came to Montarlot, a small village. Here they were sheltered in a flour mill owned by the La Marche family. Also hiding out at the mill was a German army deserter.

Here arrangements were made to smuggle the two airmen into Switzerland by hiding them under a load of millet brooms in the back of a truck.

Trucks regularly crossed the border trading millet brooms for watches. Before this could take place, however, one of the organisers expressed concern about a change which had developed, making the operation too dangerous.

Owing to the number of deserting Germans trying to flee into Switzerland the guards on the border had been doubled. Guards had even been known to prodd the loads with bayonets looking for deserters!

In the light of this increased security, the disappointed airmen decided to about turn and head towards the battle areas hoping to cross to the Allies in the confusion and chaos they expected would exist there.

The evaders set off on borrowed push-bikes. At Recey sur Ourse they encountered some evading Russian communists.

As their methods were, to say the least, rather unorthodox, they decided to separate from them and continued on their way.

Eventually they teamed up with another two RAF airmen.

Avoiding retreating enemy units, they met up with advancing U.S. forces on August 31, 1944.

In the two-and-a-half months he had been on the run Flt.-Sgt. Innes had covered more than 300 kilometres.

Having convinced the Americans of the genuineness of his story Flt.-Sgt. Innes was taken to Paris and, along with 20 or so other evaders and escapees, was flown to London in a DC3.

After an intensive intelligence debriefing he was taken to a convalescent camp.

Following a period of rest he was returned to his squadron and commissioned. His operational days, however, were at an end.

Because of his involvement with the SAS as a ground combatant, during which time he had killed German troops, he was precluded from flying over enemy territory again in case he should be shot down and captured.

Early in 1945 Flt.-Sgt Innes was returned to Australia and was given the option of taking his discharge or joining a unit in New Guinea.

He decided to return to Civvy St.

In June, 1945, the announcement of his MM was promulgated. When asked whether he wished to receive his medal at an investiture or by post he indicated the latter.

Ian Innes is now a company director living in Sydney. In May, 1978, he was elected Chairman of the Australian branch of the RAF Escaping Society.

Because he used a parachute to save his life in 1944, he is also a member of the Caterpillar Club.

During his travels Flt.-Sgt. Innes gave his Sydney address to the various families who sheltered him. During, and since, the war both he and his family corresponded with these brave friends.

An ambition which he hopes soon to realise is to visit France and retrace his journey, calling on those of his helpers who are still alive.

★ BELOW: Mr Innes posed for this shot earlier this year.



**CITATION FOR THE AWARD OF THE MM TO
AUS 423016 FLT-SGT Ian Rossell Caple Innes RAAF**

Flt.-Sgt. Innes was bomb aimer of a Halifax aircraft detailed for a bombing mission to Laon on the night of 22 June 1944.

On the return journey the crew were ordered to abandon the aircraft after it had been attacked by enemy fighters. In his descent Flt.-Sgt. Innes' flying boots came off and he narrowly missed a collision with an enemy aircraft. He landed safely and, after disposing of some of his equipment, ran from the vicinity in socks.

At dawn he made contact with a farmer who provided him with boots and food and took him to Cuvilly. After proceeding south he came to a village where he was given civilian clothes and he then decided to make for the Swiss border.

He passed through Compeigne, Soissons and Montpreux to Mailly le Camp where he made contact with the resistance movement and subsequently met a British Intelligence Officer who took him and a U.S. Officer to the Maquis with whom they stayed until the end of July.

Owing to the impossibility of crossing the Swiss frontier at the time, an endeavour was made to get in touch with American Forces but in the meantime Flt.-Sgt. Innes and his companion joined forces with a unit and he helped them when raids were made on convoys and villages held by enemy troops acting as rear and front gunners on jeeps.

On 31st August, 1944, Flt.-Sgt. Innes with two companions left and in a few days was driven to the American lines by members of the Maquis.

Award Gazetted: June, 1945.

NOTE: Ian Innes states that the last paragraph of the citation is incorrect.

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THE picture, above, has been passed on to **SABRETACHE** with a plea for help. Can anyone identify the soldier pictured?

MEDALMAN

DCM and Bar, MM group – A near miss.

A MELBOURNE collector recently purchased from the son of the recipient a DCM and Bar, MM group.

However, when another son learned of the sale, he quickly contacted the collector and quashed the sale.

One can sympathise with the collector as the DCM and Bar, MM combination is many times rarer than a V.C. and in the opinion of Medalman, much more desirable as it indicates great gallantry on at least three occasions.

V.C. group to Melbourne collector.

Medalman was informed that a Melbourne collector recently purchased an Australian WW2 V.C. group.

The recipient of the V.C. is not identified as, it is understood, the family does not wish the sale to be made public.

However, those with an interest in V.C.s could easily identify the recipient concerned.

Copies of Australian Awards.

THERE have been a number of excellent copies of the new Australian awards appear on the market.

These are being made in Pakistan and a National Medal examined by Medalman was of a very high quality.

It is suggested that collectors should be wary of Australian awards that appear to be of a higher standard of manufacture than the originals.

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Words from the President

THE Queen's Birthday display in Canberra was an outstanding success.

As anticipated, it was the best exhibition that has been held by the Society to date.

The organisers are commended for their efforts and it was encouraging to see so many of our members from the inter-State branches.

It is with regret that I notify you of the recent resignation of our Editor, Chris Coulthard-Clark.

Chris is responsible, in the main, for the standard which our journal has attained over recent issues.

He is also commended for his efforts in putting together our recent publication, "Khaki to Blue".

We have a new Editor, Peter Kelly, who is a journalist with the Defence Force.

Peter has been responsible for this edition and its new look.

I welcome him to the Society and on your behalf wish him well in his onerous duties.

While on the subject of writing, could I make you aware of our situation regarding letters to the Editor.

He is receiving many letters between issues and we cannot possibly publish them all.

The more pertinent will be selected and even some of these may require editing for reasons of clarity and brevity.

I bring to your notice the annual election of office-bearers for the Federal Council.

The Secretary, Ken White, after many years of good and faithful service, will not be standing for re-election, and I also will be standing down as I now have an Army posting away from Canberra.

CONTRIBUTE TO SABRETACHE

THE Editor of Sabretache is always seeking articles. Have YOU any interesting historical information that may be suitable?

As long as you can provide all the necessary facts, the Editor will, if necessary, rewrite the story. Black and white pictures and line drawings are also sought for publication.

For further information, contact:

**The Editor,
Sabretache,
P.O. Box 67, Lyneham,
A.C.T. 2602**

BILL ROWLINSON, DCM & BAR, 3RAR

by R. CLARK

GALLANT and distinguished service in the Korean War was rewarded with the then current British awards, ranging from the Victorian Cross to the Mentioned-in-Despatches. A double award for gallantry for this war was rare, but an Australian, Bill Rowlinson, won the Distinguished Conduct Medal and Bar.

William (Bill) Josiah Rowlinson was born at Manly, NSW, on 22 July, 1920, the son of Gilbert Douglas Rowlinson, an old soldier who served with the 1st and 53rd Battalions in World War 1 and with the 17th Battalion between the wars.

Bill had three brothers, all of whom served in the Army during World War 2.

After attending school at Balgowlah, he left early to help supplement the family income.

Interest in the Army started with service in the North Sydney Cadets, which was followed by service in the Militia unit 17th Battalion (enlisted 28 July 1938).

The 17th was another battalion that hoped to become part of the AIF, so Bill Rowlinson remained with the unit.

The unit did not become part of the AIF, so Bill Rowlinson, who was then a Warrant Officer, Class 2 joined the AIF as a Private.

After a course at Puckapunyal he was posted to the 2/7th Armoured Regiment, where the later famous RSM of the Royal Military College 'Fango' Watson was RSM.

After working his way up the promotion ladder to Sergeant Acting SSM, he volunteered as a Private for service in the

newly-formed 1st Australian Parachute Battalion.

Operational service was again denied Bill Rowlinson, as although the unit was on two occasions within hours of making operational jumps, it never left Australia.

The first planned operational jump was into New Britain, but this was cancelled, as intelligence reported the Japanese were aware of, and waiting for the jump.

The second was to be into Sandakan to release the prisoners of war.

However, at the last moment the drop was cancelled as authorities feared reprisals against the POWs.

He even missed a trip to Singapore at the end of the war for the official signing of the surrender.

In September, 1945, Corporal Rowlinson volunteered for experiments on tropical diseases, where malaria was the disease most closely studied.

For his service during these experiments Corporal Rowlinson was awarded a Commander-in-Chief's Commendation which stated:

"Recognition of your valuable contribution to the War Effort by voluntarily submitting yourself to experiments in Army Medical Research."



Private Bill Rowlinson, 3RAR, just after he arrived in Korea.

Having served throughout the duration of the war and constantly sought operational service, which eluded him, a frustrated Bill Rowlinson took his discharge on 27 March, 1946.

After working on the land in Queensland in 1948, he moved to the South Coast of NSW, and on 8 April 1950 was married.

A love of soldiering resulted in enlistment in "K" Force on 21 August, 1950 and after training at Ingleburn and the battle school in Japan, Private Rowlinson became a rifleman in Korea with "D" Company, 3 RAR.

Pte. Rowlinson joined 3 RAR after the withdrawal from the Yalu River, an operation under American command that was referred to by many of those present as a "bug out".

At this time Korea was in the midst of a freezing winter and the Australian Service Dress Uniforms had to be supplemented with cold weather clothing from British and American sources.

3 RAR, during the withdrawal, would move back to a planned area, attempt to dig into the frozen ground and remain until contact was made with the Chinese.

Whilst holding a withdrawal position the unit would be faced with thousands of refugees moving through their positions – these refugees were being driven by the Chinese and in addition Chinese troops would move amongst the refugees.

After MacArthur was sacked, a general clearing move forward was undertaken, during which time the Battalion had to occupy positions with up to 3,000 yards between companies.

Units would patrol, and have a minimum of 50 per cent "stand to" at all times.

During this period Pte. Rowlinson formed part of a four-man patrol that had to make contact with the South Koreans,

who were known to shoot first and request passwords later.

The cold, harsh conditions, coupled with fatigue, contributed to a number of casualties from frostbite. A unit patrol returning in blizzard conditions was accidentally fired upon by the Battalion, causing casualties.

The Chinese made use of the poor visibility of the blizzards and captured five members of a patrol, three of whom were released after a few weeks intensive interrogation. The captured men had given the Chinese no information and after release they made their own way back to their company.

In February, 1951, the French Battalion was cut off by the Chinese, and an American combat team was sent forward to make contact.

The team made contact but failed to return to their unit, so elements of 3 RAR were sent forward to investigate.

The unit, including Pte. Rowlinson, found a group of vehicles roughly in a circular position (similar to Custer's stand) with all the Americans killed. As most of the killed were still in their sleeping bags, it was assumed that the Chinese allowed the team to move back until they thought they were safe and become relaxed.

The Chinese then struck killing or capturing all members of the US combat team. When it suited the Chinese, they would allow the allies to move through an area or capture a feature without offering resistance.

Serving with Pte. Rowlinson was another outstanding Australian soldier, Corporal Len Opie, who won a DCM during the capture of Hill 614 in a bloody engagement. Pte. Rowlinson later took over Opie's section. Both served at Kapyong with D Company, 3 RAR, where

two divisions of Chinese tried to eliminate the Battalion.

Pte. Rowlinson described Opie as "a man completely without fear".

Pte. Rowlinson's contribution to Kapyong is summarised in his citation which was the only DCM awarded for Kapyong:

**AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL
LIEUTENANT WILLIAM JOSIAH ROWLINSON
2/400239**

CITATION

On 23rd and 24th April 1951, 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment was defending the area MOKTON-NI and D Company was assigned the role of right flank protection on feature 504 and the ridge line to the North East. 12 Platoon of which Lieutenant (then Corporal) Rowlinson was a Section Leader had the left forward section of this forward Platoon. During the first night of occupation 23rd April, 1951, enemy probing patrols endeavoured to penetrate his section position and were repulsed.

On the morning of 24th April, 1951, enemy of platoon strength maintained continuous attacks against this section position for a period of from five to six hours and were driven back again sustaining heavy casualties. During these attacks Corporal Rowlinson and six members of his section were wounded. The wounded were evacuated, but Corporal Rowlinson remained on duty and continued to lead his section until his section were ordered to withdraw.

Corporal Rowlinson although wounded displayed leadership of a very high order and outstanding courage by holding the section together during the continuous attacks on his section position and thereby securing the company position vital to the successful conduct of the battalion defence. It is estimated that during all these attacks the enemy threw in approximately 150 men and suffered 25 known dead, killed in front of Corporal Rowlinson's section.

Corporal Rowlinson states that the outcome of Kapyong would have been very different if "B" Company, 3 RAR, when overrun by Chinese, had not remained in position and continued to fight throughout the most critical period of the night of 23 April 1951.

The ferocity of fighting by the forward platoon, commanded by Lieutenant Montgomery, became evident to Rowlinson when on the 24 April as a "walking wounded" he moved through the dead Chinese that littered the platoon position.

After recovery in Japan from his wounds Cpl. Rowlinson returned to

RAR in time for the awarding of the United States Presidential Citation by General J.A. Van Fleet.

Patrol actions and line duty became routine for the Battalion until the one big operation (during the period of the peace talks.).

"Operation Commando" in October, 1951, was launched to straighten the Allied Line.

The then Sgt. Rowlinson's part in this operation, which for the Korean War gave him the unique distinction of being awarded a Bar to his DCM is illustrated in the citation:

**AWARDED A BAR TO THE DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL
LIEUTENANT WILLIAM JOSIAH ROWLINSON, D.C.M.**

2/440239

CITATION

On the morning of 5th October, 1951, D Company 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, attacked the ridge leading to Hill 317. This necessitated four separate attacks in three of which 12 Platoon, D Company, was physically involved. In the early stages of the first attack the Company Commander was wounded and was replaced by Officer Commanding 12 Platoon; Sergeant Rowlinson assuming Command of 12 Platoon. 12 Platoon was immediately committed to the attack to bolster up the assault and Sergeant Rowlinson's quick, cool, and inspiring leadership contributed largely to its success.

During the attack on the second feature in the face of heavy small arms, machine gun and 3.5 Bazooka fire, he personally led his Platoon in the assault, displaying initiative and directing fire with firm control. Early in this action, he was wounded in the left leg, but without seeking medical aid he continued to follow the plan of attack and lead his Platoon in a further assault on the third feature in the face of continued heavy enemy small arms and machine gun fire.

At this stage he quickly re-organised on the third objective and contacted his Company Commander by wireless and informed him of enemy dispositions on the fourth ridge. His quick thinking and appreciation enabled the Company to successfully conclude the operation on the fourth objective.

Sergeant Rowlinson's Platoon accounted for 32 enemy dead and took 14 Prisoners of War. Throughout the operation Sergeant Rowlinson showed complete disregard for his own personal safety and inspired his Platoon by his example. Sergeant Rowlinson was previously recommended for Distinguished Conduct Medal by this unit in April, 1951, and again has proved himself an outstanding, brave and intelligent soldier.

Rowlinson, after "Operation Com-mando" remained as a platoon commander but due to legal implications of Korea not being a war but a "Police Action" was not able to be commissioned in the field. He later was promoted to become the CSM of "D" Company, 3 RAR.

Bill Rowlinson heard of his Bar to the DCM before he was aware of the recommendation for the DCM.

Major-General H.G.H. Robertson, on a visit to Korea, informed him of the Bar.

After returning to Australia the DCM and Bar were presented in Sydney to Lieutenant Rowlinson by Sir William McKell.

After completing an officer qualifying course Lieutenant Rowlinson was posted to 4 Training Battalion, and later as a Temporary Captain as Officer Commanding, 16 Cadet Battalion at Goulburn.

While serving with 4 Training Battalion on exercise, a short fuze attached to a quarter plug of gelignite exploded prematurely, blowing off his right hand.

On 19 July 1957, Captain Rowlinson left the Army and took up employment with the Public Service in Sydney but later moved to Wagga where he became the House Services Officer for the Riverina College of Advanced Education.

In recognition of his outstanding contribution to the various sports at the College, on the recommendation of the Students Council, the squash courts were named "Rowlinson Courts".

It is incredible that no painting of Rowlinson has been done by the Australian War Memorial, who it is reported, were unable to locate him at the time he was selected for this honour.

It is hoped that the present board will see fit to honour this most gallant and unique Australian soldier. Captain Rowlinson earned the following awards: 1. DCM and Bar; 2. War Medal; 3. Australian Service Medal; 4. Korean War Medal; 5. UN Medal; 6. Australian Medal of Merit. Legion of Frontiersman of the Commonwealth.



★ ABOVE: Bill Rowlinson on Anzac Day, 1976.

Parramatta and Defence

1800-1910

I.—VOLUNTEER INFANTRY

Long before Britain withdrew her troops from Australia in 1870 the colonists had shown that they were ready, if need arose, to protect their country or to help in protecting it. The 18th century had closed in deep unrest. A learned Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin - stronghold of conservatism and of Protestant ascendancy in Ireland - could bravely inquire years later: "Who fears to speak of '98?" but, at the time, people spoke of it with the utmost precaution; and in this colony, to which persons who had or had not been implicated in the rising had been transported in numbers, there was a very real feeling that the "rebels" had preserved their disloyalty intact whilst crossing the world of waters. Added to this, there was the bogey of Napoleonic conquest. Obviously, if there were any rising amongst the discontented in the settlement or any invasion in force, the military would be unable to cope with this new danger, besides attending to their ordinary duty of preserving order amongst the convicts and the criminal population, and of protecting the lives and property of the people. For, it will be remembered, there was not a policeman in Australia until 1833, when an act was passed establishing such a force for Sydney. In this emergency, Governor Hunter appealed to the patriotism of the people, and "The Loyal Sydney and Parramatta Association" was formed in 1800 "to protect public and private property and to assist the military in the preservation of order". There were 50 men in the Sydney corps - all properly equipped and clothed in regimentals - under the command of Captain Thomas Rowley; and the same number in Parramatta, similarly trained, equipped and habited, under the command of Mr. James Thompson; the officer commanding both bodies being Captain William Balmain. The Loyal Sydney and Parramatta Association maintained its useful existence until, the immediate necessity for its aid having disappeared, it was disbanded in 1810.

The volunteer movement languished until the time of the earliest Russian scare - that created by the Crimean War. In 1854 Parliament passed the Volunteer Corps Act, and, some modifications having been found necessary in the enrolment and so forth, companies were formed in 1860 in the various centres. Amongst

The above is a chapter extracted from J. C. Wharton (ed.), *The Jubilee History of Parramatta*, published in 1911. Some minor editorial changes have been made.

these was the "Parramatta Volunteer Rifles", which was enrolled, on 28th September 1860, in the old School of Arts, at the corner of Marsden and Phillip streets, opposite the Hospital. The Captain was Dr. W. Brown, father of Dr. Sigismund and Alderman E. J. Brown; Mr. Neil Stewart was 1st Lieutenant, and Mr. T. A. M. White was Ensign. Amongst the 72 members of the rank and file were F. Armitage, H. and C. J. Byrnes, J. C. Barker, J. Brogden, R. and C. R. Blaxland, C. Cawood (the volunteer of longest continuous service in Australia), P. Faithful, D. D. Henderson, Dr. Andrew Houson, four Neales (J. R., G. W., W. H., and J. T.), S. Payten Dr. Pringle, W. and R. Ritchie, Gilbert Smith, E. H. Statham, George Suttor, J. Taylor, L. J. Trollope (Acting Headmaster of The King's School before the interregnum), F. T. Watkins, and R. Waddy (father of the present Headmaster of The King's School). Members provided their own uniform, and the Government provided them with Henry rifles and bayonets. Whenever there seemed any necessity, they drilled twice a day in the Military Buildings in George Street, and on the site of the District School. They tackled their duty manfully, and that their efforts were highly appreciated by the townspeople was shown, among other ways, by the presentation of camp colours by the ladies. Captain (now Major) Brown retired before long and was succeeded by Captain H. Byrnes, Mr. John Taylor became Lieutenant in the stead of Mr. Stewart and Mr. Gilbert Smith Ensign when Mr. White resigned. The uniform was deservedly popular in Parramatta, especially after its change from the dark blue serge coat, white trousers and peaked cap of 1860, to the pepper-an-salt tweed jacket and trousers, with green facings, and a shako. The corps became adepts at rifle-shooting, the names of C. Crouch, F. Drinkwater, R. Macdonald, sen., A. Newling and P. Tersoke being especially distinguished. Besides the shooting on the old Rifle Range, members engaged in rifle matches with other companies, and displayed their prowess in Dubbo, Goulburn, Orange and other towns. All the time they kept themselves in good military order, and when, in 1885, New South Wales despatched a contingent to the Sudan, Parramatta volunteers were to the fore. The members actually selected were: Corporal G. Watt, Lance-Corporal W. Brecknoldt, and Privates S. Adams, Berry, W. Cox, E. W. Herrington, G. Casserley, W. J. Williamson, I. Tyler, and G. Boulton, and an ex-member, E. Coates. When Captain Byrnes resigned on his appointment to a police magistracy, he was succeeded by Lieut. T. Barnett, who, however, soon had to retire for a similar reason, when Captain W. J. Ferris took command. In 1896 he retired with the rank of Major - he became Lieut.-Colonel Ferris, V.D. - and was succeeded by Captain T. J. O'Reilly, who retained his position till his untimely and regretted death in 1900, when Captain J. E. Guyot,

still in command, was promoted to his office. When volunteers were called for in the Boer War, Parramatta sent: Privates G. Boulton, L. C. Hill, and E. E. Hines with the first N.S.W. contingent; and Sergeant R. W. Spurway, and Privates A. Peek, F. Bathie and H. G. Crisp with "draft contingents". Of these, few but fit, all returned safe and sound with the exception of Private L. C. Hill, who succumbed to enteric fever, the scourge of our troops in the South African War.

The following have been the officers of the company during the 51 years of its existence: Colonels Holborow, Farrell, Guest and Lamrock being the O's.C. of the two regiments to which it has at various times been attached:—

Captains - Walter Brown, H. J. Byrnes, W. J. Ferris, T. J. O'Reilly, J. E. Guyot.

Lieutenants - Neil Stewart, John Taylor, E. Greenup, Gilbert Smith, W. J. Stephenson, T. Barnett, J. Ritchie, A. G. Christian.

Ensigns and 2nd Lieutenants - T. A. M. White, C. I. Watt, Dowell, O'Reilly, J. Creagh, E. Docker, G. N. Roche, J. Hughes, A. R. Ayres, R. Rowe, E. H. S. Guyot.

II.—CAVALRY

Parramatta is the headquarters of the New South Wales Cavalry - famous as Lancers, to be celebrated henceforth as the 1st Australian Light Horse Regiment.

Famous as Lancers - Witness three expeditions to England, undertaken at the sole expense of the Regiment; offer of troops for service in India; despatch of the first contingent to South Africa, at regimental expense; supplying horses from New South Wales to mount the Lancer detachment in South Africa, free of cost to the Government; mounting Imperial Cavalry while in New South Wales at the inauguration of the Commonwealth, and maintaining the finest mounted band in Australia.

Famous as Lancers on foreign service - Witness, the 34 general engagements and 12 minor engagements in which they took part in the Boer War during the year, November 1899 to October 1900. They played their part like men in the gloomy days of Modder River and Magersfontein. They helped to relieve Kimberley, they were present when Cronje was forced to surrender at Paardeberg, and they marched with Roberts into Bloemfontein. When they released the prisoners at Waterval they were doubly rewarded, for amongst the soldiers whom they set free were comrades in arms reported "missing" from previous engagements. Nor did the Parramatta half-squadron pass through the campaign without loss; among

the 41 casualties were the names of Corporal Kilpatrick (died of wounds), Corporal R. E. Harkus and Trooper L. D. Tunks (died of enteric), Trooper G. E. L. Doudney (taken prisoner), and several who were near death's door through enteric. Here are the names of the officers and men composing the Parramatta half-squadron: Captain C. F. Fox; Sergeants E. A. Houston, E. Luke and S. R. Fallick; Corporals P. Kilpatrick and R. E. Harkus; Trumpeter A. Barnett; Troopers W. H. Hillis, J. W. Watts, B. H. Harrison, H. J. Skipper, N. Milling, A. Fitzsimmons, J. A. Weston, J. Byrne, G. Doudney, A. J. Slattery, A. G. Baly, D. T. Holborrow, A. McManis, A. E. Myers, A. Whitney, L. D. Tunks, H. A. Artlett, O. L. Milling, S. Baly, G. C. Hillis and E. A. Withers; and Batmen E. Wilson, A. A. Burgin and C. Lamb.

The history of the Lancers does not go further back than 1885, when the "Sydney Light Horse" was enrolled, to be converted before the end of the year into Lancers at the instance of Major-General Richardson on his return from the Sudan. The only volunteer lancer corps in the world, the soldiers had to pay for their uniform - £60 for officers' full dress, and £10 for men - and, in the absence of lances, they drilled with bamboo fishing rods, with pennants tied to the ends. In 1886 they were placed on the partially-paid establishment, and five years later the splendid band was organised. The officers taxed themselves for this, however, finding horses, saddles, instruments, and music, etc.

In the early part of 1891 a public meeting was called in Parramatta by Mr. J. Sulman (the prime mover) with the object of forming a troop of mounted men in connection with the N.S.W. Lancer Regiment. About 100 names were handed in, and, after correspondence with the military authorities, permission was obtained to form a half squadron of 50 strong - or troop as it was then called - the men giving their voluntary services for the first six months until the necessary estimates were passed by Parliament. A mounted parade was held in the Parramatta Park on Saturday 6th June 1891, of all who had submitted their names, for the purpose of having their horses passed by Captain McNeil, the then Adjutant of the Regiment, and also the medical examination of the volunteers. In the evening the majority attended the School of Arts, Parramatta, when they were sworn in, after having the conditions of service explained by Capt. McNeil. Colonel J. Burns became the first Captain, and Mr. J. Shulman 1st Lieutenant.

The Parramatta Squadron was known as "K" Troop, N.S.W. Lancers, then as No. 1 Parramatta Half Squadron, having been joined with the Sydney Half Squadron to complete a full squadron. In 1899-1900, during the Boer War, the

regiment increased its establishment of squadrons, Sydney becoming No. 1 Squadron and Parramatta No. 2 Squadron, each 100 strong. The Hawkesbury and Newcastle Squadrons were also raised about this time, making the regiment over 600 strong. After the Commonwealth took over the military all regiments were reorganised. The N.S.W. Lancer Regiment was divided into three - viz., 1st A.L.H. Regt. (N.S.W. Lancers) - consisting of four squadrons, 72 strong, located at Sydney, Parramatta, Robertson-Berry, and Richmond-Windsor; 4th A.L.H. (Hunter River), and 5th A.L.H. (Richmond River).

The following are the names of the Parramatta men who were sworn in on 6th June 1891, or within a few days of that date:—

E. Atkins, F. J. Allsop, T. H. Anlezark, E. H. Acres, T. H. Burrell, P. H. Brown, S. M. C. Black, H. A. Black, S. J. Black, J. Busns, O. E. Cox, W. Crew, C. F. Cox, H. Fishburn, J. J. Garland, J. A. Greenwood, W. H. Gorman, J. Houison, G. H. Hughes, W. Ives, A. J. James, L. Kentwell, T. H. Kingscote, C. J. Lamb, C. V. Lamb, C H. Langdon, R. C. Mackenzie, A. E. Marsden, W. Muston, J. H. Muir, J O. Miller, J. E. A.Nobbs, C. S. Oakes, A. Oakes, P. F. O'Grady, G. K. Paton, E. Y. Purser, H. Rowlinson, J. W. B. Robison, G. T. Roughley, G. J. Stahl, W. Shields, W. R. Salter, J. Sulman, J. E. Sparks, A. E. Thorne, A. H. Tuckwell, C H. C. Tuckwell, I. J. Tuckwell, E. H. Thiele, F. Weston, J. R. Wood, C. J. Watt.

In connection with this list it is noteworthy that it contains the names of the three succeeding commanding officers of the regiment: Lt.-Colonel Burns 1897-1906), Lt.-Col. Cox, C.B. (1906-1911), and Lt.-Col. Mackenzie (just gazetted). It is also interesting to note that the first instructor of Parramatta Lancers is still attached to the regiment, in the person of Staff Sergeant-Major Morris.

In 1893 the Lancers, at their own expense, despatched a contingent to represent Australia at the military tournaments at Islington and Dublin; and Parramatta's representatives in this team were Sergt.-Major Weston and Trooper O'Grady. The former secured 1st prize at Islington for riding and jumping, and 2nd at Dublin for the V.C. race; whilst Trooper O'Grady came 6th for sword v. sword, and 5th for sword v. lance at Islington. In 1897, on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, a detachment of 33 officers, non-coms. and troopers was sent to participate in the tournament and other trials of skill. Captain W. L. Vernon was in command, and with him were First Lieutenants C. F. Cox and F. H. King, and 2nd Lieutenant F. C. Timothy; Squadron Sergt.-Major R. C. McKenzie, Staff-Sergt. G. E. Morris, Sergeants J. McMahon, P. F. O'Grady, R.

Waugh, C. J. Williams, J. C. McKenzie, Corporals E. H. Houston, H. E. Sparke, A. G. Brady, Trumpeter K. D. Mackenzie, and Troopers J. J. Anderson, J. W. Campbell, J. Daly, J. S. Dooley, R. E. Harkus, W. H. Hillis, W. Lumden, F. S. D'A. Macqueen, A. J. Morton, P. Pritchard, W. Moffitt, J. J. Riley, H. A. Robinson, A. T. Sharpe, P. Sexton, F. W. Todhunter, S. Watts and J. Wilson. The number of Parramatta men in this specially selected team speaks volumes for the efficiency of the squadron up here. Indeed, the hero of the contingent was Trooper Harkus, who won the cup and two medals (one the Empire Medal) for lemon-cutting, the cup and a prize for tent-pegging, trophies for sword v. sword and tilting at the ring, and a prize for the Victoria Cross competition. Sergt. C. J. Williams won the Empire medal for tent-pegging, while Sergt. O'Grady came within one point of winning the sword v. sword contest. The contingent, like the former, was financed by the regiment and by private subscriptions, Major Burns heading the list with £250.

The year 1897 also saw Major Burns promoted to the command of the regiment, with the rank of Lieut.-Colonel. Like most busy men, the Colonel always found time to do everything well, and the Lancers owe much of their deserved reputation to him. With a desire to subject them to the training which active service alone can ensure, Colonel Burns offered a squadron for India in the Afridi campaign. The then Premier, Mr. Reid, poured cold water on the proposal, which he did not even submit to the Imperial authorities. Nor did the Government show a more enlightened spirit when, in the following year, the regiment entered eagerly into their Colonel's plan for securing six months' training with Imperial cavalry. The idea was for the Regiment and the Government to divide the cost, and Colonel Burns gave the movement a great fillip by himself going to London and obtaining from the authorities a promise to horse and quarter a full squadron for a six months' course at Aldershot. Now the Government here backed out of its understanding to provide half the cost, and so the Colonel had to fall back on his regiment and his other friends. The regiment raised £2000, subscribers in England added £1000, and the public of New South Wales found the remaining £2000 necessary. All that our Government would do was to let the men go, provided that the country had to pay nothing for their transport and maintenance. This was one way of encouraging men who were going to train themselves for the better discharge of their duty towards the country - the first body of colonial troops to visit England for educational purposes.

And now we come back to the record with which this notice opens. Of the 100 men who sailed under Captain Cox for England 71 undertook active service

in South Africa and bore their part with honour to themselves, their regiment and to Australia. Of the 29 men who did not go on service, eight were medically unfit, eight were minors who volunteered but were persuaded by the then Premier, Mr. Lync, and their friends, to return, and the other 13 satisfactorily accounted for their return to Sydney. With later contingents from New South Wales, the regiment had seven officers and 165 non-commissioned officers and men engaged; some of the Parramatta men being amongst the "Fighting Twenty-eight" of Lord Methuen's force, others distinguishing themselves like Sergeant E. A. Morris (specially mentioned by Lord Roberts), or Corporal Harkus, who fought at Paardeberg, Poplar Grove and Abraham's Kraal, and who entered Bloemfontein with the conquering army, to die there of enteric. Indeed all the Lancers, who fought alongside the Inniskillings all through, covered themselves with glory, from Major Lee, the O.C., and Captain Cox, down to the rawest recruit.

At the conclusion of the big Harrismith drive on 27th February 1902, Lt.-Col. Cox was sent for and personally congratulated by Lord Kitchener on the field. The particular piece of work which earned "Fighting Charlie" this distinction occurred on the night of February 23-24, and is thus described in the "Official History of the Boer War": "Garratt's line from the river to the summit had been cut to pieces, Begbie's pom-pom jammed and its commander killed, but Cox, on Remington's left, realising the situation, swung round his nearest picquets, and faced the Boers - who had suffered somewhat severely themselves - with a square front, the issue of the fight being now in the balance." Suffice it to add that Cox, who was in command of 1000 men, saved the position and drove back the enemy.

And now the New South Wales Lancers as a regiment are gone. They are the Australian Light Horse, and the 1st Brigade is, as is fitting, in Parramatta, where also the headquarters are in the old barracks that held the regulars a century ago. Colonel Burns retired from the command five years ago. Lieut.-Colonel Cox, C.B., was appointed in his stead in 1906 and remained in command till October of this year, when he was succeeded by Major (now Lt.-Col.) Mackenzie. The Adjutant is Captain A. G. O'Donnell.

WANTED

KSA to 174 TPR J. STEWART, 1st Bn A.C.H. (the initial on the medal may be "E" instead of "J"). Also group of medals QSA bars OFS, T, CC, SAO1, SAO2 to 1894 PTE E. COMBE, 5th Vic. M.R.; 1914-15 Star, BWM, VM to 2328 A/Sgt E. COMBE, 2nd Bn A.I.F.

Will purchase or exchange for other items.

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Letters to the Editor

Keysor's V.C.

SIR:

I wish to comment on the article entitled "Medalman" in the October 1977 issue of "Sabretache" concerning the Keysor V.C.

The "Medalman" compares the selfish interests of medal collectors, of which I am one, with those who give some thought for our national heritage and treasures.

I was the person that sounded the alarm that famous Australian V.C. was about to be auctioned at Sotheby's, and in fact, was the person that bought it, unaware at the time that an appeal for funds would be launched by the R.S.L.

Like "Medalman", I am well aware of the prices paid in London for V.C.'s but he carefully omitted to mention the purchase of a Korean V.C. that brought \$11,200 during 1977.

That "someone" who "was taken to the cleaners" was me, and I might add with my eyes open.

There is more to a V.C. than the monetary values placed on it by medal collectors. It seems now that medal collectors are only worried about the future prices they may have to pay for Victoria Crosses, particularly Australian awards.

In many instances the award of the Victoria Cross has involved other persons than the winner, and indeed other lives.

As the Honorary Secretary of the 2/25th Battalion Association, I was most disturbed to hear during 1966 that the late Private Richard Kelliher's V.C. had been sent to London for sale.

Many men of the 2/25th Bn. were involved with that action on that morning of the 13th September, 1943 outside Lae, and in fact many were wounded and killed.

The Battalion certainly did not want to see that Victorian Cross ending on some medal collector's study wall, and it would have been purchased irrespective of any "current ruling price".

"Medalman" quotes the price paid for an Indian Mutiny V.C. which only brought \$2800 - this may be so, but the prices for V.C.'s rose considerably during 1977, and collectors know that the award of the V.C. during many of the 19th century campaigns, did not have the same severe qualifications for personal bravery that came into force during World War 1 and have remained ever since.

"Medalman" quotes and applauds the sale of Lieutenant E.T. Towner's V.C. to an outside collector.

He seems to relish the fact that it was not presented to the Australian War Memorial.

I deplore this sale like I deplore the action of the beneficiaries who sold it for personal monetary gain.

I wonder if the late Lieutenant Towner would have agreed to the sale.

I do not argue about the manner in which the V.C.'s are displayed at the Australian War Memorial - improvements can always take place, but I believe it is our duty for the future generations of Australians and the history of this country to save these awards that were given to noble Australians in days gone by.

Medal collectors would be the last thought to any person who happened to be around when a Victoria Cross was won.

**B.C. RUXTON
24 Glenwood Ave.,
BEAUMARIS, Vic. 3193**

CARTOON COMMENT

SIR:

I wish to join with the two members whose letters were published in the last issue in expressing my appreciation for the continuing improvement in our journal.

I regret that I, too, found that the items on pages 10 and 36 of the January issue were not only unnecessary, but not in keeping with the overall tone of "Sabretache".

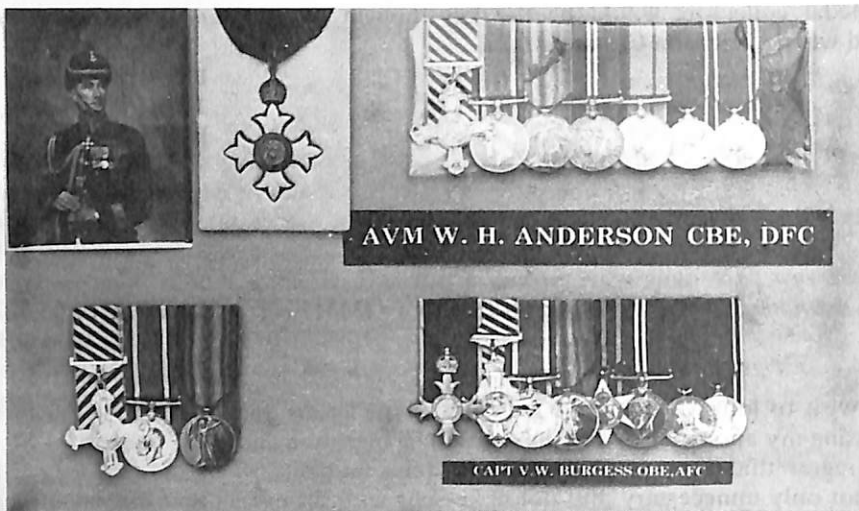
I also have some sympathy for the thrust of Mr Shaw's references to some published material relating to current, and perhaps controversial, events. It is sometimes difficult to draw a line between items of historical importance and those of more contemporary interest and I readily recognise an editor's difficulties in this regard.

There are, however, other bodies and other journals devoted to the consideration of defence policy and current problems. We, as a historical society, should guard against anticipating what may become important to future historians while at the same time doing our best to ensure that all relevant material is kept for the future.

Finally, although possibly not intended, Mr Shaw's remarks suggest that members of the ACT Branch have means of expressing their views in "Sabretache" which are not available to other members of the Society. I do not believe this to be so.

**Mr N.S. Foldi,
21 Ingamells Street,
GARRAN, ACT, 2605**

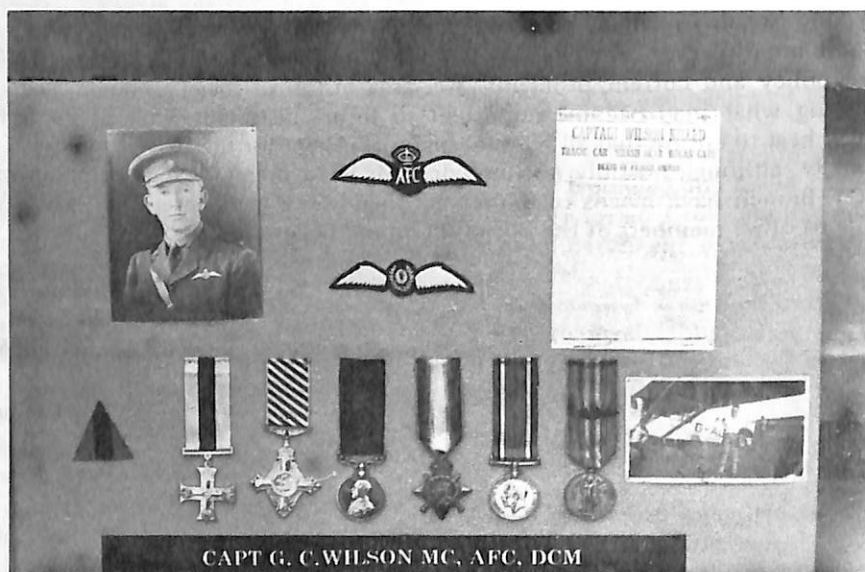
Shots from the Canberra Show



AVM W. H. ANDERSON CBE, DFC

CAPT V. W. BURGESS OBE, AFC

AUSTRALIAN FLYING CORPS



CAPT G. C. WILSON MC, AFC, DCM

THE ACT Branch of the Society held a highly successful display in the 3 RNSWR Training Depot, Canberra, during the Queen's Birthday weekend in June.

The display was opened by our Patron, General Sir John Wilton, on the Saturday night, and the opening was followed by a Wine and Cheese Evening.

Details of the display were announced in the brochure distributed with the January edition of "Sabretache" and members responded to make this one of the most impressive exhibitions mounted by the Society.

The competition attracted 14 entries covering a wide range of Society interests – medals, models, arms, relics, insignia, uniforms and prints.

The competitive entries were judged by Mr Noel Flanagan, Director of the Australian War Memorial, and the results were:

First – Weapons and Relics of the Peninsular War – Clem Sargent.

Second – The Desk of a Minor Nazi Official – Bill Palmer.

Third – Military Prints and Illustrated Books – Clem Sargent.

Our congratulations go to the award winners.

However the efforts of all exhibitors, competitive and non-competitive, were praiseworthy, and the display of medal collections warrants particular mention.

This must have been one of the most significant displays of medals and decorations ever seen in Australia.

The exhibit of orders, decorations and medals of Air Marshal Sir Basil Embry was dazzling.

This, and several other groups were on display, due to the generosity of families of the recipients.

We were pleased to see so many inter-State members, some of whom went to considerable trouble to mount exhibits.

Among the travellers were Don Wright and George Snelgrove of Brisbane; Paul Heiniger and Ray Tancred from Sydney; Brian Ellis and David Legge, Wagga; Don Trigar, Robin Hald and Dick Hefter, Melbourne; Ian Barnes, Pat Hall, George Ward, Pat O'Rourke and Peter Aitken from Geelong; and Don Campbell from Albury.

The display gained wide publicity in the local press and in the "Army" newspaper, and drew an estimated attendance of 1,500 visitors.

Our thanks go to the organising and work committee – Hugh Gordon, Ian Jenkins, Don Goldsmith, Martin Kennedy and Clem Sargent for their efforts in organising the display and providing display aids, and to Ian Teague, for arranging the wine and cheese part of the evening.

We are also indebted to the staff of 3 RNSWR and the War Memorial, whose assistance was invaluable.

However, the ultimate success of the display must be attributed to Society members who supported it loyally with exhibits from their collections and by their attendance.



★ ABOVE: The display of uniforms of Maj.-Gen. I.G. Mackay.



★ BELOW: The display of DCM's which attracted a great deal of interest.



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WRITE TO FEDERAL SECRETARY

The Webley-Fosbery Automatic Revolver

Colonel George Vincent Fosbery, the son of an English clergyman, was an Army Staff Officer stationed in India during the third quarter of the 19th Century. He was awarded the Victoria Cross in 1863 for bravery during a hill assault as part of the Umbeyla Expedition on the North West Frontier, and retired from the Army in 1877.

Fosbery's design for an automatic revolver resulted from a lifetime interest in weaponry and ammunition. Initial patents for his recoil operated revolver were granted in 1895 (B.P. 15,453).

The pistol was somewhat of an enigma. It was not a true automatic weapon in that it did not individually eject and reload the cartridges, but utilised the recoil of each shot to rotate the cylinder and recock the lock. This action eliminated the heavy trigger pull required by the normal double action revolver.

These designs were developed by the Webley and Scott Revolver and Arms Company Limited and the weapon became available commercially in 1901 during the latter stages of the Second Boer War.

It was chambered for the .455 service cartridge and the .38 Colt automatic pistol cartridge. The former was designed primarily for military use and incorporated many of the components of the Mk VI Government Model revolver.

It is the weapon most commonly encountered as, although not issued officially, many officers purchased their own and carried them as an alternative to the Mk VI during World War I.

The .38 calibre version is rarely encountered and was introduced primarily as a civilian version, which enjoyed some popularity as a target weapon.

Two model designations have been assigned, Model 1901 and Model 1902, but incorporate only minor modifications, the basic action remaining unchanged. The .38 calibre version of the 1901 Model was sometimes designated the Winans Model, having received considerable praise from the well known marksman of the period, Walter Winans.

Operation

The following description of the operation of the Webley-Fosbery automatic revolver has been adapted from Major W.C. Dowell's definitive work upon Webley firearms, "The Webley Story".

The body with hammer assembly and the barrel assembly, including the cylinder, were mounted on slides in a recoiling frame in such a manner as to produce a reciprocating motion. This allowed the body to travel to the rear a distance of 7/8" and return by the same amount.

When loaded and with the safety catch in the off position the weapon was cocked manually. On squeezing the trigger the hammer was released and on falling the body and barrel assembly etc., slid to the rear (gas pressure).

This movement re-cocked the hammer, actuated the recoiling lever and compressed the recoil lever spring, which then slid the body assembly forward again.

Rotation of the cylinder was effected in the following manner. A diamond-shaped actuating stud was fixed in a central position on the platform of the recoiling frame.

Depending on the number of chambers the surface of the cylinder was cut with six or eight zig-zag grooves to accommodate the stud. In order to describe a sixth or eighth of the complete revolution the stud must engage each leg of the zig-zag.

This was effected by the first leg of the groove being driven over the stud by the recoil. The second leg was completed by the return of the body assembly, after recoil.

The automatic revolver employed the Webley break-open barrel catch system for loading and extracting and to ensure correct alignment of the cylinder after reloading, the barrel strap incorporated a cylinder catch and positioning stud. In the break open position the catch and stud engaged in the cylinder grooves. The stud was withdrawn when the breech closed which allowed the cylinder to be actuated by the fixed stud in the recoiling frame.

Should it be necessary to operate the recoil movement by hand for any reason such as misfire, the hammer should be gripped firmly and pulled back. This will recoil the whole body assembly and, on releasing, the cylinder will have rotated to

expose the next cartridge for firing.

Weapon Detail

Calibre .455 and .38 A .32 calibre revolver was planned but apparently not produced.

Barrel Either the standard Mk VI design or Webley-Pryse type with flat top rib and bead foresight. Barrel lengths of 4", 6" and 7½" were produced, the .38 calibre weapon having a 6" barrel. Holster guides were present on most weapons.

Grips Model 1901 was fine chequered wood, Model 1912 moulded vulcanite or chequered wood. The square-ended butt was most common but the "birdshead" design was also produced.

Cylinder The use of a pawl to rotate the cylinder on a standard revolver was replaced by a diamond shape stud positioned on the recoiling frame. The stud engaged in the zig-zag groove on the cylinder periphery.

Frame Consisted of two sections; the body which contained the hammer assembly and the recoiling frame along which the hammer assembly moved. The recoil frame was fitted with removable side-plates. The back strap of the 1901 Model was not integral with the frame but attached by a screw at the top and a hinge pin at the heel of the butt.

Trigger Assembly On the 1901 Model the trigger-guard and trigger assembly were separate to the recoiling frame and held in position by one screw. In the 1902 Model, the trigger guard was part of the recoiling frame as was the actuating stud.

Recoil Lever Spring In the 1901 Model the spring used to return the recoiling frame to the forward position was a coil type 1¼" long, when not in compression, and with 21 coils and encircled a pin. With



the advent of the one-piece butt in the 1902 Model a vee spring was introduced.

Cylinder Release Mechanism Model 1901 weapons utilised the standard Webley Mk VI cam lever for the release of the cylinder. The subsequent 1902 models incorporated a spring catch in the top strap which formed part of the cylinder positioning stud. In the locked position this catch engages a recess near the front of the cylinder.

Safety Lever Sited on the left hand side of the frame, above the grip, the lever was activated by the thumb. On early 1901 Models a rather ugly hook engaged a small stud on the body, locking the body to the recoiling frame. Later 1901 Models and 1902 Models also locked the body to the

recoiling frame and in such a position that the hammer was perfectly safe at both half and full cock.

Markings Model 1901 was stamped "Webley Fosbery Automatic" on left side of barrel strap, shortened to "Webley - Fosbery" on Model 1901 weapons. The Webley winged bullet trademark appeared on the left of the recoil frame followed by "38 Automatic" or "455 Cordite Only" (Model 1901) or "455 Cordite" (Model 1901).

The retailers' name was often stamped along the top of the barrel on both models, the most common being "Army & Navy C.S.L., London" (C.S.L. = Co-operative Stores Limited) or "P. Webley & Son, London and Birmingham".



Proof marks were found on the barrel assembly, each chamber of the cylinder, and on the recoil frame. The series number was stamped on the right of the recoil frame with the last three digits on the rear face of the cylinder and the front of the barrel frame.

Conclusion

For a recoil operated weapon the mechanism was simple and very robust. Loading procedure was the same as for all Webley self-extracting revolvers.

Walter Winans found he could fire shots at the rate of one in two seconds.

By use of the clip loader the weapon could be discharged and reloaded as rapidly as any contemporary automatic pistol. The weapon was very pleasant to fire with virtually no recoil.

Main criticism of the Webley-Fosbery was the necessity to hold the arm rigid on firing to ensure full recoil and its reported vulnerability to mud and grit.

Possibly higher production costs would have been a more significant factor in its limited adoption.

The only other automatic revolvers of a similar type were made by the Union Arms Co., Ohio and Zulaicai, though other weapons using a similar rotation system were produced by Mauser and Remington.

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- Blair C.* "Pistols of the World"
- Boothroyd G.* "The Handgun"
- Dowell W.C.* "The Webley Story"
- Smith W.H.B.* "The Book of Pistols & Revolvers"
- Taylorson A.W.F.* "The Revolver 1889-1914"
- Winans W.* "The Art of Revolver Shooting"

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A soldier's story

The story which follows was penned by Lt. M.H. Savage, at Enoggera, Queensland, in February, 1919. Lt. Savage was born in 1850.

by J.J. FREWEN

I WAS 16 when I enlisted as a Drummer Boy in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, at Fermoy, Ireland, on January 8, 1867.

The regiment embarked at Cork for India on December 2, 1867, and eventually arrived at Bombay. At Karachi, we encamped for five or six days for the purpose of arranging with the Commissariat Department for Elephants, Camels, Mules, Bullocks and Bullock Hackeries (a rough covered native waggon) for conveying the married women and children of all ranks on the march. Arrangements had also to be made for a great number of camp followers.

On the 16th we started our march of some hundreds of miles to Lahore, and then on to Rawalpindi. The marching was mostly done during the night owing to the great heat. Arrived on the morning of 16 March 1868.

Three months later we started on our march to the North-west Frontier (doing forced marches) to join the Hazara Field Force in the Black Mountains. Returned to Rawalpindi again in 1869, and was stationed there until the end of 1871.

Pashawar 1872-3, Amritsar 1874-5, Delhi 1876 to April 1877. Was present at



the great Delhi Durbar, honouring the visit of the Prince of Wales (the present King's father). This was in January 1876. I was also present at another great Durbar in Delhi when Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India on 1 January 1877.

Left Delhi for Roorkee on 20 April 1877. On the 31st October 1878 I received information from my Commanding Officer, Colonel T.L. Bell, that I had the honour of being selected from the regiment as a Staff Signaller on General F.S. Roberts staff, and was instructed to be in readiness to proceed in two days time by native conveyance, changing horses at each stage during the route.

I reached that on the 12th November, where the Kurem Field Force was concentrated. I at once reported myself to Brigade Major G. Dec. Morton (formerly my Adjutant in the 6th Regiment).

A few days later we started on the March. At about 3 or 4 o'clock on the morning of the 21st November we crossed the River into Afghan territory, and encamped about eight or nine miles from Thai. Next day we marched about 16 miles up the Valley to Hazir Pir. We remained there for a day to repair the roads for the guns and transports.

On the 24th we went on to Darwazai, and the next day we marched on to Kuram, about 48 miles from Thai.

A little later we went on to Habib Kilan, about 15 or 16 miles further on. At about 10 p.m. on the 1st December, orders were given for us to fall in, in perfect silence, and our little column started on its march.

We left our tents standing and camp fires lighted and so noiseless were our movements from the camp that our own men who were left in the camp knew nothing of our departure.

The night was bitterly cold, we were only very lightly clad, our breath was almost frozen as it left our mouths. However, in spite of all difficulties on the 2nd December 1878 the Peiwar Kotal was ours. The Afghans had been beaten and driven from the Kotal with heavy loss.

On the 24th May, 1878 we were having a parade in honour of the Queen's Birthday when a very amusing thing happened.

General Roberts invited all the tribesmen to see the parade, they were all sitting on the ground near the saluting flag, everything was very quiet, and no doubt very

interesting to them until the first round of the feu-de-joie was fired. They all started to their feet and made a bolt for all they were worth, thinking they were caught in a trap.

The great difficulty was in getting them back again and making them understand the meaning of the firing of the feu-de-joie, and that it was only a sign of rejoicing.

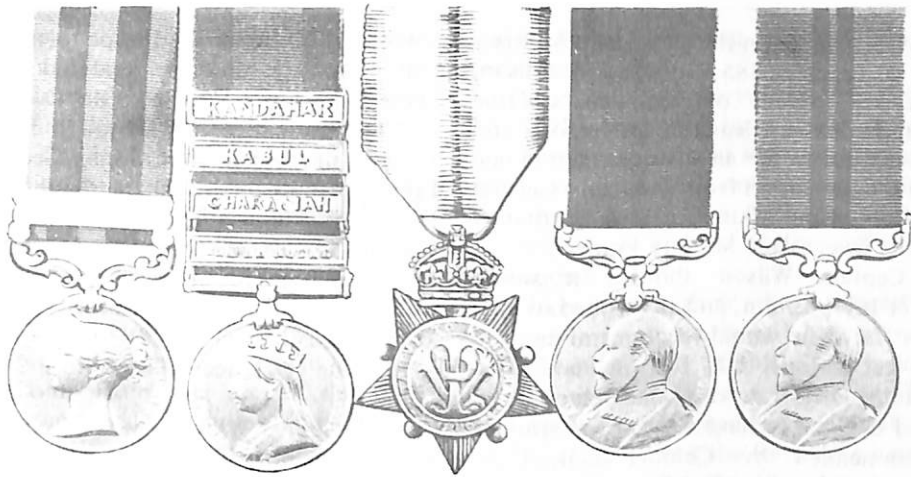
I think it was the 26th May, 1879 that the Amir of Afghanistan signed the Treaty which ended the first Afghan war. In July, 1867, Major Louis Cavagnar was chosen Envoy to the Amir of Kabul and on the 5th or 6th September news was received that Major Cavagnari and all his party had been massacred by Afghan soldiers, and no doubt assisted by the treachery of Yakub Khan.

This of course, was the cause of the second outbreak of the Afghan war. On the 27th September we marched from Kurom to fight our way on to Kabul. We were not long in getting in touch with the enemy — we had got about half way through the pass on our way to Kushi when we found our way blocked by two or three thousand Afghans.

The Highlanders and some Cavalry on foot cleared away the enemy. A little further up the pass another small engagement had taken place, and as we got nearer we could see the Afghans being driven back by a number of the 92nd Highlanders led by Colour Sergt. Hector MacDonald.

We left Kushi to make our advance on Kabul. During the fighting on the heights of Charasia the hills on our right and left of our camp were crowded with Afghans, which were causing the troops some annoyance, and had to be dislodged.

The work was done in a very brave and



★ ABOVE: Lt. Savage's medals.

daring manner by a number of the 92nd led by Lieutenant Grand and Colour Sergt. Hector MacDonald. This was the second time "Mac" had distinguished himself within the last few days.

On the 9th October we moved our camp to Siah Sang, nearer the city of Kabul, accompanied Sir F.S. Roberts in the march from Kabul to Kandahar.

We marched into Kandahar on the morning of the 31st August, 1880, our march had been a little over 318 miles through rough mountains in 20 days.

The march would not have been much if we had only had ourselves to look after, but if one takes into consideration that the people of the country we were marching through were unfriendly to us, and then again a daily supply of food of some description had to be got for about 18,000 men and some thousands of animals from the country we were passing through.

The great difficulty after our arrival in camp each day was getting fuel for cooking what little food we got. The fuel often had to be brought from a long distance,

only a very little time could be given for cooking a meal and getting a little rest before starting on our march again.

More than once during the march my day's rations had consisted of 1 lb. of Indian corn and a little water, and it had to be very little as it was almost worth its weight in gold. On the 1st September, 1880, our march was over and on the morning of the 2nd Kandahar had been relieved and Ayub Khan and his army had got the knock-out.

On the 7th October I started on my way back to India, after crossing over the Frontier, I was pushed on as rapidly as possible so as to enable me to join my regiment at Aden before its embarkation for England.

We left Aden for home on the 18th November 1880, landed in London on the 17th December 1880 and went on to Arley, and later on to the regiment in July 1881, after 14½ years service with the rank of Sergeant.

I took my discharge for the purpose of taking the position of Instructor of

Army Signalling on the permanent Militia.

In August, 1885, Captain C.W. Wilson, an officer of my old regiment, saw me when he was on leave in Devonport, and pointed out to me an advertisement in one of the daily papers from the Agent-General for Queensland asking for Drill Instructors for the Queensland Military Forces.

Captain Wilson thought it would better my position, and if I wished to have a try for it he would recommend me, and also get Colonel T.L. Bell, my late Commanding Officer, to recommend me.

I decided to have a try. I was strongly recommended by Colonel Bell, Capt. Wilson and my old Adjutant, Capt. M. Quayle Hones, to the Agent-General for Queensland, and my services were accepted.

After being passed by a Medical Officer, passage was provided for me, my wife and two children on board the Immigration S.S. "Dorunda".

We sailed from Oriars End on October 20, 1885. Had a very pleasant voyage and very little sickness until after our arrival at Batavia, then our troubles began - cholera broke out amongst the passengers.

I at once offered my services to the Ship's Medical Officer, Doctor Thomas Hickling, to attend to the cholera cases. I think that I attended every cholera case on board.

"Dorunda" arrived in Moreton Bay on the 14th December, 1885. All the passengers were landed on Peel Island Quarantine Station. We had a fairly good time on the Station, everything was done to make things as pleasant as was possible for us during our stay in Quarantine.

We were relieved from the Island on the 4th or 5th January, 1886. On landing in Brisbane I was presented with a purse of

sovereigns on behalf of the people of Brisbane for my services rendered to the cholera cases on board the S.S. "Dorunda".

The day after my arrival in Brisbane I reported myself to Colonel George A. French, Commandant, Queensland Military Forces, at Victoria Barracks, as soon as I was informed by Captain J.S. Lyster, Brigade Major, Queensland Military Forces, that there were no vacancies for Instructors at present and I should have to be employed in the Defence Force Stores, Short Street.

Mr George Williams was in charge of Stores, he being the only Ordnance Officer in the Department at the time (Mr G. Williams was the Father of Warrant Officer G. Williams, Instructional Staff).

In the 1886 Camp at Lytton I was acting Camp Quarter-Master Sergeant under Lieutenant Colonel J.H. Adams and was attached to 'A' Battery, Queensland Permanent Artillery Sergeant Mess.

Soon after the breaking up of the Lytton Camp, Colonel Adams obtained leave of absence to visit England, and before leaving he strongly recommended me to be allowed to go to the Townsville encampment to carry out the work of Camp Quarter-Master Sergeant, and to take charge of things generally.

I was sent on to Townsville, and on my arrival I reported myself to Major Haldane, Officer Commanding. After laying out the camp I was instructed by Major Haldane to make all necessary arrangements with the tradesmen for the supplies for the camp.

The work was carried out without a hitch, and I was complimented by Colonel French and Major Haldane for the manner in which I carried out the work of the camp.

On my return to Brisbane the Department granted me a bonus of £5. On the 28th February 1887, I was appointed Drum Major and Instructor to the Headquarters Band. I was appointed Range-keeper and opened the new Rifle Range at Toowong in 1887, and for about 22 years I carried out the work of the Toowong Rifle Range single handed.

The only assistance I got at any time during those years was from my wife and family who had to assist me in carrying targets out from the target sheds to Mantlets and back again as required, and that was almost every day, and often two or three times a day.

The targets at the time I am speaking of were the old double wind-mill targets, not so light as they are at the present time. For some time during my stay on the Toowong Range the Defence Department allowed Mrs Savage £10/-/- per year for selling Martine Ball ammunition to members of the Rifle Clubs.

I think it was on the 22nd August, 1908, that the Toowong Rifle Range was closed, it being considered unsafe for the public going to One Tree Hill (Mount Cootha).

In March, 1909, I was sent out to Enoggera to take over the new Rifle Range which is one of the most up-to-date ranges in the Commonwealth, though very badly in need of renovation.

Recently the Range Staff has been called upon to carry out the work that was formerly done by outside labour. My senior assistant does all the carpentering and blacksmithing work and a fair amount of emergency telephone line repairs and so on.

If anything was to happen to the Senior Assistant, or if he had to leave, this work would have to be given to outside

labour, or a tradesman employed at a greater rate of pay.

During my long service in connection with Rifle Ranges I have never to my knowledge made a direct report against any person, or had a direct report made against me. I have always had sufficient tact to deal with men and to understand their temperament.

I have always taken a keen interest in rifle and revolver shooting. I have given a good number of trophies of various descriptions to Cadets and Rifle Clubs for the purpose of encouraging rifle shooting.

I have twice won the Revolver Championship of Australia, besides a number of minor prizes. At the present time I have the honour of being President of one of the best Clubs in Brisbane (the Central).

I am also Vice-President on the Brisbane Ladies Miniature Rifle Club. I am now in my last few months service with the Defence Department and I only trust that I shall be able to carry out the rest of my time with satisfaction to the Department, and with credit to myself.

I am thankful to Major A.T. Jackson, Supervisor of Rifle Clubs for the good advice and able assistance given to me. I also wish to thank the Gentlemen of his staff for their courtesy to me at all times.

I must also thank Mr R. Low, Secretary M.D.R.C. Union for the manner in which that Gentleman has worked with me for the good of all Rifle Clubs. During the whole of my service I have only once been brought to notice of my Superior Officer for any breach of discipline and that was when I was quite a boy.

WAR SERVICE

Service in the Hazara Campaign 1868 to 1869, including the operations in the Black Mountains (Medal with Clasp). Served

under General Sir F.S. Roberts V.C. as Staff Signaller during the Afghan War of 1878 to 1880 and was present at the attack and capture of the Peiwar Kotal on the 2nd December 1878. Was in the engagement at Charasiah on the 6th October 1879 (mentioned in despatches), and in the operations around Kabul in December 1879. Accompanied Sir F.S. Roberts V.C., in the march from Kabul to Kandahar, and was present at the battle of Kandahar, Medal with four clasps, and Bronze Decoration. Also in possession of long service

and good conduct medal, and the Meritorious Service Medal. Have been three times wounded, once in the left and once in the right hand (bayonet thrust), and bullet wound in the forehead.

Imperial Service	14½ years
Militia Staff Service	3 "
Colonial Service	33 "
Total	<u>50½ years</u>

According to regulations my services with the Q.D.F. should count from the date of embarkation 20/10/85.

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7.	One clasp "Transkei". Tpr. W. Lemcke, Bakers Horse.EF 280
8.	TRANSPORT MEDAL 1899-1902. One clasp "S. Africa 1899-1902". F. Shepperd in CommandEF 305

All medals have been verified and are accompanied by photocopy research papers.

MARTIN KENNEDY, 29 Haines St., Curtin, A.C.T. 2605

BOOK REVIEWS

By B.J. VIDEON

THE ANATOMY OF GLORY – Napoleon and his Guard: A Study in Leadership, by Henry Lachouque and Anne S.K. Brown.

Arms and Armour Press (Australian representatives Thomas C. Lothian Pty Ltd, 4-12 Tattersall's Lane, MELBOURNE.

564 pp, U.K. Price £14.95, Australian price \$45.00. Copious illustrations.

Probably more than any other, the Napoleonic period of military history has gripped the imaginations of military readers, students of military history, collectors of military miniatures, wargamers and others of their ilk.

It was an age of military innovation, stirring victories, great deeds, and glamorous uniforms. The events of those years shaped modern Europe, and paved the way for the events that led to the great and terrible wars of the 20th Century. Probably few countries in the world were not affected by the events that occurred under Napoleon and his generals.

Napoleon, like great rulers before him, formed a personal bodyguard to protect his person and to improve his image. Like those rulers, it was not long before he permitted himself to enjoy the power and prestige of owning what amounted to a small personal army, the Imperial Guard, a dedicated elite force, sworn to serve him, and loved and protected by him in return.

With distinctive uniforms, better pay and privileges than those of the rest of the Army, his Guard was a unit to which it was a privilege to be appointed. It was not merely a showpiece, however, for it served as a training ground for the best soldiers of the army, for which many officers came from its ranks. In latter years, in particular, it took part in the fiercest fighting, notably in the Retreat from Moscow, and the Battle of Waterloo.

Told most graphically, and rendered into English by Miss Brown, this is a story that must be read. Commandant Lachouque, himself a notable military historian, produced the original and a revised work, and the many illustrations (over 180, including some 86 coloured plates and a number of maps and sketches, combine to offer one of the most delightful and authoritative works on this most significant epoch.

TRIPITZ – The Floating Fortress, by David Brown.

Arms and Armour Press (Thomas C. Lothian Pty Ltd).

160 pp, U.K. Price £6.95, Australian price \$20.25. Illustrated.

The largest and most menacing of Germany's warships of the Second World War was the mighty Tirpitz, for she was the sister ship of the Bismarck, that had been destroyed by the Royal Navy after the loss of the battleship Hood, and a mammoth effort involving

7 battleships, 2 aircraft carriers, 12 cruisers and 5 destroyers. If Bismarck could do that, what might Tirpitz do?

For almost three years the British managed to prevent Tirpitz from actively going to war: she was bottled up in a Norwegian fiord, and constant efforts were made to sink her by air attack. In the end, the aircraft were successful, and that threat posed by Tirpitz was ended as she capsized after an attack by R.A.F. Lancasters.

With maps, photos and sketches, this is an interesting book to the naval as well as the air historian, for it shows how the age of the battleship was ended by the development of adequate air power.

SUBMARINES OF WORLD WAR TWO by Erminio Bagnasco.

Arms and Armour Press (Thomas C. Lothian Pty Ltd).

256 pp, U.K. price £12.95, Australian price \$37.50, illustrated.

Joining the ranks of the specialist publications in this comprehensive work on the submarine, and undersea warfare, by one of Italy's leading naval authors.

Tracing the evolution of submarines from an idea proposed during the reign of Queen Elizabeth the First (!), Erminio Bagnasco eventually deals with some 2500 submarines of 18 countries, which were engaged in the submarine war of the Second World War.

With plentiful illustrations (some not unlike those in some of the Janes publications) this is an authoritative and interesting work, sure to appeal to all who follow the story of sea warfare. It is also a very attractive presentation.

SOVIET AIRCRAFT OF TODAY by Nico Sgarlato.

Arms and Armour Press (Thomas C. Lothian Pty Ltd).

80 pp, U.K. price £4.95, Australian price \$15.25, illustrated.

The combat aircraft of the U.S.S.R., although probably less well-known than many aircraft that today are obsolete, are nevertheless a subject of interest to people of many lands. To the air historian and the lover of aeroplanes, they are of technical or aesthetic interest; to others, they may be viewed either with covetous or fearful eyes.

From its early beginnings the fumbling Russian aircraft industry has progressed to the stage where its aircraft command the respect of most world air forces, following the successes in the 40's and 50's of the so-called 'MIGs' and their dedicated pilots.

Sgarlato has gone to considerable pains to produce a work that shows all available technical and performance figures, together with exploded drawings and many action photos. Whether or not he has managed to obtain the truth concerning all these aircraft will remain to be proven, but there is every suggestion that here is a reliable and informative work on the aircraft of the biggest air force in the world.

THE MOSQUITO MANUAL

R.A.F. Museum Series, Volume No. 6.

Arms and Armour Press (Thomas C. Lothian Pty Ltd).

350 pp, U.K. price £7.95, Australian price \$22.95, illustrated.

Like previously reviewed publications in this series, this is a reprint of the official air publication on the Mosquito aircraft of 1941-1945, and it contains a wealth of detail that probably will interest only the aeroplane enthusiast and the remaining servicemen who were involved in operating and maintaining Mosquitos during their service lives.

Because of its beauty of line, and its performance, however, the Mosquito probably has more admirers than most aircraft, except, perhaps, the Spitfire. Brought into use in 1941, this twin-engined wooded aircraft, with the speed of a fighter, the ability to deliver a 4000-lb bomb, was involved in many memorable exploits, and will now rank among the immortals of the aircraft world.

If you wish to rebuild or repair one, here is a book that will help you to do it. If it is light reading you want, do NOT buy this book, but if you wish to have and preserve the intimate details of its construction and performance, you cannot afford to miss it!

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SERGEANT R.J. Hayes, of 13 Longleaf Street, North Frankston, Melbourne, has asked **SABRETACHE** to help him locate an old soldier, or his medals.

He is on the trail of QX 10350 (no rank given) L.R. Markam.

Sgt. Hayes is in possession of this soldier's African Star and he is keen to obtain the 1939-45 Star, the Pacific Star, the Defence Medal, the War Medal for WW2, and the Australian Service Medal for WW2 which were awarded to Markam.

If anyone can help, please contact Sgt. Hayes at the above address.

**INTRODUCTION TO INDEX
VOL. XVI – XVIII
1974 to 1977**

COMPILED BY W.M. CHAMBERLAIN

The dates of issues of "Sabretache" since January 1974 are set out below:

VOL XVI	VOL XVII	VOL XVIII
No. 1 Jan 1974	No. 1 July 1975	No. 1 Jan 1977
2 Apr 1974 (Index & Register)	2 Dec 1975	2 Apr 1977
3 Sept 1974	3 Apr 1976	3 July 1977
4 Feb 1975 (Supp Repr Apr 1975)	4 Aug 1976	4 Oct 1977

(Note: Vol. XVII No. 4 was incorrectly designated on the cover Vol. XXII No. 4).

It will be noted that during the five-year period 1973-74 – 1977 only three volumes of "Sabretache" were issued. Therefore although the journal has been in existence for 20 years, the most recent Volume is No. XVIII. Dates of issues within volumes have reverted to a haphazard frequency and some oddities occur in pagination, e.g. some issues show odd numbers on right-hand pages, some on left-hand pages, and some change within volumes due to plates, etc., being un-numbered.

As with previous indexes this Index places emphasis on rapid location of articles and does not attempt to cover such items as Society Notes, Director Amendments, Advertisements, etc. Comments in letters, such as important information relating to a particular article, are referred to in brackets after the page number of the article concerned. Once again Book Reviews are listed separately.

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THE sun, we are so frequently reminded, has set on the Empire. But before it dipped beneath the horizon of independence, it shone on a world that will never again feel its warming rays.

Major Augustus James Oates was an Australian serving in the Indian Army in the period immediately following WWI – in which he had won a DSO at Pozieres while a Captain with the 7th Battalion, AIF.

He was later to win an MC for action in the Khyber Pass . . . But this is not the story of a hero, it is, in his own words from a letter to his fiance, of the day-to-day routine in the Indian Army.

In India's Service

I WILL now try and tell you about an ordinary day's work in the Indian Army.

The bearer (one's man-servant – I suppose he would be termed a valet in English) comes with a cup of tea and some toast and bananas at 4.30 a.m.

Early morning tea is called Chota hazari.

Then it is time to get up, bathe, shave and dress for parade.

All the Sahib's clothes are put ready by the bearer while he has his bath and shave.

The bearer puts on the Sahib's boots, puttees and spurs while he dresses the top himself. The bearer also likes to dry his Sahib's legs and feet.

At 5.15 a.m. the Syce comes with the horse all nicely groomed and the saddle beautifully polished, and the buckles nice and shiny.

The Sahib mounts and rides off to the parade ground with the Syce going like mad behind so that he will be ready to take the horse when his Sahib reaches the parade ground.

The soldiers will be ready on parade in charge of their Indian Officers. As soon as the Sahib arrives, the Indian Officers march out and salute their respective



★ ABOVE: Maj. Oates, pictured when a Captain.

Sahibs and make their reports and hand in parade states.

The Sahib then takes command and inspects each man to see he has shaved, washed, polished his buttons and so on, has a spotless uniform and has put it on correctly.

Our soldiers wear turbans, called pug-gies in India, with the Regimental colours on the left side and badge in front.

Long, tight-fitting coats, shorts, puttees and black boots complete the uniform.

All our men wear long hair and they keep it beautifully.

The Sahibs then carry out work according to programme, such as drill, misketry, physical culture, bayonet exercises and so on.

At 8 a.m. the Sahibs come home for breakfast, and then go to the office till 1 p.m. and then to the Mess for tiffin.

Study or sleep in the afternoon till 3.30 p.m. then afternoon tea. After tea, hockey with the soldiers (Sepoys) then home and change for the club where tennis, golf, polo or dancing may be indulged in.

At about 8 p.m. everyone enters the club and drinks and eats dripped potatoes. At 9 p.m. rush home and bathe, shave, change into mess kit and dine at 9.30. This is a parade.

The band plays while the Sahibs dine. The mess table is a wonderful sight. All the Regimental silver is on the table, good food, lots to drink, gay uniforms and each Sahib has his own servant to attend him.

All servants are in spotless white.

The Sahibs are not allowed to leave the table until the Colonel moves. The King is toasted every night.

After dinner the Sahibs settle down to Bridge. Bed at about 12 or 1 a.m. Not much sleep when one is doing a language.

In another letter to his future wife, he

describes his Indian service and his feelings when awarded the Military Cross.

I'll tell you a little story about my two lonely years in Afghanistan.

I went there in 1919 with a company of 270 Punjabi Musalmans and lived with them, and as one of them, till 1920.

Every six months a Sahib brought me food and so on. My job was to escort and guard convoys between India and Afghanistan.

I used to put my picquets out at daylight and withdraw them at dusk.

We lived in a bit three-storied blue stone fort with steel doors and loopholes.

It was just like being in prison.

While I was there I had a fierce battle with the Afridi tribe.

It was in this battle I got my M.C.

I was so proud when the award came through that I nearly cried with joy.

I will tell you all about it one evening when we are seated in front of the fire.

I was relieved in 1920 and sent straight to Arabia for the Arab rebellion.

I had hard years of war. I went to Egypt for the first Turkish attack on the Suez Canal in January 1915, to Gallipoli for the whole campaign, then Egypt again, France and Belgium for two years, the Wazari war in 1918, Afghan war in 1919-1920, and the Arab rebellion in 1920 and 1921.

In 1923, Capt. Oates, together with four other officers – Capt. J. Richie, Capt. H. Bastin, Capt. F. Bursey, and Capt. H. Wrigley – who had served with him in the Indian Army, he returned to Australia and they and his brother, Jim, settled at "Englefield", Balmoral, in Victoria.

During WW2 Major Oates served in a training capacity in Melbourne.

For his service in two World Wars and campaigning in India, he was awarded:

DSO, MC, 1914-15, War Medal, Vic-

tory Medal with MID, India General Service Medal with clasps "Wazaristan 1921-24" and "Afghanistan N.W.F. 1919", 1939-45 War Medal, Australian Service

Medal, Efficiency Decoration Geo VI bar Australia.

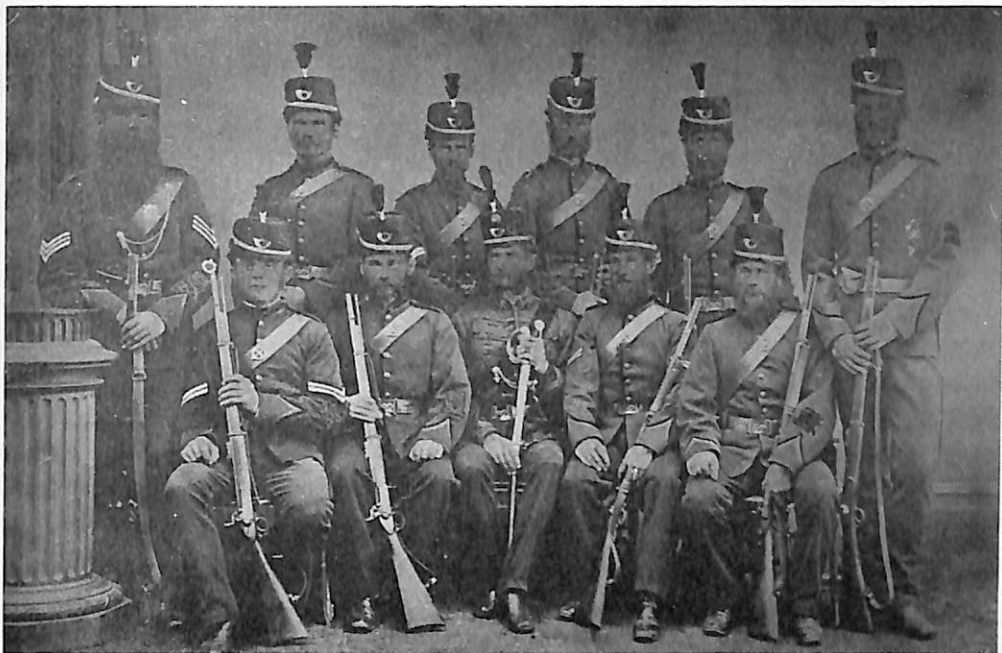
Maj. Oates, DSO, MC, ED, MID, died on August 2, 1976, at Hamilton, Victoria.



★ ABOVE: The then Captain Oates, left, is pictured leaving Buckingham Palace with a group of Australian Victoria Cross winners after receiving their medals.

With Capt. Oates are from left, Lt. Tubb V.C., Lt. Symons V.C., Cpl. Burton V.C., and Cpl. Dunstan V.C.

The medals were presented by Queen Mary.



MANY old and interesting pictures cross the Editor's desk and the one reproduced above is typical.

Unfortunately, there is usually very little caption detail provided and so the pictures tend to hold an aura of mystery about them.

The details provided with this picture advise that it is of a skirmishing team from the Ballarat Volunteer Regiment (the "Rangers").

The officer, seated centre, is Capt. A.M. Greenfield, and written on the reverse of the pic are the details:

"Comdg 1889-1894 3 Bn, Victorian Rifles".

Additional information records that Capt. Greenfield was commissioned a lieutenant on March 22, 1866, and retired as a lieutenant-colonel in 1902.

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