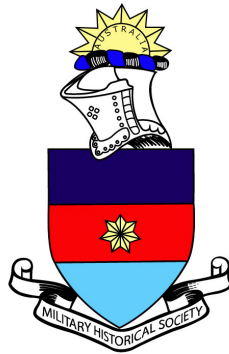


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Sabretache



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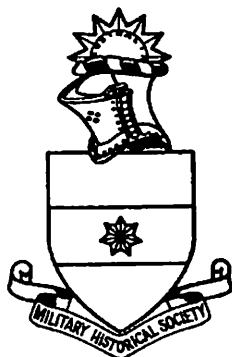
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Contributions in the form of articles, notes, queries or letters are always welcome. Authors of major articles are invited to submit a brief biographical note, and, where possible, submit the text of the article on floppy disk as well as hard copy. See the last page for further guidelines.

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The aims of the Society are the encouragement and pursuit of study and research in military history, customs, traditions, dress, arms, equipment and kindred matters; the promotion of public interest and knowledge in these subjects, and the preservation of historical military objects with particular reference to the armed forces of Australia. The annual subscription to the Society is \$30. A membership application is on the back page.

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The Federal Council of Australia is located in Canberra. The Society has branches in Brisbane, Canberra, Albury-Wodonga, Melbourne, Geelong, Adelaide and Perth. Details of meetings are available from Branch Secretaries whose names appear below.

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The constitution of the Society adopted 1 August 1993 appears in *Sabretache* January-March 1993. The Society's rules adopted on 14 April 1997 appear in *Sabretache* April-June 1997.

Sabretache

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History Repeated— The Battles of Majuba (1881) and Spion Kop (1900)

Ronald Austin

The art of war is at best a choice of difficulties.

In the twenty years between 1881 and 1901, the names Majuba and Spion Kop became widely known throughout the British Empire. Both battles were defeats, yet there were sufficient similarities to suggest that there is some validity to the cliché that 'history repeats itself'. Perhaps in this Centenary Year of the Second Boer War it is instructive to consider two similar battles that occurred between the British Army and the Boer forces in two separate wars, namely the battle of Majuba Hill which took place on 28 February 1881 and effectively ended the war in favour of the Boer Republics; and the battle of Spion Kop which occurred on 24 January 1900, and although a victory for the Boers, the ultimate results were quite different from the earlier battle.

Majuba

An examination of the First Boer War shows that it was a war fought by the British, with limited resources and a diminishing political will. The British Government in London showed little enthusiasm for the conflict, and once news of the Majuba disaster was received, it quickly terminated hostilities and agreed to a settlement, which provided the Boer Republics with a large measure of independence.

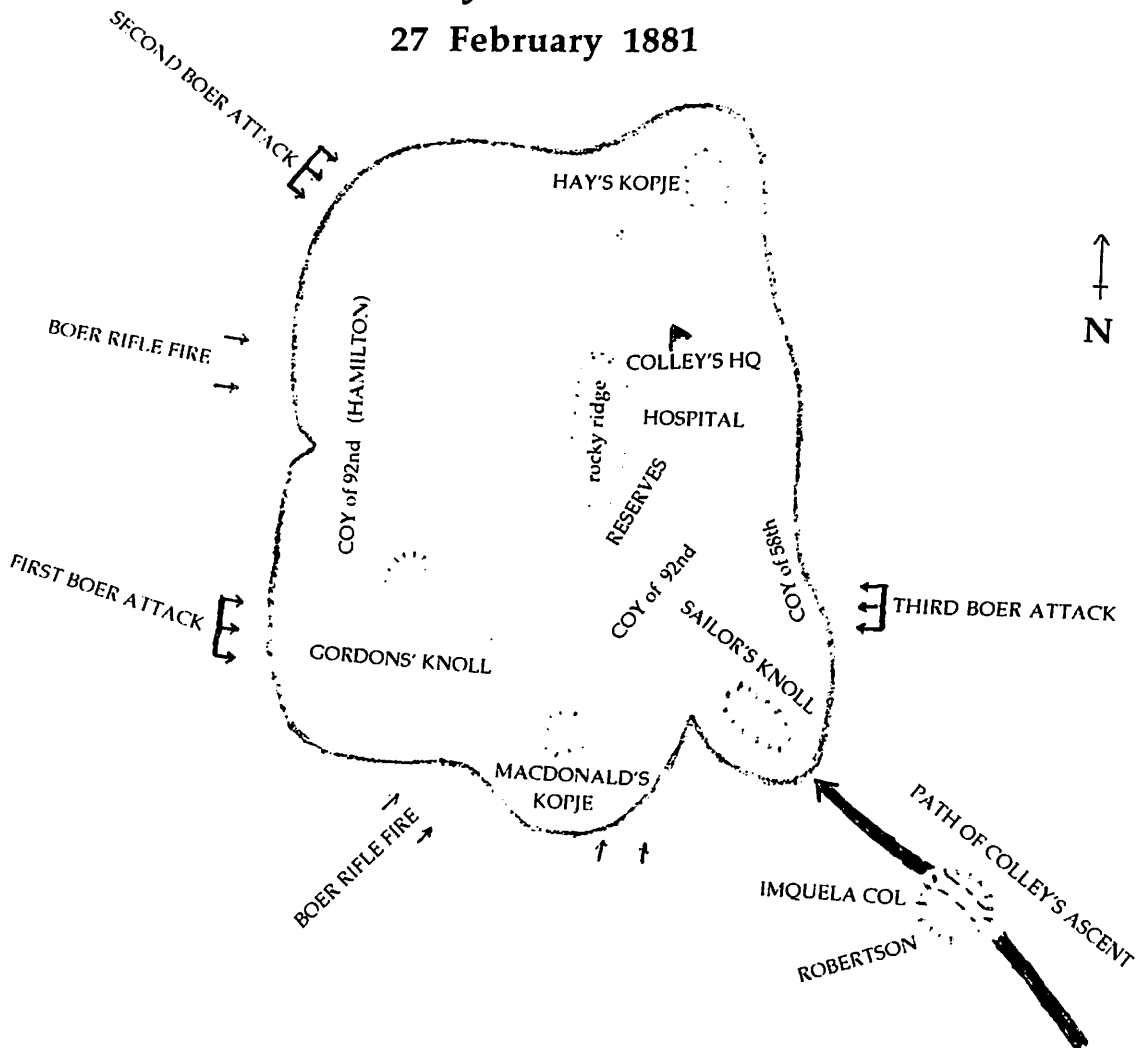
When the British Army under General George Colley, moved into northern Natal in order to crush the local Boers, it was assumed that the introduction of a small regular force would soon put an end to the hostilities. Although Colley's army had been all but beaten at Laing's Nek on 28 January 1881, Colley doggedly pressed forward, with the intention of capturing the high ground at Majuba Hill, referred to by the Boers as Spitzkop and the Zulus as Amajuba 'the hill of doves', the capture of which would probably render the Boer hold on Laing's Nek untenable. Unfortunately, as he left camp, Colley failed to disguise his intentions of a night march, thus alerting the Boer lookouts who occupied Majuba only during daylight hours, to the fact that his army was on the move.

Majuba can best be described as a forbidding old volcanic crag, which by its very size and shape, discourages occupation. The summit of Majuba consists of a saucer-like basin, with several knolls scattered along its kilometre long circumference. The approaches to the summit are hazardous, and in some places the near-vertical cliff faces suggest that scaling would be impossible. Colley decided to occupy Majuba by scaling the slopes from the direction of Imquela Col, which lay to the south of the summit. He assembled a force of almost 600 men, but made the mistake of selecting detachments from his army, rather than using one or preferably two of his complete regular battalions. To undertake a night approach march up a mountain such as Majuba was a hazardous enough enterprise and it would be difficult to maintain any semblance of coordinated command and control over the column. Colley's force included three companies (180 men) from the 92nd Regiment (Gordon Highlanders), three companies (150) from the 58th, two companies (150 men) from the 3rd/60th Rifles, and a naval detachment of 65 men led by Commander Romilly, RN. This hotch-potch force of 545 infantrymen and sailors, together with support troops, assembled on the night of 26 February 1881.

Under a cloak of secrecy, only matched by the darkness of the night, Colley's troops, carrying rifles at 'the trail', each man burdened with 75 rounds ammunition, water and three days rations, left Mount Prospect camp at 10 pm. Few of the officers apart from Colley and several of his staff officers were even aware of their objectives due to an almost paranoiac fear of Boer spies. Although it would have been almost impossible to bring up any artillery quietly, it would have been possible to provide the force with rocket support. However, Colley confidently concluded, albeit incorrectly, that Majuba could be captured and held without the need for any other supporting fire.

MAJUBA HILL

27 February 1881



By 1.30 am, the British force had commenced their final climb up the steep, rocky slopes which led to the summit. During the early climb a company of the 92nd Regiment under Captain Robertson, had been stationed south-east of the Majuba summit at Imquela Col to guard the route up to the summit. The steep, rocky ground soon forced the troops to change formation from fours to single file. The fact that it took until 3.30 am before the summit was reached, and about another hour before all the force was ensconced on the summit, gives an indication of the terrible

conditions facing the climbers. The kilted Gordons in particular, suffered severely from the coarse thorny scrub and tall grass, which tore at their bare legs. The troops soon scattered across the vast plateau, and took up positions, but without establishing a cohesive defensive position, or digging in. Thomas Carter, the journalist who accompanied the force to Majuba, claims that although men did some digging, it was unsystematic, and suggests that this was due to Colley and his senior officers regarding their hold on the summit as unassailable. Colley sited the naval troops and about fifty men of the 58th Regiment in a central position on the plateau for use as a reserve in case of enemy attack. Despite the noisy ascent, Colley managed to adhere to at least one principle of war, that of surprise! However, Colley's haphazard siting of his force, meant that the high ground around the edges of the plateau was left undefended, an error which would later cost the lives of many soldiers as they were later picked off by Boer snipers. From their positions on Majuba, the British could see in the distance, the twinkling camp fires of the Boers at Laing's Nek.

When daylight broke at about 6 am on 27 February, the Boers moved from their customary positions on the lower slopes only to find that the summit was held by the Redcoats. The Boer commander, General Joubert, realising that the Boer hold on Laing's Nek would be threatened if the British were permitted to hold the vital ground of Majuba, ordered an immediate attack upon the summit. As the Boers crept nearer to the summit, their fire had so little effect on the British due to the saucer-shaped rim, which permitted most bullets to whistle ineffectually over the heads of the defenders, that by 9.30 am, Colley's staff officer sent a flag signal to the main camp at Mount Prospect (about 10 km SE of Majuba), advising, 'All very comfortable. Boers wasting ammunition'. These comfortable conditions were soon to change, as small parties of Boers climbed up the steep gullies, which were usually in dead ground and thus invisible to the defenders, until by late morning they were able to bring aimed rifle fire upon the exposed British troops.

The outer positions were gradually forced inwards, and since no attempt had been made by Colley to coordinate his hold on the summit, the Boers successfully nibbled away at the British position. When Lieutenant Ian Hamilton of the Gordons sought Colley's permission to launch a bayonet attack in an attempt to restore the position, Colley refused to countenance such a move. With Commander Romilly dead, the British hold on the summit was collapsing as the Boers, by skilfully using fire and movement, crept safely from rock to rock. By early afternoon, Colley was killed, and the thirsty, bewildered British troops having taken many casualties, and bereft of senior leadership, were starting to panic. By mid-afternoon, British soldiers were retreating from the plateau, content to leave Majuba in Boer hands. British losses that day totalled 96 killed, 132 wounded and 56 captured, while Boer losses were two killed and five wounded.

The humiliation was followed by a capitulation by the Gladstone Government which saw the Transvaal being granted self government, a perceived slur upon the British Empire, which was not erased until the British victory at Paardeburg exactly 19 years later.

There were several reasons for the British defeat:

- A faulty reconnaissance of the objective, and an almost total unawareness of the limitations of the ground to be occupied.
- The attacking force was a makeshift, disorganised force composed of seamen, and troops from three different battalions, with regimental officers lacking knowledge of what was required of them. Lieutenant Ian Hamilton who was recommended for the Victoria Cross for his role during the battle, observed that: 'Behind the force that scaled Majuba Hill stood no tradition, no cohesion, no confidence. A common interest even was lacking, for no one had been told what was happening. Neither order nor superior officer came near my part of the line from first to last.'

- The lack of any orders from Colley to dig in and prepare a defensive position.
- No fire support plan, no artillery, rockets or Gatling guns to assist in the defence.
- Once Majuba was captured, Colley's refusal to bring up reinforcements from Mt Prospect, removed any chance of holding on throughout the day.

Let us now consider the battle of Spion Kop, a major British defeat of the Second Boer War.

Spion Kop

The Battle of Spion Kop was conducted over 24-25 January 1900, only 19 years after the defeat on Majuba Hill. Like the earlier war, the Boers had inflicted a series of heavy defeats upon the British, particularly during the period known as 'Black Week'. General Sir Redvers Buller, VC, a veteran of the Zulu and First Boer Wars, was advancing toward Ladysmith with the aim of relieving the town, which had been under siege by the Boers since 2 November 1899. Having successfully crossed the Tugela River, at two places, Potgeiter's and Trichardt's Drifts, Buller was faced by a series of natural obstacles—the ridges of Tabanyama and Spion Kop, which posed the last major obstacles to his advance to Ladysmith. Having failed in an attempt to capture Tabanyama on 20 January, Lieutenant General Clery was urged by General Warren to make a further attempt on the following day. This attack likewise failed, due to the entrenchments dug by the Boers under the command of General Louis Botha. Buller's army, which was now north of the Tugela, was constantly harassed by shell fire from the Boer positions.

General Buller, exasperated by the lack of progress, told General Warren, that unless he attacked, his force would be withdrawn across the Tugela, Warren, faced with this ultimatum, agreed to a compromise plan which involved an attack on Spion Kop, located to the east of Tabanyama. If the attack were successful, Tabanyama would quickly be captured or abandoned by the Boers. Although a formidable obstacle, it was hoped that the sheer difficulty of such a climb by a large body of men, would persuade the Boers to hold Spion Kop with a minimal force. As with Majuba, surprise would be the key to capturing the summit, but alas, like Majuba, the attackers failed to bring up any artillery to support their position once daylight arrived. The obvious similarities of the two hills prompted Lieutenant Colonel Charles a'Court, one of Buller's staff officers attached to Warren's column, to enhance Warren's plan by arranging for artillery support to commence as soon as the summit was captured.

Warren entrusted the task of capturing Spion Kop to Major General Sir E Woodgate and his Lancashire Brigade. During the night of 23/24 January, Woodgate's force of some 1,800 rain drenched men from the 2nd Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers, the Royal Lancaster Regiment (part of Thorneycroft's Horse), and troops from the Connaught Rangers, the Imperial Light Infantry and the Royal Engineers, marched from camp in fours, then at about midnight, led by Colonel Thorneycroft (of Thorneycroft's Mounted Infantry), started climbing the mist-covered steep slopes of Spion Kop in single file. Shortly before 4 am, they overwhelmed the Boer sentries of the Vryheid Commando, with the loss of only ten men wounded, and took possession of what they thought was the summit. Prior reconnaissance would have revealed the true configuration of Spion Kop, but unfortunately the summit of Spion Kop remained a mystery to Woodgate and his troops, due to the thick mist that covered the feature for another three hours.

The main summit of Spion Kop was roughly 700 × 350 metres, with a smaller plateau of 200 × 200 in the centre. Five distinct peaks existed along the feature, and the further peculiarities of the ground were to have dire consequences for Woodgate. At the western end of Spion Kop lay a smaller plateau some seven metres lower than the main summit, 700 metres to the north was Conical Hill, and on the eastern side was a small saddle leading to Aloe Knoll, only 400 metres

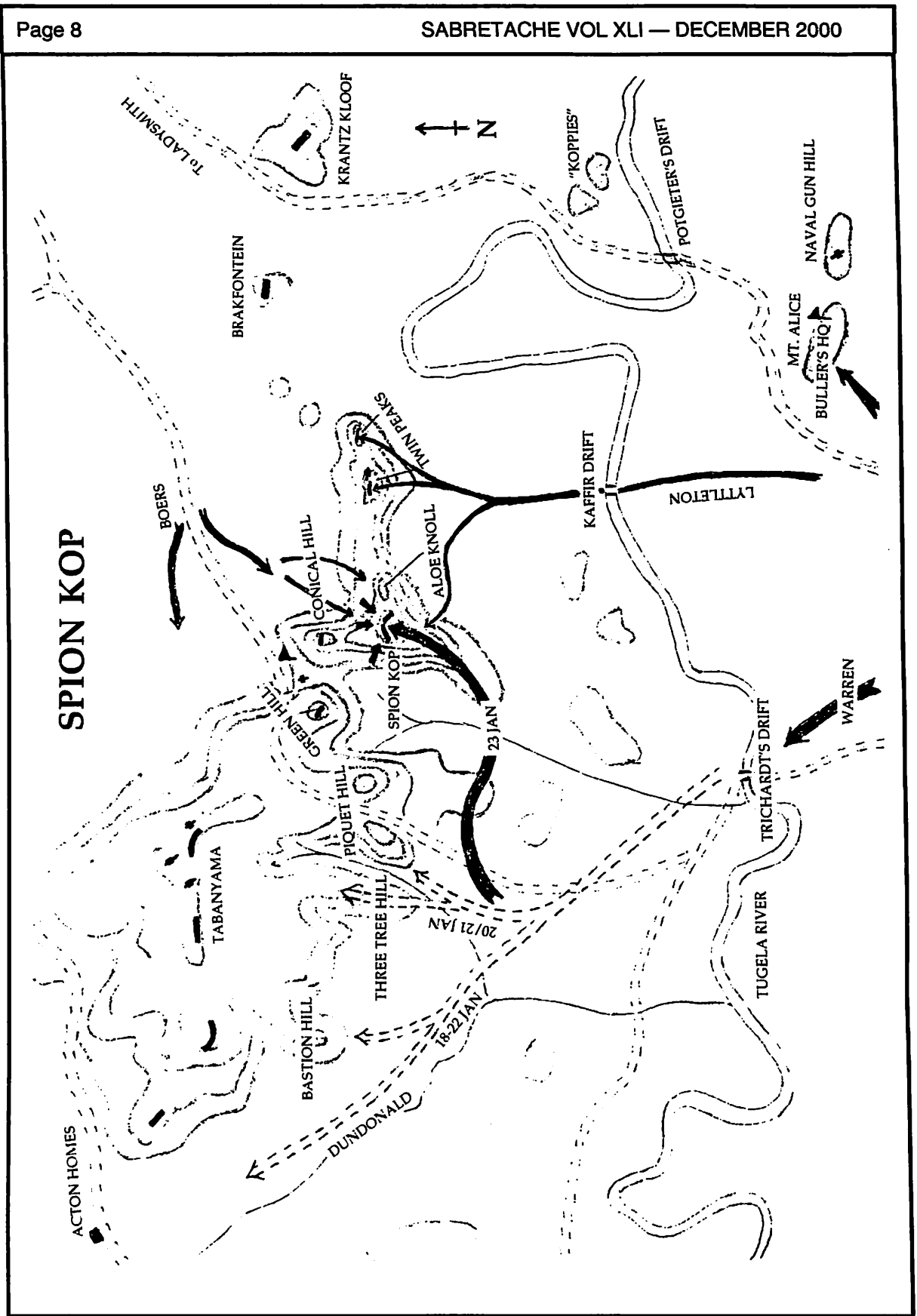
away from the summit. Some three kilometres further east were the peaks of Drielingkoppe, known to the British as Twin Peaks. If Woodgate's men failed to capture and hold each of the three closer features, they would be brutally exposed to enemy fire, plus long range rifle fire from Twin Peaks, a fire that would enfilade any British troops seeking to reinforce Spion Kop.

Despite the heavy mist, Woodgate's men commenced to dig shallow trenches in preparation for the coming day—trenches that later in the day would prove fatal to their occupants, as the Boer rifle fire enfiladed their position. In addition, the British perimeter was too small and the trenches dug in the wrong position due to the fog. While the British were consolidating their precarious position, General Botha having been alerted to the presence of the British upon Spion Kop, took steps to remove this dangerous threat. However, Botha only had at his disposal, five field guns and two pom-poms, the firepower of which could safely harass the British but was unlikely to drive them from the summit. To achieve that aim, he would need to attack the summit with his burghers. Assaults of strongly-held enemy positions were, if possible, always avoided by the burghers, and Botha was mindful of the reluctance of his troops to engage in attacks that could lead to heavy casualties. Botha's predicament was temporarily solved when Hendrick Prinsloo and his Carolina Commando volunteered to capture the unoccupied Conical Hill and Aloe Knoll.

By 8 am, the mist had cleared and the hot African sun began to beat down on the soldiers atop Spion Kop. Although the Boers managed to capture the two adjacent hills, they failed in their attempts to wrest control of the summit from the British. Neither side at that stage realised the vulnerability of the British position. If only the summit had not been shrouded in fog, then Woodgate would have realised that Alop Knoll and Conical Hill would have to be captured and incorporated in the defensive line, and thus probably would have rendered any Boer attacks futile. But Botha's swift reaction ensured that these two features were denied to the British.

Throughout the morning, the Boer artillery from positions along the Tabanyama ridge, shelled the trapped British force. An added terror came from the rifle fire that swept over the shallow trenches, claiming any soul who ventured his head above the parapet. By 8.30 am, Woodgate had received a mortal wound to the head and command was reluctantly assumed by Colonel Crofton of the Royal Lancasters. Realising that the summit could not be held unless he was reinforced, Crofton sent the following dismal signal to General Warren: 'Reinforce at once or all is lost. General dead'. In response to Crofton's plea, Warren despatched help. During the course of the morning, reinforcements in the form of the 2nd Battalions of the Dorset and Middlesex Regiments plus the Imperial Light Infantry, all under the command of Major General Talbot-Coke who was recovering from a broken leg, braved the enemy fire and climbed the mountain, only to be confronted by a chaotic situation. One officer wrote; 'I crawled along a little way with half my company, and then brought up others in the same manner. The men of the different regiments already on the hill were mixed up, and ours met the same fate. It was impossible under the circumstances to keep regimental control. One unit merged into another'.

Once the mist had cleared, Buller and his staff could watch the battle upon Spion Kop. The situation was obviously desperate, and the somewhat timid Crofton was obviously not the man to maintain a resolute defence of the summit. Buller then suggested to Warren that he appoint Lieutenant Colonel Alex Thorneycroft to command of the summit. Thorneycroft was certainly a man recognised for his dynamic leadership, but the situation on Spion Kop, was soon to prove too much even for an officer of his talents. On this occasion, Warren responded to Buller's advice and sent a message up to Thorneycroft informing him that he had been promoted to brigadier general, but failed to advise Talbot-Coke, who had by now established his headquarters on the southern slopes of Spion Kop, that Thorneycroft had been placed in charge of the summit. Warren's communication lapses were soon to prove costly!



Attacks against the British trenches by the Boers, were fought off, but at the cost of casualties including prisoners. At 2.30 pm, Thorneycroft sent a message to Warren, seeking water and reinforcements and with a plea for action against the enemy guns. Warren conceded that ways had to be found to bring mountain guns up to the beleaguered summit. Confronted with the predicament on Spion Kop, Warren felt he could ease the pressure on his garrison by attacking the Boers at Tabanyama in the east, or at Twin Peaks to the west. Ignoring the obvious attack route to Tabanyama, possibly because of his earlier unsuccessful attacks, Warren chose to capture the formidable Twin Peaks. By shortly after 5 pm that afternoon, General Lyttleton's men of the 3rd Battalion, King's Royal Rifles had scrambled up and dislodged the Boer defenders from both the peaks, while the Scottish Rifles swung left to reinforce Spion Kop.

With the British now in possession of the main summit of Spion Kop as well as Twin Peaks, it appeared to many Boers that defeat was inevitable! During the night, General Shalk Burger withdrew his commandos from the battlefield and fled. Unfortunately, General Buller failed to recognise the predicament that faced the Boers following Lyttleton's advance and capture of Twin Peaks, and recalled the troops. Once darkness fell, the captors of Twin Peaks slowly and quietly made their way from the battlefield, little realising that their efforts that afternoon were to be the only successes of that fateful day.

Meanwhile, on Spion Kop, the situation had become critical. The lack of water, medical facilities and small arms ammunition was sapping the determination of the defenders. It was not until 9 pm on the night of 24 January that Warren despatched his engineer commander with a view to building emplacements for the mountain guns and two naval guns due to arrive by the following day. Warren also sent a message up to Coke, requesting him to report to Warren's headquarters, a decision that would leave Thorneycroft in sole charge of the shambles upon Spion Kop, though unbeknown to Thorneycroft, Coke had delegated his authority to Colonel Hill. In the late afternoon, Spion Kop received an unexpected visitor—Winston Churchill, journalist and part-time officer in the South African Light Horse. Bored by the inactivity due to Warren's reluctance to use his mounted troops, Churchill rode over to Spion Kop and climbed up close to the summit, noting that: 'Men were staggering alone, or supported by comrades, or crawling on hands and knees. Corpses lay here and there'. Without climbing right up to the bullet-swept summit, Churchill hastily returned to Warren, where he expressed his concerns about the conditions on Spion Kop.

With the mountain now shrouded in darkness, Churchill volunteered to once again climb up Spion Kop and deliver a message to Thorneycroft, advising him that the naval guns and a large digging party were coming. When Churchill reached the summit, he found that although casualties had fragmented the battalions into small groups, morale was still holding. Churchill was dismayed to find that a shocked Thorneycroft had decided to evacuate the summit rather than lose the remainder of his troops once daylight reappeared. This decision was contested by Lieutenant Colonel Hill of the Middlesex Regiment, who disbelieved Thorneycroft's rapid promotion, and insisted that, as he was senior to Thorneycroft, command of the summit was in his hands, and opposed any evacuation of Spion Kop. None the less, Thorneycroft's view prevailed, and during the night, the remaining garrison of British troops silently made their way off the summit. The finale in this tragic comic opera, was that just as Thorneycroft neared the base of Spion Kop, he met up with the engineer officer who was bringing up the digging party for the guns. Although Colonel Sims urged Thorneycroft to return to the summit, he refused saying 'I have done all I can'. Faced with the task of digging gun emplacements for a

garrison which was no longer in possession of Spion Kop, Sims likewise withdrew. At 2 am on 25 January, Thorneycroft reported in to Warren. The confusion on Spion Kop had been compounded by Warren's reluctance to firmly assert his command, which led to a situation in which following Woodgate's death, Talbot-Coke, Crofton, Thorneycroft and Hill each thought that they were in command of the summit.

The Boers, who were facing a decisive defeat due to the capture of Twin Peaks, were also preparing to concede victory, particularly as many had already evacuated the area. Such an approach was anathema to Louis Botha, who managed to rally enough burghers to remain at Spion Kop and fight on despite the gravity of the situation. In the hours before dawn, the burghers started the climb up to their precarious positions near the British-held summit. Young Denys Reitz wrote how 'almost unbelievably, defeat had turned to victory—the English were gone and the hill was still ours'. When Reitz reached the summit he found a ghastly sight: 'In the shallow trenches where they had fought the soldiers lay dead in swathes, and in places piled three deep. The Boer guns in particular had wrought terrible havoc and some of the bodies were shockingly mutilated'.

British casualties at Spion Kop totalled 383 killed, 1,154 wounded and 305 missing or captured. Boer casualties were claimed to be 51 killed and 123 wounded. Thorneycroft's unexpected capitulation was to create an uproar in England, and subsequently led to the termination of the military careers of both Buller and Warren. In addition the conduct of the war, and in particular battles such as Spion Kop and Black Week, generated such public disapprobation that a Royal Commission was established and sat from October 1902 to June 1903.

The Battles of Majuba and Spion Kop, although different in scale, bear some uncanny resemblances to each other. Although the summits of both mountains were easily captured due to the element of surprise, other similarities such as the inadequate prior reconnaissance, abysmally poor communication with the base camp, lack of artillery support to assist in holding the summits, failure to suppress enemy shell and rifle fire, and inadequate entrenching, tend to confirm a view that history does repeat itself. At Majuba and Spion Kop, defeat may have been avoided if both commanders had made the effort to examine the actual configuration of the ground and adjust their defensive lines accordingly. In both battles the commanding generals paid the ultimate price. However, at Spion Kop, the final responsibility for the failure of the operation lay with the indecisive Generals Buller and Warren, not Woodgate. Over the last century, historians have harshly dealt with these generals. Amery attacked the 'general feebleness, the palpable lack of will-power exhibited' by the two senior generals, while Conan Doyle pondered over Warren's failure to ascend Spion Kop and bring up reinforcements and engineers to dig deeper trenches. More recently, Nasson claims that 'if there is an oddity about Spion Kop, it is that neither side grasped how badly its adversary was doing' and that 'strategically ground lost or taken in this battle was of trivial significance' Perhaps the last word should rest with the hapless General Warren, who later claimed that 'the retirement from Spion Kop is a unique episode in our military history, and seems unaccountable'.

These two military disasters, both in reality and public perception, tarnished the reputation of the British Army until the advent of the Great War of 1914-18, when the crippling losses of that conflict completely overshadowed these relatively insignificant South African battles.

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Australians in the Unconventional Conventional War in South Africa, November 1899 to June 1900

Craig Wilcox¹

Most of us know that a squadron of New South Wales Lancers under Captain Charles Cox was the first Australian unit to arrive in South Africa in 1899 and the first to engage the enemy. That first engagement is usually taken to be Belmont, a small battle on 23 November 1899 during Methuen's failed push toward Kimberley in which a troop of lancers took part. But when Charles Cox wrote home that 'I saw the first shot fired yesterday', he was writing from another theatre of war, the Colesberg district of Cape Colony, and he was referring not to a battle against the Boers but to an encounter with a handful of British subjects that took place a day before Belmont, an encounter that was more an act of policing than soldiering.²

Before dawn on 22 November 1899 Cox led a small patrol of lancers guided by a couple of Cape policemen to a group of farms at Jackalsfontein owned by the van der Walt family. Army intelligence had intercepted a letter written by a young man from one of the farms stating his intention to join the Boers, and the patrol was to arrest all the men and impound any arms and horses. The farms stood a hundred kilometres south of the border with the Orange Free State, well within British territory. But this was hostile country, where white farmers more often favoured the Boer cause than the British. As the patrol approached the farms they saw a man gallop off; they chased him but failed to catch him. They saw flashes of light coming from the direction of the main farmhouse; they took these to be signals to some rebel band. Cox was anxious to get the job done and get out before his patrol was ambushed.

At the main farmhouse the patrol stood two young men of the van der Walt family against a wall while they searched the house and gathered the horses. One bridle was missing, and it would be needed if every horse were to be taken. Cox ordered Jan Dolley, a Sotho servant of the van der Walts, to find it. The black man proved sullen and uncooperative, and refused to search a stable for the missing bridle. Peter Smith, one of the Cape policemen with the patrol, walked up to Cox and reported Dolley's refusal to cooperate. Smith was sure Dolley knew where the bridle was. 'If he won't give you the bridle', Cox told Smith, then 'give him a hole'. Smith walked back toward the stable, inserting a cartridge into the breech of his carbine. A few seconds later a shot rang out. Just after that awful sound, one lancer recalled, 'the bridle turned up from somewhere'—not, apparently, from within the stable. The patrol saddled up hastily, their prisoners and horses in tow, and scampered back to their base, not daring to draw rein for some time lest they be overtaken by rebels.³

The patrol to Jackalsfontein and the shooting of Jan Dolley might seem too trivial an incident to include in the record of Australians in the South African war, let alone to confer on it the distinction of the first warlike act performed by an Australian unit in it. It isn't mentioned in

¹ I read this paper at the MHSAs biennial history conference in Canberra on 10 June 2000, and questions and comments I received shaped this printed version. I especially thank Ron Austin, Max Chamberlain, Peter Edgar, Roger Lee and Colin Simpson.

² G B Barton et al, *The Story of South Africa in Two Volumes*, vol. 2, *The Despatch of Contingents from Australia and New Zealand and their Exploits on the Battle Fields*, World, Sydney c. 1902, p 41.

³ National Army Museum 6807/159 (Cavalry Division war diary) vol. 1, part 1, 22 November 1899; Cape Archives AG 2071 (Cape Police correspondence on shootings of natives) box 1, folder 29 and box 2, folder 1; *Melbourne Age*, 5 December 1900, p 11.

P L Murray's *Official Records of the Australian Military Contingents to the War in South Africa*, published by the Defence Department in 1911, nor is it recounted in P V Vernon's 1961 history of *The Royal New South Wales Lancers*. It is mentioned, though, in G B Barton's thorough but unfinished chronicle of Australians in the war, published after his death as the second volume of the Australian edition of *The Story of South Africa*.⁴ Barton was right to mention it. However trivial, and however brutal, the incident represents much of what Australians did in the war, even during the war's conventional phase that ran at least until the middle of 1900.

I'm not making the obvious point that much of the war's fighting even in its first year was small in scale, consisting more of patrols and ambushes and skirmishes than of battles. My point is that the conventional war against the Boer commandos was accompanied by an unconventional war against rebels and potential rebels in Cape Colony, against newly conquered peoples in the Boer republics and in Rhodesia, and on behalf of nervous civil administrations and beleaguered loyalists in districts where rebels held the upper hand. Australian contingents to South Africa were as often engaged in the police and garrison duties that this unconventional war entailed as they were in the skirmishes and battles that the more conventional conquest of the Boer republics entailed, and we can learn much about these duties from South African records, including published records available in Australia. From November 1899 to June 1900, Australians were as just as busy turning the pink bits of the South African map into a hearty red as they were shifting the red border south of the Limpopo and north of the Orange.

The unconventional war seemed necessary because hostility and potential hostility to the imperial cause was not confined to armed men from the Boer republics. A substantial minority of white settlers in Cape Colony were Afrikaners in ethnicity and culture, and from November 1899 to March 1900 two thousand or more from Cape districts that bordered on the Orange Free State—men like the van der Walts of Colesberg—rose against imperial rule as Boer commandos invaded, infiltrated or approached their districts. Milner, the imperial high commissioner in Cape Town, feared a general rising. There was no part of Cape Colony, he suspected, 'in which the Dutch population are not rebels at heart, and would not rise against us if they saw a chance'.⁵ Buller and Roberts, successive imperial military commanders during the first year of the war, were more concerned to conquer the Boer republics than suppress the Cape rebels. But some troops had to be allotted to the task, and most of the first wave of Australian contingents—those raised in October 1899 as the war was beginning—were occasionally deployed against rebels and those who might join them. Percy Ricardo's Queensland Mounted Infantry, John Hoad's Australian Regiment and John Antill's New South Wales Mounted Rifles squadron were sent to the rear of Methuen's division in December 1899, and in January 1900 they struck against rebels in the Prieska and Douglas districts, the latter strike involving the skirmish at Sunnyside and the first deaths in action by soldiers wearing Australian uniforms.

In February the first Australian contingents marched north in Roberts' invasion of the Orange Free State or helped Ralph Clements contain a Boer invasion of the Colesberg district. They were joined by two in three of the newly arrived second wave of contingents from Australia. The rest of this second wave—Henry Pilkington's 2nd West Australian Mounted Infantry, Charles Reade's 2nd South Australian Mounted Rifles, Arthur Riggall's drafts for the 1st Tasmanian contingent, and Sydenham Smith's A Battery from Sydney—were deployed in a gigantic, three-pronged westward thrust into what is now called the Northern Cape against rebels and infiltrating commandos in response to an imperial defeat near Prieska and renewed fears of rebellion. One,

⁴ Barton, *The story of South Africa*, p 41.

⁵ K T Surridge, *Managing the South African War 1899-1902: Politicians v. Generals*, Royal Historical Society and Boydell Press, Woodbridge Suffolk, 1998, p 79.

perhaps two, of the second contingents remained in the Northern Cape long after the sweep. Smith's A Battery formed part of an occupation force for nearly a year, and most if not all of the drafts for the 1st Tasmanians may have done the same.⁶

As the Boer capitals fell to Roberts—Bloemfontein in March, Pretoria in June—Roberts believed that police operations would largely suffice to secure imperial rule in the republics. Milner supported Roberts in this belief, hoping that police operations would be placed under civil direction rather than military. Well before the famous South African Constabulary was raised toward the end of 1900, provisional mounted police forces were formed in Bloemfontein and Pretoria to protect loyalists and intimidate conquered Boers. Colonial soldiers like the Australians were invited to be attached temporarily to the provisional police at ten shillings a day—twice what most were earning, though food and fodder costs would be deducted. The prospect of high pay, easy service and escape from unpopular officers or comrades ensured that applications far exceeded vacancies. Around seventy-five Australians joined the Bloemfontein provisional police. Probably a larger number joined the Pretoria force.⁷

It was not only white men who seemed to threaten imperial rule in southern Africa. In Rhodesia, a recent imperial acquisition, forty-nine in every fifty persons belonged to the Ndebele or Shona peoples who, three years before, had revolted against their white conquerors. Then there were the Afrikaners among the few white Rhodesians. The army was uninterested in Rhodesia's security beyond repelling Boer raids, but local loyalists and Cecil Rhodes' British South Africa Company, which had founded the colony and still partly administered it, demanded security and the raising of an occupation force—and Rhodes had a long purse and a loud voice. The War Office in London quashed the Company's plan to recruit an occupation force privately, but with Roberts' agreement it sent five thousand men to Rhodesia from among the vast wave of volunteers to the war that the defeats of Black Week were putting into uniform. A Rhodesian Field Force was to be formed from these men to discourage rebellion and Boer raids simply by its strength. If all went well, it would then march south toward Pretoria. Untried troops were thought sufficient for this task, so all the third wave of contingents from Australia, the citizen bushmen as they were known, and two of the six Australian contingents from the fourth wave, the imperial bushmen, were landed not in Cape Town but at Biera on the east African coast whence they marched into Rhodesia to form the bulk of the force.⁸ Edwin Tivey from Victoria noted that the bushmen were ready to prevent a black revolt.⁹ But all went well after all. Local Afrikaners proved quiescent, as did the Ndebele and Shona, though some Imperial Yeomanry from Britain briefly went into action against one tribe. So the Rhodesian Field Force was slowly moved south, not against Pretoria as intended but into the northwest Transvaal around Mafeking. Still, few Australian bushmen reached the conventional war in the Boer republics before July 1900, and some Victorians were still in Rhodesia in 1901.

Most of the Australian contingents raised in 1899 and 1900, then, joined in the unconventional, police-like activities of suppressing rebels, intimidating potential rebels and supporting loyalists at some point during the conventional war. Few Australians were shot and killed in this

⁶ Australian War Memorial AWM1 (Australian defence records predating Great War) 4/2 (reports from Smith); J Bufton, *Tasmanians in the Transvaal War*, Loone, Hobart, 1905. p 217.

⁷ Free State Archives PMP1 (Provisional Mounted Police personnel files), PMP13 (Provisional Mounted Police miscellaneous files), PMP17 (Provisional Mounted Police chief intelligence officer's letterbook); Transvaal Archives MGP3 (Military Governor of Pretoria inward correspondence) file MGP 596/00, MGP7 (Military Governor of Pretoria inward correspondence) file MGP 596/00.

⁸ Public Record Office CO417/306 (Colonial Office correspondence with War Office), CO417/308 (Colonial Office correspondence with British South Africa Company), WO105/30 (Roberts papers, cables from War Office), WO105/31 (Roberts papers, cables to War Office).

⁹ Australian War Memorial 3DRL/3058 (Tivey papers) folder 2, Tivey to mother 7 September 1900.

unconventional war, with the notable exceptions of Victor Jones and David McLeod at Sunnyside. Outside the Sunnyside clash the unconventional war did not seem like real war, and Australians who had come to taste real war did not like it. 'No kudos to be got out of this sort of thing' reported Sydenham Smith in charge of A Battery.¹⁰ 'Hard lines we can't go', wrote one of Riggall's Tasmanians in the Northern Cape when he learned that Pilkington's West Australians were leaving for the front line in the Free State.¹¹ 'We do hope it is the back door to Pretoria and that we will see some of the [real] work', wrote a Queensland bushman when he learned he was headed for Rhodesia.¹² The Rhodesian deployment seemed offensive as well as tedious to some bushmen. They had expected to be deployed as scouts for the British army, not as garrison troops for Rhodes and his Company, the same gang who had launched the Jameson raid. Methuen informed Roberts, with some exaggeration, that *all* bushmen 'look with the utmost disfavour on the Jameson Raid and Rhodes', and that Kenneth Mackay, commanding the largest bushmen contingent, had protested at finding himself under the command of Raleigh Grey, one of Rhodes' lieutenants.¹³ Against the Australian reluctance for and even distaste at the unconventional war, we have to balance the popularity of service in the provisional police forces. And the Australians could at least console themselves with the knowledge that suppression and intimidation, however unspectacular and at times distasteful, equalled liberation for local loyalists—though not all English South Africans saw it this way. To liberals like John Merriman, treasurer in the Cape government until mid 1900, the unconventional war was a counterproductive campaign that deepened local divisions and made civil war likely. If such criticism irked Australian soldiers at the time and helped paint a black record of their deeds, it also helped produce a mass local records on the unconventional war that allows to see a new and sometimes controversial side to the Australian contribution to the South African war.

The shooting of Jan Dolley had a political significance that made it not just a typical episode of the unconventional war but also an important one. Dolley probably seemed an minor human obstacle to Charles Cox, a railway clerk from Parramatta who knew nothing of South Africa's complex social relations and political divisions. But Dolley was a trusted family servant, well known and much loved in his district. His shooting was seen as a cold-blooded murder by local white farmers, especially those with little love for what seemed to them an army of occupation. There were protests to the army and the Cape government, then an inquiry. There were denunciations in the Cape parliament, denunciations that informed the parliament's decision to create a special court to punish crimes committed under martial law—those by soldiers enforcing it as well as those by rebels resisting it. A trial for Jan Dolley's murder was listed as the court's first case. Milner prudently suggested to Roberts that Cox be shipped back to Australia beyond the court's reach. But a deal was struck between the army and the Cape government. Soldiers inside a zone declared to be under martial law, as Colesberg had been when Dolley was shot, would not normally come under the new court's jurisdiction. Cox appeared before the court in October 1900 and admitted giving an order that allowed Smith, the policeman, to shoot Dolley; but under the terms of the deal Cox and Smith walked out of the courtroom free men.¹⁴ The deal

¹⁰ Australian War MemorialAWM1 4/2 Smith to Assistant Adjutant General 7 April 1900.

¹¹ Bufton, *Tasmanians in the Transvaal War*, p 140.

¹² L Harvey, *Letters from the Veldt: an Account of the Involvement of Volunteers from Queensland at the War in South Africa (Boer War) 1899-1902*, McTaggart, Harvey Bay Qld, p 48.

¹³ Public Record Office WO105/25 (Roberts papers, confidential papers)_folder 52, Methuen to Roberts 22 September 1900.

¹⁴ P Lewsen ed., *Selections from the Correspondence of John X Merriman*, vol. 3 1899-1905, Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1966, pp. 118, 174-5; Cape Colony *Annexures to the votes and proceedings of the House of Assembly*, 1900 vol. 1, no. A5 (magistrates' reports on enemy occupations and martial law); Cape Archives, AG 2071 box 1 folder 29, box 2 folder 1; South Africa Conciliation Committee, *Martial Law and Conciliation: being the Experience of Two Members of the Cape Parliament*, Cape Town, c.1900, pp. 4-5; Bodleian Library MS Milner

which saved Charles Cox from possibly the same fate as Breaker Morant offended even the staunchest loyalists in Cape Colony. 'The whole affair stinks in our nostrils', judged the *Colesberg Advertiser*, a local English-language newspaper.¹⁵

The Sunnyside skirmish of 1 January 1900 also ended in a court room in Cape Town. It began with a badly divided community. The expedition that brought on the skirmish was intended to rescue the loyalists of the Douglas district—women like Sarah Finlay, who had been threatened by two armed men outside her farm one day, and men like Rudolph Roessler, who had been told he must join the rebels within a fortnight or be shot by them.¹⁶ The soldiers who rescued Douglas's loyalists were hailed as liberators by a community expecting exile or even death as the rebel cause prospered, and it and they were celebrated by newspapers around the empire for having beaten the Boers in a dark period following of the defeats of Black Week. The Afrikaner newspaper *Ons Land* saw the event differently, noting sourly that 'a number of British troops took Douglas without opposition'.¹⁷ The truth lay somewhere in between. At Sunnyside the enemy was not the Boers but a band of two hundred rebels armed with a variety of guns—a similar band in size and cohesion and sense of principle to the Victorian miners who defended the Eureka stockade in 1854. The skirmish was a one-sided affair, and when it was over Ricardo's Queenslanders not only pursued rebels who got away but also searched the rebels' camp for documents that would identify and incriminate them. Enough was found to provide evidence for a series of trials that ran intermittently until July 1900, which several officers from the Queensland Mounted Infantry and New South Wales medical corps attended as witnesses.¹⁸ The trials were controversial, at least for Afrikaners and English liberals. John Merriman noted in his diary the day that 'forty miserable creatures, some lads of sixteen, nearly all them paupers, who were captured at Sunnyside, were tried and sentenced for high treason, poor wretches'. A few days later he wrote to his mother that 'I can never defend the prosecution of those forty paupers ... the case might well have been postponed and justice would not have suffered—if indeed such rank and file should ever be indicted'.¹⁹

John Antill's New South Wales Mounted Rifles squadron entered Prieska the day after Sunnyside, on 2 January 1900. Prieska's loyalists, like the loyalists of Douglas, feared the Boers and the local rebels and hailed their rescuers enthusiastically. In Douglas, though, the warm welcome may have worn off. Antill's squadron stayed for two weeks, and raided houses and impounded arms, ammunition, food, livestock, furniture, a blacksmith's forge, even a bearskin rug which one soldier kept to sleep on with an enthusiasm and lack of discrimination that offended many locals. When the squadron fired into a house in which rebels were sheltering they blazed away at anyone who fled—including a black man, probably a servant and certainly a non-combatant, whom they shot four times. They took the man to a doctor, but as with Jan Dolley's shooting the incident was remembered by everyone who bore little love for the imperial cause. 'These swashbucklers', complained John Merriman, 'arrested inhabitants, drove off stock, and shot a few people without greatly caring who they were'.²⁰ When the squadron pulled out of

(Milner papers) dep. 175, Milner to Roberts 16 July 1900; Cape Colony *Supreme Court Reports*, vol. 17, pp 561-8; *Melbourne Age*, 5 December 1900, p 11.

¹⁵ *Colesberg Advertiser*, 2 November 1900, p 2.

¹⁶ Cape Archives 1/DGS (Magistrate of Douglas/Herbert) 1/4/1/1 (high treason case affidavits) affidavit 501, 1/4/1/2 (high treason case affidavits) affidavit 59.

¹⁷ *Cape Argus*, 4 January 1900 p 4.

¹⁸ *Cape Argus*, 15 January 1900 p 5, 17 January 1900 p. 5, 18 January 1900 p 5, 8 February 1900 p 5; *Cape Times* 24 April 1900 p 7; Cape Archives AG 2067 (Cape Police correspondence on Sunnyside rebels) folder 10.

¹⁹ Lewsen, *Correspondence of John X Merriman*, pp 188, 198.

²⁰ Lewsen, *Correspondence of John X Merriman*, p 139.

Prieska in mid January they regretted that they had seen no real fighting.²¹ The townspeople may also have had cause for regret. A local official reported that the occupation had made matters worse for the loyalists, for when the squadron withdrew the rebels returned and were determined to take revenge for what it had done.²² Discontent over Antill's occupation of Prieska rose at the same time as the glowing reports of the Sunnyside skirmish appeared in the loyalist press, perhaps giving Australian soldiers a mixed reputation among Cape Colonists that varied according to political bias. Merriman recorded that his neighbour was 'full of grievances against the Australians at Prieska, their kidnapping the inhabitants and lifting sheep, leaving women and children to starve on charity'.²³

The death of Jan Dolley, the crushing of the Sunnyside rebels and Antill's occupation of Prieska show the dark side of the unconventional war and the Australian contribution to it—that is why they generated a wealth of records that allows us to see these episodes in such detail. But tact, mercy and deft competence were commonly employed in the unconventional war too, in civil as well as military situations, and praise from liberated loyalists and silence from civilians who barely noticed their army of occupation deserves as much attention from historians as do protests from angry Afrikaners. The lonely, frustrating garrison duties performed by A Battery in the Northern Cape showed notable diligence and discipline. So too the expedition in the second half of 1900 by Corporal John Malcolm, a thirty-year-old former detective who was attached to the Bloemfontein provisional police from the Victorian Mounted Rifles. In June that year Malcolm was sent to the Paardeberg battlefield in charge of some black labourers to dig for artillery said to have been buried there by the Boers when Cronje had been defeated four months earlier. After weeks of digging, Malcolm and his men unearthed two cases of shells, ten rifles, some ammunition, but no guns. Local intelligence suggested that some guns might be buried further west, but Malcolm suggested to his superiors that it would be more useful to sniff out rifles hidden by local farmers, and offer protection to white settlers from black marauders. He was ordered to keep looking for the guns. So he and his labourers trudged west, digging as they went. By October Malcolm was back in Bloemfontein, reporting that 'I have made extensive inquiries, and so give it as my opinion that all guns ... that Cronje had in the laager were taken by Lord Roberts'. There had been one bright spot in all this fruitless digging and questioning. One day in August, Malcolm had received the delightful order, 'Mr Peat with Lady Chermside and party arrive Paardeburg about Sunday. Place yourself at their disposal.'²⁴ We should place at ourselves at the disposal of the wealth of records that document the part played by Australians in the unconventional conventional war to learn more about how men like Malcolm helped secure imperial rule across southern Africa a century ago.

²¹ Australian War Memorial AWM1 4/8 (reports from Antill), Antill to Assistant Adjutant General 7, 16 and 22 January 1900, 8 February 1900; Barton, *Story of South Africa*, pp 59-62; F Wilkinson, *Australia at the Front: a Colonial View of the Boer War*, Long, London 1901, pp 55-9.

²² Cape Colony *Annexures to the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Assembly*, 1900 vol 1, no A5, pp 149-52. See also Cape Archives 1/PKA (Magistrate of Prieska) 4/1/7/7 (miscellaneous letters received), Frankel to civil commissioner 25 January 1900, and Van der Merwe to resident magistrate 31 January 1900.

²³ Lewsen, *Correspondence of John X Merriman*, p 142.

²⁴ Free State Archive PMP1 folder 71 (Corporal Malcolm), PMP15 (Provisional Mounted Police miscellaneous files) file C122 (hidden arms at Paardeburg); PMP17 ff 192, 200.

Movement of the 40th Regiment as Guard Detachments on Convict Transports 1823-1824

Clem Sargent

The 40th Regiment was formed as Philipp's Regiment in Canada in 1717. It had become the 40th Regiment in 1751 and the 2nd Somersetshire Regiment in 1782. The 40th served mainly in North America and the West Indies with occasional tours of duty in Britain and Europe. It was in the first and last battles of the Peninsular War and at Waterloo. It spent a period in the occupation force in France and then served in Scotland and Ireland until in March 1823 the regiment was ordered for service in the Colony of NSW.

Part I—The First Detachment

The 40th Regiment served in Australia twice—1823 to 1829 and 1852 to 1860. This part deals only with the movement of the first detachment of the 40th to New South Wales in 1823.

Crossing from Dublin to Liverpool the regiment marched across England, two companies to Deptford, four to Chatham, both stations on the south side of the Thames and the remaining two companies being stationed at Harwich in Essex and at Landguard Fort waiting call forward.

On 25 April 1823, four days after the arrival of the companies of the 40th at Deptford, the first detachment for guard duty on a convict transport, in full marching order, moved from the barracks to the naval dockyard on the Thames. There the three-masted, square rigged ship, the *Albion*, 479 tons, Bristol built in 1813 and captained by W R Best, had been fitted out under Admiralty supervision to the standard configuration for a convict transport and victualled for the voyage to Van Diemens Land with a shipment of male convicts. This was the *Albion's* first voyage to Australia as a convict transport, so the Navy Board agent had inspected the ship to ensure that the owners had met the charter conditions for security, ventilation, cleanliness and fumigation, the provision of beds and bedding space, and a hospital. The agent was also responsible, before the guard embarked, for the supervision of the stowing of provisions and water for both convicts and guards during the voyage.

The Surgeon Superintendent, James A Mercer, joined the ship at the same time as the guard. Mercer, a half-pay Royal Navy surgeon, was making his second voyage aboard a convict transport. Post 1815 the system of control on convict transports had been vastly improved by employing half-pay RN surgeons as the surgeon superintendents. An examination of the surgeons' logs in the period will show that they were responsible and competent to deal with the health problems encountered in a large body of men on a long voyage with few, possibly no intermediate ports of call before reaching NSW. The surgeon's responsibilities were defined in instructions issued by the Admiralty in the early 1820s for Surgeon Superintendents on board convict ships to New South Wales or Van Diemens Land. He was required to ensure that the ship's master fully complied with the conditions of the charter, including a prohibition on shipping private goods for sale in the colony. The Surgeon Superintendent had absolute responsibility for the management of the convicts, their well-being, imprisonment, their punishment aboard ship and their medical treatment, including hospitalisation. Neither the ship's master nor the officer in charge of the guard could order punishment of any prisoner, only the

surgeon could do that. He could not interfere in the navigation of the ship and was required to provide a medical service for both crew and the military guard.¹

Lieutenant Nathaniel Low commanded the guard detachment. He had been appointed an ensign in the regiment, by purchase, in May 1815, and promoted to lieutenant, without purchase, in November 1821. Although not an overly experienced officer he had with him two sergeants who would provide adequate support in managing the rank and file of the detachment: Sergeants John Baker and William Vile had both served in the Peninsular War, Baker from 1813 to 1814, while Vile had been there with the regiment from 1808 to 1814, taking part in twelve engagements. Both had been at Waterloo, as had six other soldiers of the detachment. These six may also have served in the Peninsular as, after the battle of Toulouse in 1814, the regiment had been shipped directly from France to New Orleans and on return in 1815 had disembarked at Ostend without landing in England. Unlike Baker and Vile they may have not survived to 1847 to be awarded the Military General Service Medal 1793 to 1814, certain confirmation of Peninsular service.

Low was fortunate that the men of his detachment were all from his own regiment as it was common practice, before and after the movement of the 40th, for guard detachments to be made up from small drafts of reinforcements, often raw recruits, joining their regiments in New South Wales or going on to India to join regiments serving there. The officers commanding these mixed detachments were frequently from unrelated regiments and, if young and inexperienced, unable to control the all too often ill-disciplined and riotous behaviour of their troops and, as often, of their wives.

One of the best known of the soldiers who reached New South Wales in a mixed detachment was Private Charles Fraser who arrived in Sydney in the guard detachment on the *Guildford* in April 1816 as a reinforcement for the 56th Regiment in India. After waiting seven months for an onward passage to join his regiment, Fraser wisely transferred to the 46th Regiment, at that time the garrison regiment in New South Wales, instead of continuing his voyage to India where there was a fair chance of succumbing to one of the tropical infections which beset the British soldier in that country. Coming to the attention of fellow Scot, Governor Lachlan Macquarie, Fraser ultimately became the colonial botanist and was responsible for the establishment of the Botanical Gardens in Sydney.²

The detachment on the *Albion* was accompanied by five wives and eight children. For service in New South Wales twelve wives and their children were allowed to accompany each 100 men of the regiment. Again, in the absence of any supporting records it is likely that only the senior and long-serving members of the detachment would probably be married; there is evidence from records on their arrival in New South Wales that Sergeant Vile was accompanied by his family.³

When the veteran soldiers in the detachment, those who had voyaged to Florida in 1814, boarded the *Albion* they would have recognised the similarity between the transports on which they had sailed then and the convict ship, as apart from the security features fitted to control the convicts, the layout of the convict ship and the troop transports was very similar. The ship was required to carry three boats. In the hold beneath the lower deck the provisions for the voyage were stowed, barrels of fresh water, salt beef and salt pork, and bags of biscuit, fresh vegetables while they lasted, lime juice and cocoa, and rum for the soldiers and crew. Aft, under the lower deck, the ammunition was stored, access being provided to this storage only through the after hatch. The lower deck provided accommodation for convicts, crew and the other rank members of the guard

¹ Charles Bateson, *The Convict Ships*, Sydney, 1983, p 51.

² Clem Sargent, *The Colonial Garrison 1817 to 1824*, Canberra, 1996, pp 34-35.

³ General Regulations and Orders for the Army, 1822, p 329.

detachment, and it was on this deck that the main measures to secure the convicts were fitted. A thwartships at the mainmast a heavy, nail-studded timber barricade with a single small steel door was built to divide the convict from the guard and crew quarters. In the convict section, just aft of the main hatch on the starboard side a section was partitioned off as a hospital, and opposite, on the larboard or port side, was a similar section for boys under sixteen years of age to segregate them from the older prisoners. Along both sides of the vessel, in the convict compartment, a double tier of open bunks, each six feet by six feet, to accommodate four convicts in each, were built. Each convict was allowed a bed, a pillow and one blanket.

The crew and guard quarters were two partitioned-off areas, similarly fitted with four-man bunks with the necessary number of beds, pillows and blankets. The crew occupied the starboard quarters and the troops the port side with married men, their wives and families accommodated in the stern section, their only privacy being afforded by scraps of canvas or cloth hung to create individual family areas. It is little wonder that in a voyage of up to six months' duration feelings between women could reach boiling point and that such domestic disagreements could cause great discomfort for the officer in charge of the guards.

On the main deck, under the poop at the stern, were cabins for the captain and the surgeon, each cabin about ten feet square, while along each side was a row of small cabins six feet by eight feet (1.8 x 2.4 metres) for single officers, their wives and for any passengers. Lieutenant Low was single but there were passengers for Sydney on the *Albion*, Mr Edward and Mrs Sarah Sweetman and their young daughters, Emma, Frances and Georgiana all travelling, no doubt, with the requisite authority from the Admiralty and the Colonial Office as Mrs Sweetman had been appointed Matron to the Female Orphan School at Parramatta and Sweetman, a postmaster at Ryde on the Isle of Wight, as Secretary to the Male and Female Orphan Institutions and the Native Institution. Between the cabins in the poop was an open area known as the cuddy; here a long table was fitted through which the mizzen mast passed. This was the dining and social centre for the officers and passengers.⁴

On the main deck between a barricade, similar to the ones on the lower deck, and the poop was the quarter deck; here members of the guard, their wives and families and the crew relaxed in fine weather. The captain, the surgeon superintendent and the officer in charge of the guard promenaded on the poop deck which was shared by the members of the watch not on sentry duty. On the main deck forward of the barricade, the crew worked the ship. Two 'caboooses' for the preparation of food were sighted forward of the fore mast, one for the convicts, the other for crew and guard. Mid-ships was the main hatch and forward of that, almost up to the foremast, the fore hatch was located. Both hatches gave access to the lower deck and the hold. Between decks strong nail-studded wooden stanchions surrounded the hatchways with a small, steel, triple-locked door opening into the convict quarters on the lower deck. The ship's longboat frequently occupied the space between the two hatches on the main deck. If the vessel carried any armament this probably consisted of two small calibre guns mounted on the quarter deck, to sweep the main deck, in the event of a mutiny by the convicts.

Lieutenant Low's first responsibility after settling his detachment into their quarters was to brief his men on the duties they were to perform on the voyage. Although the 1822 General Regulations and Orders for the Army provided detailed instructions for troops sailing on military transports or on East India Company ships the instructions issued for the management for troops embarked to do duty as a guard on convict transports were minimal. These instructions said :

⁴ AONSW CSO 4/5783, pp 472-473.

When detachments are embarked as Guards on board of convict Ships for New South Wales, they are to assist the Civil Officers, to whom the Care of the Convicts is entrusted:- In addition, therefore, to the foregoing Orders, it is the Duty of Officers in Command of these Detachments to afford every Aid to the Superintendents of Convicts, by furnishing such Sentinels, and adopting such measures, as they may deem necessary, for the Security of the Prisoners intrusted to their Charge.⁵

In March 1819, Governor Lachlan Macquarie, in a despatch to Earl Bathurst, Secretary for War and the Colonies, had requested that instructions be issued, not so much relating to the administration of the guard detachments, but to define the respective responsibilities of the ships' captain, the surgeon superintendent and the guard commander. If regulations were issued to surgeon superintendents in early 1820 it seems safe to assume that similar instructions had been issued to guard commanders for their guidance. Certainly detailed instructions were issued by the Commissioners for the Admiralty to the Surgeon Superintendents by May 1835, and to commanders of guard detachments as 'Regulations to be observed by Detachments of Troops embarked on board CONVICT SHIPS' in King's Orders and Regulations for the Army 1837.'

Although these regulations were promulgated relatively late in the period of transportation to New South Wales and Van Diemens Land, it is inconceivable, with the experience gained through 45 years of transportation of convicts to the new colonies and, before that, to North America and the West Indies, that some perhaps less formalised instructions had not been produced to guide officers undertaking this role for the first time in their careers. Consequently it is assumed that the regulations published in 1837 would have embodied any previous informal instructions and can be applied to describe the responsibilities of the guard detachment on the *Albion* in 1823.

The strength of the guard detachment—two senior NCOs and 30 Rank and File—had been arrived at by the need to provide three watches, each eight men strong, including a corporal as watch commander, a cook, who was only a member of the detachment, with perhaps no culinary qualifications or experience - the British Army did not provide trained cooks at that time, an officer's servant, and a small reserve to provide cover for any members of the detachment becoming unfit for duty through illness on the voyage. With one man absent from the four man bunks during a watch period, some greater degree of comfort was awarded to the remaining three compared to the convicts who remained four to a bunk for the duration of the voyage. There may have been an even greater easing of sleeping accommodation due to the segregation of the married personnel. The soldiers hung their accoutrements on pegs in the wall partitioning off the crews' quarters. Their packs, shakos, and red coats were stored in wooden boxes brought aboard by each man for that purpose and stored in the hold. The boxes also contained the white duck trousers and white canvas jackets to be exchanged for the cloth trousers and watchcoats (greatcoats) when the ship reached warmer latitudes. The muskets of the men not on watch were placed in an arms rack at the fore part of the soldiers' quarters. Lieutenant Low occupied one of the six feet by eight feet cabins off the cuddy on the quarter deck, where he had the option of asking for the installation of a fixed bunk or that a hammock should be slung.

With his men settled into their quarters, Lieutenant Low had then to organise them into the three watches and acquaint them with the duty hours in five watches of four hours each and two of two hours which would ensure a rotation of watch times. Each watch provided three sentries who were relieved every hour; during the day one sentry was sited at the windward gangway and was responsible for guarding the doors through the barricade from the main to the quarter deck, the other two were positioned one at each side of the front of the poop deck to observe the behaviour

⁵ General Regulations and Orders for the Army, 1822, p 325.

of the convicts allowed on the main deck. The remainder of the guard were stationed on the poop with their loaded muskets in a rack at the front of the poop.

At night the stations of the sentries changed; although one remained at the windward gangway, the other two were located one down each of the two main deck hatchways, separated from the prisoners by the cage-like structure. These two sentries were armed with pistols and cutlasses, supplied for the purpose by the ship's charterers who also supplied similar arms for the crew, to be used in the event of a convict mutiny. The sentries in the hatchways were to observe the prisoners, to prevent them making a noise and also to observe any unusual activity which was to be reported immediately through the guard NCO to the Surgeon Superintendent. At no time, day or night, were members of the guard to speak to the prisoners. This was a punishable offence. If approached by a convict the soldier was to call the guard NCO who would acquaint the Surgeon Superintendent of the occurrence for any necessary action. The sentries, in turn, were to call 'All is well' each time the ship's bell struck the half-hour.

The Guard NCO was in charge of the keys to the prison—the convict quarters on the lower deck—and carried out any instructions from the Surgeon Superintendent relating to the prisoners. The NCO posted the sentries, organised their hourly reliefs and supervised their duties, mainly to see that the sentries posted in the hatches did not go to sleep. The most common crime committed by the men of the detachments, particularly when on duty in the hatches, was to engage in conversation with the convicts. These breaches of discipline were usually punished by stoppage of grog. One of the sergeants was designated NCO of the Day and attended to the administration of the detachment, its messing, and as a representative for checking the issue of rations. He was also responsible for the cleanliness of the barracks.

Orders to the troops laid down the procedures to be followed should there be an alarm during the night. The guard on duty was to endeavour to prevent the convicts reaching the main deck through the hatchways; the next relief was to man the barricade and the third relief occupied the poop to act as reserve. The crew, armed with cutlasses were required to assist in defending the hatchways or the barricade and quarter deck. The final positions to be taken up by crew and guard were on the poop and within the cuddy where they could fire through the windows. A different drill was to be adopted for a day-time mutiny. In that case the watch on duty, reinforced by the next watch, would defend the barricade and the quarter deck and, if the quarter deck was carried, the watch on duty was to retire to the cuddy and the next relief to join the reserve on the poop. Troops were warned not to be diverted by the cry of 'Man overboard'. In the case of such an alarm the detachment was to take up its posts as for a mutiny. Should it become necessary for a convict to be flogged, a punishment which could only be imposed by the Surgeon Superintendent, and inflicted by the ship's bosun, a guard was to parade under arms on the poop. Low had sufficient time between settling his soldiers into the *Albion* and the embarkation of the prisoners to practice the guard in the drills to be followed in the event of a mutiny. In reality the drills would be carried out under the watchful eyes of the sergeants unless Low was a particularly conscientious young officer.

The loading of stores, the guard and the passengers completed, the *Albion* was towed down the Thames to the Nore and set sail for Portsmouth, where, on 8 May, 200 male prisoners, in shackles, were embarked from the prison hulks *Leviathan* and *York* (the latter pictured here). The hulks were decommissioned three and four decker ships of the line laid up as floating prisons to overcome the shortage of accommodation in conventional prisons. (they had also been used to hold POWs during the Napoleonic wars). Hulks were moored in the Thames, and at Portsmouth, Plymouth and Cork. The prisoners for the *Albion* were mainly labourers and semi-skilled artisans sentenced to transportation by the proceedings of County Assizes. Either these two hulks were very clean prisons or the prisoners had not been held there very long as,

according to the medical log of Surgeon Superintendent Mercer, they did not bring with them the two most serious diseases endemic to the convict transports—typhus, spread by rat fleas and lice, and typhoid spread in food contaminated, usually in its handling, by carriers involved in its preparation aboard ship or in the hulks. It is obvious from his log that Mercer ran a 'tight ship'. He was 'unwilling to take any sickness to sea' and at Portsmouth on 19 May transferred to the local military hospital Private John Walsh, one of the guard detachment, who had been ill for some time but who had delayed reporting sick fearful of being separated from his brother, Charles, 'to whom he was very much attached'.

On 20 May 1823 the *Albion* sailed from Spithead and 'after beating about in the Channel against unfavourable winds for four days was forced to bear up for Spithead again'. Private Walsh returned to the ship on 26 May, 'his complaint was subdued but he was in a very debilitated state and it was many weeks before he was able to mount guard'. Walsh was the only member of the guard to report sick during the whole voyage. Even for the convicts the voyage was a particularly healthy one with nothing more serious than 24 cases of 'fluxes' (diarrhoea), a common occurrence when the prisoners were put onto an extended diet of salt meats. After a few days at sea Mercer had the shackles struck off and for the whole of the voyage the prisoners were allowed on deck from eight in the morning to eight at night, weather permitting, although the regulations stated that only half should be allowed on deck at any one time.⁶

On 27 May 1823, as the *Albion* found fair winds and sailed slowly southward on the first leg of the voyage to New South Wales the guard detachment fell into the daily routine followed for the next six months. At 8 am the 4am to 8am watch stood down, discharging their muskets as they did so, usually at any bird flying close to the ship; the weapons were then reloaded and placed in a rack at the front of the poop where the members of the incoming watch not on sentry duty took up their position during the day, moving to the quarter deck at night. At 8am breakfast consisting of biscuit or porridge with cocoa, the same meal provided for the convicts, was served. After breakfast the off-duty members of the detachment, wives and children came up onto the quarter deck bringing with them their bedding for airing in fine weather. They shared the quarter deck with the crew and a variety of livestock—poultry, sheep, pigs and goats, in pens—carried to provide fresh meat for the officers and passengers. Duty men, under the supervision of one of the sergeants, cleaned the sleeping quarters, usually referred to as the barracks. Dinner, usually boiled salt beef, less frequently salt pork, pudding and peas, prepared by the detachment cook, was served in the detachment's quarters at 12 o'clock. That was the final meal for the day. One ounce of lime juice with sugar was served after dinner and soldiers, their wives and children over the age of twelve years received two noggins of rum mixed with three parts of water.

By 8 June the *Albion* was passing the latitude of Madeira; with the advent of warmer weather greatcoats and heavy clothing were stored away in the soldiers' boxes and duck jackets and trousers became the dress of the day, while off duty men were allowed to go bare-footed, an unusual experience for new recruits but not so for veterans like Sergeant Vile who was one of those who had marched out of his boots in the 1811 advance of the 40th from the Lines of Torres Vedras to the Spanish frontier. It is probable, although no evidence has been found during the records of this voyage to support the theory, that literate members of the detachment might try to teach their less lettered comrades and the children to read and write. Their major aid for this purpose would be the Bible which the more religious soldiers would have brought aboard in their baggage. Not all members of the British Army at this time were 'scum of the earth, enlisted for

⁶ Surgeon's Log — Convict Ship *Albion*, Surgeon James A Mercer, 3 April-17 November 1823, PRO, ADM 101, AJCP Reel 3187.

drink'; in New South Wales garrison soldiers had already taken an active part in the establishment of the Wesleyan Church.

In the evenings the monotony of the voyage was relieved by singing and dancing by the soldiers, wives and crew, particularly if a fiddle or tin whistle player could be found amongst the detachment, the crew or even the convicts. On some of the transports as the vessel crossed the Equator the traditional line-crossing ceremony would be held, with the oldest seaman in the crew playing the part of Neptune. As this activity called for space on the main deck for the performance of barbering, and the ducking tub, it was necessary to restrict the convicts to the prison deck for the duration of the ceremony. It seems unlikely that Surgeon Superintendent Mercer would have been prepared to deny the freedom of his well-behaved charges to allow the crew to indulge in this frivolity.

Shipboard life for Lieutenant Nathaniel Low, as befitted his rank, was more comfortable than that of his men. His cabin gave him the privacy of his own bed or hammock and limited space in which to store his clothes and the items needed for his daily life, but little more. He could, however, stow other belongings in the hold beneath the after hatchway, accessible should he require them during the voyage. Low took his meals, cooked by the ship's cook and served by the captain's steward, at the long table in the cuddy with the ship's officers and the Sweetmans and their daughters. There, too, he could play at cards, chess and the ever popular backgammon with his fellow members of the cuddy. In common with other young officers Low undoubtedly prepared for the long voyage by bringing aboard a small library and, like many of his contemporaries, he may even have brought a dog on board. He was attended by his servant, numbered as one of the detachment but whose main duty was to attend to the needs and comfort of the young officer. The servant would arrange for Low's clothes to be washed by one of the soldier's wives who for the sum of one halfpenny per week also washed the clothes of the soldiers in the detachment. Low's military responsibilities on board ship were minimal. He made a daily inspection of the barracks and periodic inspections of the men and their muskets but, with two experienced sergeants, it is unlikely that he had to check that the night sentries were awake and not conversing with the convicts through the barricades. When more than one officer accompanied a guard detachment it always became the unenviable duty of the junior officer to prise himself from his bunk in the middle of the night to check the sentries. It nevertheless was Low's responsibility to hand out punishment to offenders, normally by stoppage of grog but persistent miscreants could be confined in the 'box', a narrow coffin-like structure, forward on the main deck, in which convicts or soldiers could be confined standing upright for several hours.

Low took his exercise walking on the poop deck, the preserve of the ship's officers and the duty watch. There he could try his hand at shooting sea-birds flying over or near the ship; those unlucky enough to be hit and to fall on deck would be seized by the crew or guard and added to the pot as a variation from the daily diet of salt meat. Any fish caught by line or harpooned, usually shark, were similarly disposed of, although on a later transport, a sergeant expressed some distaste for further shark meat after he witnessed a school of sharks attacking the corpse of a convict, thrown unceremoniously from the ship. One less attractive recreation, by to-day's standards, was catching sea-birds, 'mollymawks', usually shearwaters, with a baited fishing line.

A less enjoyable duty for Low, one which would become more frequent late in the voyage when bad weather confined the off-duty members of the detachment to the barracks, was the need to settle disputes between the wives of his soldiers. Although numbering only five, closely confined on the last long leg from Cape Town to Van Diemens Land, it is inevitable that disputes should have arisen amongst women who may have walked across Portugal and Spain and accompanied their men to New Orleans and Waterloo, as tough and as hard as the veterans themselves, jealous of their rights and privileges and mindful of the welfare of their off-spring. As the *Albion* passed

the islands of Tristan da Cunha, in a last long reach across the South Atlantic towards Cape Town, one of the wives was delivered of a child, who, contrary to the usual, arrived in Hobart, according to Mercer, 'alive in health and thriving'. There is no mention of the birth in Mercer's medical log so it must be assumed that he, a naval surgeon, more practised in dealing with male patients, had no part in the delivery and that one of the other wives acted as mid-wife, a role at that time quite familiar to the women who followed the drum.

The *Albion* called at Cape Town to take on fresh water, vegetables and oranges to replace the already exhausted lime juice. Low would have taken the opportunity to call at the messes of the Cape garrison but it is unlikely that any members of the guard detachment were allowed ashore, there was always the risk of desertion. At Cape Town two more prisoners were added to Mercer's roll and it was with pride that he recorded in his final report that the ship arrived in Hobart 'without so much as a jammed finger on board', certainly with no loss of life. The final leg of the voyage from

Cape Town to Van Diemens Land had not been so comfortable as the first part as the *Albion* rode the winds of the Roaring Forties eastward to Hobart Town. 'From the Bank of Agulhas to the entrance to D'Entrecasteaux Channel in Van Diemens Land there was nothing but gales and hurricanes and consequently wet decks.'⁷ Consequently, too, the convicts and off-duty soldiers spent this part of the voyage below deck in the prison and the barracks. Although Mercer mentions D'Entrecasteaux Channel in his report, it is not clear whether Captain Best chose this shorter but dangerous passage to Hobart. It was in this channel in April 1835 that the transport *George III* struck the rock, now named after the ship, where 132 lives were lost.

The *Albion*, however, arrived safely to anchor in Sullivans Cove on 21 October 1823. After disembarking the 202 convicts and while still anchored in Sullivan's Cove the afterhold of the ship was broken into and the box belonging to Sergeant Vile forced open. From the box he lost 26 Spanish dollars but the loss was not formally reported by Lieutenant Low until the *Albion* reached Sydney where the occurrence was referred to D'Arcy Wentworth, Superintendent of Police, for investigation. Wentworth pointed out that the incident should have been investigated at Hobart and that there were no grounds on which the Board of Magistrates could investigate the matter in Sydney. This was no compensation to Sergeant Vile who had to become reconciled to the loss of his money, a considerable sum for a sergeant with a family to support.⁸

Sergeant Vile's nest egg begs some questioning; could it have been the residual of his 1817 prize money for Waterloo? It appears unlikely that the £19-4-4 awarded in 1817 would have lasted so long; could it have been loot from Badajoz, long salted away? On the other hand could Vile have purchased the dollars in London or Cape Town hoping to make a profit on their value in the colony? If so, it indicates an awareness by a veteran infantry sergeant, of the precarious monetary situation in the colony. It could throw light on how well informed troops were at that rank when warned for service in the colony. Obviously it was Vile's carefully hoarded contingency money. There are, however, no answer to these questions.

The *Albion* sailed on to Sydney with the first detachment of the 40th Regiment, to reach its final destination on Saturday 15 November 1823. Lieutenant Low and his detachment embarked shortly afterwards (the date of disembarkation is not shown in the Monthly Return), and marched to its quarters in the George Street barracks. The Sweetman family also landed in Sydney, Mrs Sweetman to take up the position of matron of the Female Orphan School and her husband, Edward, the office of secretary to the Female and Male Orphan Schools and the Native

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Lt Low to Maj Goulburn, 1 Dec 1823, AONSW Col Sec's Corresp, 4/1773, f 94.

Institution. Within sixteen months both husband and wife resigned from their positions on the grounds of ill-health, a genuine reason, it appears, as Sarah Sweetman died and was buried at Liverpool on 6 July 1825, to be followed by her husband two months later. The daughters, Francis, aged seventeen years, Georgiana, aged ten, and Emma, aged four years, were left orphans, isolated in a strange land, but all survived to marry, Francis three times, and to raise families.⁹

The *Albion* was followed by fourteen more transports bringing officers, guard detachments and families of the 40th to New South Wales up to January 1825 and reinforcements were to make up guards on subsequently arriving transports throughout the period the regiment was to garrison Australia. Details of the fifteen detachments that arrived in 1823 to 1825 are shown below.

Part II—1823 – 1825

Not all the voyages of the guard detachments of the 40th to New South Wales went as smoothly and as without incident as that on the *Albion*. On the arrival of the *Isabella* in Sydney on 17 December 1823, Surgeon Superintendent William Rae reported that 'a dangerous mutiny which was on the verge of breaking out amongst the prisoners' at the time the vessel was in latitude five or six degrees (Rae did not specify whether north or south) had been thwarted through 'the courage of one man' a convict Francis Keefe, who reported the existence of 'the horrid plot' to Rae. The Surgeon Superintendent immediately replaced the shackles on most of the prisoners, restricting the liberty and kind treatment previously allowed them. Bateson, in his book *The Convict Ships* has discounted the seriousness of the plot as a tale by the informer but Rae, an experienced surgeon superintendent, from the tone of his report, which was countersigned by the ship's captain and Captain Millar [sic], the guard detachment commander, was convinced of the seriousness of the threat. He listed in his report the names of the seven ring-leaders, recommending that they should receive harsher treatment than the remaining convicts after landing.¹⁰

The next convict transport of interest to arrive was the *Sir Godfrey Webster*; interesting because it had amongst its passengers the diarist G T W B Boyes, a member of the Commissariat Department taking up the appointment of Deputy Assistant Commissary General in New South Wales after languishing on half-pay from 1815, hoping to carve out a career for himself in the colony. A keen, if somewhat acerbic observer, Boyes recorded some colourful vignettes of his fellow passengers and their activities. Captain George Hibbert, the officer commanding the detachment of the 40th, which had embarked at Deptford on 18 July 1823, was described by Boyes as 'a little gentlemanlike, good humoured creature, fond of all kinds of fun and also the promoting of it—Sings Glees, reads plays with effect—plays a shocking game of whist and annoys no one with the disciplining of his men' His subaltern, Ensign William Williams, was 'a highly educated young Irishman of gentlemanlike manners and correct conduct, with sufficient wit to be agreeable without the least disposition to offend – has seen a little service; was by his father when killed at Salamanca and received a commission at the age of twelve'. Williams had indeed gone out to Spain at the age of twelve to join his father, also William Williams, a Cornet (Second Lieutenant) in the 11th Light Dragoons, in the hope of obtaining a commission, but William senior suffered an appalling wound on 18 July in the manoeuvring before the battle of Salamanca and died in the arms of his son at Salamanca on 12 August 1812. The circumstances

⁹ I am indebted to Mrs Janet Robinson of Wahroonga, for research on the Sweetman family in the records of the Society of Australian Genealogists, Sydney, on my behalf.

¹⁰ William Rae to Gov. Brisbane, 17 Dec 1823, AONSW Col Sec's Corresp, 4/1765, p 227; Surgeon Superintendent William Rae, Log 14 July-24 November 1823, PRO ADM 101/36.

of Williams' wounding are vividly describe in William Napier's *History of the War in the Peninsula*. Young William was awarded a commission, without purchase, as a cornet in the 11th Light Dragoons on 16 September 1812 but being too young for active service he was sent home on half-pay. He transferred to the 40th as an ensign on 10 August 1822.¹¹

Sharing the cuddy of the *Sir Godfrey Webster* with Boyes were fellow commissaries James Goodsir, accompanied by his wife and family, 'kind hearted Scots', and the newly-married Charles Howard and his wife; their amorous activities causing the collapse of their single bunks, overheard by their fellow passengers and, no doubt, dutifully reported for the amusement of the guard detachment by Mrs Howard's servant for the voyage, Mrs Radford, wife of Private George Radford. Also travelling with Boyes was William Sorell, son of Lieutenant Governor William Sorell, returning to rejoin his father whom he had not seen since the age of seven.

After embarking its cargo of convicts in London, the *Sir Godfrey Webster* dropped down to Sheerness, then to the Downs on 9 August but it was not until 2 September that the vessel cleared Lands End and began its southern voyage. Boyes recorded the detachment's part in prayers on the first Sunday at sea 'The convicts were gathered around the Companion. The sailors behind and the soldiers under arms with bayonets fixed upon the poop'. On balmy evenings, as the ship sailed into warmer latitudes, Boyes wrote in his diary that the passengers relaxed on deck listening to the songs of the soldiers and sailors, lying stretched on deck near the mainmast where they 'were opposing in friendly emulation the battles of Trafalger [sic] and the Nile to the Glories of the Peninsular and of the field of Waterloo'. On 20 September the *Sir Godfrey Webster* reached Santa Cruz, in the island of Tenerife, at the same time as the *Guildford* which had sailed from Portsmouth on 28 August. The passengers and the military and ships' officers from both vessels dined together ashore but on leaving dinner 'found all the men drunk and a terrible riot immediately commenced—soldiers, sailors, officers and men were all fighting together—their shouts and oaths were echoed, or ought to have been, from the neighbouring Mountains—the business continued at this height for about an hour—many an awkward thump was given and received that evening and many a powerful body laid low'. Obviously the ready availability of an unlimited supply of Spanish wine after three weeks on the ships' grog ration had inflamed the sensibilities of the detachments of the 40th and the ships' crews. In retrospect they probably concluded that a good time had been had by all.¹²

Both ships got under way by 23 September, their routes separating. Two weeks later the *Sir Godfrey Webster* experienced a heavy rain squall which contributed to the ship's supply of fresh water and allowed soldiers and sailors to 'cavort' under the heavy showers while the ship's livestock, four-footed and feathered, joined in the tumult. According to Boyes the noise was deafening. The ship was now approaching the Equator but the captain allowed no line crossing ceremony. As homeward bound ships were passed the opportunity was taken to send letters home. The *Sir Godfrey Webster* sailed well south to clear the Cape of Good Hope and then rode the winds of the Roaring Forties towards Van Diemens Land; Christmas was celebrated in the cuddy in style with a fine dinner; the crew got drunk but the 'soldiers kept themselves quite sober and of course behaved properly'. The ship tied up at Hobart on 27 December 1823 and 139 convicts were disembarked; one had died from a fall en route. After a nine day stay in Hobart the *Sir Godfrey Webster* sailed on to Sydney, reaching there on 17 January 1824 when Captain Hibbert, Ensign Williams, one sergeant and 32 Rank and File disembarked to join the three previously arrived detachments of the 40th. Boyes wrote to his wife, Mary, on 31 January and

¹¹ Peter Chapman (ed), *The Diaries And Letters of GTWB Boyes*, Melbourne, 1985, p 124; W F P Napier KCB, *History Of The War In The Peninsula*, London, 1850, Vol IV, p 254; *The Peninsula Roll Call (Challis Index)*, mfm NLA, Reel G7310; Returns of Officers' Services, WO 25/ 749. f 354.

¹² Chapman, pp 132, 137.

mentioned that the *Guildford* which had left Tenerife at the same time as the *Sir Godfrey Webster* had still not arrived in Sydney.

The *Guildford* had a more eventful voyage than the *Sir Godfrey Webster* as well as having a minor diarist on board. It had as passengers Sir Francis Forbes, appointed to the post of chief judge of the Supreme Court in New South Wales, accompanied by his wife, the Lady Amelia Sophia, who kept a brief diary, with two house servants and a butler. Fellow passengers in the cuddy were Mr Glennie, the two Messrs Dalhanty and Lieutenant Richard Thornhill, commanding a detachment of one sergeant and 32 Rank and File of the 40th Regiment. Lady Forbes recorded her alarm on hearing the clanking of shackles and learning that the *Guildford* also carried 160 less willing passengers, male convicts 'bound for Botany Bay'. This revelation was probably not as alarming as the news that while crossing the Bay of Biscay the ship had sprung a leak. When the *Guildford* put into Tenerife, to join the *Sir Godfrey Webster* it was assessed that there was less danger in making for Rio de Janeiro for repairs than to lay up in Tenerife. At Tenerife the activities of Spanish privateers, bringing in French prizes to the island during the hostilities between France and Spain over the restoration of the Bourbon King Fernando VII to absolute power in Spain, was daily expected to precipitate an attack by a French fleet.

The *Guildford* sailed from Tenerife on 22 September, heading for Rio. On the voyage the leak worsened considerably so that the combined efforts of the crew and the prisoners were required to man the pumps, the convicts working under a guard with loaded muskets. The leaking vessel arrive at Rio on 28 October, where the Brazilian government made available a hulk on which the convicts and their guard were quartered until repairs were completed. The ship sailed for Sydney on 26 December 1823, finally reaching its destination on 5 March 1824. Its arrival was reported in the *Sydney Gazette* of 11 March '...to the joy of the whole Colony, alarming apprehensions being entertained of her safety'. Lieutenant Thornhill and his detachment disembarked the day after their arrival, well pleased to be ashore after their 190 day voyage.¹³

The *Phoenix* transport, bringing Lieutenant James Butler, Ensign Richard Floyer, three sergeants, two drummers and 51 Rank and File, after disembarking 202 prisoners in Hobart, made an even more spectacular entrance to Port Jackson. Entering the harbour, under the control of the pilot, the 589 ton vessel ran aground on the Sow and Pigs, the rocks and reef which split the entry channel to Port Jackson between Camp Cove and Georges Head. The detachment disembarked on 6 August 1824, the ship was lightened, and, with the help of the boats of *HMS Tamar* and the *Prince Regent*, both in the harbour, was dragged off the reef. The *Phoenix* was damaged beyond economical repair, 'getting opened and breaking her back'. The vessel was purchased by Governor Brisbane for £1000 and spent the remainder of its life as a convict hulk at various anchorages around Sydney Harbour, holding retaken bushrangers until they could be transported to places of secondary punishment.¹⁴

It was not until 14 June 1824 that the Commanding Officer of the 40th Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Henry Thornton, embarked for New South Wales on the *Mangles*, with Lieutenant Molineaux Dalrymple, the Regimental Surgeon, William Jones, the Regimental Sergeant Major, Patrick Walsh, three other sergeants, two drummers and 50 Rank and File. This detachment, according to the regimental history comprised the headquarters of the regiment. Two months after embarking, on 19 August, Lieutenant Dalrymple submitted to his commanding officer a long report concerning a mutiny being planned by the prisoners, who had, it was believed, involved members of the crew in a plot to seize the ship. Again, Bateson has dismissed the purported plot as a play on the susceptibilities of young inexperienced recruits by some of the

¹³ Lady Amelia Sophia Forbes, *Sydney Society in Crown Colony Days*, ML, MSS 943, ff 9-15.

¹⁴ *Sydney Gazette*, 12 August 1824; HRA I, 11, p 553.

old lags and by the reports of an informer amongst them. Nevertheless action was taken by Thornton to meet the perceived threat. He ordered the sentinels to be increased from four to six and for the men's loaded muskets to be placed in a specially constructed rack on the poop. In spite of Bateson's dismissal of the plot, there appears to be sufficient evidence in Dalrymple's report to give some credence that a mutiny was being planned however ineffectively. Nothing more was heard before the ship reached Sydney where the Regimental Headquarters disembarked on 27 October 1824.¹⁵

While some of the detachment commanders, surgeon superintendents and ships' captains had grappled with rumours of attempted mutiny, and possible ship wreck during the voyages of the 40th to New South Wales, the surgeon superintendent of the *Minerva* was faced with a different challenge - an outbreak of typhoid. Embarking 172 male prisoners in London and sailing in mid-July 1824, after a month at sea Surgeon Superintendent Alexander Nisbit found that he had to contend with typhoid amongst both prisoners and members of the guard detachment. Nisbit, by prompt action kept the outbreak under control but by the time that the vessel reached Sydney he had treated 67 patients for 'continued fevers', hospitalising ten, losing only two convicts and one soldier to the infection.

Nisbit was of the opinion that the infection was carried by the ship, which had a history of previous outbreaks, but the likelihood of the infection lurking in the woodwork of the ship between convict charter voyages is improbable; it is more likely that the typhoid virus had been brought aboard by a carrier embarked from the Thames hulks where the prisoners had been held waiting transportation. There were no cases amongst the boy prisoners whom Nisbit kept segregated from the adults. Nisbit treated nine soldiers of the detachment who displayed symptoms of the disease. The fatality, a twenty year old recruit, Private John Hore, was treated and placed off-duty when the symptoms became apparent but, against Nisbit's advice, Hore returned to duty too soon 'as his fellow soldiers accused him of skulking'.

It is inconceivable, by present day standards of military man-management in the Australian Army, that a junior and inexperienced member of a detachment could have been treated with such neglect and derision, leading to his death. It is unrealistic to expect that either military officer on the *Minerva*, Major Kirkwood or Quartermaster Hales, would be aware of the state of health of each soldier in the guard detachment, but it comprised three sergeants, one, Joshua Baby, a Peninsular and Waterloo veteran, and two corporals, one of whom had been at Waterloo. Obviously the physical well-being of one of the junior soldiers did not warrant their attention or, perhaps, sympathy. Nevertheless the circumstances of Hore's death was sufficiently noteworthy for Alexander Nisbit to have recorded it in his Log.¹⁶

The arrival of the *Ann & Amelia* in Sydney on 2 January 1825 saw the last of the main detachments join the regiment in New South Wales. Reinforcements, as recruits joined the regiment in Britain, continued to arrive during the 40th's service in the colony as part of guard detachments on convict transports. Almost as soon as the first detachments of the 40th had disembarked they were despatched to various country stations in New South Wales and later, in Van Diemens Land. This aspect of service in Australia, the employment of troops in small isolated garrisons, was not conducive to the maintenance of discipline or the regimental spirit, and drew later criticism. In spite of this experience, the Inspecting Officer of the first division of the 40th Regiment to reach India in 1829 reported:

¹⁵ Lieutenant Dalrymple to Lieutenant Colonel Thornton, 19 August 1824, AONSW Col Sec's Corresp, 4/1782, ff 10-11.

¹⁶ *Minerva*, Surgeon's Log, 21 June - 20 November 1824, Adm 101/54, AJCP Reel 3205, NLA; WO 12/5336, 25 March - 24 June 1824.

The disadvantages the regiment has laboured under in being separated in various small detachments for nearly eight years, does not appear to have produced any alteration in the discipline and the interior economy of this division, which fully supports (from what I have observed) the excellent character they brought with them from Van Diemen's Land. ¹⁷

Movement of the 40th Regiment as Guard Detachments on Convict Transports 1823-1824

Date of Embarkation	Ship	Location	Date of Sailing	From	Ports en Route	Disembarkation Sydney	Details of Detachment
23 Apr 1823	<i>Albion</i>	Deptford	27 May 1823	Spithead	Cape Town	15 Nov 1823	Lt N Low 2 Sgt 34 R & F
5 Jul 1823	<i>Asia</i>	Deptford	9 Sep 1823	The Downs	Cape Town Hobart	6 Feb 1824	Capt P Bishop 1 Sgt 32 R & F
10 Jul 1823	<i>Isabella</i>	Deptford	?	Cork	?	17 Dec 1823	Lt H Millar 31 R & F (one died en route?)
18 Jul 1823	<i>Sir Godfrey Webster</i>	Deptford	1 Sep 1823	London	Tenerife Hobart	17 Jan 1824	Capt G Hibbert Ens W Williams 1 Sgt 32 R & F
28 Jul 1823	<i>Guildford</i>	Deptford	28 Aug 1823	Portsmouth	Tenerife Rio Cape Town	6 Mar 1824	Lt R Thornhill 1 Sgt 32 R & F
31 Jul 1823	<i>Medina</i>	Deptford	9 Sep 1823	Cork	Direct	31 Dec 1823	Lt F C Ganning Ens J Curtin Asst Surg P Coleman 1 Sgt 33 R & F
5 Aug 1823	<i>Castle Forbes</i>	Deptford	28 Sep 1823	Cork	Direct	16 Jan 1824	Lt Col W Balfour Lt J Richardson 1 Sgt 34 R & F
20 Dec 1823	<i>Prince Regent</i>	Deptford	13 Feb 1824	Cork	Rio	15 Jul 1824	Capt R P Stewart Lt W Sergeantson 2 Sgts 2 Dmrs, 52 R & F
25 Feb 1824	<i>Countess of Harcourt</i>	Deptford	23 Mar 1823	The Downs	Hobart	14 Jul 1824	Capt R Morow Ens J A Robertson 1 Sgt 32 R & F
Not in Regtl Record	<i>Phoenix</i>	Deptford ?	3 April 1824	Portsmouth	Tenerife Hobart	6 Aug 1824	Lt J Butler Ens R Floyer 3 Sgts 2 Dmrs, 51 R & F

¹⁷ *Historical Records of the 40th Regiment*, p 231.

5 Feb 1824	<i>Chapman</i>	Deptford	6 Apr 1824	Portsmouth	St Jago Hobart	18 Aug 1824	Capt R Jebb Ens G Moore 1 Sgt 32 R & F
14 June 1824	<i>Mangles</i>	Deptford	14 Jul 1824	Portsmouth	Tenerife	27 Oct 1824	Lt Col H Thornton Lt M Dalrymple Surg W Jones 4 Sgts 2 Dmsrs, 50 R & F
Not in Regtl Record	<i>Minerva</i>	Deptford ?	14 Jul 1824	London	Cape Town	20 Nov 1824	Maj T Kirkwood QM F Hales 3 Sgts 4 Dmsrs, 36 R & F Pte John Hore died at sea
14 Jun 1824	<i>Princess Charlotte</i>	Deptford	16 Jul 1824	Falmouth	Rio Hobart	1 Dec 1824	Lt & Adj W Neilley 2 Sgts 35 R & F
Not in Regt Record	<i>Ann & Amelia</i>	Deptford ?	8 Sep 1824	Cork	Direct	2 Jan 1825	Capt R Turton Pmstr R Moore 2 Sgts 26 R & F

The above table has been compiled from the following sources:

- Date of embarkation and ship—Historical Records of the 40th (2nd Somersetshire) Regiment, p 216. Three ships, *Phoenix*, *Minerva*, *Ann & Amelia*, are not identified by name in the Regimental Records but appear in the Monthly Returns.
- Date of sailing—Log of Logs, and is the date of departure from the last British port.
- Ports visited during voyage—Log of Logs.
- Date of disembarkation in Sydney—Monthly Returns, NSW, WO17/2307-2309.
- Detachment details—Monthly Returns, WO17 series and Regimental Records.

The following sources in addition to the sources mentioned in the references, have been used to provide background details for the experiences of guard detachments:

- Eric R Dibbs, Captain Charles Hamilton Smith of the 28th Foot, *Journal RAHS*, Vol ??, pp 131-135.
- George Mason, *The Journal of Captain George Mason of the 4th (or King's Own) Regiment of Foot*, Lancaster, c 1981.
- John Robinson, *Diary (manuscript) 1837-1838*, NLA, MS 1845.
- Nancy M Taylor, (ed), *The Journal of Ensign Best, 1837-1843*, Wellington, 1966.
- Ian Nicholson, *Log of Logs*, Nambour, nd.

Sgt James Rogers VC¹

Anthony Staunton

Victoria sent five contingents to South Africa as well as detachments for the 2nd, 4th and 6th Battalions Australian Commonwealth Horse. In all, over 3500 Victorian officers and men served in the war. Three Victorian soldiers who served in South Africa were awarded the Victoria Cross (VC). Only Lt Leslie Cecil Maygar would still be a member of a Victorian unit, the 5th Victorian Mounted Rifles (VMR) when he was awarded the VC. William Thomas Dartnell who also went to South Africa with the 5th VMR would be honoured posthumously in 1915 while serving with the 25th Battalion Royal Fusiliers in East Africa.

My talk today is about James Rogers, the second of these three who received the Victoria Cross as a Sergeant of the South African Constabulary (SAC).² He was a member of the first Victorian contingent to South Africa and returned to South Africa in 1902 as an officer of the Australian Commonwealth Horse. In the 1914-1918 War as an officer with the AIF he would see further service where he would be wounded with the Light Horse on Gallipoli.

James Rogers was born on 4 July 1873, at Woodside Farm, Moama which is on the New South Wales side of the Murray River just opposite the Victorian town of Echuca. He was the son of Welsh-born John Rogers, farmer, and his wife Sarah Louisa, nee Johnstone, from Sydney. Rogers was educated locally at state schools. In 1886 his family moved to Heywood in the western district of Victoria, where he later worked on his father's farm and joined the local company of the VMR. In 1899 he was 6 ft. 2 in tall, 12 stone and a superb horseman, tough bushman and crack rifle shot.

When the South African War broke out Rogers enlisted as a private with the 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry Company on 16 October 1899. He disembarked with his unit at Cape Town in November 1899. On 1 May 1900 Rogers was seconded as a corporal to the Provincial Mounted Police, Orange River Colony. When the 1st Victorian Contingent returned to Australia in November he took his discharge in South Africa and joined the newly formed SAC as a sergeant.

On 15 June 1901 Rogers was serving with No. 6 Troop SAC, commanded by Lieutenant Frank Dickinson. The troop joined a 200-man column of the Royal Irish Rifles which patrolled from Thaba 'Nchu³ to Tabaksberg in search of Boer forces. On the return march, about ten miles north of Hout Nek, the column came under Boer sniper fire. Dickinson with six men, including Rogers, waited in ambush at a kraal while the column returned to camp. They surprised the Boers and then Dickinson withdrew his men to rejoin the column. About two miles from the column about sixty Boers tried to cut the group off. When Dickinson's horse was shot, Rogers despite heavy enemy fire rode back, pulled him up behind him on his horse and carried him out of danger. Rogers returned twice more to rescue two men who had let go of their horses when they had dismounted to fire. He then caught and led back to the firing line two horses, which had escaped from other men.

¹ A Paper Presented to the 2000 Biennial Seminar of the Military Historical Society of Australia 9-12 June 2000

² Wigmore, Lionel in collaboration with Harding Bruce They dared mightily, Australian War Memorial 1986 and entry in Volume 11 of the Australian Dictionary of Biography p.441-442.

³ Thaba N'Chu the 'black mountain' pronounced 'ta-baan-choo'.

Lt Dickinson submitted a partial report on the 15 June action to the Senior Officer, SAC, Bloemfontein two days later and followed this report with an expanded version on 20 June:⁴

Acting on orders received I took 25 men to join Capt Sitwell's (R.I.R.) column of 200 men. We proceeded to the Tabaksberg Mountain, intending to operate in conjunction with four other little columns the same strength as our own. We saw small parties of Boers, but met with no resistance from any of these.

We then started back. When about 10 miles from Hout Nek and due North of it, the rearguard, consisting of the SAC were fired upon by a party of 6 Boers some thousand yards on our left flank. Thinking that if these Boers were not dispersed, they would continue to snipe us the whole way back to camp (Hout Nek). I took Sergt Rogers and 6 men and we chased them out of the kraal from which they were firing. I had posted the remainder of the rearguard in a kraal near to cover our advance, which they did with success. I then rejoined the main body of the rearguard in their kraal. The Boers had retired behind us now, and we could plainly see them riding about on a ridge, not a mile in rear of us. I therefore sent a message to Capt Sitwell and obtained permission to hide with 6 men in the kraal to wait for these Boers; while the rest of the column, including the 19 rearguard went on towards camp. This we did, and the Boers coming up fairly close to us, we killed one of their horses.

As the column was by this time some three miles off, I thought we had better overtake them. We had gone one mile from the kraal, and were still about two miles behind the main body, when on our right and left flanks up galloped two parties of Boers, they were about 60 in number as near as I could count. We fired a few shots at about 800 yards range hoping to stop them. This did not have the least effect, and as there was no cover of any sort, and we were hopelessly outnumbered, we were compelled to retire as quickly as we could. The Boers on the left flank came up within 400 yards, dismounted and opened a very heavy fire. They shot my horse, and as I was a little behind the men, I was compelled to run. The men who were nearest to me had not noticed this and did not hear me shouting but Sergt Rogers - who was right on our right flank, and whose attention had been fully occupied by Boers on the right flank, happened to look around and see me running. He rode straight for me firing at the Boers as he came, some of whom had by this time mounted again and were making for me. His and my combined fire checked those last, who dismounted again and started firing afresh at 300 yards. Sergt Rogers then carried me for 1/2 mile behind him on his horse. He then returned to within 400 yards of the Boers and carried away another man of the SAC who had foolishly let go of his horse when he dismounted to fire. He then returned again to the same place, and carried out another man of the SAC who had done the same thing. He then observed two of the Bedford Mounted Infantry running midway between us and the Boers: Their horses were galloping towards us, these he caught one by one and led to the two men, holding still for the men to mount. I wish to lay emphasis on the fact that this was all done under a very heavy rifle fire and that he was only covered by the rifle fire of 6 men on our side, which was of little use against such a number of Boers. By this time some of the main body had ridden back to our assistance and very heavy firing on both sides followed. The Boers had by now been reinforced by some 40 or so men in our direct rear. We all then fell back, endeavouring to draw the Boers on to within range of two 151b guns, posted on Hout Nek. However as it was getting dark, the Boers drew off.

The SAC had one man very slightly wounded, grazed in the forehead by a bullet which rendered him unconscious for a short time. This man, Sergt McGregor of No. 9 Troop, lay in a mealie field till dark and then walked back to camp, his horse having come in with us. He reports that when we got some way off the Boers brought up a mule wagon and placed 15 or 16 men on it having lifted them off the ground. He could not see whether these men

4 Public Records Office WO32/7476.

were wounded or dead. The wagon made off in the direction of the Korannaberg. Sergt McGregor got to Hout Nek at 10 o'clock and made his report to Capt Sitwell and myself. I consider his story probably true, as the firing was very heavy on our side, and the range short.

I wish to lay special emphasis on Sergt Rogers gallant actions. I consider he undoubtedly saved the lives of myself and 4 men. The Boers were sufficiently close to him and to call upon him to surrender; the only answer he gave was to fire again. I trust that due notice will be taken of this. Capt Sitwell is in a position to corroborate most of what I have said with regard to him, he having been one of the first of the main body to return to our assistance.

The report was signed Frank Dickinson Lt. SAC No. 6 Troop. To the Commandant Thaba 'Nchu, Lt-Col B R Harris, Lt Dickinson submitted the following recommendation:

I wish to draw your attention to the following facts.

1. That Sergt. Rogers of the SAC, the rearguard of Capt Sitwell's column having been unexpectedly attacked by Boers 10 miles N of Hons Nek, did at the risk of his life ride back to the spot where Lieut Dickinson's horse had been shot and carry Lieut Dickinson out of danger behind him on his horse.
2. That he returned again and carried out another man of the SAC who had let go of his horse when dismounting to fire.
3. That he returned again and did the same for another man of the SAC
4. That he then caught and led back to the firing line two horses belonging to the men of the Bedford M.I. which had escaped.

All these actions were performed under heavy fire and I cannot speak too highly of Sergt. Rogers brave conduct. I consider that there is no doubt that, but for him, myself and the four men would have either been killed or captured, thus giving 5 rifles and ammunition to the enemy. On two occasions the Boers were sufficiently close to Sergt. Rogers to call upon him to surrender, he answered by firing on them. I trust you will forward this report to the proper quarter and that due recognition will be made of Sergt. Rogers brave conduct.

N.B. Boers numbered about 100 in my opinion.

The recommendation was supported by Capt Sitwell:

With reference to the attached letter from Lieutenant Dickinson SAC I have the honour to endorse his high opinion of the conduct of Sergeant Rogers of the same corps. I was in a small force of 200 mounted men, returning from the Tabaksberg on 15th instant, when about 10 miles north of Hout Nek, the Boers commenced sniping the rearguard but were driven off. Shortly after, they again made a push with the apparent intention of cutting off Lieut Dickinson and his party and it was during this portion of the retirement that Sergeant Rogers performed the acts stated. I was myself a witness of the two acts numbered 1 and 4 in Lieut Dickinson's letter, and was particularly struck with Sergt Rogers coolness and gallantry.

In conclusion I would beg to bring this incident to your notice for such recognition of his bravery as you may think fit.

Recommendation for the Victoria Cross

Although Lt Dickinson's report and recommendation had been made promptly, the SAC does not seem to have considered the issue until 26 August 1901. The Chief Staff Officer of the SAC noted on the memorandum that called for details of Rogers' actions that 'such delay may

prejudice claim'. Two weeks later on 10 September 1901 the Chief Staff Officer forwarded the Victoria Cross recommendation to the Adjutant at Army HQ in South Africa. However the recommendation waited until 28 December 1901 when Lord Kitchener C-in-C South Africa forwarded the papers to the Under Secretary of War in London. A note, dated 3 January 1902, on the file at the War Office states that 'This seems a doubtful case and Lord Kitchener has not given an opinion. Should it be returned?' Three days later on 6 January the note is endorsed 'Returned for favour of Lord K's opinion- Roberts' and the papers were returned to South Africa the following day.



On 21 February 1902 Kitchener's replied that the 'conduct merited the reward of either The Victoria Cross or Distinguished Conduct Medal. Rogers was awarded the Victoria Cross in *The London Gazette* 18 April 1902. The award was the 69th of 78 awards for the South African War. The award was the first to the SAC but was the second last awarded before hostilities ended. The last award before hostilities ended was also the last action commended and was the second and only other award to the SAC. It was awarded to a medical officer Arthur Martin Leake who like Rogers would

serve in Worlds War One.⁵ There were eight awards gazetted after hostilities ended, two were late awards and six were posthumous awards made as a special exception to the policy not to

5 In 1914 Martin-Leake would be awarded the first bar to the VC.

award the Victoria Cross for action for which the recipient being commended was killed.⁶ The policy change allowing posthumous awards for future conflicts was not made until 1907.

4972

no duplicates of this discharge given.

SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTABULARY.

DISCHARGE CERTIFICATE.

This is to certify that 6241 Sergeant James Rogers was
 enrolled in the above Corps on 8th day of November 1900,
 and has served one Years one Months one Days, and is
 now discharged.

Character: very good

DATE 6th December 1901.

J. Dickinson, Capt.
 Staff adjt. S.C., Division, S.A.C.

Bloumfontein,
 (Date) 6th December 1901.

SOUTH AFRICAN CONSTABULARY
 CHIEF CLERK
 ISSUED BY

Discharge certificate

The award to Rogers was nearly 10 months after the action being commended. This was three months longer than the average for South Africa of 7 months (WW1 was 3 months). For the six Australian award the 307 days between action and gazettal was only exceeded by Howse with 315 (Bell was 141, Wylly was 83, Maygar was 80 and the Bisdee the first VC gazetted to an Australian was just 73 days after the action being commended.) Maygar of the 5th VMR was commended for action in November 1901, five months after Rogers's gallantry in June but his award was gazetted in February 1902 two months before Rogers.

Rogers returned to Australia late in 1901 and Dickinson recommended that his gallantry be recognised. Rogers was awarded the Victoria Cross on 18 April 1902 having previously been mentioned in dispatches.

A month later he again left for South Africa as a lieutenant with the 6th Battalion, Australian Commonwealth Horse. However, the war had ended and the battalion returned home.

Rogers tried to obtain a commission in the Australian Military Forces but was unsuccessful. He returned to South Africa where he served with the Criminal Investigation Department of the Cape Police until February 1904.

⁶ However, if someone survived the action but later died or wounds a recommendation would be considered. For example the award to the Hon Frederick Hugh Sherston Roberts who was badly wounded at the Battle of Colenso in 1899 and died several days later.

CERTIFICATE

Criminal Investigation Department
Cape Police District No.3, Cape Town

To whom it may concern

This is to certify that the bearer James Rogers VC has been employed in this Department since the 24th of October 1902 as a Special Detective.

During the time he has been here, he has always been most industrious and sober, and has performed his duties to the satisfaction of his Superior Officer.

He leaves the department this 16th day of February 1904 at his own request.

George Easton, Inspector
for Inspector in Charge
CID CPD3

On 25 April 1907, describing himself as a mounted trooper, Roger married Ethel Maud Seldon at Portland, Victoria and they had two sons. By 1912 Rogers was a marker at Williamstown rifle range and by the outbreak of World War I he was a range assistant. On 6 December 1914 he was commissioned in the 3rd Light Horse Brigade Train, Australian Army Service Corps, Australian Imperial Force. He was seriously wounded at Gallipoli on 4 August 1915 and evacuated to Egypt. He then served with the Anzac Provost Corps before returning to Australia on 18 July 1916. His AIF appointment ended on 31 December 1916 but Rogers remained in the Army performing home service duties until the end of the war.

Rogers resumed work at Williamstown as a range assistant, then in 1921 became an assistant storeman, Ordnance Branch, AMF, Victoria. He resigned in 1922 and resumed farming. He retired to Kew in Melbourne in the 1920's where resided with his wife until her death in 1958. In 1956 Rogers and his wife attended the Victoria Cross Centenary Celebrations in London with the Australian contingent. He lived the remainder of his life with his surviving son at Roseville, Sydney. He died in Concord Repatriation Hospital on 28 October 1961, and was cremated with military honours in Melbourne. His name is commemorated on a memorial cairn at Heywood. His Victoria Cross is on permanent display in the Hall of Valour, Australian War Memorial, Canberra.



The Visit of Field Marshall Lord Alanbrooke to Australia, November and December 1945

Alan Smith¹

After the end of World War 2 in August 1945, Field Marshall Lord Alanbrooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff of the British Army, began a world wide tour of the theatres of war in which the Allied forces had fought. He visited (among other places) Burma (now Myanmar), Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and landed in Darwin in his personal Avro York of Transport Command on 24 November.

While his crew rested and his aircraft refuelled, Alanbrooke went to a Rugby match where both teams were Aborigines, which event he commented favourably upon. Next stop was Melbourne, where he conferred with the Australian Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant Generals Sir Vernon Sturdee and his Deputy Sir John Northcott. He was able to present to them the views of General Macarthur in respect of the command structure being put in place for the British Commonwealth Occupation Forces of Japan (BCOF). This was the principal agenda item for his visit.² The frank discussions Alanbrooke had with his Australian counterparts centred around the refusal by the GOC of the British Indian Division to serve under Northcott, the BCOF Commander designate. He also met with General Sir Thomas Blamey, whose retirement had been announced.

On 26 November Alanbrooke, then suffering from a heavy cold, sore throat and headache, gave an impromptu speech at a Lord Mayoral reception. He visited Healesville Bird Sanctuary (he was keen ornithologist) before dining with the Governor General, the Duke of Gloucester. Next morning (at 0315) he was off to New Zealand. He returned via Sydney on 1 December, where he was welcomed by Lieutenant General Sir Leslie Morshead at Mascot. He met with the Lieutenant Governor of New South Wales and visited Taronga Park Zoo. Here he had the obligatory nurse of a Koala. Next day he flew to Canberra where he had an interview with the Prime Minister, the Hon J B Chifley. It is not recorded what they discussed but Alanbrooke was very critical of the way in which the Minister and Under Secretary of the Department of the Army dealt with telegrams from the British CGS. Alanbrooke wrote, 'He takes it upon himself to reply to telegrams without reference to the CGS and he represents military views in Cabinet for the Chief of Staff. He is no doubt capable but equally certain to assume too much power.'

It is obvious from Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke's diary entries that he tired of answering the same sort of questions from all whom he met, from the Governor General, Prime Minister and those of limited military experience or lesser lights who held simplistic views of military strategy and operations. Here was a man who had been at the centre of grand designs and events for five years, and for whom the post-war 'let down' was something to be handled by somebody else—Field Marshal Montgomery no less.

¹ Alan Smith was commissioned in the Royal Australian Artillery in 1954, serving with 21 and later 23 Field Regiments, RAA (CMF). He had regimental service with the Royal Artillery and Royal Canadian Artillery and transferred to infantry (2RNSWR) as a Company Commander. He was DAAG in HQ Communications Zone (Logistics) before being appointed DAA and QMG on 8 Task Force, his terminal posting. He was awarded the Efficiency Decoration in 1966. He holds a Masters Degree in economic history and writes on artillery history.

² A Bryant, *The Turn of the Tide*, pp 367-8.



Lord Alanbrooke arrives at Mascot and is greeted by Sir Leslie Morshead, 1 December 1945.,
Source: Fairfax Photo Library, ref: K/1/30/9-11 # 1

His government's agenda for his overseas visits to war theatres, Japan and Australia/New Zealand, was probably as unclear to him as it was to the incoming Attlee Labour Government. Its priorities in regard to defence of the Empire, especially those possessions in the Far East, had yet to be formulated. It was not long before it became clear that it was not a top priority.

However, arising from their wartime experiences of cooperation in the manufacture of defence materiel, the British and Dominion governments and defence staffs were still keen on some sort of relationship. The Prime Minister, Mr J B Chifley, had approved a minute (March 1945) from the Minister of Defence (Mr J Beasley) for Australia's proposals (viz):

- Full and continuous consultation;
- Periodical meetings of Prime Ministers;
- Ditto for Ministers of Munitions;
- Ditto for meetings at an official level.

This was developed by the bureaucrats and on 7 June the Australian Cabinet Defence Committee minuted 'there should be a plan, not only as a means of achieving strategic deployment of production capacity throughout the British Commonwealth as part of Imperial Defence, on an overall regional basis, for ships, aircraft and equipment that could be produced'. This was doubtless one item on the agenda for Alanbrooke's talk with Chifley.³

³ National Archives, File 14/301/292A, Minutes, 3 April 1945 and 7 June 1945.

When the Field Marshal returned to London he gave a press conference which the *Daily Herald* Military Correspondent reported as under, and which was dutifully reported in *The Age* of Melbourne:

'Field Marshal Alanbrooke stated that an new all-empire Chief of Staff is contemplated, foreshadowing much closer coordination of British Commonwealth forces. He has just returned from a 30,000 mile trip to war zones. ... Hitherto, divergences between various forces in armament, equipment, training handicapped the efficient cooperation of their forces. There were better training opportunities in the wider spaces of the dominions. If appointed the Chief of Staff would carry out the policies of the governments concerned.'⁴

Now this was too much for Mr A A Calwell, Minister for Information, an ardent patriot who was naturally suspicious of any utterance originating in London concerning Australia. His department monitored all media commentary, and after it had been brought to his attention he fired off an immediate minute to Prime Minister Chifley. He said, 'Prima facie the statement ... gives great cause for concern to all of us who have fought against Imperial Federation or any diminution of Australia's right to control and direct Australian forces without reference to any authority outside this country. The Field Marshal would wish this to be so.'⁵

Calwell went on to ask his Prime Minister to raise the matter before War Cabinet, and said '... could not some indication be given to Australia's traditional attitude in regard to "interweaving of policy and strategy".' He did not have to wait long. On 24 December, War Cabinet approved a memo prepared by Sir Frederick Shedden, Secretary for Defence. It stated:

'The following directions have been given:

All specific proposals relating to Empire cooperation in Post War Defence policy shall be subject to approval by the Government. This is in accordance with the principle that any arrangements for cooperation are subject to the sovereign control of each part of the Empire by its own people, parliament and government.

Before consideration by government there would be a review by Higher Defence Machinery from a Defence [department] aspect.

Where consultation involves the United Kingdom government, proposals involving cooperation in Empire defence will be referred by the Prime Minister to the Resident Minister in London for action accordingly.'⁶

This went forward to Alanbrooke, who replied on 29 January 1946:

'The whole question of Higher Defence organization in UK is now under examination. I am afraid our views are not sufficiently firm to give you any indications of value at this stage. I hope that under whatever machinery is adopted, the British and Australian Chiefs of Staffs will be free to exchange views on matters other than major policy issues.'⁷

There the matter rested while both Governments wrestled with more important domestic political issues. The AMF hierarchy were keen to keep in step with British systems, training, equipment and practices, which policy they adopted for many years.

⁴ *ibid*, press cutting, *The Age*, 27 December 1945.

⁵ *ibid*, Minute, 27 December 1945.

⁶ National Archives, File 43/19, Minute from Secretary for Defence to War Cabinet, dated 24 December 1945. There were some other bureaucratic/administrative provisos at paras 4 to 6.

⁷ Letter, CIGS/BM/25/391, Field Marshal Alanbrooke to Sir Frederick Shedden, KCMG, OBE, of 29 January 1946.

After Canberra Alanbrooke flew non-stop to Perth. On 4 December he was airborne for Cocos and Singapore, and he made his final comments about Australia. He diarised ‘... everywhere enjoying boundless hospitality. They were all kindness itself’, he wrote, but ‘Country Clubs are not in my line at all! I am too old to go on talking nonsense to people I am unlikely ever to meet again. I find it exhausting. I leave Australia with many regrets and wish I could have spent more time here, and at the same time thank God that I came out even for these few days. I have now at least a very hazy outline picture of both New Zealand and Australia, and impression of vast amounts of blotting paper capable of soaking up humanity. Countries full of problems, and I carry away uneasy feelings from Sydney and Melbourne of too much luxury when there is still a rough and rocky road to follow in the development of the country. I expected to find a hardier type and less luxury-loving breed of men. However, I only visited large cities and not the outback country...’⁸

A snapshot of the end of 1945

At the time of Alanbrooke’s visit the ACTU was in dispute with the communist-led ironworkers, miner’s and seamen’s unions. They were calling strikes and fomenting widespread discontent, a post-war world-wide phenomena. Beer supplies for Christmas were in jeopardy. The Ministers for Defence and the Army had their problems.

General Sir Thomas Blamey had just retired and Mr. Justice Ligertwood was conducting an inquiry into Major General Gordon Bennett’s escape from Singapore in 1942. There was a push for Compulsory Military Service from the RSL. Australian troops were helping to restore civil order in the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia).

In Parliament (apart from the strikes) the Speaker of the House of Representatives (Mr Sol Rosevear) was preparing the House for a referendum to alter the Constitution. The possibility of taking immigrants from war-affected countries was mooted.⁹ Plus ça change ...

Viscount Alanbrooke was raised to the peerage in December 1945 by which time he became the most highly decorated and acclaimed soldier in the British Army. He was educated in Ireland and France, and after graduating from the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich was allotted to the Royal Horse Artillery, where he gained his prestigious ‘jacket’. He had come a long way since 1916 on the Western Front when he was Brigade Major, Royal Artillery of 18th Division. He went on to become Staff Officer Royal Artillery (SORA) Canadian Corps and his biographer noted that ‘His initial and greatest reputation as a gunner staff officer in I Canadian Corps was for the plan he drew up and executed for the capture of Vimy Ridge.’

Alanbrooke made his reputation for strategic and tactical vision in the disastrous campaign in northern France and the rescue of the British Expeditionary Force in 1940. He was appointed Chief of the General Staff and represented Imperial interests at the highest level during the war.

In addition to his Imperial honours, including the Order of Merit, he was awarded chivalrous honours of France, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Portugal. Alanbrooke was the most highly decorated soldier ever to visit Australia.¹⁰

⁸ H Fraser, *Alanbrooke*, pp 507, 508.

⁹ *Sydney Morning Herald and The Age*.

¹⁰ *Who’s Who* and Fraser, *ibid*, p 512.

Obituary

John Laffin – 1922-2000

John Laffin, journalist, teacher, author, lecturer and historian died in Canberra in September after a long illness. He was a prolific author with 130 books to his name. Many of his books concerned military history and I have had his book *Digger* on my bookshelf for many years and regularly enjoy re-reading it. His last book, published just before his death, was his autobiography, *A Kind of Immortality* (Kangaroo Press).

Laffin's parents both served in WWI, his father in the 20th Battalion and his mother as a nurse. In 1940, aged 24, having worked with *Smith's Weekly* and *The Wagga Advertiser*, he enlisted in the 2nd AIF. He trained as an infantryman and later completed an officer course before serving in New Guinea. While convalescing in Sydney in 1943 he met his wife Hazelle, a young VAD.

After the war Laffin worked for a number of newspapers and magazines, wrote short novels and began his own feature service and editing unit. With his family he left for England in 1956 where he resided for nearly 40 years. He wrote articles for Australian newspapers and taught English, history and geography in secondary colleges.

Laffin travelled extensively in Europe, especially the Western Front areas of WWI and in the Middle East. He returned to Australia in 1995 but Hazelle developed heart problems and died in early 1997. He is survived by his partner, Anny two daughters, Bronwen and Pirenne, and a son, Craig.

—Anthony Staunton

Members' Notices

Joe Furphy's, 'Around the Water Cart' will be back for the next edition.

Information Request - The AIF in Ireland, 1919

From Peter Thomas, GPO Box 89, DARWIN NT 0801

My family history is that RQMS Edwin Howard Rice, MSM, 51st Bn, AIF, spent some time in Ireland before being returned to Australia. I don't know that the whole Battalion went, but I gather he wasn't alone, and it wasn't on holiday. He reminisced that the British thought the Irish would throw less rocks at the slouch-hatted diggers than they would at the poms. Mr Rice remarked that experiment proved unsuccessful, so far as he was concerned, and he recalled being struck several times.

I have read about the Diggers who signed on for more (Russian campaign), and I suppose some Australians may have volunteered for the Black & Tans, but I've not encountered any reference to an Australian unit being posted to Ireland.

Comment from Anthony Staunton:

Is there anything in the Unit History of the 51st Battalion from 1916-1919 by Neville Browning (skip@starwon.com.au)?

I would be surprised if any AIF units were sent to Ireland but many individuals visited on leave. Some may have gone for training or education. I hope none joined the blacks and tans

but if any did and you find their names check the WWI Nominal Roll to see if they were discharged instead of RTA. I do remember a paper at an AWM History Conference about 10 or so years ago about an AIF Catholic priest being court marshalled in Ireland.

ANZAC Officers killed at Gallipoli

John Meyers (PO Box 618, Bribie Island QLD 4507, johnmeyers@daleandmeyers.com.au, ph 07 4129 2477) intends to produce a CD and possibly a book of biographies of all the ANZAC officers who died as a result of service at Gallipoli. He now has photos of all but 27 of the 507 officers (see <http://www.surflin.ne.jp/3dolans/Anzac%20Pages/Index.html>). He seeks assistance from readers to locate photos of the following officers:

Lt Herbert Alexander BIGGSLEY, 6 Bn	Lieut Talisker Donald McLEOD, 3 Bn
Capt Philip Ignatius CALLARY, 9 LHR	2 Lt John Laidley MERIVALE, 4 Bn
Capt Sydney Reynold CLEMENT, 5 Bn	Capt Alfred Harold POSSINGHAM, 8 Bn
2 Lt Joseph Henry COOKE, 11 Bn	Lieut Harold Edwy Colston RUDDOCK, 28 Bn
2 Lt Robert Twentyman FAIRCLOUGH, 6 Bn	2 Lt John Reginald SHALLBERG, 8 Bn
Lieut William Dalziel Seymour FINLAY, 24 Bn	2 Lt Harold George SMITH, 15 Bn
Capt William Stanley FRAYNE, 10 Bn	2 Lt William SUTHERLAND, 13 Bn
* 2 Lt George Holt HENDERSON-SMITH, 11 Bn	2 Lt Walter Hervey THYER, 16 Bn
2 Lt James HOME, 4 Bn	2 Lt Harold Freeman TIPPET, 24 Bn
Capt Alfred John JAFFRAY, 9 LHR	Lieut Robert WARREN, 14 Bn
2 Lt George Arthur LEAKE, 10 LHR	Capt William Organ WILLIS, 15 Bn
2 Lt William Henry LYNCH, 4 Bn	2 Lt Cecil Sturt WILSON, 8 LHR
2 Lt John Edmund MARSHALL, 6 Bn	2 Lt Valentine BLAKE, Canterbury Bn NZEF
2 Lt Thomas Edward McGOWAN, 3 Bn	

* It is noted that a brass engraved photo of Henderson-Smith hangs on a wall at the AWM.

Victoria Cross Presentations and Locations

Victoria Cross Presentations and Locations by Dennis Pillinger and Anthony Staunton is an attempt to make assessable information often not covered in works on the Victoria Cross and to present that information in a simple and easy to follow manner. The new book includes a chapter on when and where the VC was presented to VC recipients. It updates the alphabetic, museum, regimental and sales chapters on locations that originally appeared in the 1991 and 1997 editions of the Victoria Cross Locator.

\$18 (POSTAGE PAID)

Cheques to:

Anthony Staunton
PO Box 354
WODEN ACT 2606

Further information anthony.staunton@pcug.org.au (VCPL on subject line)

**THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
FEDERAL COUNCIL
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2000**

	2000		1999	
	\$		\$	
RECEIPTS				
Subscriptions	7390		9050	
less Capitation	<u>216</u>	7174	<u>266</u>	8784
Interest				
Bank	67		25	
Investment	<u>455</u>	522	<u>503</u>	528
Sales				
Sudan Book	40		54	
Sabretache	<u>1199</u>	1239	<u>962</u>	1016
Donations		150		-
Korean War Memorial		50		-
Sundry Income		<u>3</u>		<u>78</u>
		<u>9138</u>		<u>10406</u>
PAYMENTS				
Publication of Sabretache		5200		5200
Index to Sabretache		4250		-
Postage of Sabretache		1102		1188
ADFA Prize		200		-
Korean War Memorial		50		-
Federal Council Expenses				
Postage	50		166	
Stationary			228	
PO Box	45		45	
Audit Fee	80		75	
Melbourne Conference	-		160	
Goods and Services Tax	3		-	
Sundry Expenses	<u>102</u>	<u>280</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>696</u>
		<u>11082</u>		<u>7084</u>
Surplus of Receipts over Payments			3322	
Deficit of Payments over Receipts		(1944)		

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AS AT 30 JUNE 2000**

	2000		1999
	\$		\$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash at Bank	10295		12694
Investment	<u>11306</u>		<u>10851</u>
Total Assets	<u>21601</u>		<u>23545</u>
Net Assets	<u>21601</u>		<u>23545</u>
ACCUMULATED FUND			
Balance 1 July-	23545		20223
Surplus/(Deficit) for Period	<u>(1944)</u>		<u>3322</u>
Balance 30 June	<u>21601</u>		<u>23545</u>

N S Foldi
Hon Treasurer
28 July 2000

AUDITOR'S REPORT

I have examined the records of the Military Historical Society of Australia Federal Council and in my opinion the attached accounts comprising the Statement of Assets and Liabilities and the Statement of Receipts and Payments represent a true and fair view of the Council's operations for the year ended 30 June 2000.

L G Carder FCPA
Auditor
8 August 2000

THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA FEDERAL COUNCIL NOTES TO AND FORGO PART OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2000

1. The deficit of receipts to payments is the result of
 - the payment of \$4250 for an index to *Sabretache* ; and
 - a reduction in subscriptions received.

As to the first, Federal Council judged this to be in the interest of members. The second is of concern, although partially offset by sales of *Sabretache*. The financial position remains substantial, but Branches might consider ways of increasing membership.

2. The rise in Sundry Expenses is due to a refund \$80 for an overpayment by a member for copies of articles from *Sabretache*.

3. The receipt and payment-in regard to the Korean War Memorial resulted from a proposal from a Branch for a Society donation to this memorial, backed by a cheque for \$50. Federal Council contacted all Branches but no other support was gained. The \$50 was returned -so that they could make their own arrangements.

4. In past years donations have been included in Sundry Income. As this source seems to be increasing it is separately reported.

5. Federal Council has adopted a position on the Goods and Services Tax which will mean that we will pay tax on purchases but not collect tax on goods and services supplied. Subscriptions and the annual purchase price of *Sabretache* will remain at \$30 and the situation will be kept under review.

6. Investment interest continues to reflect rates generally available.

7. The value of stock on hand of the Sudan Book (at cost) as at 30 June was \$40. As this figure is not now significant it will not be reported in the future.

N S Foldi
Hon Treasurer
28 July 2000

MHSA Branch Office Bearers

ACT

President
Vice-President
Secretary/Treasurer

Col Simpson
Brad Manera
Graham Wilson
234 Beasley St
Farrer ACT 2617
02 6286 7702 (h)
02 6265 4560 (w)

4th Monday of the month
Feb to Nov at 7.30 pm
Upstairs
Canberra City RSL
Moore St Civic

ALBURY-WODONGA

President/Secretary

Nigel Horne
PO Box 679
Albury NSW 2640
02 6056 7260 (h)
0407 058 706 (w)
Russell Johnston
Don Campbell

1st Monday at 7.30 pm, even
numbered months (Feb, Apr, etc)
8/13 VMR Museum
Bandiana Army Base
Wodonga

Vice President
Treasurer

GEELONG

President
Vice-President
Secretary

Robin Mawson
Ian Barnes
Steve Chilvers
110 Beacon Point Road
Clifton Springs Vic 3222
03 5253 1176 (h)
03 5249 3222 (w)
Rob Rytir

1st Friday of the month. 7.30 pm
Osborne Naval Museum
North Geelong

Treasurer

QUEENSLAND

President
Vice-President
Secretary/Treasurer

Don Wright
Dave Radford
Syd Wigzell
17 Royal St
Alexandra Hills Qld 4161
07 3824 2006
07 3395 1843

7.30 pm, 4th Monday of the
month except December
Yeronga Service Club
Fairfield Road
Yeronga Brisbane

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

President
Vice-President Secretary

Tony Rudd
Tony Harris
PO Box 550
Mitcham SA 5062
08 82718619 (h)
08 8226 4779 (w)
John Lawrence

8 pm, 2nd Friday each month
except Good Friday
Army Museum of SA
Keswick Barracks
Anzac Highway, Keswick

Treasurer

VICTORIA

President
Vice-President
Secretary

Steve Gray
Robbie Dalton
George Ward
7 McKenzie Crt
Croydon Vic 3136
03 9725 2916
Bill Black

4th Thurs of month except Dec
Toorak Bowling Club
Mandeville Cres
Toorak
8.15 pm

Treasurer

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

President
Vice-President
Secretary/Treasurer

Russell Mehan
Ian Macfarlan
Peter Bamforth
23 Sweeney Way
Padbury WA 6025
08 9307 7780

3rd Wednesday of the month
Fremantle Army Museum
7.30 pm

Notes from the Editor on contributions to *Sabretache*

While the following are merely guidelines, it certainly helps the Editor in preparing copy for publication if these guidelines are followed. Nevertheless, potential contributors should not be deterred by them if, for example, you do not have access to computers or typewriters. Handwritten articles are always welcome, although, if publication deadlines are tight, they might not be published until the next issue.

Typewritten submissions are preferred. Material should be double spaced with a margin. If your article is prepared on a computer please send a copy on a 3.5' disk (together with a paper copy).

Please write dates in the form 11 June 1993, without punctuation. Ranks, initials and decorations should be without full-stops, eg, Capt B J R Brown MC MM.

Please feel free to use footnotes, which should be grouped at the end of the article (however, when published in *Sabretache* they will appear at the foot of the relevant page). As well as references cited, footnotes should be used for asides that are not central to the article.

Photos to illustrate the article are welcomed and encouraged. However, if you can, forward copies of photos rather than originals.

Articles, preferably, should be in the range of 2,000-2,500 words (approx 4 typeset pages) or 5,000-7,000 words (approx 10 typeset pages) for major feature articles. Articles should be submitted in accordance with the time limits indicated on page 2. Recently, lateness in receiving articles has meant that the Journal has been delayed in publication. Nevertheless, where an article is of particular importance, but is received late, the Editor will endeavour to publish the article if possible and space permitting.

Authors of published articles retain copyright of their articles, but once an article is published in *Sabretache*, the Society, as well as the author, each have the independent right to republish (electronically or in print), or licence the use of the article.

Elizabeth Topperwien
Editor

✂

Application for Membership

I/*We
(Name/Rank etc.)

Of (Address)

hereby apply for membership of the MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA and wish to be admitted as a *Corresponding Member/*Subscriber to *Sabretache* /*Branch Member of the

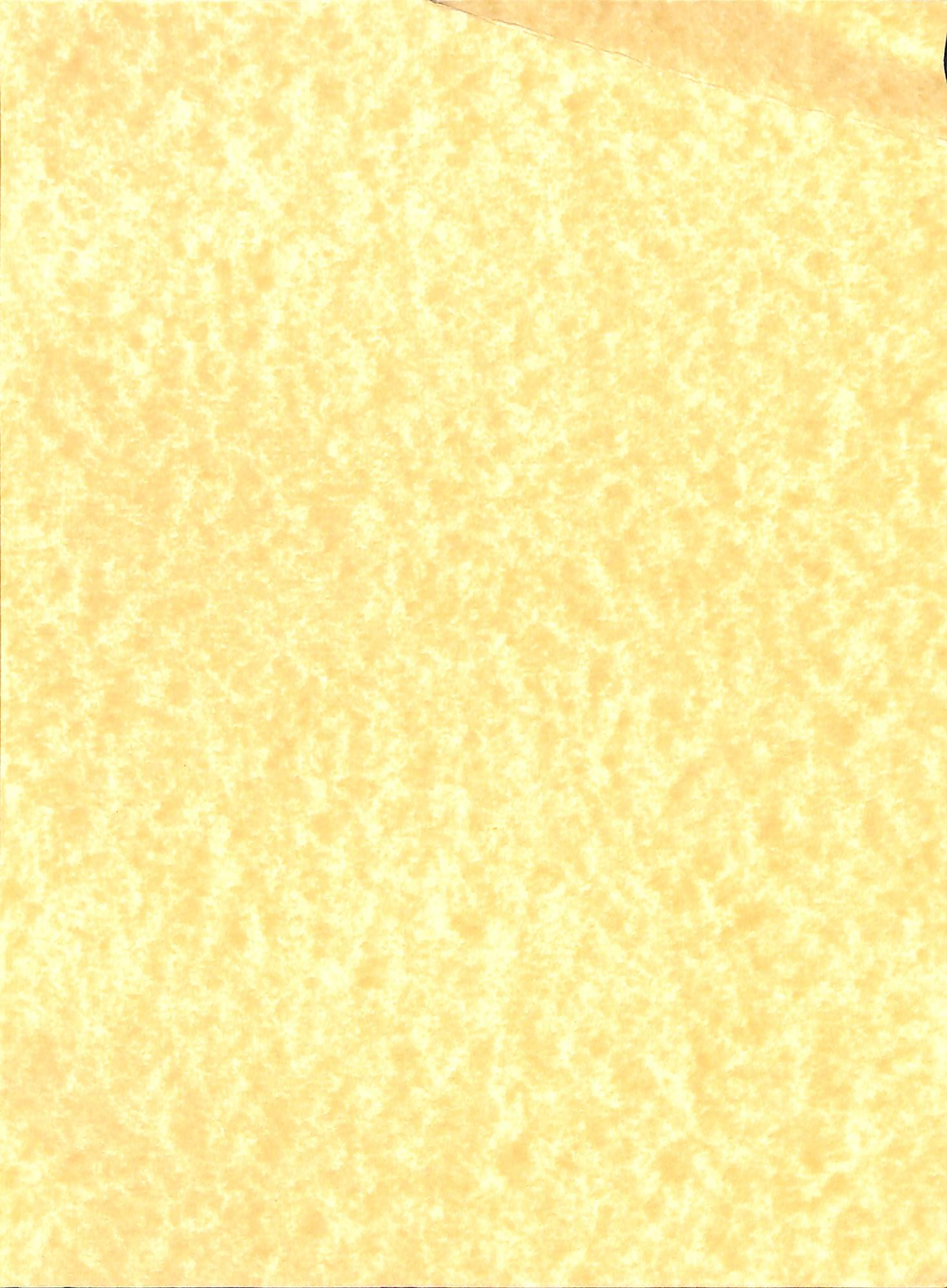
..... Branch

My main interests are

I/*We enclose remittance of A\$30.00 being annual subscription, due 1 July each year.

Send to: Federal Secretary, PO Box 30, Garran, ACT 2605, Australia





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