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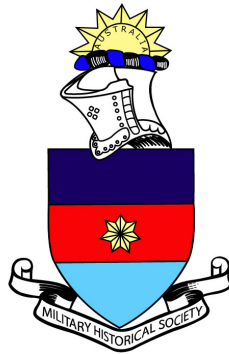
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www.mhsa.org.au

Military Historical Society of Australia
PO Box 5030, Garran, ACT 2605.
email: webmaster@mhsa.org.au

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WITH HORSE AND MORSE IN MESOPOTAMIA: THE HISTORY OF A UNIT HISTORY

Dr Paul Skrebels

Late in 1927 there appeared an addition to the steadily growing list of Australian army unit histories of the Great War, called *With Horse and Morse in Mesopotamia: The Story of Anzacs in Asia*. Despite its almost playful title, the work was reviewed earnestly and very favourably. F.M. Cutlack, author of *The Australian Flying Corps* volume of the *Official History*, himself 'a fine soldier', journalist, and former assistant to the official historian, C.E.W. Bean,¹ wrote in the *Sydney Morning Herald* that

The editor of "With Horse and Morse in Mesopotamia (the Story of the Anzacs in Asia)" has just published one of the finest memorial unit histories of the war which Australians have yet produced.²

A.M. Pooley in the *Sydney Evening News* went even further: 'It is no disparagement of other war books to say that this is the best war history that I have seen from any country'.³ The unnamed reviewer in *The Argus* pointed enthusiastically to the book's potentially wide market, noting that it 'is so packed with narratives, diaries, and photographs that it is entitled to rank as a war book with an appeal to the general public'.⁴

So atypical was it of the standard unit history monographs being produced at the time that Pooley's review labels it a 'memory book' – aligning it with the so-called 'soldiers' books' made up of edited collections of contributions from service personnel themselves: articles, poems, anecdotes and illustrations, often augmented with more official material such as photographs and maps. In the Australian context the best known of these were *The Anzac Book* (1916) and *Australia in Palestine* (1919); significantly the look and feel of *Horse and Morse* even closely resembles these two books rather than the usual 'octavo' format of most unit histories.⁵

Nevertheless, *Horse and Morse* is a unit history or, more accurately, a compendium of various units' histories. Principally it is a record of the service of the various Australian and New Zealand signals units sent out to Mesopotamia (Iraq) from 1916 to support British and Indian units fighting the Turks in that region. In the book's own terms these were the Australian Pack Troop, the New Zealand Pack Troop, the Australian Wireless Squadron, and the Cavalry Divisional Signals Squadron. Officially these units went under a bewildering variety of titles, especially as they evolved and metamorphosed over time. Broadly speaking, however, the separate Australian and New Zealand Pack Wireless Signal Troops, raised in 1915, were absorbed into the expanded 1st (Australian and New Zealand) Wireless Signal Squadron in mid-1916, which in turn became 1st Australian Wireless Signal Squadron in mid-1918 when the NZ personnel were replaced by those of the disbanded Australian Cavalry Divisional Signal

¹ Clement Semmler, 'War Correspondents in Australian Literature: An Outline', *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 12, no. 2, October 1985, p.197.

² 'Diggers in Asia', *SMH* 3 December 1927. Reprint held in Australian War Memorial (AWM) file 419/15/5 (folder 20).

³ A.M. Pooley, 'The Memory Book of a Great Adventure', *SEN* 22 January 1928. Cutting held in AWM 184 [87].

⁴ 28 January 1928. Cutting held in AWM 184 [87].

⁵ The format of *Horse and Morse* is approximately 285 x 210 mm with 200 pages; *The Anzac Book* is 285 x 220 mm, 170 pages; *Australia in Palestine* is 270 x 220 mm, 158 pages.

Squadron, which had been raised in early 1917 to support the Indian Cavalry Division.⁶ In addition, *Horse and Morse* devotes chapters to the Australians in Dunsterforce, the expedition made up of British and Dominion volunteers sent to Persia (Iran) in 1918; to the Australian Nurses in India, 1916-1919; and to D Troop of the Signals Squadron, which remained behind after the Armistice and took part in the campaign into Kurdistan in 1919,⁷ 'the last complete Australian unit that saw active service'.⁸ These latter units were included because of their relevance to the general theatre of war being dealt with, and because up to that time there hadn't been any official coverage of their service.⁹

The publicity leaflet announcing 'The Wireless Book is Out!', produced with the imprimatur of the chairman of the unit committee and the editor, summarises *Horse and Morse*'s varied content well.¹⁰ Besides the 'hundred and fifty pages of absorbing print', there are 'sixty or seventy pages' of pictures 'containing nearly two hundred photographs'; 'almost a hundred' pen sketches of 'souvenirs, maps, menus, badges'; chapters on all the units and locations in which they served; 'twenty-seven pages of humorous and descriptive contributions'; 'a schedule showing where every station was on every day of the campaign'; a 'glossary of Eastern and colloquial expressions'; and importantly, 'nominal rolls of all Australians and N.Z.'s who served in the Middle East', including that of the 1st Half-Flight, AFC which, although its exploits are not dealt with in the book (having been covered already in Cutlack's vol. 8 of the *Official History*¹¹), was included in the interests of comprehensiveness.

All of this adds up to a unique and valuable unit history, but what is equally remarkable is that the material came together in the first place. There was, after all, a powerful mix of factors and circumstances militating against the project's success: the small size and diversity of the units represented; the obscurity of the campaign, a 'little known side-line of the war';¹² and a cohort of ex-service personnel scattered across the country under a unit association run by at least two, not particularly cooperative, committees. Many other far less decentralised associations floundered in their quests to produce unit histories, even when only having to deal with members in one or two states. Yet, as Cutlack's and Pooley's reviews recognise and the editorial committee's publicity leaflet admits, after seven years' work *Horse and Morse* at last saw the light of day. What the documents held in the War Memorial archives reveal is that it managed to do so because of two key players: its editor, Keast Burke, who was doubly blessed with the right skills for the job and a profound love of his subject matter; and no less a figure than the official historian, Charles Bean, whose timely intervention, devotedness to the cause of memorialising Australia's part in the Great War, and preparedness to flex some influential 'muscle', ensured that the efforts of the 'Mesopotamia' units association would reach fruition.

⁶ See R.R. McNicoll, *The Royal Australian Engineers 1902 to 1919: Making and Breaking*, Corps Committee of the RAE, Canberra, 1979, pp. 184-188, for an idea of these units' formal designations.

⁷ Its members thus qualified for the General Service Medal with clasp 'Kurdistan'.

⁸ *With Horse and Morse in Mesopotamia*, ed. Keast Burke, The Unit Committee, Sydney, 1927, p. 147. D Troop remained about a month longer on campaign than the Australians in the interventionist forces in North Russia (who were not actually serving in Australian army units).

⁹ And presumably because its editor, Keast Burke, had served in D Troop (see below). Bean later included an appendix (no. 5), 'Australians in Mesopotamia', in vol. 5 of the *Official History* (first published 1937), dealing with the Signals Units and Dunsterforce, but not the nurses in India.

¹⁰ Leaflet held in AWM 419/15/5 (folder 18).

¹¹ See the footnote in the Preface to *Horse and Morse*, unpaginated.

¹² Pooley, op. cit., AWM 184 [87].

Eric Keast Burke (1896-1974) was born in Christchurch, New Zealand, but came to live in Sydney when his parents emigrated to Australia in 1904. In the early stages of the First World War he was a student at the University of Sydney, and eventually graduated with a Bachelor of Economics in 1922. He joined the Signal Corps section of the Sydney University Scouts regiment, Australian Military Forces, and served a year in this unit before enlisting in the AIF in February 1917. As 20555 Sapper E.K. Burke he was posted to D Troop of the Wireless Signal Squadron – made up of ‘light motor wireless sections’¹³ – which embarked for the Middle East in December 1917. He served with the squadron up to the armistice, and as one of the late reinforcements and an unmarried man, was kept behind with D Troop when it went to Kurdistan.¹⁴ He eventually returned to Australia on *HMAT Medic* in December 1919 and was discharged in January 1920.¹⁵

As tragic as the Great War was for the majority of its participants, there is little doubt that for Keast Burke it delivered on its promise of the ‘great adventure’ that had inspired so many young men to enlist. While overseas he documented his experiences with rather more assiduity and astuteness than the usual ‘five bob a day tourist’, carrying on the tradition of those 19th century soldiers who, while serving in various colonial wars, took the opportunity to play the amateur anthropologist or ethnographer. Burke had both the qualifications and the talents for such a role, which went beyond his obvious intellectual achievements and university education. He was also a very capable draughtsman, and many of his pen sketches (along with those from other contributors and sources) adorn the pages of *Horse and Morse*, depicting contemporary and historical buildings, local people, artefacts, flora and fauna, and other sights encountered along the way. He also had the foresight to collect and conserve everyday ephemera during his time overseas: menus of unit dinners; tram, train and theatre tickets from Bombay, Baghdad and elsewhere; records of graffiti in various languages; copies of orders, forms and proclamations. Many of these original items can still be seen among the folders of the Keast Burke file in the Australian War Memorial,¹⁶ and their facsimiles are scattered throughout *Horse and Morse*, intended no doubt to stimulate the memories of returned personnel, but which for the general reader evoke an equally strong sense of time and place as experienced by those who served.

Burke’s chief ability and interest lay in photography, however, and the war provided him with ample opportunity to employ the medium. While Burke was still serving overseas, a veteran of Mesopotamia, G.R. Watts,¹⁷ sent Bean a couple of letters urging that an account of the campaign be included in the forthcoming official histories. Watts wrote helpfully (if none too grammatically): ‘I shall be only too pleased to forward any information you require also my photos’, adding the cryptic rider, ‘Photography was encouraged on that front (on account of the postwar settlement presumably).’¹⁸ Whatever the reasons behind it, the absence of the usual military restrictions on private photography was taken full advantage of by Burke. His fascination with photography was obviously inherited from his father Walter, a Fellow of the

¹³ *Horse and Morse*, p. 51.

¹⁴ Burke received the General Service Medal for service in this campaign, in addition to the British War Medal and Victory Medal (National Archives of Australia item, barcode 3168895).

¹⁵ Biographical details summarised from *Australian Dictionary of Biography 1940-1980*, vol. 13, Melbourne UP, Melbourne, pp. 302-303, and service records, National Archives of Australia item, barcode 3168895.

¹⁶ MSS 1306, AWM file 419/15/5.

¹⁷ 14335 L/Cpl Watts, George Royston Allan, 1st Wireless Signal Sqn.

¹⁸ Letter, 1 June 1919, AWM 184 [87].

Royal Photographic Society and editor of the Kodak-published *Australasian Photo-Review*. In fact, after the war Keast became the magazine's associate editor, and in 1946 its editor until its demise in 1956. He then became Kodak (Australasia)'s advertising manager, and all his life was involved in many aspects of photography and photojournalism.¹⁹

Armed with 'two small Kodaks - a Vest Pocket and a No.1 Special', and developing the film 'in all sorts of out-of-the-way spots, under Active Service conditions',²⁰ Burke took a huge number of photographs spanning his service from the training camp at Moore Park, Sydney, to D Troop's embarkation in Bombay for home. Immediately upon his return he undertook a couple of tasks that probably tipped the balance in favour of his eventual appointment as editor of *Horse and Morse*. The first was to put together an illustrated article for his father's magazine, a copy of which Walter wasted no time in sending to Bean, recommending it as 'of interest to you as a historian of Australians' work in the field'.²¹ This had the effect not only of introducing Keast Burke to Bean, but of acquainting him with the quality of the young man's work; Bean wrote soon after to Charles Barrett - who laboured under the pretentious title of Literary Organiser of Unit Histories - about 'an article containing some excellent photos of the Wireless unit in Mesopotamia' which 'will be of much interest' in the compilation of a history of the campaign.²² A few years later Burke referred in a letter to 'the negatives which the War Museum [sic] purchased from me on my return'²³ - 'some 2000 photographs', according to a later source.²⁴ Whether or not the purchase was a direct consequence of Walter's letter and Bean's subsequent recommendation is unknown.

Burke's other course of action reveals the extent to which his experiences in Mesopotamia had affected him and, in hindsight, points in the direction his particular vision for the unit history would take. Burke compiled a 'travelog' (sic) called 'Mesopotamia - An Ancient Land in Modern Hands' in the form of a lantern-slide show using his own photographs and observations. Extant promotional leaflets show that it was presented at least twice in 1920, on 23 July and 14 September, and that it consisted of a mix of the war experiences of the Anzac wireless units interspersed with more general sights and impressions of Iraq. While the July showing was given under the patronage and in the presence of the then Governor of NSW, the September effort was under that of Maj. C.W.C. Marr, M.C., M.P., former C.O. of the Wireless Signal Squadron and subsequently chairman of the Mesopotamia units committee. Significantly, proceeds for this show were to go 'to a fund for the publication of a Memorial History of the work of the A.I.F. Units in Mesopotamia.'²⁵

Two years later, again under vice-regal patronage but now titled simply 'Mesopotamia', the presentation's emphasis seems to have shifted away from the war service of the wireless units towards a more purely ethnographic and historical view of the region. Under the heading 'It Fires Your Imagination', the publicity poster tempts its audience with an orientalist smorgasbord of 'Ruined Cities', 'Ancient Kingdoms', 'Mighty Rivers', 'Domes. Mosques. Minarets', 'The

¹⁹ *ADB 1940-1980*, p. 303.

²⁰ Advertising brochure, 'Mesopotamia - An Ancient Land in Modern Hands: A Travelog by Eric Keast Burke', 1920, held in AWM 419/15/5 (folder 23).

²¹ Letter, 17 May 1920, AWM 184 [87].

²² Letter, 6 June 1920, AWM 184 [87].

²³ Letter, K. Burke to Bean, 3 December 1926, AWM 184 [87].

²⁴ Letter no. 2805, A.W. Bazley(?) to Brig.Gen. T. Griffiths, 29 Dec. 1927, AWM 184 [87].

²⁵ Publicity leaflet held in AWM 419/15/5 (folder 23).

Magic Carpet', 'Arabian Nights', 'Harems', and other markers of the 'mysterious east'.²⁶ Although the names of Townshend, General Maude and Kut-el-Amara rate a mention, no longer does the 1922 show mention views of the camps, wireless stations, arrivals and embarkations of the Australian units serving there, all of which formed part of the program of the 1920 presentations. Also in 1922, Burke had an article published in the April issue of *National Geographic* magazine, titled 'Modern Scenes in Mesopotamia, the Cradle of Civilization',²⁷ illustrated with his own photographs, the whole almost certainly based on the material he was using for his public presentations. Quite obviously, he was emerging as yet another of those many ex-servicemen, of which T.E. Lawrence was only their most prominent spokesman, who had developed a deep and abiding fascination with the Middle East and aspects of Arab culture. This would help to explain why a work ostensibly recounting the operations of military units in that theatre should also include a chapter updating 'Travel in Iraq and Persia' (contributed by a Major Sanford-Morgan), not to mention the scores of photos, illustrations, personal notes and observations of a more broadly historical, geographical and anthropological nature.

Whatever the final form such a work might have taken, it's fair to say that *With Horse and Mors* in *Mesopotamia* may never have been published at all if not for the direct and decisive intervention of the official war historian himself, Charles Bean. The relevant files from the extensive Bean papers held in the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, reveal just how comprehensive his involvement in the project eventually became.²⁸ The chief source of information, AWM file 184 [87], contains over 170 documents dealing with the production of *Horse and Mors* over the period 1919 to 1932, including correspondence between Bean and Lt Gen. C.B.B. White, Brig. Stanley Savige, Maj. Marr, Keast Burke, Charles Barrett and many others. These and other items such as the nominal rolls he managed to have compiled and fastidiously checked are indicative of Bean's efforts in seeing *Horse and Mors* through to publication. At some stages he was even compelled to act as an intermediary between the Sydney and Melbourne committees of the Mesopotamian Units Association (MUA), and he seems to have worked tirelessly not only in facilitating the impetus of the project, but also in connecting the eventual network of contributors and in ensuring the accuracy and inclusivity of their contributions. While it's not the object of this article to document every single instance of Bean's involvement, the case can be made very adequately through citing some of the more significant contributions he made both to the book's content and to ensuring its completion.²⁹

To some extent Bean himself may be credited with actually getting the unit history underway. Back in 1920 E.R. Farquharson, secretary of the MUA, enquired of the Secretary of Defence as to what the official historian had at his disposal in order to give an account of the campaign and, as Watts did to Bean the previous year, offered material assistance. On 7 March Bean wrote in reply, stressing that the official history will 'lack the detail that they deserve':

For that reason I would suggest that, as well as the short account of your work which will appear in the Official History you should publish a "Unit History" of the forces comprised in your association.

He added that such a work must 'pay for itself ultimately by its circulation amongst your members', but added helpfully that the government had a funding scheme for kick-starting these projects. It must have taken a while for the MUA to get its act together, but at last in August

²⁶ From an original advertising poster held in AWM 419/15/5 (folder 21).

²⁷ <http://www.kaiserbooks.com/sales/ngs/ng20.htm> (accessed 6 March 2006)

²⁸ Principally AWM 184 [87], but also AWM 93, 12/1/42.

²⁹ Unless otherwise noted, the account that follows is based on documents found in AWM 184 [87].

1921 it applied for and duly received an advance of £60 (the standard amount advanced to unit associations³⁰) from the Anzac Book Fund, of which Bean was a trustee.

For the next couple of years there appears to have been a certain amount of to-ing and fro-ing of ideas and opinions between the Sydney and Melbourne committees of the MUA, with suggestions from each about how the task of writing various chapters should be divided up. On 14 January 1924 Barrett wrote to Farquharson asking when 'the history of the Mesopotamian Units is likely to be published', as the former needed to report to the trustees on associations in receipt of advances but which had not yet produced unit histories. There seems to have been no satisfactory reply, but in August that year Base Records informed Barrett that a nominal roll had been sent to Burke in his capacity as editor, an appointment apparently made by the MUA sometime between 1921 and 1924. While it can be assumed that Burke was hard at work gathering material, to outsiders it must have appeared, as Bean's letter of 28 January 1926 to the Dept of Defence reveals, that 'nothing further has been done by the unit'. Bean therefore resolved to contact Marr, the MUA chairman and 'now a minister' himself, 'to bring pressure on the association ... in order to have this history completed'. By the middle of that year Bean had to step in as a mediator between the Sydney and Melbourne committees of the MUA. Apparently the Sydney committee had proposed the formation of a combined committee under '(say) Mr Marr & reps of both ... Assocs.'. When the Melbourne branch failed to reply to the suggestion, Bean admitted, 'I am really trying to keep peace between the two committees'.³¹ His efforts must have paid off, for in June Marr announced that

at last former members of the Unit in Victoria and New South Wales have agreed to appoint a Committee for the production of the Unit's record in Mesopotamia. I have been elected Chairman, and Mr. K. Burke will represent New South Wales and Mr. Farquharson, Victoria.³²

No doubt it was a relieved Bean who promised to 'give all the assistance I can', and the meeting he promptly organised between himself, Marr and Burke at 10:45 am on Saturday, 26 June 1926 in the Commonwealth Bank building, Sydney, can be seen as the catalysing moment guaranteeing the eventual publication of *Horse and Morse*.

From then on it was all go, as Bean went about soliciting – and in some cases, more often wheedling – contributions from various people: Stanley Savige on the Australians of Dunsterforce; Matron G.E. Davies on the Australian Nurses in India; F.H. Wickham on the administration of the AIF in India; J.L. Treloar of the AWM and others on details of the Cavalry Divisional Signal Squadron. Savige accompanied his contribution with the disclaimer, 'I don't profess to be able to put a show together along the proper lines and you have full permission to cut it to pieces as much as you like'.³³ Bean responded with similar largesse, telling Savige that while he would 'do any editing necessary', the contribution 'seems to me to need very little'.³⁴ Thus the chapter 'The Australians of the [sic] Dunsterforce' is credited to Savige, but interestingly, 'in collaboration with Captain F. Lord',³⁵ who was also in the force, implying that Savige's work required another perspective if not a degree of checking or cross-referencing. Matron Davies' contribution arrived on 25 February 1927 with a covering message expressing regret over the delay and that as she had no dates available in her own notes she had relied on

³⁰ See AWM 93, 12/1/42, for Memorandum no.11316, 20 June 1939, from the trustees of the Anzac Book Fund (i.e. Bean and C.B.B. White) to the Secretary of Defence advising the writing off of such advances to those associations which have managed to publish unit histories to that time.

³¹ Letter 1093, Bean to A.W. Newman, Dept of Defence, 28 May 1926.

³² Marr to Bean, 9 June 1926.

³³ Savige to Bean, 12 November 1926.

³⁴ Bean to Savige, 17 November 1926.

³⁵ *Horse and Morse*, p. 104.

her memory to fill these in. Whether or not this latter aspect rankled against Bean's professionalism as a historian is nowhere expressed, but his diplomatic response to her on 2 March was that he would be 'editing and condensing the actual article which will appear in the unit history, combining yours with some other material that we have received', including, eventually, a nominal roll of the nurses from the Defence Department. While Bean made sure that his version was sent to Davies for approval, and the Preface to *Horse and Morse* acknowledges her, it also unambiguously credits the chapter 'The Australian Nurses in India 1916-1919' to Bean.

By 18 May 1927 Bean's assistant, A.W. Bazley, was able to write to A.J. Withers of the Defence Department that 'The book is almost finished and will, I think, be a very good volume'. However, there was still work to do, largely in collating, checking and finalising the additional nominal rolls it had been decided (by whom exactly is not specified in the correspondence) as necessary addenda to the history. Thus Bazley goes on to request of Withers rolls of the Half-Flight, the AIF staff at Bombay, and the 'Dispensers' – the pharmacist NCOs who worked with the nurses in India – plus the current addresses of the nurses so that they may be contacted once the work is published. The patient Withers dutifully complied with these and other similar requests, but the process of obtaining and incorporating this extra information served to delay publication still further. By November 1926 Bean could claim that 'The Mesopotamian history is now partly in proof';³⁶ however, three months later Bazley was apologising for the fact that the 'volume was not ready in time for it to be published before Christmas [1926], as was hoped, but the editor, Mr. Keast Burke, hopes to get it out in the next month or two'.³⁷ In fact, it was not until December that Bazley was able to allude to 'The Mesopotamian Unit History' which 'has just been published'.³⁸

In a revealing postscript to its publication, the printer Arthur McQuitty complained to the publishers (presumably the unit committee) that the cost of producing the book 'quickly got past' the amount of £200 he'd initially quoted Burke: 'the very large amount of "author's corrections" which together with the special type that was chosen cost me £132 alone'. McQuitty maintained that the printing 'took over 12 months to complete', and concluded tetchily, 'It was not an easy book to produce, and I can assure you that I was glad to see the end'.³⁹ Given the many circumstances impacting on the book's production outlined above, it was probably unfair of McQuitty to lay the blame solely with Burke. Nevertheless, it's also difficult to avoid attributing to Burke the overall vision for the book, an ambitious one based on his wish to pay full tribute both to the units serving there and to the uniqueness of the Mesopotamian theatre of war itself. Part of the responsibility must also be taken by the official historian, who clearly brought with his involvement in the project that same commitment and conscientiousness that attended all of his efforts to commemorate Australia's participation in the Great War. But produced it was, when far too many more famous AIF units failed to have histories of their service published during the lifetimes of their returned members. Whatever the particular birth pangs of *With Horse and Morse in Mesopotamia*, the units that served there, and everyone else interested in the campaign, owe Keast Burke and Charles Bean a considerable debt of gratitude.

³⁶ Letter no. 1516, Bean to Newman, 8 November 1926.

³⁷ Bazley to Capt. C.F. Mills, 20 February 1927.

³⁸ Bazley to P.R. Ball, 15 December 1927.

³⁹ Letter, 23 October 1928. In a similar vein, Marr wrote to the Trustees for further financial assistance, on the grounds that the MUA 'had no regimental funds such as other Units of the A.I.F. possessed' (letter, 24 October 1928). Bean managed to secure the MUA a further £30, adding graciously in his letter of recommendation to Lt.Gen. White, 'In my opinion, it is worth it' (13 November 1928).



SONGS OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Gail Gunn

Let's start with a lady called Julia Howe who in 1861 wrote new words to a 19th century American camp meeting song;

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord,
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored,
He has loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword,
His truth is marching on.¹

Perhaps we had better stop before the Glory Glory Hallelujah's start because they may evolve into "and he ain't going to fly no more". Poor Julia. In the next 80 years her spiritually uplifting words would be frequently replaced with soldier's parodies of a coarseness, vulgarity and cynicism she could never have predicted.

The *Battle Hymn of the Republic* is importantly representative of one type of war song. Firstly it was written by a civilian safely out of range of any guns, it implies that God is on our side and while it may bring a lump to the throat, it neither offers any insight into the political machinations that caused the war, nor reflects the sentiments of the humble soldier who is within range of the guns.

The Second World War had the new technology of radio and sound movies. Popular songs spread much further, quicker and wider than previously. The BBC had a powerful influence on what songs were actually sung. Community sing-songs were tremendously popular and for young people, dancing; that is, two people standing in front of each other, holding each other and moving gracefully to music that was soft enough that conversation was not impossible. The older people can explain this quaint phenomenon to the youngsters.

We all know the old favourites which I fear may not survive past my generation. But tonight we are going to investigate the songs that could not have been written at any other time.

In my research into this subject I have come across some truly astonishing lyrics which came from RAF bomber crews. However I must refrain from presenting any here for fear of offending the delicate sensibilities of any infantry junior NCO's who may be present.

When the war broke out in 1939, The sons of the Old Contemptibles had to make do with music recycled from the Great War to get them across the channel, but with some updated versions like *Somewhere in France with you* and *Daughter of Mademoiselle from Armentieres*. My favourite is *If a grey-haired lady says how's yer father, that's Mademoiselle from Armentieres*, a forgettable piece from the popular Flannagan and Allen. Now, one wonders how Mademoiselle from Armentieres went in a short 21 years from being a young sexy and celebrated French bint to becoming a grey-haired old lady. I'm sure the lucrative French cosmetic industry could take issue with this. Take a popular soldier's marching tune of the Great War;

I've got sixpence, jolly jolly sixpence,
I've got sixpence, to last me all my life,
I've got twopence to spend,
Twopence to lend
And twopence to send home to my wife.²

¹ *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, *Popular Songs of Nineteenth-Century America*, Richard Jackson, Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1976.

Change a few words and you have a little brainwashing song;

I've got a coupon, jolly jolly coupon,
I've got a coupon the only one to spare,
I've a coat and a vest and as for the rest
My coupon is all I have to wear.

You need coupons for your butter and your tea,
For eggs and ham and cheese & jam and honey from the bee,
Why pay coupons for the things only husbands ought to see,
As they go carrying on the home.

Carrying on, carrying on, as they go carrying on the home
We need no coupons for our pint of beer,
That's why we're all so full of cheer.³

Obviously brainwashing to music was a great success because it was followed by a song called *Obeys your air raid warden* which may have been common sense, but the song had little artistic merit.

Our next song is a bit dreary, but it served a purpose;

When the homeland is in danger.
And there's trouble in the air,
We forget our little squabbles,
And it's trespassers beware.
All the nation is united,
When the danger looms in sight
And we march along together
As we sing with all our might,
We must all stick together,
All stick together,
And the clouds will soon roll by,
We must all stick together,
All stick together,
Never mind the old school tie,
United we will stand
Whatever may befall,
The richest in the land
The poorest of us all,

We must all stick together,
Birds of a feather,
And the clouds will soon roll by.⁴

These stirring sentiments of a classless society were certainly embraced with enthusiasm by the richest in the land, one of whom, the celebrated Lady Diana Cooper, when she wasn't living at the Dorchester Hotel took up milking cows.

The Queen put on her best frock to visit the bombed residents of the East End.

The Princess Elizabeth learnt how to strip down a truck engine.

² I've Got Sixpence, Box, Cox and Hall, Copyright MCMXLI, by Bradbury Wood Ltd., London.

³ I've Got Sixpence, Box, Cox and Hall, *Hits of the War Years* (CD1), Sony Music Entertainment (Australia) Ltd. 1997.

⁴ We Must All Stick Together, Butler/Wallace, *ibid.*

George Formby thought he would get into this togetherness act with a truly wondrous piece of racism;

There's a Chinese laundry man, the famous Mr Wu,
He's chucked his Limehouse laundry shop and his window cleaning too,
He's got another job, and it's one of the best,
Now he's doing his bit for England like the rest.

Mr Wu is now an Air Raid Warden, And don't he look cute,
In his new siren suit.
He goes round every night to make the blackout sure,
So if you've got a chink in your window,
you'll have another one at your door.

His headquarters it's plain, are down by lover's lane,
And he goes there every evening any how,
He'll flash his torch into the dark
and the girls all cover their laundry mark,
Cause Mr Wu's an Air Raid Warden Now.⁵

Taking the Mickey is an admirable British characteristic that stands them in good stead when there's really not much to laugh about. Enter Annette Mills whose previous contribution to British sophistication was, *Hands, knees & boomp-sa daisy*. This little gem sounds like a re-worked *Belgium put the kibosh on the Kaiser*. It had a limited shelf life, but filled a niche at the time;

A certain German chancellor has lost his head,
He's going to get a headache somewhere else instead,
And he will be retiring very soon,
To join a certain Kaiser down in Doorn,

Adolf, you've bitten off, much more than you can chew.
Come on, hold your hand out,
We're all fed up with you, Gor Blimey,
Adolf, you toddle off, and all your Nazis too,
Or you may get something to remind you
Of the old red, white and blue.⁶

Flannagan and Allen rose to the occasion with;

We're going to hang out the washing on the Seigfried line,
Have you any dirty washing mother dear,
We're going to hang out the washing on the Siegfried line,
'Cos the washing day is here.
Whether the weather may be wet or fine
We'll just rub along without a care,
We're going to hang out the washing on the Seigfried line
If the Seigfried line's still there.⁷

Stirring marching tunes and amusing little cheer-ups are all very well, but there was a definite need for sentimental songs of loneliness and yearning. There was a great proliferation of these songs. Enter the popular Vera Lynn. *We'll Meet Again* came out in 1939. It never mentions the

⁵ Mr Wu's An Air Raid Warden Now, Latta, *ibid* (CD2).

⁶ Adolf, Annette Mills, Copyright in all Countries, MCMXXXIX, The Lawrence Wright Music Co. Ltd., London.

⁷ We're Gonna Hang Out The Washing on the Siegfried Lind, Jimmy Kennedy & Michael Carr, Copyright MCMXXXIX for all Countries by The Peter Maurice Music Co. Ltd..

war, but refers to dark clouds being chased away by blue skies. London was blacked out. Walking around in the dark tended to make people depressed. So there was a need to turn a disadvantage into a virtue;

When we go strolling in the park at night,
Oh, the darkness is a boon
Who cares if we're without a light,
They can't black out the moon.
I see you smiling in the cigarette glow,
Though the picture fades too soon
But I see all I want to know
They can't black out the moon.

We don't grumble
We don't worry about alarms
When you stumble, you stumble right into my arms
And when you kiss me don't you realize
That my heart's like a big balloon
And like the lovelight in your eyes,
They can't black out the moon.⁸

Obviously not everybody was convinced by this sentiment because getting the lights turned on in London seemed to be the ultimate goal for a nation. Carroll Gibbons and His Savoy Hotel Orpheans had a great ambition to *Get Lit Up When the Lights go up in London*.

However, we will start with a 1939 song;

For a while we must part,
But remember me sweetheart,
Till the lights of London shine again.
And while I'm over there,
Think of me in every prayer
Till the lights of London shine again.
I'll keep your picture near me
A tender souvenir,
Now hold me close and kiss me
And may God bless you, dear.
Don't you cry when I'm gone,
Wear a smile and carry on,
Till the lights of London shine again.⁹

By 1942, our Vera seemed fed up with all the sacrifices and she put it this way;

When the lights go on again,
All over the world,
And the boys are home again,
All over the world,
And rain or snow is all that may fall from the skies above.
A kiss won't mean Goodbye, but Hello to love.
When the lights go on again,
All over the world
And the ships will sail again,
All over the world

⁸ They Can't Black-out The Moon, Art Strauss, Bob Dale & Sonny Miller, Copyright in all Countries, MCMXXXIX, Lawrence Wright Music Co. Ltd., London.

⁹ Till The Lights of London Shine Again, Tommy Connor, Eddie Pola, Copyright 1939 B. Feldman & Co. Ltd., London.

Then we'll have time for things like wedding rings,
 And free hearts will sing,
 When the lights go on again,
 All over the world.¹⁰

The observant listener will notice that so far the fare has been entirely British.

The Yanks came into the war only three weeks before 1942 began, starting off by recycling their Great War hit *Over There* by George M. Cohan;

Late again, Late again,
 Here we are, here we are, Late again.

Suddenly they were over here, over paid and oversexed. Obviously the British felt obliged to suck up to the Yanks, so Flannagan & Allan recorded a truly forgettable number about some poor schmuck of a kid who got lumbered with the name Franklin Delano Roosevelt Jones, Yes, siree, yes, sir-ee. If I may quote my friend Neville Cohn the music critic here, "Patriotic songs, as a genre, don't have an in-built guarantee of musical quality." He was obviously talking about *FDR Jones*.

The American contribution to the music of World War Two was enormous. Up till now the British had been doing the *Hokey Pokey*, *Knees Up Mother Brown* and the *Lambeth Walk*.

In fact it could be argued that these contributions to music, not to mention Gracie Fields, were responsible for the ferocity of the Blitz. The Germans, after all, were music lovers.

However, Glen Miller hit the UK with his big band and young people could now smooch around the dance floor to *Moonlight Serenade* or jitterbug to *In The Mood*.

Most American song hits that came out during the war were strictly business as usual, the Bing Crosby spoon-beneath-the-moon-in-June variety. Take *Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow* for example. This was enormously popular but reflects nothing about the war unless, of course, it could have been interpreted as the Red Army's defence strategy.

Very few American song hits could be described as "songs that could only have been written at that time". The question on everyone's lips was "What's got six tits and squeals"? The Andrew Sisters were obviously confused about whose side they were on when they recorded *Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen*. Probably to make amends they then came up with the great little patriotic piece, *Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy*. Their hit *Drinking Rum and Coca Cola* should go down in history as one of the best pieces of corporate advertising embracing product placement, patriotism, racism and sexism all in the one song. Quite an achievement.

A typical example of the Business-As-Usual American song would be the great hit of 1941 *Elmer's Tune*;

Why are the stars always winkin, and blinkin above,
 What makes a fellow start thinking of falling in love,
 It's not the season, the reason is plain as the moon.
 It's just Elmer's tune.
 What makes a lady of eighty go out on the loose?
 Why does a gander meander in search of a goose?
 What puts the kick in a chicken, the magic in June?
 It's just Elmer's tune.

¹⁰ When The Lights Go On Again, Eddie Seiler, Sol Marcus & Bennie Benjemen, Copyright 1942 Campbell, Loft & Porgie Incorporated, USA.

Listen, Listen, there's a lot you're liable to be missing.
 Sing it, swing it, any old way and any old time.
 The Hurdy gurdies, the birdies, the cop on the beat.
 The candy maker, the baker, the man on the street,
 The city charmer, the farmer, the man in the moon.
 All sing Elmer's Tune.¹¹

I can assure you that the list of people who sing *Elmer's Tune* goes on almost forever. Well, at this point someone must have said, "Pardon me, don't you know there's a war on", because after another tedious verse they finally come up with a little post script;

You'll find the Army, the Navy, the Aussies and Yanks,
 The flighty Airmen, the generals, the men in the ranks,
 You'll find the Search-lighters seeking to rival the moon
 All sing Elmer's Tune.

The British custom of "taking the Mickey" crossed the Atlantic and Spike Jones and his City Slickers rose to the occasion. Viewing the war through the bottom of his whisky glass, Spike put some new words to an old German tune and came up with a song you don't hear much any more, which means it definitely falls in the category of "songs that could only have been written at the time";

Ven der Fuehrer says, "Ve iss der Master Race,
 Ve Heil! Heil! Right in Der Fuehrer's face,
 Not to luff der Fuehrer is a great disgrace
 So ve Heil! Heil! Right in der Fuehrer's Face.

Ven Herr Goebbels says, "Ve own der Vorld und Space"
 Ve Heil! Heil! Right in Herr Goebbel's face,
 Ven Herr Goehring says "Dey'll neffer bomb dis place"
 Ve Heil! Heil! Right in Herr Goehring's face.¹²

Nobody could ever accuse Spike Jones of moderation. He also recorded such classics as *The Sailor with the Navy Blue Eyes*, and *Little Bo Peep Has Lost Her Jeep*.

One of the most loved songs of the war came out of Germany in 1941. It is interesting that when it transferred to English in 1944, the sheet music was marked *The Authentic and Officially Sanctioned Edition* which I assume meant it was not the unkind version sung by the RAF. The original was by Lale Anderson, who I am very sorry is not with us tonight because no subsequent cover was ever as good, including, with all respects, Vera Lynn, Marlene Deitrich and especially not the RAF;

Vor der Kaserne,
 Vor dem grossen Tor,
 Stand eine Laterne,
 Und steht sie noch davor,
 So woll'n wir uns da wiedersehen
 Bei der Laterne woll'n wire steh'n
 Wie einst Lili Marleen.¹³

¹¹ Elmer's Tune, Elmer Albrecht, Sammy Gallop & Dick Jurgens, Copyright 1941 Robbins Music Corporation, New York.

¹² Der Fuehrer's Face, Oliver Wallace, Copyright 1942, Southern Music Publishing Company Incorporated, USA.

¹³ Lilli Marlene, Hans Leip, Norbert Schultze, Copyright 1941 Apollo Verlag, Germany.

Another song which was translated into English was the French song *J'Attendrai*. This came out in 1937 and was recorded by everyone who was anyone; Gladys Moncrief, Richard Tauber, Josephine Baker to name but a few. Known in English as *Au Revoir*, it obviously touched a cord with those missing their loved ones;

J'attendrai,
 Le jour et la nuit,
 J'attendrai toujours
 Ton retour
 J'attendrai
 Car l'oiseau qui s'en fuit
 Vient cher cher l'oubli
 Dans son nid
 Le temps passe et court
 En battant Tristement
 Dans mon Coeur plus lourd
 Et pourtant J'attendrai ton retour.¹⁴

The reason for including this in our little presentation is that it was sung by Fania Fenelon, a Parisian cabaret singer who was transported to Auschwitz and survived the war by playing in an orchestra assembled to soothe the nerves of her fellow Jews on their way to the gas chambers.

One of the few survivors of the sinking of the Bismarck remembers distinctly that this was the song being played over the tannoy as the ship went down.

Meanwhile back in the USA Spike Jones and his City Slickers expanded their morale boosting repertoire with a little number that went the way of all ephemeral songs that ceased to be PC after the war;

You're a sap Mr Jap, to make a Yankee cranky,
 You're a sap Mr Jap, Uncle Sam is going to spank ée,
 Wait & see before we're done,
 The ABC & D will sink your rising sun.

You're a sap Mr Jap, Oh what a load to carry,
 Don't you know, don't you know,
 You're committing harri karri,
 For we'll wipe the Axis right off the map,
 You're a sap, sap, sap, Mr Jap.¹⁵

On the American home front, it was all hands to the pump. Suddenly minority groups were being courted, at least temporarily. To wipe Mr Jap off the map the military needed ships and planes. There was a shortage of men. Uncle Sam sponsored an extensive propaganda campaign to get women into factories, assuring them building ships was as easy as filing their nails. Six million of them responded. One wonders if they appreciated the irony of their working for the Kaiser Shipyards.

Despite the references to cocktail bars and munching caviar, it was working class women, both black and white, who flocked to the factories. This 1942 song became an anthem to the women's movement in the USA in the 60's;

While other girls attend their favourite cocktail bar,
 Sipping dry Martinis, munching caviar,

¹⁴ J'Attendrai Louis Poterat, Dino Olivieri, Copyright 1937 P. Leonardi Berlin, Milano, Italy.

¹⁵ You're a Sap Mister Jap, Cavanaugh, Redmond, Simon, *Spike Jones & His City Slickers Strictly For Music Lovers* (CD1) Proper Records, London, 1999.

There's a girl who's really putting them to shame
Rosie is her name.

All day long, whether rain or shine,
She's a part of the assembly line,
She's making history, working for victory,
Rosie, the riveter.

Keeps a sharp lookout for sabotage
Sitting up there on the fuselage
That little frail can do
More than a male can do,
Rosie, the riveter

Rosie's got a boy friend Charlie,
Charlie, he's a Marine.
Rosie is protecting Charlie
Working overtime on the riveting machine

When they gave her a production "E"
She was as proud as a girl could be
There's something true about,
Red, white and blue about
Rosie, the riveter.¹⁶

After the war, women's magazines were full of recipes for complicated "simple" meals that took 6 hours to prepare so that Rosie was once again back in the kitchen.

Black Americans elbowed their way into the military usually against the military's racial policies. It wasn't till 1944 that this song appeared;

Chocolate drop, always fast asleep
Dozin in his cosy bed
Chocolate drop has got no time for sleep
He's riding in a jeep instead

They used to call in lazy bones in Harlem
Lazy good for nothing all the day
But now they're mighty proud of him in Harlem
Chocolate soldier from the USA.

They used to call him just a chocolate dreamer
Until the day he heard the bugle play
They made a coloured Doughboy out of dreamer
Chocolate soldier from the USA.

Never in the school room
Always in the pool room
For a nickel or a dime he'd croon
His idea of heaven
Was seven come eleven
And dancing every evening neath the yellow Harlem moon

He used to get a scolding from his mammy
But now you'll hear his mammy proudly say
He's somewhere over there for Uncle Sammy

¹⁶ Rosie The Riveter, Fedd Evans & John Jacob Loeb, Copyright MCMXLII by Paramount Music Corporation, New York.

Chocolate Soldier from the USA.¹⁷

The black soldiers' contribution to the war effort was obviously enormously appreciated by a grateful nation because when they finally came home there were only about 38 of them lynched.

This next song, written in 1944, appears to have only been copyrighted in Australia. It comes under three headings;

- 1st War Makes Strange Bedfellows
- 2nd It could only have been written at the time
- 3rd Patriotism is no guarantee of musical worth.

Perhaps some time during the conference some of the more scholarly of you could find time to discuss in depth the reasons why this song was not plagiarised by the Americans and turned into a big hit in the 1950's;

The carpet biter Hitler
Gets littler and littler,
But Uncle Joe he, grow and grows and grows.
The stooges of the Feuhrer, get fewerer and fewerer
And soon there'll be an end to Nazi foes.

Curl the mo, Uncle Joe, curl the mo.
We've got the Hun on the run Uncle Joe
Churchill and Roosevelt and we know it too
That the Reds helped to keep the red in the Red White and Blue
Light your pipe, you're alright, Uncle Joe.
Though the going may seem mighty slow
From the Volga to Berlin, you're an odds-on cert to win
Curl the mo, Uncle Joe, curl the mo.¹⁸

There are another 2 verses. They don't get any better. I'm sure that while Noel Coward was writing *Don't Let's Be Beastly To The Germans* he agonized for minutes wondering why he couldn't come up with clever lyrics like that. But let me assure you it is considerably better than *Goodbye Uncle Adolph* which also seems to have been confined to Australia.

Obviously by this time everyone was fed up with the war. Vera Lynn put it nicely;

When they sound the last all clear,
How happy my darling we'll be,
When they turn up the lights,
And those sad lonely nights,
Are only a memory.
Never more we'll be apart
Always together sweetheart
For the peace bells will ring
And the whole world will sing,
When they sound the last all clear.¹⁹

Australians had a different slant on this;

When they send the last Yank home,

¹⁷ Choc'late Soldier From the U.S.A., E. Box, D. Cox & Lewis Ilda, Copyright MCMXLIV Irwin Dash Music Co. Ltd., London.

¹⁸ Curl The Mo, Uncle Joe, Jack Hatch & Jack Lumsdaine, Copyright 1944 J. Albert & Son Pty. Ltd., Sydney.

¹⁹ When They Sound The Last All Clear, Hugh Charles & Louis Elton, Copyright MCMXLI The Irwin Dash Music Co. Ltd., London.

How lonely some women will be.
 When they turn out the lights,
 There'll be long, lonely nights,
 All those good times just a memory.
 Evermore they'll be alone,
 Those women no Aussie would own.
 All they'll have are some clothes
 And a kid who talks through its nose,
 When they send the last Yank home²⁰.

Finally it was all over and the boys started coming home. After years away, vowing that "the second thing I am going to do when I get home is take my pack off", these sentiments were put to music in 1945 by Sammy Cahn and Jule Styne, only much more politely;

Just kiss me once, then kiss me twice, then kiss me once again.
 It's been a long long time.
 Haven't felt like this my dear, since can't remember when
 It's been a long, long time.
 You'll never know how many dreams I dreamed about you
 Or just how empty they all seemed without you,
 So kiss me once and kiss me twice, then kiss me once again,
 It's been a long long time.²¹

There were several patriotic songs written in Australia about the AIF which seem to have sunk without a trace. But let us finish with a great Australian patriotic song which has been well remembered. It was written by the comedian George Wallace, so it has a rather retrospective Great War vaudeville quality about it.

Actually this should be presented rather in the style of *Mrs Henderson presents*, by a chorus of young ladies in skimpy AIF uniforms;

It's a Brown Slouch Hat with the side turned up,
 And it means the world to me.
 It's the symbol of our Nation,
 The land of liberty,
 And the soldiers they wear it,
 How proudly they bear it
 For all the world to see.
 Just a brown slouch hat with the side turned up,
 Heading straight for victory.²²

²⁰ *Echoes of ANZAC: The voice of Australians at War* edited by Graham Seal, Lothian Books 2005, p. 7.

²¹ *It's Been a Long, Long Time*, Sammy Cahn, Jule Styne, Copyright 1945 Edwin H. Morris & Company Inc., New York..

²² *A Brown Slouch Hat*, George Wallace, Copyright 1942, J. Albert & Sons Pty. Ltd., Sydney.



ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARMY DENTAL CORPS

Lieutenant Colonel Sven Kuusk RFD, BDS(Hons), MDS, qs(us). (Retd.)

Military medical services in some form or other have always existed in Australia. During the Boer War many troops became incapacitated due to dental disease, could not chew their food and had to be evacuated: an Army that cannot bite cannot fight. The British Army's answer to this problem was to issue two mincing machines to each infantry company and authorise some general dental practitioners to come out from England at their own expense and to work in the base camps.

In the reorganisation of the AAMC which took place after the Boer War no provision was made for a dental service. However the field medical kit contained four universal dental extraction pliers. In 1906 the Director of Medical Services, Surgeon General Williams, unsuccessfully tried for the formation of a dental service when the AMF was reorganised for the introduction of Universal Military Training in 1911.

World War 1

At the outbreak of WW1 no system existed in the Army for dental treatment. Responsibility for this default did not lie with the medical or dental professions as both had urged its importance. On the outbreak of war many dental practitioners volunteered for service as Army Dentists but their enlistment was refused as not being provided for in British War Establishments. The AIF was to work with the British Army and therefore adopt its organisation and structure. The British War Office and medical establishment made no provision for, or had no dental policy, only a negative attitude to dental treatment in the field.

When the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force was raised in 1914 for service in German New Guinea, General Howse VC the senior medical officer recognised the need for dental support and arranged for John Keith Henderson, a 4th year dental student and his instruments to be part of the medical detachment of the AN&MEF. Henderson thus became the first dental person in the Australian Army to render dental treatment in the field during WW1. He later served in France as an infantry captain in the 13th Battalion and was killed at Pozieres on 14 August 1916.

With recruiting under way for the AIF, a dental officer was appointed to each military district, he drew pay and field allowances but his scope of duty provided only for advice to senior medical officers and no liability was to be incurred for dental work. The dental profession itself stepped into the gap and organised in each State, clinics to treat troops in camp on purely gratuitous and patriotic basis. Dental Hospitals were also placed at the disposal of the Minister for Defence, and private practitioners treated troops free of charge in their own surgeries. Due to the public spirited action the Australian Imperial Force sailed from Australia in a reasonably satisfactory condition of dental fitness.

Within a short period of arriving in Egypt large numbers of men began to present at sick parades for dental treatment. The Army had made no provision for dental treatment in Egypt, In Cairo private dentists both qualified and unqualified were thronged even though the cost of treatment was exorbitant and mostly of poor quality. When soldiers pay drawing rights were reduced, to keep them out of brothels and to reduce the high incidence of VD, there was no money available for private dental treatment and so the dental problems became even greater. In some units or field ambulances soldiers with some dental knowledge were put to work, instruments and

supplies purchased from local Cairo sources with the aid of Red Cross and Unit Comfort Funds. General Bridges in a despatch to the Defence Department said that the services of a dentist in the field would make for efficiency and economy as an alternative to evacuating soldiers back to base areas for treatment. By the end of July 1915 from the 1st Australian Division alone 600 men had been evacuated from Gallipoli because of dental disabilities or their inability to chew their food. A soldier who cannot bite his army biscuit cannot fight.

On 6 January 1915 Military Order No. 11 approved the formation of the AAMC (Dental) Reserve.

Military District	Captains	Lieutenants
1	1	7
2	1	13
3	1	13
4	1	7
5	1	5
6	1	5
Total	6	50

All ranks were honorary, this was the first recognition in Australia of the principle of granting commissioned rank to members of the dental profession as such, and was the first step in the formation of an Australian Army Dental Corps. The first appointments were not made until March 1915 and the Reserve was not utilised until May 1915 when its members were called up for home service. The demand of the dental profession for the opportunity to participate as a technical branch of the AAMC was backed with vehement and even bitter support by the forces overseas.

In June 1915 Military Order 387 authorised the appointment of Dentists to commissioned rank and dental mechanics to non-commissioned rank in the AIF.

MO 387 Authorised a total of 39 personnel:-

13 Lieutenants 13 Staff Sergeants and 13 Orderlies.

These were to be enlisted partly locally in Australia and partly from the force overseas and were to be organised as 13 Dental Units.

In July 1915 a meeting was held in the office of the DGMS Melbourne to select the first six officers (one from each State) to be posted overseas.

The original six selected were:-

Lt Marshall	3 AGH Lemnos
Lt Molle	1 AGH Heliopolis Palace Hotel
Lt Terry	1 AGH Heliopolis Palace Hotel
Lt Day	Mena House
Lt Down	1 Auxiliary Hospital, Luna Park Heliopolis
Lt Douglas	Zeitoun Camp

Four additional officers were appointed in Egypt:

Lt. Wright	3 Auxiliary Hospital
Lt. Pascoe	2 AGH Gezireh Palace
Lt. Blogg	Helonan convalescent Hospital
Lt. Vernon	Harefield Park Convalescent Hospital - UK

By December 1915 Surgeon General Howse VC had been appointed provisional DGMS AIF. General Howse VC shared the beliefs of the dental profession, in the potentialities of the new Dental Corps as a branch of reparative surgery and preventive medicine.

To organise dental services throughout the Commonwealth a principle Dental officer was appointed to the Staff of DGMS and an Staff Dental Officer to 2 MD and 3MD.

Military Order No.76 dated 22nd February, 1916 provided for a home service of:

Majors	2
Captains	6
Lieutenant	160
Warrant Officers	5
Staff Sergeants.	163

New dental units were formed and equipped as rapidly as men and material could be found and assembled. By April 1916, 36 Dental Units were at work of which 25 had been equipped locally from the dental section of the Australian Base Depot of Medical Stores now in charge of a dental quartermaster, Lieutenant Unsworth.

The consent of the Australian Government was obtained by General Birdwood for three dental sections to accompany each division preceding to France, with one dental unit attached to each field ambulance. (Military Order No. 278 dated 20 June 1916.)

By May 1916 the Dental Corps consisted of a Home Service and the AIF with four majors, 54 captains, 116 lieutenants, eight warrant officers, 170 staff sergeants, eight corporals and 170 privates. Major T.F.W. Hall was Staff Officer Dental Services on the staff of DGMS in Melbourne and was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel.

The first thirty six AIF Dental Units were allotted as follows:-

General Hospitals	3
Auxiliary Hospitals	4
Dermatological Hospitals	1
Convalescent Depots	2
Stationary Hospitals	2
Casualty Clearing Station	1
Field Ambulances	12
Light Horse Fd. Amb.	3
Training Bases	8

The Base Depot for Medical and Dental Stores was at Heliopolis. Every dentist who left Egypt with the AIF was supplied with a complete field equipment and sufficient supplies of materials to carry on for six to eight weeks.

By February 1917 dental officers were given power to ask for men to be paraded for dental examinations. A standard of dental fitness had been established, and no man was allowed to proceed overseas unless he was dentally fit.

In July 1917 MO No. 290 advised that all Honorary Ranks held by Dental Officers were to be made substantive with effect from April.

Late in 1917 Staff Officers and Senior Dental Officers were appointed in order to improve the control and supervision of Dental Units serving overseas. It was the duty of all Staff Officers to ensure that the best available use was being made of the units under their control. Staff Officers appointed were:

Admin. H.Q.	Lieutenant Colonel Marshall
Dental Units France	Major Day
AIF Depots in UK	Major Down
Dental Units in Egypt	Major Douglas

By November 1918 there were 130 dental officers serving the AIF abroad, of whom 119 were engaged in operative work, and 11 in administrative duties. In 1916-17 there was one dental officer per 7,500 men and by 1918-19 one dental officer for every 4,250 men.

Between the wars

From 1920 to 1939 a small nucleus of dental officers in each Military District carried out tactical exercises to study the constitution, equipment, administration and tactical handling of army dental units. The more senior militia officers also qualified for administrative positions. At the outbreak of WW2 found a nucleus of medical and dental officers with a knowledge of the military system.

World War II

On Sunday, 3 September 1939, Australians knew that they were committed to another war. The organisation necessary to provide a dental service had already received attention from the DGMS and ADGMS (Dental) Colonel J.E. Down prior to mobilisation. In 1939 Colonel Down estimated the dental needs for a division and its associated troops to be:

50,000 fillings
40,000 extractions
10,000 dentures.

For this task seven dental officers were provided.

By October 1939 Dental Units were provided on the War Establishment of

3 Field Ambulances
1 Casualty Clearing Station
2 General Hospitals
1 Convalescent Depot.

Each Dental Unit consisted of a Dental Officer, two Mechanics and one Clerk Orderly. They wore a brown hexagonal colour patch.

Growth of the Dental Services progressed through a series of stages:-

1. Limited number of dentists enlisted in the early stages
2. Assistance of a part time voluntary service
3. Equipment and supplies were insufficient for a time
4. Dental surgeons working with locally obtained dental supplies
5. Attaining separate status of the AAD Corps.

On the 23rd April 1943 GRO A369 Of 1943 authorised the formation of the AAD Corps. In July GRO O 520 of 1943 designated a hexagonal colour patch of Burnt Orange.. This was changed on 16 November 1945 by GRO 283 to the new rectangular system which remained until 1948 when colour patches ceased to be worn, and shoulder titles introduced.

By October 1945 the establishment of the Dental Corps was:-

DDS LHQ

DDS Advanced LHQ

Consulting Dental Surgeon LHQ

Depot of Dental Store LHQ

DDDS HQ 1st AUST ARMY

ADDS HQ 1 AUST CORPS

ADDS HQ 2 AUST CORPS

ADDS HQ QLD LofC Area

ADDS HQ NSW LofC AREA

ADDS HQ VIC LofC Area

ADDS HQ SA LofC Area

Aust Base Depot of Dental Stores

44 Dental Units 2/1 to 2/8 51 to 87

5 Reinforcement Pools - one in each mainland state.

Qld L of C Area	1 officer
NSW L of C Area	2 officers
Vic L of C Area	4 officers
WA L of C Area	2 officers
SA L of C Area	1 officer

Dental Officers Attached to Other Units

Hospital Ships Manunda & Wanganella	2 captains
Facio Maxillary Units	4 majors
Casualty Clearing Stations	9 captains
Australian General Hospitals	22 majors or captains
Royal Military College Dental Unit	1 captain
Supernumerary List	3 major & 14 captains

At the cessation of hostilities Dental Units continued to be employed where the need was greatest and were gradually reduced as demobilisation wound down the Army.

Post war period

At the cessation of hostilities Land Headquarters AMF was disbanded and Army Headquarters and the Military Board were re-established.

The RAADC was administered by the Director Dental Services under the Adjutant General Branch of Army Headquarters. The allotment of dental personnel was to be based on one dental officer per 1000 soldiers.

Dental Units were regarded as Army Troops and allocated on the basis of two per division and three per corps with additional units for BASE and Communication Zone Areas as required.

The Dental Unit consisted of a Headquarters and six sections (Major & 7 Captains). The HQ with two dental officers controlled and administered the sections and could establish a dental post. Each section consisted of a Dental Officer, two technicians and an orderly / clerk. The sections were self contained in personnel, equipment, transport and were normally allocated to other units for maintenance.

Other dental personnel (Dental Section) were allotted to medical units as follows:-

- Casualty Clearing Station
- General Hospital with more than 100 beds
- Convalescent Depot - 2 Sections
- Hospital Ships
- Maxillo- Facial Surgical Team

The raising of BCOF and 34th Infantry Brigade and its supporting elements saw the raising in Mauritai of 87th Dental Unit which became BRITCOM Dental Unit at Kure in Japan. This unit predominantly Australian also contained British, Canadians and New Zealanders.

In 1948 the Dental Corps in common with other Corps which had seen war service received the Royal Charter and so became the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps. The Corps became affiliated with the RADC and adopted a modification of their hat badge. The Corps Colour became Green until 1961 when it reverted back to Burnt Orange.

The Interim Army, the beginning of the Australian Regular Army (ARA), was formed in 1947 and recruiting for Korea and K Force commenced in 1951. Dental Section 101 was raised for service in Korea and when a second battalion was sent to Korea, Dental Section 102 was raised to support the Australian Forces in Korea.

In 1948 CMF Dental Units were raised in each State.

- 1 Dental Unit - Queensland
- 2 Dental Unit - New South Wales
- 3 Dental Unit - Victoria
- 4 Dental Unit - South Australia
- 5 Dental Unit - Western Australia
- 6 Dental Unit - Tas
- 41 Dental Training Unit - Singleton

These units supported the CMF Divisions and the Communication Zone Troops.

Regular Army Dental Units were raised in each Command to support the Australian Regular Army.

- 7 Dental Unit - New South Wales
- 8 Dental Unit - Victoria
- 9 Dental Unit - Queensland
- 10 Dental Unit - Keswick
- 11 Dental Unit - Western Australia
- 12 Dental Unit - Kapooka
- 15 Dental Unit - Queensland
- 16 Dental Unit - Woodside
- 17 Dental Unit - Puckapunyal
- 18 Dental Unit - Singleton Raised 15 September 1965
- 21 Dental Unit RMC Dental Unit
- 32 Dental Unit was raised for service in Malaya and Borneo

33 Dental Unit was raised for service in Vietnam.
35 Dental Unit - Holdsworthy/Ingleburn/Puckapunyal
620 Dental Unit Papua and New Guinea Command

In 1959 approval was granted for the appointment of Dental Specialist Consultants. Today we have consultants in all of the major dental specialties of:

Oral Surgery
Prosthodontics
Conservative Dentistry
Preventive Dentistry
Periodontics
Orthodontics

1960 Reorganisation - The Pentropic Division

Dental Units were not organic to the Division but were allocated on the basis of one unit per 5000 troops. A Dental Unit was organic to the Combat Support Group, in the Communication Zone the allocation was also one unit per 5000 troops. A Dental Unit consisted of a HQ and four sections which could form 5 dental teams, the teams are self contained operationally with their own transport and are attached to units as required.

Dental Units work under the direction of a DADDS on divisional HQ, the appointment normally being filled by the senior OC of the dental units concerned.

During July 1967 Department of Defence issued a directive that the Medical and Dental Stores Services of the RAN, AMF and RAAF was to come under the single management of the Army. The DDS would be responsible from 1st January 1967 for the procurement, supply and issue of all Dental Stores required by the three Services.

1970 Reorganisation - The Division In Battle

Divisional Allocation

ADDS on Div HQ
Two dental units now organic to the Division.
Unit is air portable and all stores are man portable
Three dental sections - each organic to a Field Ambulance
Two dental Sections organic to the Light Field Hospital

Two dental units each of five officers and 18 other ranks with five light vehicles with trailers are now organic to the division under the control of an ADDS, able to form ten treatment sections allocated on the basis of one section per 1000 troops. Sections are technically self contained but must be attached to a unit for local administration. Each Field Ambulance has a Dental Section and the Light Field Hospital has two dental sections.

In 1976 the two Divisional dental units were reorganised into a single unit of a headquarters and 12 sections. 14 officers 42 other ranks and 13 light vehicles with trailers. ie 13 Dental Sections

1981 Reorganisation - Manual of land warfare

Dental Unit with HQ and three HQ Treatment Sections each of two Treatment Sections. 11 Dental Officers 31 OR's with 10 Lt veh & Tlr. ie 10 dental sections

Three Field Ambulances each with an organic Dental Section of 1::3

Field Hospital with an organic Dental Section of 1:3

1995 Reorganisation - Brigade Administrative Support Battalion

On 1 July 1995 all dental units were absorbed into the medical company of the Brigade Administrative Support Battalion and lost their individual dental unit number. The new medical company now consisted of the old field ambulance, the dental unit and a psych unit. On the 15 May 2001 the Brigade Administrative Support Battalion was renamed as Combat Service Support Battalion. The dental unit now wears the colour patch of its Combat Service Support Battalion.

Current

Today we have the Defence Force Dentistry Organisation which has become a Tri-Service organisation. The Field Force is supported by Combat Service Support Battalion.

In the base areas are the fixed medical and dental centres located in each State. These Medical and Dental Centres are now staffed by a combination of Army, Navy or Air Force and civilian personnel and now also include a dental hygienist.

Overseas peacekeeping forces receive their dental support from dental teams specially raised for that operation and usually consist of tri-service personnel. Even in East Timor soldiers were still chipping or breaking their teeth on hard rations. Today impacted and/or infected wisdom teeth rather than lack of teeth or decayed teeth are the major problem. A soldier with an infected and impacted wisdom tooth cannot bite or chew his food and is therefore not fit to fight.

Conclusion

The Army Dental Service was formed of necessity in WW1 as part of the AAMC Reserve (Dental) to prevent the evacuation of soldiers from dental disease and the inability to chew hard rations. It developed according to circumstances during WWI and WW2 and gained status as a separate corps on 23 April 1943. The corps gained Royal assent in 1948 and became the Royal Australian Army Dental Corps (RAADC). Today the RAADC has become part of the Australian Defence Force Dental Service staffed by Army, Navy, Air Force and civilian personnel as required and wherever required. Today all troops are maintained dentally fit and the emphasis is now on prevention. The higher level of dental health and fewer missing teeth has created a new situation for the RAADC to adapt to, more impacted wisdom teeth. Dental support for operations is now an ADF or tri-service function. There is now a greater need for dentists with surgical skills. Today on peacekeeping and humanitarian deployments the RAADC is still adapting to the situation of highly specialised dental treatment for all ADF personnel and very basic treatment for civilian populations being supported on peacekeeping operations.



A SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TREASURE: THE VC TO SERGEANT MAJOR JOHN GRIEVE

Anthony Staunton

150 years ago on 29 January 1856, Queen Victoria signed a Royal Warrant instituting a new naval and military decoration for gallantry, the Victoria Cross. The new medal was for both officers and men who had served "in the presence of the enemy and shall then have performed some signal act of valour or devotion to their country ... neither rank nor long service nor wounds nor any other circumstance or condition whatsoever save the merit of conspicuous bravery shall be held to establish a sufficient claim for the honour.

The Crimean War produced three gallantry awards. In 1854 the Distinguished Conduct Medal was instituted for Army non commissioned officers and other ranks. In 1855 the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal was introduced for petty officers and sailors. Senior Officers were eligible for the Order of the Bath but it was not until the institution of the Victoria Cross in 1856 that there was a medal for the company officers more directly involved in the fighting. However, as well as junior officers, the Victoria Cross was open to all ranks.

In 1854, Britain became engaged in the first European War for 50 years. The war quickly revealed a number of defects in the British Army including the lack of appropriate recognition for gallantry. The credit for bringing to public attention the shortcomings of existing means of recognition goes to Captain G.T. Scholl, MP. On 18 December 1854 he moved in the House of Commons that an Order of Merit should be instituted to recognize distinguished and prominent personal gallantry of members of the army and navy then fighting in the Crimea. Having debated the matter in the Commons and having been assured that the question was under consideration, he withdrew his motion.

The Duke of Newcastle, then Secretary of War, had previously without success raised the issue of individual recognition with Albert, the Prince Consort. Following the Commons debate he raised the matter again with the Prince Consort who now supported the proposal that a new decoration be instituted. On 22 January 1855 he prepared a draft of the conditions for the proposed award. A week later the Duke of Newcastle announced to the House of Lords that a Cross of Merit, open to all ranks, would be introduced.

The Order of Merit proposed by Captain Scholl, MP, in December 1854 became the Cross of Merit in the Duke of Newcastle's January 1855 statement and by January 1856 had evolved into the Victoria Cross. However, a further twelve months would pass before the first recipients of the Victoria Cross were announced.

On 24 February 1857, the *London Gazette* promulgated 85 Victoria Cross awards; 27 for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines and 58 for the Army. The awards appeared in the gazette in order of seniority. For the Royal Navy it was individual seniority but for the Army the awards were in regimental order of precedence with the senior regiment to appear being the 2nd Dragoons (the Royal Scots Greys).

The only member of the Royal Scots Greys to appear in the first list of recipients was Sergeant Major John Grieve who has the distinction of being the first Army recipient gazetted with the Victoria Cross. He was commended for gallantry during the Charge of the Heavy Brigade at Balaclava on 25 October 1854. Grieve is not chronologically the first Army recipient. That honour belongs to eight officers and men from five regiments decorated for gallantry at the Alma on 20 September 1854. As was common for Crimean War awards, four of the recipients were

commended for multiple dates including Sergeant John Park of the 77th Regiment. He received his medal in Sydney in March 1858 while his regiment was stationed in New South Wales.

Following success at Alma, the British, French and Turkish forces proceeded to besiege Sebastopol. South of Sebastopol is the small port of Balaclava where the British established a supply base. On 25 October, four Russian columns attacked Balaclava in force. Three Russian battalions under General Gribbe seized the village of Kamara while a second column of five battalions under General Semiakin assaulted Canrobert's Hill. Kamara and Canrobert's Hill were defended by Turkish troops who although outnumbered, resisted stubbornly and with great gallantry until they lost a third of their men; they then retreated towards Balaclava's harbour.

The Balaclava plain was split from left to right by the Causeway Heights along which ran the Woronzov Road. Six redoubts were positioned on the Causeway Heights and were manned by Turkish troops. These troops, demoralised by the retreat from Kamara and Canrobert's Hill, fled when the Russians turned their artillery on the redoubts, the objectives of General Levontski's and Colonel Scuderi's columns. The 12-pounders in the redoubts were spiked by their British gunners before the Russians occupied four of the positions.

Only the British Cavalry Division and the 93rd Highlanders stood between the Russians and Balaclava. Following the Russian infantry was the main body of Russian cavalry which moved from the North Valley over the Causeway Heights into the South Valley towards the town of Balaclava. In direct line between the Russians and Balaclava, under the command of Sir Colin Campbell stood 700 troops including 550 Highlanders of the 93rd Regiment (Sutherland Highlanders). Four Russian squadrons split from the main body of Russian cavalry and were seen to wheel towards Balaclava. Campbell ordered his men to line up on the crest of a hillock in what history knows as the "Thin Red Line". At 500 meters the Highlanders fired, a second volley was fired at 300 yards and a third at 150 meters. The Russian formation broke and wheeled back towards the Causeway.

Lord Lucan, the commander of the Cavalry Division sent the Heavy Brigade of 800 men under Brigadier General Scarlett to support Campbell. Scarlett was 55 years old and had seen no active service prior to Crimea. However, he did not discount the value of active service and had selected as aide-de-camp Captain Alexander Elliott who had seen active service in India with the 8th Bengal Cavalry.

The main body of General Rykoff's Russian cavalry of about 3000 men in blue and silver uniforms came into view on the skyline as the Heavy Cavalry moved into position. Because of the nature of the terrain, Scarlett's Brigade was moving in two irregularly spaced columns. Scarlett was leading the two squadrons of Scots Greys and a squadron of Inniskilling Dragoons. To their right was another squadron of Inniskilling Dragoons and the 5th Dragoons. In reserve, in the rear were the 4th Dragoons.

The Russians had the advantage of both higher ground and superior numbers, but Lord Lucan ordered Scarlett to immediately attack. Before ordering the attack, Scarlett first aligned his squadrons. Instead of charging down and engulfing the Heavy Cavalry, the Russians halted and watched the British preparations. Having completed his unhurried preparations, Scarlett then gave the order to advance.

The Heavy Cavalry charged towards the Russians. Scarlett with Captain Elliott and two troopers was fifty metres in the lead of his column of 300 sabres. The Scots Greys and Inniskilling Dragoons smashed into the Russian ranks and cut and slashed their way through. The 5th Dragoons attacked the Russian centre and Lord Lucan ordered the 4th Dragoons, from reserve, to attack the Russian flank. As the flank attack came in, the Scots Greys and the Inniskillings

emerged from the chaos and eight minutes after it all began the Russians reeled, broke up and turned to scatter in complete disorder.

In the midst of the action, while the two sides were inextricably mixed, Sergeant Major John Grieve performed the actions for which he was awarded the Victoria Cross. His citation states that he:

Saved the life of an officer, in the Heavy Cavalry Charge at Balaclava, who was surrounded by Russian cavalry, by his gallant conduct in riding up to his rescue and cutting off the head of one Russian, disabling and dispersing the others.

The casualties on both sides were surprisingly light, the British suffering about 80, the Russians about 200. The congestion, blunt sabres and thick grey coats worn by the Russians contributed to a small toll but the moral effect was great. The Heavy Brigade had won a clean-cut and important victory. The triumph could have been greater if the Light Brigade had followed up the retreating Russians. However, Lord Cardigan, the commander of the Light Brigade, despite pleas from his subordinate, refused to move from where he had been ordered to remain. Instead of exploiting the Heavy Cavalry's success, Lord Cardigan allowed the opportunity to slip away. Later that day, Lord Cardigan refused to question an ambiguous order and the Light Brigade, made its famous but catastrophic and futile charge.

On 21 July 1856, six months after signing the Royal Warrant instituting the Victoria Cross, Queen Victoria wrote to the Secretary of War pointing out that the forces that had served in Crimea had returned home and that "distinctions always have the more effect when they are given without delay". However it was not until 2 February 1857 that a board of senior officers met to consider the numerous recommendations. Two lists of names were prepared for formal submission to Queen Victoria, one for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines and the other for the Army. The lists were submitted to the Queen on 15 February who suggested one amendment. Following the publication of the first list of recipients on 24 February 1857 it was another four months before the any awards were presented to recipients.

The first presentation of the Victoria Cross was made by Queen Victoria in Hyde Park on 26 June 1857 when over 100,000 people assembled to see the event. The troops on parade formed up under the command of Sir Colin Campbell who had commanded the "Thin Red Line". The Royal party arrived at 10 am with Queen Victoria accompanied by an impressive entourage escorted by the Royal Horse Guards. The Queen wore a suitably adapted Field-Marshal's uniform and took her position for the ceremony with Prince Alfred, who the previous day was conferred with the title of Prince Consort, on her left.

The recipients of the Victoria Cross were drawn up in front of the troops. When all was ready, each man filed past the Queen. The Secretary of State for War handed a medal to the Queen who stooped from her saddle and fixed it on the man's chest. The Navy filed past first and Commander Henry John Raby was the first to receive his medal. Lieutenant Charles Davis Lucas, who chronologically was the first recipient of the Victoria Cross, and, who was cited for his gallantry in the Baltic, was the fourth to receive his medal. The 12 naval officers and sailors were followed by two Royal Marines. The 48 Army recipients were presented to the Queen in regimental order of precedence and again Sergeant Major John Grieve headed the Army group. Although not chronologically the first army recipient of the Victoria Cross, Sergeant Major John Grieve has the distinction of receiving the first Army Victoria Cross gazetted and the first Army Victoria Cross presented.

Charles Dickens wrote of Grieve's gallantry in an early edition of his journal *All the Year Round*:

It is not a thing that should be suffered to die away. When he cut off a soldier's head at a blow, and disabled and dispersed several others, he had no very exciting motives of self-devotion. Pay, promotion, or popularity could not well enter his head, for he knew the rules of the Service about rising from the ranks, and he knew too, that the British public rarely asks the names of the poor privates and non-commissioned officers who fall. What John Grieve did, then, was an act of the purest and most unselfish heroism; but I daresay, when the Queen pinned the Cross to his breast in Hyde Park that day, he felt he was more than rewarded for what to him was a very ordinary matter-of-fact bit of duty.

John Grieve was born in Scotland on 3 May 1822 at Musselburgh in what is now the eastern outskirts of Edinburgh. According to a nephew, Mr Charles Grieve, his uncle as a young man ran through a small fortune and then enlisted in the Scots Greys. He became Cornet without purchase on 4 December 1857, Adjutant on 15 February 1859 and Lieutenant on 30 January 1863. He died aged 52 on 1 December 1873 at Inveresk, Mid Lothian, Scotland. He was buried four days later at St Michael's Churchyard, Inveresk and was interred in his mother's grave. Sadly, the grave remained unmarked for 130 years.

On 21 August 2003 at Piershill Cemetery, Edinburgh, the Royal Highland Fusiliers in conjunction with the Royal Scots Greys and the Black Watch placed a memorial stone over the previously unmarked grave of Private George Wilson VC. On either side of the Wilson grave were memorial stones commemorating Grieve and Indian Mutiny VC recipient Private James Davis, 42nd Regiment (The Black Watch). The memorial stones were later placed over the graves of Grieve at Inveresk and Davis in North Merchiston Cemetery, Edinburgh.

When I wrote an article on John Grieve 15 years ago I ended with the statement that the second edition to *The Register of the Victoria Cross* indicates that John Grieve is the great uncle of Captain Robert Cuthbert Grieve (1889-1957) who was awarded the Victoria Cross with the 37th Battalion, AIF at Messines on 7 June 1917. The source of the story that the two VC recipients named Grieve were related would seem to be a paragraph that appeared in the *Times* on 29 May 1964. It read:

During the Crimean campaign John Grieve sent home £75 to Robert Grieve. If Robert Grieve was his brother and also emigrated, then some relationship may be established between the Crimean VC and an Australian Army VC of the First World War Captain Robert Cuthbert Grieve ...

Descendents of both Grieve families have been in contact with each other trying to find a family connection but so far without success. While there might be a connection further back, the claim that John Grieve VC is the great uncle of Captain Robert Cuthbert Grieve VC seems unlikely. However a nephew of John Grieve VC did arrive in Australia in 1880.

John Grieve Oliver, the son of Catherine Oliver, a sister of John Grieve VC worked with the South Australian Railways until he retired in 1925. His mother sent the Victoria Cross to her son in Australia. In 1918 seeing an appeal by the Adelaide Museum for a Victoria Cross for its medal collection John Grieve Oliver loaned his uncle's medals to the museum. In 1936 he gifted the medals to the museum. At that time he was a widower in his mid 70s with five grand daughters but no grandsons.

The Victoria Cross was on display the Elder Wing (Australian Collection) of the Art Gallery of South Australian for Anzac Day 2005 and remained on display 1 May. The Art Gallery of South Australia maintains a public access policy enabling you to view any object(s) in the collection (not on display) during normal office hours and this can be arranged by appointment. Unfortunately this visit is too brief to arrange for an inspection but I will soon be back in Adelaide to see this South Australian treasure.



GRG 26/5/4

A REMARKABLE PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

Anthony F. Harris

'GRG26/5/4' is a collection of photographs of AIF personnel of the Great War held by State Records of South Australia - the government archives. The reference translates simply as 'GRG' - Government Record Group; '26' - the index number allocated to the State Library holdings in State Records; '5' - the series under which the collection is filed; and '4' - the particular collection within that series. This brace of numbers is followed by a sequential number from 1 on allotted to each individual photograph. For those of you who may not have used archival research sources this simply means that by using these reference numbers the Archivist can, amongst other things, locate exactly what records, or in this case, photographs, are required at any one time.

There are of course numerous photographic collections held by many libraries, archives and similar institutions around the country. We are all aware of the staggering collection held by the Australian War Memorial; similarly many of you will recall hearing of a program entitled the 'Adopt-A-Soldier' project in the Battye Library of Western Australia. That project seeks benefactors to adopt-a-soldier by choosing an un-named digger from the collection of glass negatives and donating a given sum; a means of generating funds for the long-term preservation of the glass negative, in return for which the donor receives a large format presentation print. As an aside, it is interesting to note that the whole donation to the Battye came from the Western Australian fire authorities who for many years used the glass from the negatives to place into their 'break the glass and ring the bell' alarm system.

But despite the numerous wonderful collections held around the country, the South Australian collection is possibly unique in that, it was the result of a contemporary planned program initiated by a government department.

The State Records holding GRG 26/5/4 commenced in November 1918 when the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery of South Australia - then one homogenous department - decided that a photographic collection of South Australian soldiers in uniform who enlisted for the European war would be of benefit to the department's Photographic Record of South Australia; a specific collection covering all aspects of life, industry and commerce throughout the State. Small posters and circulars promoting the proposed new collection were printed and distributed across the State, with specific approaches being made to Secretaries of Branches of the RSL, church groups, local councils and similar organisations. The criteria laid down established that the collection would include native born South Australians, residents of South Australia, and those from elsewhere who enlisted in South Australia or who served in South Australian units.¹ Although most of the responses were received in 1919-1920, the last addition to the collection was made in the early 1950's. No effort has been made to find the individual who first proposed or initiated the program although it is likely that the answer lies elsewhere in the State Library administration files now in the care of State Records. But it is of particular interest to note that, with remarkable foresight, it was stated that '...for future generations, [the collection] will have as great, if not greater interest than for the people of today'. In 1986, with the creation of the Mortlock Library of South Australia, the old Archives section was split from the State Library of SA to become the Public Records Office, now State Records. In one of those quirky

¹ State Records of South Australia, GRG26/5/7 (Correspondence)

bureaucratic decisions the collection was transferred away from the State Library to the Public Records Office as it was recognised as a file specifically created by a government department.

Because of the importance of the collection to the family genealogical fraternity a basic alphabetical listing had been prepared some time previously giving only the full name of the individuals and the relevant photograph file number. The purpose for this was to provide a simple and easy first reference - if someone researching great uncle John Arthur Jones located his name on the list he could then get the archivist to retrieve that particular photograph and possibly get a copy for his genealogical dossier. State Records also produced this alphabetical listing in microfiche form, which is believed to be still available for purchase.

But included with each photograph is a small 'particulars' sheet; and it is this alone that is responsible for changing the collection from an interesting, patriotic statement of its time into a valuable source of contemporary data. So many libraries hold collections of wonderful photographs but relatively few of these photos come with any appreciable amount of data. Apparently when this project got under way, those who wished to donate a photograph were required to fill out a small pro-forma, filling in such details as they could on the individual in the image: Name in full, place of birth, date of birth, residence at enlistment, date of enlistment, occupation, rank and service number, battalion or corps and distinctions (that is - awards and decorations).

Thus you can see straight away that the collection comprises a relatively large amount of information, considerably more than could be gleaned from a photograph or name alone. It was found that many researchers would seek information based on districts or towns rather than by individual names, such as: 'Do you have anyone from, say, Strathalbyn in the collection' etc. Consequently, State Records decided to compile a much more comprehensive computer listing of the collection with a further view to eventually making the data available either on the Internet or via an in-house computer data base. This was commenced as a 'fill-in' task for the Search Room receptionist. Following a public service redeployment, the author was given the fairly straight-forward task of continuing the keying in of the data from the pro-forma 'particulars' sheets. Unfortunately, the guidelines given excluded some of the data and, being a little unsure of just what latitudes were permitted, only those details already started were keyed in (at this stage only about 100 or so entries had been made). However, it was later agreed that more of the missing data should be added, though unfortunately the service number of the individuals was inadvertently excluded. Needless to say, when the project was completed it was stated that anything relevant on the 'particulars' sheet could have been added to the data base!

The keying in of plain data can be (and usually is) appallingly repetitive, boring and monotonous; especially for someone with poor typing skills. But this project? Not at all! Each of the photographs were inspected and compared with the details on the 'particulars' sheet which were then transferred to the computer. However a secondary list of peculiarities or notes on anything that seemed out of the ordinary was jotted down to be perused later, and it was these that subsequently became the basis for this paper. There are in excess of 2,600 photographs in the collection, mostly the standard 'cabinet' size, that is, an approximately post card size print on a slightly larger photographers mount. Some are considerably smaller, some are nothing more than snapshots, but in total they cover just about every branch of the AIF of 1914-19 you can think of.

However, never having made a great study of the Great War or the AIF, after a considerable number of years rubbing shoulders with those who have, a little has rubbed off. So what was seen as 'unusual' or peculiar may be not in the least so to the student of the war, though it is arguable that most of what is here interpreted as unusual are indeed just that. As far as is known

most of them have never been widely published or discussed elsewhere. But before discussing some of the individual photographs, perhaps consideration should be given to what else can be gained from the collection. Firstly of course, the photographs are a great historical resource in their own right - everyone has heard that 'a picture paints a thousand words'. But what about the two or three dozen words on the associated 'particulars' sheet? Obviously these few details paint a far wider canvas than the photographs alone.

Consider perhaps just the quantity; almost 3,000. Surely a broad enough cross section of local society on which to base any number of statistics? As mentioned earlier, simply listing 'place of birth' or 'residence at time of enlistment'; birth dates, occupations, etc could be used to generate any number of lists, graphs or pie-charts. Consider also the unasked-for notes that many of the people sending in the photographs chose to add to the sheet. These notes are truly remarkable in highlighting some of the agonies, the ironies the good fortunes and bad. A few examples perhaps?

Many instances such as 'Killed in action at Pozieres - another only son'; of four men in a family, only 1 returns; in another family, all four members return, each one having served in a different unit. A man transfers to another Battalion to be with his only brother - they both die in the one battle. Five men in the one family, all survive to be discharged; but another digger, gassed on the Western Front, dies just a few days after his repatriation.

The oldest soldier in the collection appears to be Trooper T W Hayes, farmer, of the 9th Light Horse. His date of birth is given as 24 February 1852; simple calculation makes him aged 65 at enlistment in 1917. He went overseas and returned unharmed at wars end. Mind you, he doesn't appear on the AWM's Nominal Roll so perhaps there is an error or other mis-information here! The youngest noted - 16 years at enlistment - as we all know, not at all uncommon. Some people (usually speaking of their own service) went to great lengths adding a couple of extra pages detailing their service throughout the war. For instance, Nurse Elsie Ann Eglinton, file number 2125, lists every ship she sailed in, every staging camp and every hospital she was posted to, from enlistment in October 1914 to her arrival home in July 1918; while file number 2315 K C Presgrave of the Army Medical Corps writes in a letter to his mother what amounts to four closely type-written quarto pages about his arrival in Jerusalem with the Light Horse. Reading the extract suggests that he was well schooled in his religious education! It should be pointed out that the numbers quoted here are generally the file number within the collection, not the individual's service number.

More gems? The brothers C W & M S Goyder, consecutive service numbers 4728 & 4729, both of the 15th Field Ambulance - both awarded Military Medals. What a nice little family group for a medal collector! A number of others quote their service in the Boer War, the Coronation contingents (King Edward VII and King George V) and service in other theatres and corps. A native born South Australian, Thomas Gilbert, file number 2291, born in Pewsey Vale, South Australia, served with the 27th Indian Light Cavalry before transferring to the Royal Flying Corps in January 1917. File number 2384 A S Cameron was a Sub-Lt. in the Naval Bridging Train. We find Capt. H F Hübbe, file No.178 - perhaps a son or other relative of Capt. Samuel Grau Hübbe who died on service with South Australia's 3rd Boer War contingent, the South Australian Bushmen. With the photograph of Sgt S R Gray of the Australian Flying Corps we find a pristine original letterhead of the Station Sergeant's Mess AFC Leightonstone Aerodrome, Tetbury in England; while other photographs include a copy of the family's memorium card, often embellished with battalion colours etc.

Unit transfers are also listed although many of these were probably more administrative, or to better use the skills of an individual, than of the choosing of the digger. Examples: Enlisted in

the 9LH, transferred to 11LH, transferred to AFC. Transferred from 10Bn to 48th, or from the AASC to 16Bn. Some transfers were quite logical. A chauffeur, enlisted in the 10Bn, later transfers to Motor Transport; or the engine fireman who transfers from the 43rd Bn to a Light Railway unit. The combinations are endless.

One of the more notable things about the images is the number of times something unusual crops up - hence the 'secondary list'! Among all the colour patches that are visible, suddenly there is something different. Shoulder titles - number over a few initials over a curved 'Australia' - but suddenly, photo number 2057 for instance, a straight 'Australia'. Obviously examples have been found, but how many in relation to curved ones? I have since learned that the navy wore a straight 'Australia' title and that these occasionally filtered across to army personnel. We are all thoroughly familiar with the ANZAC 'A' so proudly worn on the colour patches of our Gallipoli veterans. Usually it is a die-struck brass initial with serifs. But here and there are variations, such as some woven in bullion wire, while others are plain brass but in a more unusual sans-serif style.

Military bandmen or musicians are usually easy to pick with their die-struck lyre insignia. But then we come across something different. Stationmaster Arnold Smith (Military Medal, recommended for the DCM), a Naracoorte man in the 4th Australian Railway Operating Company is found wearing what appears to be a civilian piece of band insignia, hand-cut from sheet metal in the form of an uncrowned lute. Who among badge collectors would dare say he has a complete collection?

Among all the brown drab khaki AIF uniforms, suddenly we find someone wearing his best pre-war Militia uniform. There are uniforms with shoulder chains; Sam Browne belts with whistle pouches on the cross-piece and apparently non-regulation insignia. Such a variety of interesting and perhaps historically significant differences! A few more examples of what can be seen in the many photographs will serve to help researchers appreciate what a truly remarkable collection this is:

Photos. 946 & 947 show the McCloughry brothers of North Adelaide. The older brother, Wilfred, enlisted in 1914 aged 20, a Law Clerk; while the younger, Edgar, 19 years old on enlistment in July 1915, a student. Both joined the AFC and both are mentioned in Bean's Official History. Between them they brought home a Majority, a Captaincy, 2 DSO's, 3 DFC's and a Military Medal! Where are those little baubles?

Two more brothers are shown in Photos 1100 & 1101 - Robert and Reginald Davey; both South Australian born but both enlisted in British units. Whilst there is no information giving the circumstances of their overseas enlistment, Reginald, the younger brother enlisted in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve while his older brother was taken into the Royal Field Artillery. It seems that Robert survived the war but Reginald did not return. He was a Flight Lieut. in the Royal Naval Air Service serving on *HMS Campania*. The attached note states that he 'lost his life in the North Sea 8 September 1916 owing to accident had to descend onto the water. Only one lifebelt on the aeroplane which he gave to his Observer'. He was about one month short of his 20th birthday at the time of his death. A tragic story certainly, but also a good photograph of a member of the flying branch of the RNVR. His older brother Robert, a Lieutenant in the Royal Artillery, rather ironically perhaps wears the wing insignia of what I presume would be an Aerial Artillery Observer.

Still on a 'flying' theme, Photo. No.1243 shows Alexander Caldwell, a carpenter of Strathalbyn, a small town south of Adelaide, who became a Corporal in the AFC Repair Section. He wears the shoulder title '4 over AFC over Australia', plus what must be a now very rare piece of insignia - a cloth 'Trade' badge showing a vertical wing within a wreath with the initials AFC beneath.

Cecil Claude Pudney, Photo No. 1855, another carpenter by trade was aged nearly 23 years at enlistment. Sgt Pudney was initially in the 27th Bn, transferred to the 16th Pioneer Training Bn, then transferred back again to the 27th. He is wearing a colour patch which certainly appears to be a 27 Bn. patch, but embroidered across the two colours there appears to be a leafed branch of some sort. Another little mystery. Unfortunately Cecil was killed in action on 9 October 1917.

Next to consider is Major Edward Theodore Pascoe, a Dental Surgeon of Adelaide who is listed as serving in the 'AAMC, late 9LH and Major, SOADS Egypt'. Perhaps SOADS translates as Senior Officer or Staff Officer, Australian Dental Service? At first glance this photo seems to have been taken after 1930 as he is wearing what at first appears to be 9LH collar badges. But closer examination shows that they are not post-1930 militia badges of the 9LH at all, but are almost identical to a sketch shown in one of Alfred Festberg's books on Australian army insignia and recorded as 24th Light Horse - approved 7.7.1913. It is not known if this badge was manufactured². Here we have evidence that the badge was indeed manufactured and must probably rate as one of Australia's rarities. The 24 LH was one of three militia Light Horse regiments in SA between 1912 and 1918. Most 24 Light Horse troopers during this period just wore the numeral 24 on the hat. Perhaps only officers wore the badge.

Photo no. 2511 shows another gentleman of more mature years – Major William J.R. Hutchison, born in the South East of SA in March 1865. He enlisted at the age of 50 in June 1915. His AIF duty was in the Sea Transport Service and he claims 20 years in the State and Commonwealth Military Forces by 1919. This is confirmed in pre-Federation records which show he was promoted to Lt. in No.1 Squadron, South Australian Mounted Rifles in February 1900. At war's end he was a Major in the 23 (Barossa) Light Horse. The photo he chose to send in shows the somewhat scarce enamelled Australian Intelligence Corps badge³. Whether this piece of insignia is linked with his AIF service (Temp. Lt-Colonel) or his militia Light Horse unit is not clear.

It is also worthy of note that this collection can also be used 'in reverse'. A few years ago in a country antique shop the author bought a photograph of a digger of the Great War with a clear photographer's imprint (Kadina, SA) and a customer's name 'Whittaker' scrawled across the back of the mount. After coughing up the princely sum of \$5 and scurrying home southward, a quick check of the database revealed two Whittakers of Port Broughton - a small coastal town a few miles north of Kadina. On retrieving the two photographs one was found to be an exact copy of the photo just bought; Hubert Pike Whittaker, Pte 297, 8th Machine Gun Company, born Port Broughton, farmer, enlisted 1 March 1916. He was wounded at Polygon Wood on the 26 September 1917, and died 2 days later at the Canadian Clearing Station.

The reader will agree that GRG26/5/4 is indeed a very rich source of military history from a number of standpoints. The collection is a delight to the careful observer, to the medal and insignia enthusiasts, as also to the statistician. To anyone who has an interest in South Australians in the Great War it is recommended that you remember and try out this resource when next you pick up one of those seemingly innocuous threads of history.

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² *Hat Badges of the Australian Army 1903-1930*, Alfred M. Festberg, Silverleaf Publishing, Melbourne 1981, p.70

³ *ibid*, p.100



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DAVID ALAN FRASER 1920-2006

Notice of the passing of Alan Fraser appeared in the June issue of *Sabretache* and it was appropriate that the same issue should carry his last article for the Journal - *The Last Strike*, the account of his participation in the last RAAF action against the Japanese in New Guinea on 15 August 1945, the day on which the Japanese surrender was announced.

Alan was born at Drouin, Victoria, on 22 June 1920 and developed an early interest in aviation. In his youth this took the form of aircraft modelling with the Hearn brothers of Hearn's Hobbies, a well known Melbourne landmark. Pursuing his interest he became a member of an aero club and took up gliding. He joined the RAAF on 24 April 1942 and rose to the rank of Warrant Officer Pilot. He flew Fairy Battles, Dornier seaplanes, Catalinas and saw war service in New Guinea with 7 Squadron, 71 Wing as a Beaufort pilot.

After Discharge on 14 December 1946 Alan studied accounting. He married Margo in 1947 and in 1950 joined the Commonwealth Department of Treasury, moving from Melbourne to Canberra in 1959. He served for three years as a Finance Officer with HQ FARELF in Singapore. Back in Australia he reached Branch Head level in the Department of Finance.

Alan maintained his interest in aviation history, particularly of WWI aircraft. He became a Founding Member of the Australian Society for Aero-Historical Preservation and edited the Society magazine, and in practical application of his interest worked on the restoration of WWI aircraft for the Australian War Memorial. He also contributed six articles to the ADB.

In July 1984 Alan undertook the editorship of *Sabretache* and served in that capacity for three years. His editorship was meticulous, applied with an eagle eye for typos, grammatical construction and loose writing, but he could suggest necessary corrections without ruffling the feathers of enthusiastic authors, his was a most gentlemanly approach.

Alan's funeral service was attended by Col Simpson, President of the ACT Branch and Clem Sargent. They were able to extend the sympathy of MHSAs members to Alan's three daughters and their families on their loss of a fine and dignified man, and to express the Society's loss of a respected and valuable member

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THE SHOUT VICTORIA CROSS SALE

Anthony Staunton

The Victoria Cross, Military Cross and other medals awarded Captain Alfred John Shout of the 1st Australian Infantry Battalion were sold at auction by Bonhams & Goodman in Sydney on Monday, 24 July 2006. His elderly grandson was the seller. The hammer price was \$1 million, a world record for a Victoria Cross group. The total price including buyer's premium and GST on the buyer's premium paid by media owner Kerry Stokes was \$1,214,500. Of the nine Victoria Cross awards to Australians at Gallipoli, Shout's was the only one not held at the Australian War Memorial and Kerry Stokes bought the medal so that it could be displayed with the other eight medals. Shout was awarded one of seven Victoria Crosses for Lone Pine already having been awarded the Military Cross for gallantry two days after the landing at Anzac Cove. He was also mentioned in despatches and was the mostly highly decorated Australian soldier for Gallipoli. Shout was born in Wellington, New Zealand, on 7 August 1881, and moved to Sydney in 1905. He died from wounds aboard a hospital ship on 11 August 1915 and was buried at sea. His name is commemorated on the Lone Pine Memorial.

The sale attracted much media interest before the sale and greater interest after the record amount paid. Some opinion pieces following the sale made interesting reading. There seem to be general ignorance that all Australian Victoria Crosses have been listed by name under the *Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage* legislation and cannot leave the country. There were the usual letters and commentaries that medals should not be sold. I do not think anyone making such comments realise that millions of medals have been issued to Australian forces since the first campaign medals were issued to the HMCS *Victoria* landing party for the New Zealand wars. It is not possible for public museums to collect, store or display more than a fraction of medals issued. For a whole lot of understandable reasons some families cannot or will not hold onto these relics. So why not encourage other individuals to be the temporary custodians of a nation's relics. Most collectors are not into collecting for the money but for the commemoration, research and intellectual stimulation.

Although the Shout sale attracted a lot of media attention very little attention was paid to the next lot sold for \$150,000 hammer price. Lot 1079 was the George Cross group of Lieutenant Commander George Gosse GC RANVR who was awarded the George Cross in May 1945 for 12 days searching for and removing mines at Bremen Harbour in Germany. In May 2003 the medals had been passed in at an auction held by Sotheby's Australia.

Wodonga Streets to be name for Victoria Cross recipients.

Eight streets in one of Wodonga's largest new housing estates, White Box Rise Estate, could be named after Victoria Cross recipients. This has been recommended by Wodonga council's place names committee, chaired by Cr John Mahony who said choosing the names of Victoria Cross recipients was appropriate given the development was land that had been owned and used for many years by the army. "The street names theme represented a wonderful connection between the long-term land usage and Australia's most honoured military heroes," Cr Mahony said.

The major thoroughfare into White Box Rise Estate would be called Victoria Cross Parade and would link at the eastern end of the development with Anzac Parade. One of the proposed names is Payne Street named for Warrant Officer Class 2 Keith Payne awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry in Vietnam on 24 May 1969. Street naming criteria usually precludes using the names of people still alive but it is believed an exception will be made for Payne, who lives in Queensland. Payne has spoken at Albury Anzac Day services and been involved with the

Bandiana Army Museum. The names of the other seven Victoria Cross recipients and action they led to their award are:

Axford Boulevard	Lance Corporal Thomas Leslie Axford, Hamel, France, 4 July 1918
Burton Crescent	Corporal Alexander Stewart Burton, Lone Pine, 9 August 1915
Dartnell Crescent	Lieutenant William Thomas Dartnell, Maktou, Kenya, 3 September 1915
Kelliher Avenue	Private Richard Kelliher, Nadzab, Papua New Guinea, 13 September 1943
McDougall Street	Sergeant Stanley Robert McDougall, Dernancourt, France, 28 March 1918
O'Meara Street	Private Martin O'Meara, Pozieres, France, 9 to 12 August 1916
Partridge Way	Private Frank John Partridge, Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, 24 July 1945.

(Thanks to Nigel Horne for the article "Streets to honour VC winners" by Nick Higgins, *Border Mail*, 7 July 2006.)

Umrao Singh

More than 400 Victoria Crosses have been sold at public auction and an equal number have been donated to public institutions. Many of the other medals have remained with the recipient's family. The December 2005 issue of *Sabretache* reported the death of Havildar Umrao Singh, the last surviving Indian Victoria Cross recipient. In *The Daily Telegraph* (UK) on 6 July 2006 it was reported that family of Umrao Singh had been approached with an offer of six million rupees (\$A180,000) but were rebuffed by the family. "It wouldn't make any difference if they offered ten million or twenty million," said his Mr Ved Prakash, a police constable with a wife and two children to support. "Nothing could be more shameful than giving away the symbol of my father's heroism for materialistic reasons." (Thanks to former ACT and now Dublin based corresponding member John Tremlett for the article. John also sent a two page article from the same paper dated 12 July on sportsmen who were awarded the Victoria Cross.)

Lord Ashcroft

For many years Lord Ashcroft, Deputy Chairman of the Conservative Party, has been known to be a buyer of Victoria Crosses that have come up for sale or auction. There has been speculation as to how many medals he has acquired and the estimate suggested in the last few years has been that he owns more than one hundred Victoria Cross groups. The question of how many groups Lord Ashcroft owns has now been answered by Lord Ashcroft himself. In an article in *The Spectator* of 22 April 2006 Lord Ashcroft revealed he has had a long fascination with the Victoria Cross and that in 1986 he achieved a dream of buying his first VC group. He set up a trust to protect the collection which now owns 139 VC including three official replacements, one unissued specimen and an unofficial cross. The collection includes six fighter aces from the First World War and two of the 11 awards for Rorke's Drift. Lord Ashcroft announced that he is writing a book about the collection which is the largest and most valuable in the world. The book is due to be published later this year. (Thanks to George Franki for a copy of *The Spectator* article.)

Victoria Cross stamps for UK

Royal Mail will mark the 150th anniversary of the Victoria Cross with an issue of six stamps depicting: Charles Lucas; Noel Chavasse (VC and bar); Agansing Rai; Jack Cornwell; Albert Ball and Arthur Martin-Leake (VC and bar). Each stamp has a head and shoulders of the recipient, the Victoria Cross (and bar where applicable) and part of a newspaper account of the deed. There will also be a fully illustrated Prestige Stamp Book containing four stamp panes (sheets) as well as background information on the Victoria Cross and those who have received it. Release date is 21 September 2006. (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/vconstamps/>)