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JCS

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

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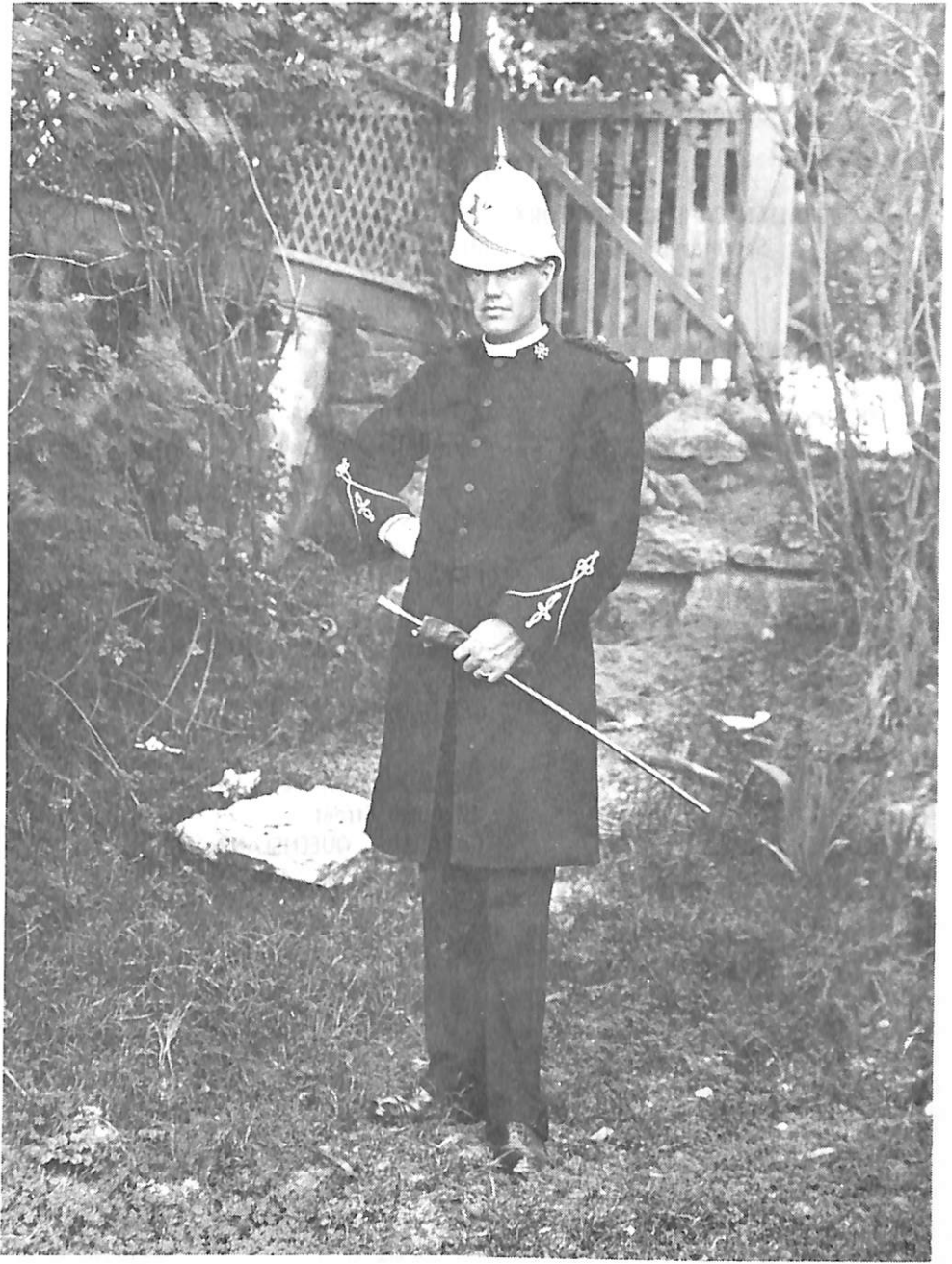
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THE AUSTRALIANS IN NORTH RUSSIA 1919

By Peter Burness

During March 1918 a request was received at A.I.F. Depots in the United Kingdom for volunteers for a secret overseas mission. Of the Australians who came forward about 30 were chosen to go to London and from these three officers and six sergeants were finally selected. These nine men were then sent down to the Tower of London where they joined about 200 other British and Commonwealth volunteers in training. During this period no indication was given of their destination or purpose.

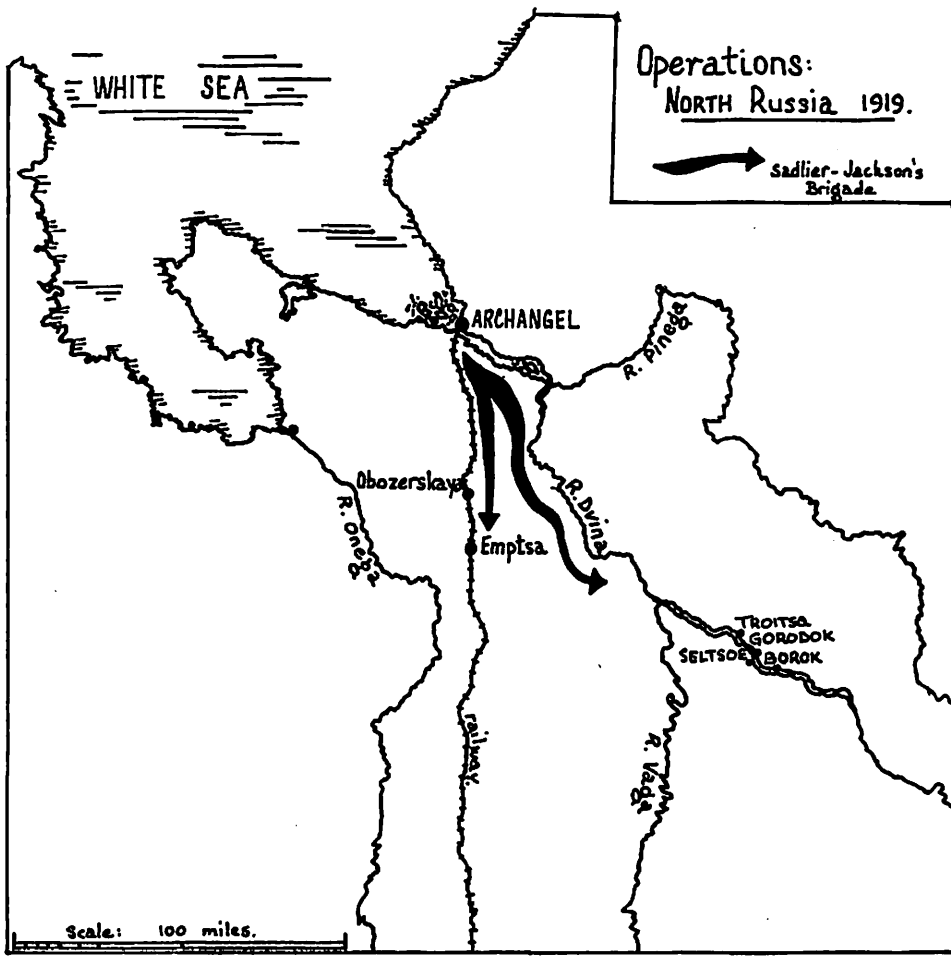
Finally, with only a day's notice, the men were marched down to Waterloo Station to board a train for Newcastle. On 17 June 1918 the force embarked on the troopship "City of Marseilles". Only now were they told that their destination was North Russia.

Following revolutions the previous year Russia had signed an armistice with Germany withdrawing from the European War and at the same time embarking on a bitter civil war within her own boundaries. The Allies were greatly alarmed that Russia's collapse would allow Germany to transfer large numbers of troops from the east over to the Western Front. At the same time there was also concern that large quantities of military stores held in Russia would fall into German hands.

In early 1918 a small Allied detachment was landed at Murmansk in North Russia. This was followed in August by larger landings at Archangel of British, Canadian, and U.S. battalions supported by French, Poles, Serbs and Italian troops.

The Australian volunteers were formed into part of a force known as "Elope Force" which was first landed at Murmansk. One of the Australians, Sergeant A. Van Duve, M.M., later wrote: "On arrival at Murmansk in June 1918 five of us were sent inland on patrol . . . it was six weeks before we arrived back at Murmansk, then we sailed for Archangel. There was another Australian (Sgt. B. Perry, M.M.) in that patrol."

Following the Archangel landings the Allies advanced in August and September westward to Onega, and south along the Vologda railway and the Dvina River to Bereznik. Behind these advances were the friendly White Russian forces. By October 1918 it is estimated that there were 15,000 Allied troops around Archangel.





Some of the British and Commonwealth volunteers for "Elope Force" prior to their embarkation for North Russia in 1918. Four of the nine Australian volunteers are present.

It was inevitable that the landings in North Russia would bring the Allies into conflict with the local Bolshevik forces. The Bolsheviks, however, realised that this theatre of operations was relatively unimportant because of its climate, remoteness, poor communications, and difficult terrain. As a result the Reds maintained a constant pressure, but did not launch any major offensive to try to dislodge the Allied troops.

On 11 November 1918 Germany signed the Armistice and the guns fell quiet on the Western Front. This event added a new dimension to the activities of the North Russia Force. There was no longer any German threat to be considered. However, while the war had ended, troops in North Russia still found themselves in action supporting White forces against the Bolsheviks. Furthermore, the Allies were now committed to this strange campaign by the onset of the Arctic winter which froze the harbours and made evacuation impossible.

Throughout the winter the Allied forces resisted Red Army attacks, developed defences and trained White Army troops. The small band of Australians were by this time widely scattered. Most were serving amongst White units in an advisory capacity. This role was not unlike that of the Australian Army Training Team in Vietnam 40 years later in a somewhat similar conflict.

The Allied governments had agreed that their forces should be evacuated at the earliest opportunity. War against the Bolsheviks was not one of the objects of the original landings. Furthermore, any escalation of the present fighting would be politically unwise at home where the population was preparing for the long awaited peace.

In the early Spring news was received in Archangel of important White Russian Army successes in the east and in southern Russia. It was, therefore, decided that the Allied force in North Russia should be strengthened to allow a local offensive to drive south and link up with the Siberian Army. Such an offensive would allow an evacuation while the Reds were still recovering. As a result, plans were commenced in England to raise a special volunteer force for North Russia.

The North Russia Relief Force was to consist of two brigades. The first would be commanded by Gen. Grogan, V.C., and the second by Gen. L. W. de V. Sadlier-Jackson. Sadlier-Jackson's brigade would consist of the 45th and 46th Battalions of the Royal Fusiliers, and the 201st Battalion M.G. Corps, with the 55th Bty. R.F.A., 250 Signal Coy. R.E., and the 385 Field Coy. R.E., attached. Volunteers for these units were required to be trained, single, fit and over 19 years of age. They would be enlisted for 12 months service.



Corporal Arthur Sullivan, V.C., shortly after his return from North Russia where he served with the 45th Battalion Royal Fusiliers in 1919.

Among the early volunteers for the Relief Force was Major H. G. Harcourt, D.S.O., M.C. Harcourt was a regular British Army officer with considerable war experience and valuable machine gun training. He was appointed to raise and command a company of the 201st M.G. Battalion. Harcourt was aware that there were many well trained Australian servicemen still in England awaiting repatriation to Australia. He went down to A.I.F. Headquarters at Horseferry Road, London, to seek volunteers.

Among the Australians was Warrant Officer Charles Oliver—" a typical British sergeant-major, stiff-backed, full-chested, and unashamedly proud of his unofficial badge of office, a rapier sharp, wax-tipped moustache." Oliver had settled in Australia in 1910 after an extensive career in the British Army. Before the war he had been appointed to the new Duntroon Military College as an instructor. In 1917 he joined the A.I.F. and in April 1918 joined the 21st Battalion in France. In June he was wounded and invalided back to England where he was when the war ended. He obtained leave to study orcharding at West Brighton. However, finding this too dull he put his name down for North Russia. Oliver was responsible for enlisting a great many fellow members of the A.I.F. into the Relief Force.

The Australians recruited by Harcourt and Oliver, and others who responded to separate appeals, were posted to the 45th Battalion Royal Fusiliers and the 201st M.G. Battalion in Sadler-Jackson's Brigade. Unlike the earlier A.I.F. volunteers already in Russia these men, numbering possibly 150, had to be discharged from the A.I.F. and enlisted into the British Army. However, Charles Oliver was able to get permission for the Australians to be enlisted as special companies. They were also allowed to retain A.I.F. uniform and received an assurance that they would be repatriated to Australia after the campaign.

Among the Australians to offer their services was Captain H. Murray, the A.I.F.'s most decorated officer. However, Murray withdrew his name when advised that he would not be able to retain his rank in the British Army. Another officer, Lieut. H. Gipps of the 5th Australian Division Artillery enlisted and served in North Russia as a corporal. Some of the others who enlisted were General Service Reinforcements who had arrived too late to serve in France. These men were determined to see some action before returning home. However, there were also many Australians who had already seen considerable active service who were prepared to join up. Sergeant Robinson and Private Francis were both Anzacs and carried wounds received in 1915. Corporal Pearce wore the ribbon of his Military Medal won at Ypres in 1917. Private H. Spies also had an M.M., and Warrant Officer Jenkyn wore the Distinguished Conduct Medal awarded for his repeated acts of bravery in France during 1918.



Two members of the Australian Section 201st M.G. Battalion man a captured blockhouse near Empsta in late August 1919.

Most of Sadlier-Jackson's Brigade was formed in London before being sent up to Sandling Camp in Kent where General Rawlinson presented Colours to the Royal Fusiliers on 22 May. During the next few weeks the Brigade assembled at Leith, Newcastle, Tilbury, and Southampton prior to embarkation. Most of the Australians finally sailed on the former German ship "Steigerwald" from Leith on 9 June, and on the "Czar" from Southampton on 3 July. The "Times" newspaper report of the departure or the "Steigerwald" says that the ship sailed flying the flag of the League of Nations.

Sadlier-Jackson's Brigade disembarked in North Russia over a period of about four weeks during June-July 1919. General Ironsides, commanding the North Russia Forces, observed: "As I watched them disembark I felt that they could walk through anything in Russia."

Following the arrival of the Relief Force it was possible for most of the original 1918 Expeditionary Force to be evacuated. Most of the A.I.F. volunteers were amongst the first to leave. By July only two of the original nine Australians were still in North Russia.

General Grogan's Brigade was the first to land and was sent up the Pinega River. When the first companies of Sadlier-Jackson's Brigade arrived at Archangel they were sent down the Dvina River. This force made its way down the river by barge to the forward base at Bereznik where they relieved troops who had held the village throughout the winter. The front line was now at Triotsa and Topsa a few miles away.

The Relief Force on the Dvina River joined up with a White Russian force called "Dyer's Battalion". This battalion was composed of Russians of doubtful loyalty welded together by strict discipline. General Ironside's faith in Dyer's Battalion was shattered on 7 July when a company rose up in mutiny murdering their British officers and crossing over to the Reds.

The mutiny of Dyer's Battalion had a considerable effect on General Ironside's plans. He wrote: "I now felt a distinct urge to extricate myself and troops as quickly as possible." The mutiny also fell heavily on Sadlier-Jackson who conceived "an immense disgust and mistrust of everything Russian."

Whilst the main part of the Brigade was moving into positions down the river there were further troops of the Royal Fusiliers and the 201st M.G. Battalion landing from Britain. These companies were held for a while at Archangel since the river was dropping too low for them to proceed down the Dvina. There was a high proportion of Australians amongst these companies which included the machine-gunners of Major Harcourt.

On 16 July Harcourt was ordered to take his men and some details of the 45th Battalion Royal Fusiliers down the railway to the other main front to strengthen the positions there. On 20 July General Ironsides flew up to Archangel from the Dvina following reports of possible mutinies on the railway front. Ironsides took a train down to Obozerskaya where he collected Harcourt's force. The British had obtained information that the Bolsheviks would attack along the railway to support mutinies among the local Russians and those on the Onega front. Anticipating this attack the British quietly withdrew possible pro-Bolshevik troops from the line and had Harcourt's men disarm them. Their positions were then occupied by British, Australian and loyal Russian troops.

On the Onega River the Russians staged their mutiny prematurely on the 20th. Among the few British troops in that area was Captain A. Brown, one of the original A.I.F. officers in North Russia. The Australian was taken by surprise, although he managed to shoot two mutineers with his revolver before he himself was shot and bayoneted to death.

On 22 July the Bolsheviks attacked on the railway. They advanced with considerable commotion. "Obviously they were calling to the men they expected to come over to them. They got a rude awakening when the Australian machine-gunners opened on them," wrote General Ironsides. The Bolsheviks were able to capture six blockhouses which they occupied. During the night they made further attacks on Harcourt's positions which were repelled without loss.

Next morning the British counter-attacked and recovered all their former positions. During the day patrols located about 300 Bolsheviks regrouping in preparation for another attack. A company of men, mostly Australians, caught them by surprise killing about 30 and routing the rest. General Ironsides was returning to Dvina when he received a message of the successful raid. "The Australians . . . killed 30 with the bayonet and wounded a good many more. They then set fire to four blockhouses and left them burning briskly. With this heartening information in my pocket I flew off," he later wrote.

A week later the Australians were again in action on the railway front. A force from the 45th Battalion Royal Fusiliers commanded by Major May, and Harcourt's mixed force, with two Russian companies in support launched an attack on the Bolshevik's flank. Part of the Australian detachment was to seize a large gun located on a railway siding. This attack got off to a bad start when the guides got lost. However, the Australians performed well in the following action capturing some artillery, machine guns and over 200 prisoners. The railway gun was damaged but withdrew to safety.

The British were unable to follow-up this attack and advance on to Emptsa because the Russians in reserve were too slow coming forward.

With the situation now well in hand on the railway, General Ironsides turned his attention to the forces along the Dvina. Here he hoped to deliver his main blow against the Bolsheviks before carrying out his final evacuation. Sadlier-Jackson had already been ordered to plan this attack and now selected 10 August as the date. The purpose of this offensive was described by Gen. Sadlier-Jackson:

1. To strike a strong blow at the enemy and lower his morale;
2. To push his river fleet back to allow mining for the evacuation;
3. To raise the morale of the White Russians.

The Bolsheviks defences on the Dvina lay astride the river for about six miles with a depth of ten miles. This took in the villages of Nijni Seltso, Sludka, and Chudinova on the left bank, and Selmenga, Gorodak, and Borok on the other side. About 6,000 Reds held this line, many in well constructed log blockhouses behind wire entanglements. To launch his attack Sadlier-Jackson had two battalions of Royal Fusiliers (less those companies serving on the railway front), two M.G. companies, a company of Royal Engineers, and a brigade of White Russians. Artillery support was available from over 20 field guns and howitzers and two 60-pounders from the Royal Navy.

The attack commenced on time after a heavy artillery bombardment which included smoke and mustard gas. Kochimaka was in British hands only ten minutes after zero hour, and Chudinova an hour later. Sludka was entered at 1350 hours. Private Brooke, an Australian in the 45th Battalion Royal Fusiliers, distinguished himself in these early actions. "Under heavy fire (he) came back with reliable information enabling his platoon to advance without casualties." Brooke was later awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

At Seltso the attack ran into trouble and was held up. However, on the right bank of the river things went according to plan. Borok fell first, then at 1458 hours Gorodok, considered to be the key to the right bank positions, was entered. Later in the day the Bolsheviks counter-attacked but were driven off with heavy losses. On the difficult left bank a 20-minute barrage was ordered on Nijni Seltso. This was followed by a successful attack in which many prisoners were taken. By midnight the battle had been won. However, at this time there were grave fears held for a column which had earlier captured Sludka. Taking their wounded and prisoners with them this column had tried to link up with the main force but had been repeatedly attacked. Finally, the weary survivors staggered into the British lines at 0720 hours next morning.

FOR DISPOSAL

The following are duplicates I hold of the World War II series (unofficial):

Khaki and Green (2 copies)

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Jungle Warfare (3 copies)

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Signals (1 copy)

As You Were—1946 (2 copies)

As You Were—1949 (1 copy)

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The King's (Liverpool) Regt.
The Lancashire Fusiliers
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The South Lancashire Regt.
The Loyal North Lancs. Regt.
The Manchester Regt.
The Border Regt.

Contact—PETER STANLEY, Burton Hall, P.O. Box 813, Canberra City 2601 A.C.T.

Corporal A. P. Sullivan, an Australian, won the Victoria Cross for his bravery on the 10th August. Existing records do not provide many details of his actions. However, it appears that he may have been part of the column which had been cut off. His citation says: " The platoon to which he belonged, after fighting a rearguard covering action, had to cross the river by means of a narrow plank, and during the passage an officer and three men fell into a deep swamp. Without hesitation, under intense fire, Corporal Sullivan jumped into the river and rescued all four, bringing them out singly. But for this gallant action his comrades would undoubtedly have drowned. It was a splendid example of heroism, as all ranks were on the point of exhaustion and the enemy less than 100 yards distant."

On 11 August General Rawlinson arrived at Archangel to take over from Ironsides as Commander-in-Chief and arrange the evacuation from North Russia. Commenting on the report of Sadler-Jackson's victory the previous day, Rawlinson wrote: " This success is just what I wanted. It will greatly hearten the White Russians, and keep the Bolshies from interfering with our withdrawal."

Before the British evacuated North Russia there was one final offensive action in which the Australians played a very important part. This action took place at Emptsa along the railway in late August. The attack was designed to allow the White forces to consolidate their positions before the final British withdrawal. Because of the inadequacy of the maps available, this attack was preceded by extensive patrolling.

After a long approach march the attack went in during the late afternoon of 29 August. The Australians spearheaded the assault which was supported by White forces. On this occasion the White Russians performed well. The Bolsheviks were taken completely by surprise, but some of their blockhouses defended bravely. During this action Sergeant Samuel Pearce, a Victorian, cut his way through the enemy barbed wire under heavy fire. He then, single-handed, attacked a blockhouse and knocked it out with hand grenades. A few minutes later Pearce was cut down by an enemy machine gun. He was later awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross.

In the same attack with Pearce, Sergeant Hill, another Australian, was badly wounded attacking a blockhouse. Hill's leg was so badly shattered that it had to be amputated. Private Ben Williams, Hill's mate, then silenced an enemy post with his Lewis Gun. Finally, the Bolsheviks fell back across the Emptsa River demolishing the steel railway bridge behind them. In this action over 1,000 prisoners were taken.

During the next four weeks the British handed over their positions to the White Russian Army and made their way back up the rivers, and the railway, to Archangel. This withdrawal required that an enormous quantity of military stores and equipment be destroyed. By 23 September the British force had withdrawn within the Inner Defence Line around the city. Within the next four days all the troops were aboard ships returning to Britain. The evacuation was completed by 27 September 1919.

The Australians in the North Russia Relief Force returned to England to take their leave and obtain their discharges from the British Army. They then joined over 8,000 other troops still awaiting repatriation to Australia. They also managed to get two captured machine guns sent home for display in the proposed "Australian War Museum". One of these (a Maxim) is still held at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, and the other (a Colt) is now in the Infantry Centre Museum at Singleton, N.S.W.

In Australia itself the North Russia "diggers" attracted little attention. Newspaper reports of their activities went little beyond reporting the award of the two Victoria Crosses. However, there was one article published in the Melbourne "Truth" on 24 May 1919 which had a lot to say about the political implications of the campaign. It concluded by saying: "The Commonwealth Parliament ought to be called together at once to condemn the sending of Australian troops (to North Russia) from London or anywhere else." Senator Pearce, Australian Minister for Defence, tried to avoid any criticism of the Government by stating that he was not receiving any information on the activities of these Australians. "The men are entirely under War Office conditions. Their discharge has relieved the Commonwealth of responsibility in regard to them."

In early 1920, only a few months after the evacuation of the Relief Force, Archangel was in Bolshevik hands. The British seem to have determined that the campaign should be quickly forgotten. No Official History of the campaign was ever written nor did the troops involved ever receive a special medal (eligibility for the British War Medal was later extended to cover North Russia). The Communists, however, did not forget. Many years later Mr. Krushchev said: "We remember the grim days when . . . all the capitalist countries of Europe and America marched on our country to strangle the new revolution." Perhaps if there is a lesson to be learned from the North Russia intervention it should be the one expressed by General Ironsides: "Once a military force is involved on land it is almost impossible to limit the magnitude of its commitments."

The Australians in Sadler-Jackson's Brigade served only about ten weeks in Russia. Most of that period was spent in reasonably comfortable circumstances. There were certainly very few of the horrors which had been experienced on the Western Front,

and casualties were only light. Only two Australians were killed in North Russia (one of them A.I.F.). However, there were several men wounded, including Sergeant Hill, and Privates Kevin, Purdue and Robinson. The Australians did maintain their reputation for boldness and daring. The Victoria Crosses of Sergeant Pearce and Corporal Sullivan were the only two awarded for the entire campaign. In addition there were other decorations awarded. These included Distinguished Conduct Medals to Sergeant Robinson, Corporal Gipps, L/Cpl. Lutherburrow, and Privates Brooke, Purdue, and Quarrell. Private Spies received a bar to his Military Medal, and Sergeant Kennard and Captain Brown (A.I.F.) were Mentioned in Despatches. A number of Russian decorations were also awarded.

No doubt Australian veterans of North Russia had cause in later years to remember the names of some of those they had served under, and alongside, in 1919. Arthur Sullivan "the quiet V.C.", returned to civilian employment in Australia. In 1937 he visited England as a member of the Australian Coronation Contingent for King George VI, and on 9 April was tragically killed in a fall in a London street. General Ironsides received his Field Marshal's baton in 1940. He was C.I.G.S., and later C-in-C Home Forces during the early years of World War II. Lt.-General Arthur Percival, in command of forces in Singapore at the time of the surrender in 1942 had been awarded a bar to his D.S.O. for service in Sadlier-Jackson's Brigade. Major Harcourt also received a bar for his D.S.O. for North Russia. Harcourt, who was closely identified with the Australians in North Russia, visited Australia in 1929 on leave from the British Army and decided to stay. He later served with distinction during the 1939-45 War, commanding the 2/6th Independent Company on the Kokoda Trail in 1942.

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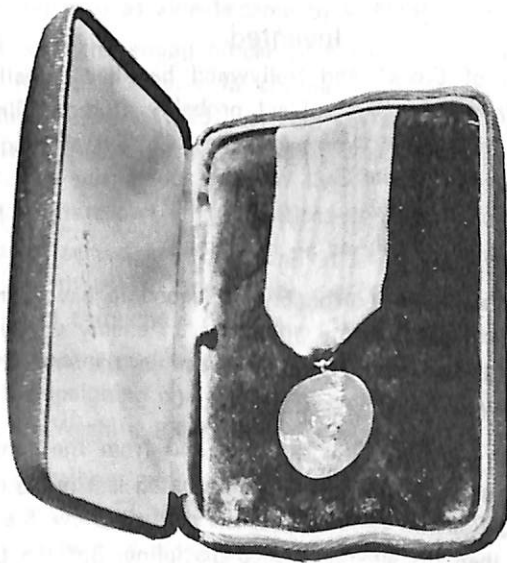
AUSTRALIAN ARMY OFFICER AWARDED IRANIAN GOLD MEDAL FOR VALOUR

Major Rex Clark was recently invested by His Excellency the Iranian Ambassador with the Iranian Gold Medal for Valour. The award was for extraordinary heroism and leadership in action whilst serving with the Imperial Iranian Armed Forces in the Dhofar War. A framed award diploma signed by His Imperial Majesty the Shahan Shah was presented with the decoration which is the Iranian equivalent of the Victoria Cross. The decoration is not known to have been previously awarded to a foreigner.

Newspaper reports indicate that army brass have been quick to insult a world super power by not granting permission for the wearing of this award. It is obvious that the decision to make the award to Major Clark would have been taken at the highest level, yet the Australian Government has allowed an "army brass hat" to make a decision which must surely should have been a ministerial decision. One would think that such insults to friendly foreign nations would be the prerogative of elected Government.

Congratulations are extended to Major Clark for another well earned award which all Australians would be proud to see him wear.

—Federal President



Iranian Gold Medal for Valour

LIEUTENANT COLONEL CUSTER'S LAST STAND

By Frank Cranston

(With kind permission of Editor, Canberra Times)

It was a great day to be alive and that in itself was a pity because before it was over they would be dead. But there was honour and glory to be had and the chance to become part of immortality. They achieved it in full measure.

On this day a century ago, June 25, 1876, at the Little Big Horn River, Montana Territory, U.S.A., George Armstrong Custer, Lieutenant Colonel, 7th Cavalry Regiment, U.S. Army, made his last stand. The 214 men of his column, including his brothers, Boston Custer and Thomas Custer, his favourite nephew, Henry Armstrong Reed, and his brother-in-law James Calhoun fell with him. And the killing would not end there.

The darling of a legend which was already fully aflame in the American conscience, Custer, 37, fell before the warriors of the Sioux chieftain, Sitting Bull, though the victory was to turn sour as the white man wreaked his vengeance not only on Sitting Bull's people but on any other member of the Indian race who declined to show obeisance.

Invented

Much has been written of Custer and Hollywood has had a ball with the legend, versions of his Indian days being the subject probably of more films than any other single incident. Most of them have overlooked the fact that although Custer did make Major General under Sheridan in the Civil War his substantive rank at the time of his death was Lieutenant Colonel. He was entitled to the two stars of his brevet appointment and to the title "General" only as an honorific.

In the aftermath of the Civil War it probably was good to have a hero who could be hailed by both Unionist and Confederate alike and an enemy which either side could hate with superb impartiality. If the Indian menace in the west had not existed it would have had to be invented.

Custer was born in New Rumley, Ohio, in 1839 and from the time he was able to express it, his ambition was to be a soldier. He graduated last in his class from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1861 where, the records show, his academic prowess was only slightly better than his amenability to discipline. But the Union needed men and there was no time to check temperament or qualities of leadership.

' All Soldier '

Fresh from the academy the raw Second Lieutenant who in normal times might have achieved some menial task in an out-of-the-way garrison post was thrown into one of the greatest contests of the war—First Bull Run—and quickly drew attention to himself with a reckless elan of which there was all too little in his army at the time.

“ He was all soldier,” Bruce Catton reports in his monumental trilogy on the Civil War. He was known as “Cinnamon” because of the cinnamon flavoured hair oil with which he kept flowing curls under control. He stood two metres tall in his socks and was broad across the shoulder. He wore a spectacular uniform with a tight hussar jacket, gold-lace trimmed black trousers and a rakishly angled hat, “like a circus rider gone mad” as a contemporary remarked.

Despatches

But idiosyncrasies aside he knew his trade and soon the name of Custer was creeping into the despatches—and the newspapers. He was attached to the staff of General Kearney and later to General McLellan, the commander-in-chief, who greatly admired his courage and initiative.

Upon McClellan's removal from command Custer was returned to his regiment, but early in 1863 was selected as aide-de-camp by General Pleasanton.

Just as impressed with the young officer as his colleagues had been, Pleasanton promoted Custer to Brigadier-General in charge of volunteer forces which were then flocking to the Union banner. At 23, just two years out of West Point, Custer was the youngest general in the U.S. Army, a record which probably will never be equalled.

Patrolling

At Gettysburg Custer served brilliantly and at Cold Harbour, Cedar Creek, Five Forks and Appomattox Courthouse in one of the last great cavalry charges in history. He was a household word throughout the Union. The South had a price on his head.

Reduced to his permanent rank of captain after the war Custer was sent to the 7th Cavalry Regiment campaigning against the Cheyenne in Kansas, taking part in an overwhelming victory at Washita River, in November 1868.

Routine frontier patrolling and pacification campaigns during the next few years included mounting escort duty for the North Pacific Railway survey in Dakota Territory in 1873. Allegations he had made about Washington being soft on the Indians had resulted in his court-martial earlier and his suspension for one year.



Chief Sitting Bull

But such was his image in the public mind and so powerful his supporters that the suspension stood for only ten months and at the end of it he would return to the 7th with no loss of rank.

Sitting Bull and the Sioux regarded the incursions of the railroaders as a breach of the understandings they had with Washington and they did all they could to disrupt the work.

Writing to his friends in Washington Custer propagated rumours of massive gold deposits to be found in the area of the railroad survey this in turn resulting in enormous pressure on Congress to disregard its treaty obligations and allow full-scale development.

Custer helped fuel the flames by alleging that relatives of President Grant were involved in the sale of trading-post rights in the territory, the inference being that Grant was opposed to opening up the territory because of the financial rewards his connections were reaping from their monopolies.

Not one to be intimidated, Grant ordered the Army to get Custer out of the area but reports of a mass Indian gathering aimed at driving the whites off the plains led instead to the promotion of the swashbuckling captain to Lieutenant Colonel in charge of the 7th. An Indian fighter of such renown could not so easily be dispensed with—not even by a President.

Surprise

Properly alarmed, Sitting Bull had called a conference of the Sioux chiefs and the Cheyenne and the Arapaho for Rosebud Creek. Thousands of fighting men arrived.

On June 17, 1876, the Sioux and their allies took by surprise a force of more than 1,250 under the command of General Crook when Chief Crazy Horse launched wave after wave against his blue-coated enemies. Crook managed to extricate his force with the loss of 28 dead and 50 or so wounded but it was Crazy Horse's day and it provided a marvellous boost for Indian morale.

But the Sioux's problems were not over. Two other forces, under General Terry and Colonel Gibbon, were also converging on his encampments. Terry's force included the 7th and Custer whose descriptions of the Eldorado to be found on the Indian territory had started most of the trouble.

Gibbon had 450 seasoned cavalrymen and Terry 925. The plan was to catch the Indians between the two forces and leave them no avenue for escape.

Encircled

General Terry knew the Sioux were withdrawing northward after their Rosebud Creek victory and planned that they should be brought to battle on June 27. But he reckoned without Custer, to whom he should have ensured that definite orders were transmitted.

Custer's instructions were to swing his force around the Indians and pin them against Gibbons' force which was intended to hold them encircled until Terry's men could join the U.S. positions.

But Custer, with the same dash with which he had routed many a Confederate force, decided otherwise. He mistook the trail of the withdrawing Indian encampment as signifying a headlong retreat after Rosebud Creek instead of the orderly strategic withdrawal which Sitting Bull had ordered.

Custer ordered the 7th in hot pursuit and came upon the rearguard of the Sioux early on June 25 near the Little Big Horn River. Completely misreading the signs, he believed that he had a smallish Indian force of about 600 on his hands. There were instead up to 2,000 Indian fighting men to face the 7th's 650 cavalrymen.

And then the man whose reputation for recklessness had not been earned easily made his fatal mistake. He split his force into three columns, the first under Major Marcus A. Reno with about 150 men to charge into and attack the Indian camp, the second, of about the same size, under Captain Frederick W. Benteen, to search for more Indians in the passes and valleys while Custer, with his 215 would flank the enemy force and pincer it between himself and Reno.

Reno hit first but he charged into a maelstrom as the Indians, alerted by a boy who had seen the blue-coats approach, waited for him with about 1,000 braves. Within minutes Reno was fighting to extricate his forces and men fell thickly around him.

When he was able to withdraw after about 45 minutes, half of his force lay dead on the field. Only the emergence of Benteen's force toward the sound of the firing stopped a complete massacre. They were to fight for two more days until relieved by Gibbons.

Disaster

Just as the tumult was settling and Sitting Bull was contemplating an even greater victory than Rosebud Creek, Custer's force surmounted a low rise, across the river.

Perhaps had Custer waited a few moments to adequately interpret the scene the disaster might have been avoided. Perhaps it was already too late as two other columns of Indians riding hard toward the battle converged on the cavalry force's flanks. Perhaps he believed that his enemy would melt before him as had all others in his experience.

Had they charged straight through the Indian forces some of them might have survived to join Reno on the bluffs overlooking the encampment. Instead, caught on broken ground he probably judged unsuitable for cavalry action, Custer ordered his men to dismount, thus depriving them of their only tactical advantage over their still-surprised if elated foes.

What happened next was obscured by the great cloud of dust which the battle caused, a cloud which the legend makers in Hollywood have tried hard to pierce but often only to make the scene more obscure.

Not Scalped

White Bull, a nephew of Sitting Bull, believed Custer himself was his victim. The description he gave of the wounds he inflicted upon "a tall soldier with yellow hair and moustache" matched the wounds found on the body. But with so many in the slaughter it would be difficult to tell.

According to White Bull, Custer was fighting to the last with his bare hands. He would have done. His body was not disfigured by scalping, nor was it looted.

But Custer's defeat, although probably the greatest victory the Indian ever had against the white man, was strategically an enormous disaster at the same time. After the Little Big Horn the Indian was doomed. The Sioux were hounded and beaten again and again and the remnants finally driven into Canada and then permitted back into the United States only on the most stringent conditions.

Buffalo Bill Cody befriended Sitting Bull and tried hard to fight his cause but by that time thoughts of justice for the Indian were at best illusory. Ill-feeling and distrust were the order on both sides. Sitting Bull was the sort of symbol which Washington could not afford to have intact.

Massacre

He was shot and killed while "resisting arrest" at Grand River Camp on December 14, 1890—shot by Indian police. And 15 days later at Wounded Knee the massacre of 180 Indians spelt the end of a nation. Not as well-remembered as the Little Big Horn, it is just as essential a part of the story.

Hero or madman? The argument still rages but it is certain that if Custer had succeeded at the Little Big Horn he would have gone far in the U.S. Army and indeed in American politics. Nelson disobeyed orders too, but in his case it worked.

The extinction of nations was not something to which much thought was given in 1876, no more in the U.S. than it was in the Australia of the day. By his own lights and by those of his admirers, Custer was a military genius whose first error a century ago today compounded itself into disaster. His personal bravery cannot be impugned.

Wounded Knee was the final indecency of it all. It too, at the time, was a "victory" of sorts—the massacre of men, women and children. It does not appear though on the battle honours of the 7th Cavalry which carried it out. And nor does Little Big Horn, for that matter.



George Armstrong Custer. He was a Lieutenant Colonel—not a General—at the time of his death.

COLONEL CHARLES FORTESCUE, D.S.O., M.C., V.D., M.I.D.

By R. Clark

One of the gallant and distinguished Australians to be decorated for actions on the 25 April 1915 was Lieutenant Charles Fortescue. Charles Fortescue was born in Toowoomba, Queensland, on 18 May 1893 and was educated at the Toowoomba State School and Toowoomba Grammar School. He finished school in 1910 and took up employment with his father (Charles Fortescue) who was a jeweller. In 1911 he was commissioned in the Senior Cadets as a 2nd Lieutenant and in 1912 was appointed to 11th Infantry Battalion, Militia, being employed as the officer in charge of the machine gun section. In 1914 he became a 2nd Lieutenant with the 9th Battalion A.I.F. and sailed with the unit to Egypt.

On the 25 April 1915 he landed at Gallipoli commanding the right flank of the unit's covering party. During the confusion of the landing Lieutenant Fortescue rallied various groups of soldiers who had become separated from their units and used them to give covering fire to units who were "digging in". An immediate award of the Military Cross was made to Lieutenant Fortescue for his gallantry at Gallipoli where he had been wounded on three occasions. Although wounded he remained on duty until 17 May 1915 when a severe wound from shrapnel, which forced itself between his ribs tearing the muscles and taking off a bit of the right kidney before lodging in the spinal column, resulted in his evacuation to hospital in Malta and then England. The official extract from the citation for the Military Cross (Australian Military Order 547 of 1915) reads:

"From 25 to 29 April 1915, during operations near Gaba Tepe, for conspicuous gallantry. He twice lead charges against the enemy and rendered good service in collecting reinforcements and organising stragglers."

In January 1916 Captain Fortescue rejoined his unit in Egypt and was later transferred to become a Company Commander with the 49th Battalion which was part of the newly formed 4th Division. He went to France with the 49th Battalion which soon went into action in Belgium. The Distinguished Service Order (D.S.O.) was awarded in 1916 for an attack on Fmme de Moquet where he was again wounded. The citation published in Australian Military Order 180 of 1917 reads:

"For conspicuous gallantry in action. He commanded his Company with the greatest courage and skill. Later although wounded he greatly assisted in

defeating several attacks. He showed a splendid example of coolness and initiative to his men."

The following letter from Field Marshal Birdwood gives a better description of the award:

1st Anzac Corps, 17th October 1916

Dear Fortescue,

This is a line to let you know how glad I am to be able to congratulate you on the D.S.O. which you so fully deserved for all your good work during the command of your Company, you took the German second line trench on the morning of the 3rd September and after capturing it reorganized your Company and consolidated the position until the Battalion was relieved two days later. During all this time I know the enemy constantly counter-attacked, and that the position was held was a great deal owing to your ability and the excellent example you set to your men.

I trust that your wound is not giving you any bother now, and with many thanks to you for your fine work and splendid example.

Yours sincerely

W. R. BIRDWOOD

Fortescue was subsequently promoted to Major and was mentioned in Despatches for an attack at a railway cutting at Noreuil (France) in 1917. During this attack he was blown down the steps of a dugout by the explosion of an enemy pineapple bomb and although he was badly bruised and shaken he continued to command his company (M.I.D. dated 13 Nov. 1916). He had been previously mentioned in General Hamilton's despatches dated 12 Jan. 1915. Major Fortescue was present at all the bitter engagements of the 49th Battalion until he was sent on leave at the end of 1918. Whilst on leave the Armistice was signed so his service with the A.I.F. was terminated when he returned to Australia in 1919. He went back to work with the firm of C. Fortescue Jeweller but continued an active interest with the Army. Service in the C.M.F. was as Commanding Officer of the 25th Battalion and for a short period as C.O. of the 11th Light Horse Regiment. In 1927 Lieutenant Colonel Fortescue was awarded the Colonial Auxiliary Forces Decoration (V.D.).

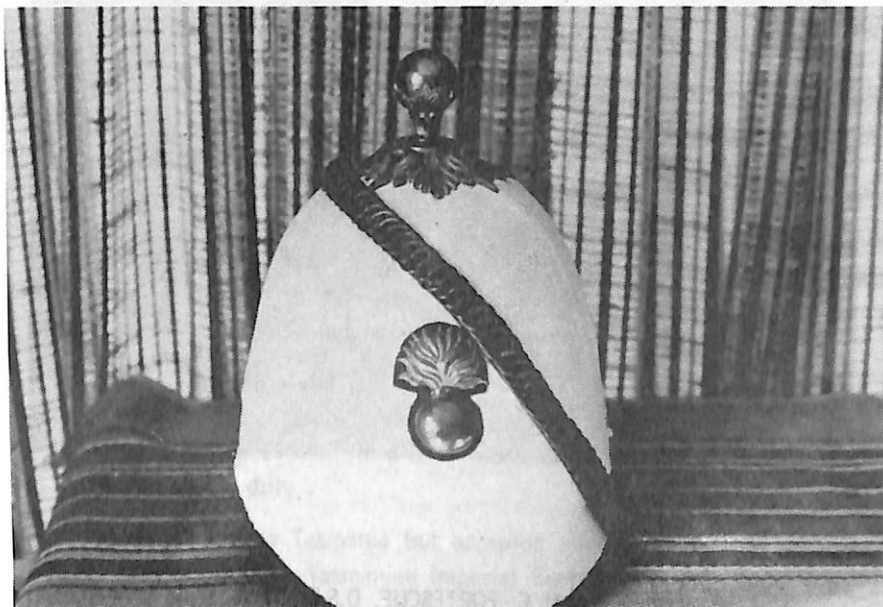
After the outbreak of the war in 1939 he was appointed to form and command the 1st Australian Garrison Battalion which extended from Southport to Thursday Island. After about two years this unit was reorganised and subsequent commands held by Fortescue were 15 Garrison Battalion, 11 Infantry Training Battalion, 23 and 32 Garrison Battalions. Throughout the war he tried on several occasions to be appointed to the A.I.F. but his efforts were in vain. In 1944 after having given his country dedicated service he was

transferred to the Retired List of Officers as a Colonel. Colonel Fortescue was appointed Honorary Colonel of the 25th Battalion and was serving in that appointment when the unit became part of the Royal Queensland Regiment.

Charles Fortescue married Rhea Mansfield on 12 May 1943 and they had one daughter, Jean Mary, who was born in 1946. On 28 May 1971 Australia lost a great and gallant Australian who had served his country with dedication in both war and peace. Colonel Fortescue was awarded the following decorations and medals:

1. The Distinguished Service Order
2. Military Cross
3. 1914-15 Star
4. British War Medal
5. Victory Medal with M.I.D.
6. 1939-45 War Medal
7. Australian Service Medal
8. Colonial Auxiliary Forces Decoration

The author wishes to acknowledge the much appreciated help given by Mrs. Rhea Fortescue who provided the information for this article.





Colonel C. FORTESCUE, D.S.O., M.C., V.D.

BISDEE, V.C.

By Chris Coulthard-Clark

John Hutton Bisdee, V.C., O.B.E., soldier and pastoralist, was the son of John and Ellen Jane Bisdee and the grandson of John Bisdee, formerly of Hutton, Somersetshire, England. He was born on 28 September 1869 at Hutton Park in Tasmania and attended the Hutchin's School at Hobart before returning to work his father's Hutton Park and Tedworth properties.

He enlisted for service in South Africa and left Australia with the First Tasmanian Imperial Bushmen in April 1900. He was involved in operations in Cape Colony, the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, including the action at Wittebergen, and was awarded the Victoria Cross for his part in an action fought on 1 September 1900. A troop of Tasmanians under the command of Lieutenant G. G. E. Wylly were escorting a party of Army Service Corps personnel who were under orders to push north-west from Warm Bad, in the Transvaal, to round up Boer cattle for meat and test Boer strength in the region. When the party was moving through a mountain pass they were ambushed by a Boer force and in the subsequent fray Bisdee rescued Major E. W. Brooke, commanding the A.S.C. personnel. The citation which appeared in the London Gazette on 13 November 1900 read:

On the 1st September, 1900, Trooper Bisdee was one of an advanced scouting party passing through a rocky defile near Warm Red, Transvaal. The enemy, who were in ambush, opened a sudden fire at close range and six out of the party of eight were hit, including two officers. The horse of one of the wounded officers broke away and bolted. Finding that the officer was too badly wounded to go on, Trooper Bisdee dismounted, placed him on his horse, mounted behind him and conveyed him out of range. This act was performed under a very hot fire, and in a very exposed place.

Wigmore quotes Bisdee's later statement of the incident that ' Seeing the officer without a horse, I put him on mine, ran alongside until we were out of range, then mounted behind him and rejoined the escort '. In a letter home he remarked that ' it was merely a case of a man doing his duty '.

Bisdee was invalided back to Tasmania but accepted a commission as Lieutenant in No. 7 Company of the Second Tasmanian Imperial Bushmen on 20 March 1901 and

saw further service until May 1902. He returned from the war having been several times mentioned in despatches, and with the Queen's South Africa Medal (with 3 clasps) and the King's South Africa Medal (with 2 clasps) in addition to his V.C.

Bisdee resumed his mixed farming pursuits, but did not abandon his military interests. On 15 March 1906 he was commissioned Second Lieutenant in the 12th Light Horse (Tasmanian Mounted Infantry). He was promoted Lieutenant on 10 November 1908, and Captain on 14 March 1910. In September of 1910 he was selected to attend 'Courses of Training in India during the forthcoming Drill Season there'. He left Melbourne on the R.M.S. China on 27 September and returned on board the same vessel on 1 May the following year. When the new Universal Training Scheme was introduced on 1 July 1912 the nomenclature of units under the old organisation were changed; Bisdee's unit consequently became the 26th Light Horse (Tasmanian Mounted Infantry). He was appointed to command the unit on 1 August 1913 and remained the nominal C.O. until 31 July 1918, although service with the A.I.F. intervened.

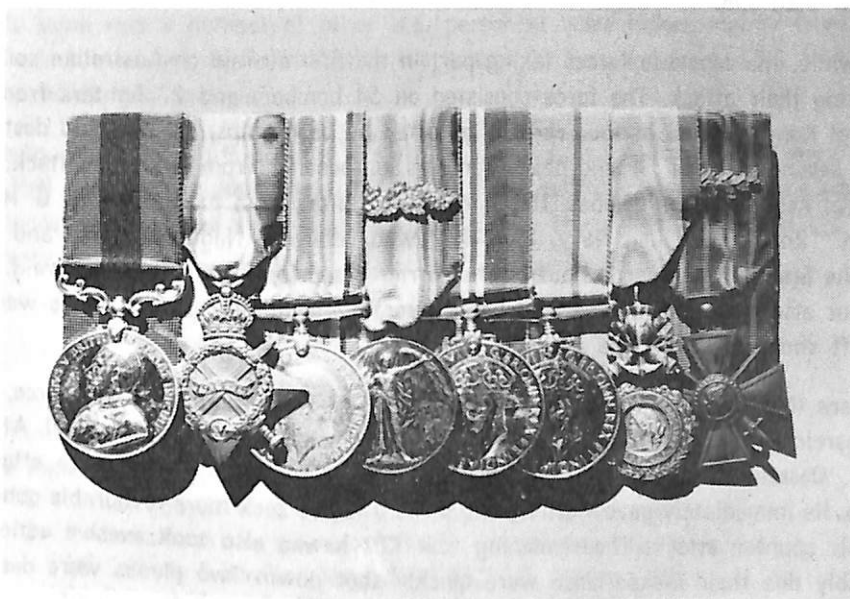
Bisdee joined the First A.I.F. with rank of Captain on 26 July 1915, and was allotted to the 12th Light Horse Regiment, a New South Wales unit. He was promoted Honorary Major on 16 August, and during November and December 1915 served in an Australian Composite Regiment operating against the Senussi in Egypt; he was wounded in the leg and incapacitated for further active service. Consequently, he was seconded from his unit to become Assistant Provost Marshal at General Headquarters on 26 March 1916, and from here he was seconded to become A.P.M. in the Anzac Mounted Division from 24 May 1916 until 3 January 1917, when he was returned to regimental duty.

On 20 January 1918, Bisdee (a substantive major from 7 September 1916) was appointed A.P.M. to the A.I.F. in Egypt, and was granted temporary rank of lieutenant-colonel on 17 February, while commanding the Egyptian Section of the Australian Provost Corps. He transferred from the 12th Light Horse to the Australian Provost Corps (Egyptian Section) on 24 June 1918 and was appointed substantive lieutenant-colonel from the same date. Mentioned in Allenby's despatches dated 5 March 1919, Bisdee was made an O.B.E. in the King's Birthday Honours List on 3 June 1919 for 'valuable services rendered in connection with Military Operations in Egypt'. His war service had also entitled him to the British War Medal and Victory Medal. Bisdee resigned his A.I.F. appointment and was discharged in England on 19 June 1920. He ended his military career when he was placed on the Reserve of Officers on 31 May 1921.

On 11 April 1904 Bisdee had married Georgiana Theodosia Hale, daughter of the Right Rev. Dr. M. B. Hale of Gloucester, England, first Bishop of Perth and Bishop of Brisbane

until his death. After his marriage he moved from Hutton Park to live with his wife at Ashbirton, Bridgewater. Mrs. Bisdee accompanied her husband to Egypt in 1915 and did valuable work in the Army canteen there. She died in the south of France at Christmas 1926, as the result of influenza. Bisdee returned to Tasmania and lived with his sister at Tranquility, Melton Mowbray, and continued there after her death. He was a member of the Kempton Council for some years, and died on his property at Melton Mowbray on 14 January 1930.

SOURCES: L. Wigmore (Ed), "They Dared Mightily," Canberra, 1963, pp. 18-19; "Who Was Who 1929-1940," p. 318; Military Orders 1906-1921; P. L. Murray, "Official Records of the Australian Military Contingents to the War in South Africa," Melbourne 1912; "The Mercury" (Hobart), 15 January 1930; "The Tasmanian Mail" (Hobart), 24 November 1900.



THEY DIED FOR AUSTRALIA

By K. R. White

The question was recently asked "Who was the first U.S. serviceman to die in the defence of the Australian Mainland?" and as a result of limited research the following information is offered in answer to the question.

On 15th February 1942, a group of ten U.S.A.A.F. Kittyhawk fighters had landed at Darwin on route to Java, led by Major Floyd J. Pell, whose second-in-command was Lt. R. G. Oesreicher and whose other pilots were young and operationally inexperienced. After some days rest the group left Darwin at 9 a.m. on the 19th February bound for Koepang, accompanied by a Flying Fortress which served as navigation leader for the group. The aircraft had not proceeded very far when an adverse weather report was received from Koepang which caused Major Pell to decide to return to Darwin, arriving back at 9.40 a.m.

Meanwhile, the Japanese forces taking part in the first air-raid on Australian soil were mounting their attack. The force consisted on 54 bombers and 27 fighters from Vice Admiral Kondo's force of four carriers escorted by battleships, cruisers and destroyers and a second force of 54 land based bombers, unescorted, from First Air Attack Group based at Kendari in the Celebes. This information differs from that quoted by G. Herman Gill in "Royal Australian Navy, 1939-42" who refers to Nagumo's force and states that the first raid was carried out by the carrier based force and the second raid, about an hour after the first, by the land based aircraft. The total Japanese losses were five aircraft shot down and five probably destroyed.

Unaware that the attack was being mounted, Major Pell ordered half his force, under Lt. Oesreicher, to fly air patrol, while he led the remainder into land to refuel. At 8,000 ft. Lt. Oesreicher looked up and sighted a number of Zeros diving in to attack his group. He immediately gave warning and dived away to seek more favourable conditions for his counter attack. The remaining four Kittyhawks also took evasive action, but probably due their inexperience were quickly shot down. Two planes were destroyed immediately, resulting in the death of their pilots, 2nd Lt. J. R. Peres and 2nd Lt. E. S. Perry. A third pilot was able to parachute into the sea and the fourth pilot, although wounded, managed to crashland his disabled aircraft.

Lt. Oesreicher was more fortunate than his comrades and managed to avoid the enemy fighters, being successful in shooting down two bombers before landing his shotup Kittyhawk.

On despatching Oesreicher's group to provide air cover, Major Pell had led his group in to land with intention to refuelling before resuming his patrol. No sooner had the planes landed and taxied into the refuelling area than they were attacked from the air. As the only fighter aircraft in the Darwin area the five Kittyhawks were immediately scrambled, Pell and three others managing to become airborne while the fifth aircraft, piloted by 2nd Lt. C. W. Hughes, was destroyed and the pilot killed. Major Pell reached 80 ft. before his aircraft was hit and he parachuted to safety reaching the ground as his chute fully developed. However, as he landed an enemy aircraft dived on him and he was killed by cannon fire. The remaining three Kittyhawks were all destroyed before reaching operational height, however the pilots all survived the action.

From the above it would appear that the first U.S. serviceman to die in action in the defence of the Australian mainland was either 2nd Lt. Peres or 2nd Lt. Perry but from the sources checked it cannot be definitely stated.

In this same raid a number of other U.S. personnel were killed, mainly from U.S.S. Peary which was sunk in the raid with the loss of 80 lives and from U.S.S. William B. Preston which was damaged.

As memorials to the pilots killed in the attack, airstrips in the Darwin area were named after Pell and Hughes and a major U.S. Army base in Victoria was named Camp Pell. No known memorials of this nature commemorated the memories of 2nd Lts. Peres and Perry.

Source material was obtained from the following:

1. "They Fought With What They Had." W. D. Edmonds.
2. "Australia in the War of 1939-45." Australian War Memorial.
 - (a) "Royal Australian Navy 1939-43." G. Herman Gill.
 - (b) "South-West Pacific Area 1st Year." D. McCarthy.
 - (c) "Royal Australian Air Force 1939-42." D. Gillison.

MEDALS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

By I. C. Teague

A most interesting series of medals to collect are those awarded by the United Nations, as with the exception of two, all have been awarded to Australians. There are a number of different manufacturers of the U.N. medals which has resulted in differing shades in the medal colour; different types of suspension rings and variation in the relief on the observe. Both the French and the United States manufactured medals are seen on sale in Australia.

At this date the U.N. have struck three different types of medals for personnel serving with U.N. Forces, and have issued those medals with eight different ribbons. Seven of the medals have ring suspension and one (Korea) has a straight bar suspension. The photograph shows the standard U.N. medal with the six different ribbons, the U.N.E.F. Medal and the Korean Medal. The abbreviations and some detail on the medals are as follows:

UNFICYP—U.N. Force in Cyprus	30 days
Korea—U.N. Force in Korea	30 days
ONUC—U.N. Operations in the Congo	90 days
UNYOM—U.N. Yemen Observation Mission	60 days
UNMOGIP—U.N. Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (Kashmir)	6 months
UNTSO—U.N. Truce Supervision Organisation in Palestine	6 months
UNEF—U.N. Emergency Force in the Middle East	90 days
UNTEA—U.N. Temporary Executive Authority in West New Guinea	3 months

The Korean medal was issued in the following languages: Amhoric, Dutch, English, French, Greek, Italian, Korean, Spanish, Thai and Turkish—ten different strikings of the medal. The other two medals are issued in English only.

Only two Australian officers are known to have been awarded the Congo and Yemen medals. One Australian awarded the Congo medal also was awarded the Middle East (UNTSO) and Korea U.N. medals. Another Australian was awarded the Yemen and UNTSO U.N. medals. The Australian Police Force are awarded the Cyprus medal and the R.A.A.F. in the Middle East will be awarded the UNTSO medal.

With the exception of the Korea U.N. medal none are common with UNTEA and UNYOM being extremely rare. All are issued unnamed. A complete collection of U.N. medals, including the different languages, would comprise 17 medals. There is no known collection outside of U.N. Headquarters in New York which has a complete collection of these medals.

The Korean and UNEF ribbons are worn with their respective medals, all other ribbons are worn on the Standard U.N. medal. Description of the ribbons are as follows:

Korea: Alternate narrow blue and white stripes—U.N. colours.

UNFICYP: The design, a thick white band, with two other dark blue bands symbolizing the Mediterranean with the U.N. represented by a thick blue band on either edge.

ONUC: The original U.N. medal for the Congo was issued with a blue and white ribbon (UNTSO) with bar "Congo". In 1963 the ribbon changed to one of blue and green with a narrow white stripe. Green being the symbol of hope for a young nation and to also symbolise the Congo Basin.

UNYOM: The varying shades of brown indicate the dry and rugged mountain in the Yemen, the lighter shades represent the desert. A U.N. blue stripe is on each edge.

UNMOGIP: The varying shades of green represent the Himalayas and Kashmir Valley with a white stripe to represent the snow capped mountains. The U.N. blue stripe is on each edge.

UNTSO: This medal is sometimes called the UNOGIL. Is blue with two narrow white strips representing the U.N.

UNEF: Wide U.N. blue band with yellow symbolizing the Sinai desert, a thin blue stripe representing the Suez Canal and a green stripe symbolizing the Nile Valley.

UNTEA: The ribbon is U.N. blue with three central stripes—dark green to represent the jungle, pale green a symbol of the coral beaches and white to represent the snow covered mountains.

A Canadian officer is known to have been awarded five U.N. medals but only one Australian is known to have been awarded three U.N. medals. A roll of Australian recipients is not known so the Society would welcome any effort to compile such a roll.

UNITED NATIONS MEDALS



UNFICYP



KOREA



ONUC



UNYOM



UNMOGIP



UNTSO



UNEF



UNTEA

SISTER ADA HODSON, A.R.R.C., AUSTRALIAN ARMY NURSING SERVICE

By P. Hall

Of the six members of the A.A.N.S. who were awarded the Indian General Service Medal with clasps 'Afghanistan N.W. Frontier 1919' two were also awarded The Royal Red Cross 2nd Class, 'for valuable services in the field in the Afghan War 1919'. Sister Hodson is one of the two Australian Nurses to be awarded these extremely rare combination of medals.

Ada Hodson was born at Lilydale in Victoria and before the war worked at Osborne House, Geelong. During the war she served mainly in the British India Service as a Staff Nurse at Colaba War Hospital Bombay, Victoria West Hospital Bombay, 36 and 52nd British Hospitals of Rohat. In addition she served on the hospital ship Ellore, and in 1920 she took her discharge in England. Sister Hodson later worked at The Memorial Hospital at Bulawaza in Rhodesia.

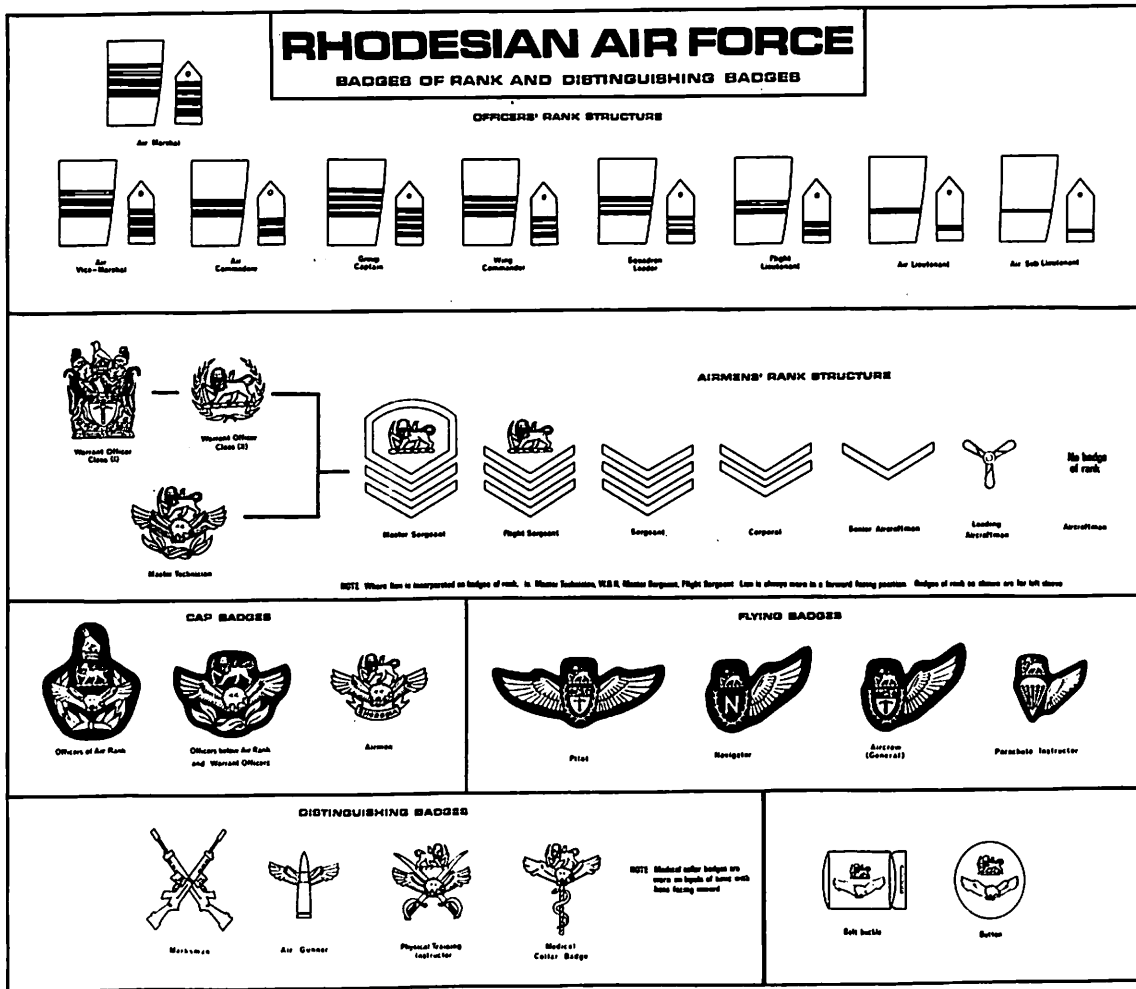
Sister Hodson was awarded the following decorations and medals:

1. Royal Red Cross 2nd Class (Geo. V)
2. 1914-15 Star
3. British War Medal
4. Victory Medal
5. Indian General Service Medal with clasp.

The A.A.R.C. appeared in London Gazette 2nd Supplement 32001 of 30 July 1920 and C.A.G. 89 of 21 October 1920.



Helmet Plates of the N.S.W. Military Forces in the Bob Gray Collection.



THE STORY BEHIND THE GUNS

By R. D. White

A feature of parks and gardens up to and including World War I was the use of obsolete artillery pieces as ornaments and as part of war memorials. This practice seems to have died out but many interesting guns are still to be found in towns throughout Australia. An interesting example is the 3-inch rifled breech loader illustrated. It appears to be of Armstrong manufacture and probably would have had a projectile of 10 to 12½ pounds. It is preserved near the War Memorial at Sunbury, Victoria.

It once was part of the armament of the Rupertswood Half Battery of Royal Horse Artillery, raised and subsidised in the 1870's by Sir William J. Clarke, a prominent grazier of the district. This volunteer unit conducted training manoeuvres and parades on the vast grounds belonging to Rupertswood mansion, now the site of a boys' school.

In addition to the light field artillery as illustrated, the Battery was equipped with the Nordenfeldt ten barrelled machine guns.

One of its regular functions was to provide the Governor's escort for the Opening of Parliament ceremony. A team was sent to Islington in the early 1890's and won a number of competitions.

Encampments were held annually at Easter when volunteers from other Victorian units combined in mock battles involving several thousand men.

Traditionally a bridge was built across the creek and blown up at the end of the camp—a custom still preserved with some interesting variations by commando units of later years.

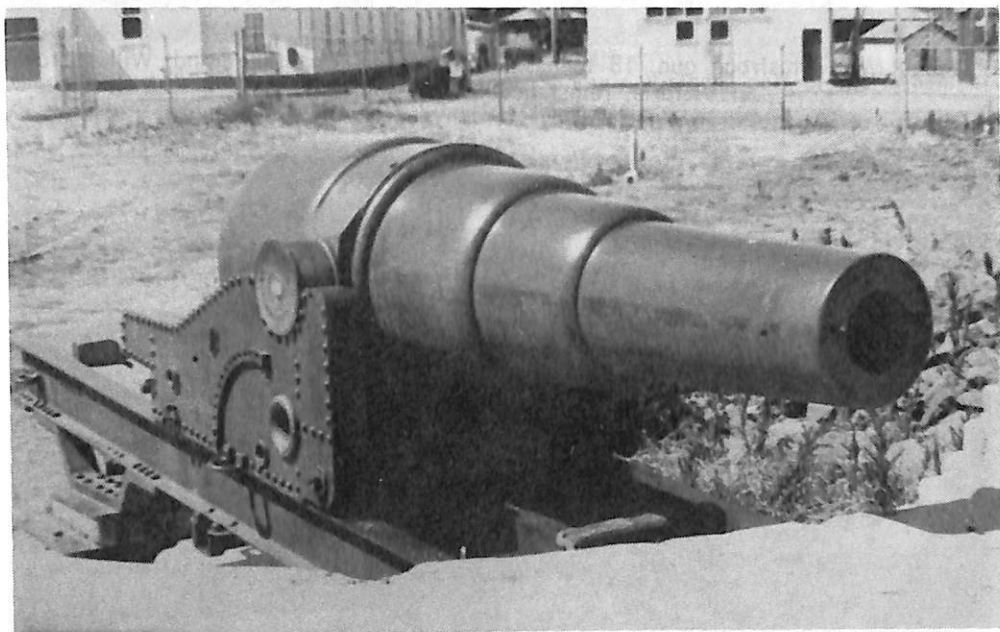
Another interesting example of bygone days is the 18 tonne rifled muzzle loader, several of which are preserved at Williamstown, Victoria. Manufactured in 1867 at the British works of Sir William Armstrong, these monsters were installed at Fort Gellibrand as part of the coastal defences of Melbourne. Their 10 inch rifled barrel could accommodate a 300 pound projectile, which could be used as fused shell, shrapnel, or shot.

Fort Gellibrand was remodelled in 1870 using prison labour from the stockade nearby. Many mock battles were fought between units of the Victorian Navy and the Williamstown Division of the Victorian Volunteer Artillery.

In 1906 four of these guns were obtained from the Defence Department and placed in Williamstown Gardens by the local council. In 1975 two of these guns were restored to their original emplacements, the land being given by the Army for use as a foreshore recreational park.

The remaining two guns had previously been moved to a site on the other side of Williamstown and close to relics from the H.M.V.S. Nelson.

REFERENCES: Sunbury—"Pioneers to Pop Festivals 1970"; W. P. Evans—"Deeds Not Words," "Port of Many Prows," and other notes on Williamstown history.



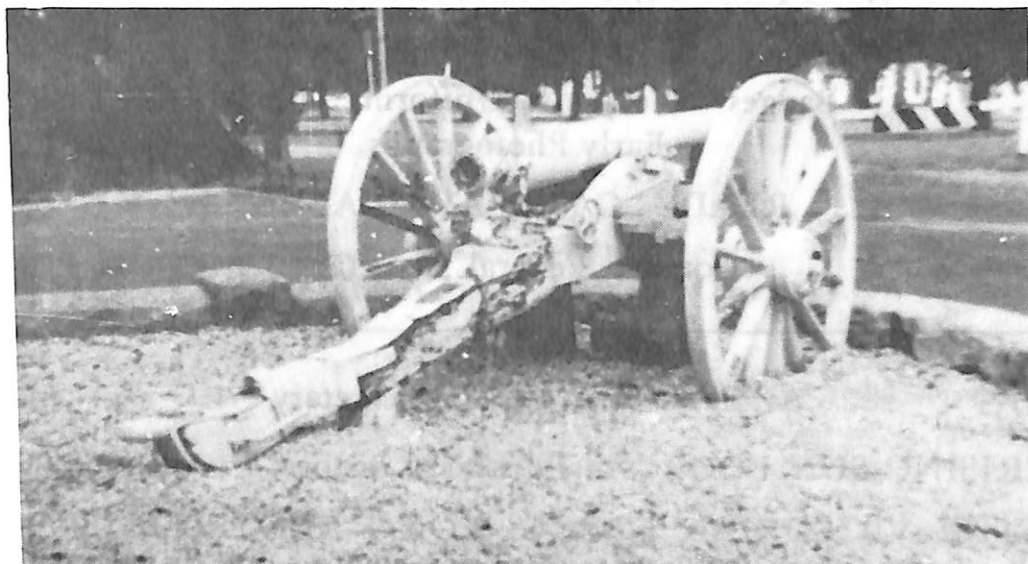
General view of 1867 R.M.L. Armstrong 300 pounder installed at Fort Gellibrand, Williamstown, about 1880.



1867 R.M.L. Armstrong gun, 18 tonnes, 300 pounder, Fort Gellibrand, Williamstown, Victoria, reinstalled in old emplacement.



Old gun mount, emplacement and magazine at Fort Gellibrand, Williamstown, Victoria.



3 inch Rifled Breech Loader at War Memorial, Sunbury, Victoria, part of the armament of the Rupertswood Battery.



Close-up of muzzle of R.M.L. Armstrong 300 pounder at Fort Gellibrand, Williamstown
A conical projectile is visible in the 10 inch barrel.

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COLONEL C. C. EASTERBROOK, D.S.O., M.B.E., M.C.

By Lt. Col. H. L. Harnett (R.L.)

With the recent death of Colonel Claude Cadman Easterbrook, D.S.O., M.B.E., M.C., on the 8th May 1975 another era in the history of the Australian Army comes to an end. Claude would be, I believe, the last of the pre-war 1914 members of what was known as the A.I.S. (Australian Administration and Instructional Staff), and what became in 1921 the Australian Instructional Corps, a body of dedicated men who by their energy, efficiency and devotion to duty helped to produce most of Australia's Army leaders. At the commencement of Compulsory training in 1911, following Lord Kitchener's recommendation, schools of instruction were held to produce instructors for the Scheme. Some officers who had served with the volunteer units were accepted with commissions, e.g. Sir Carl Jess in 1909, General John Whitman in 1910, who commanded Southern Command in 1940, General Hardie (appointed from 6th A.I.R. in 1909) and many others who reached the rank of Major General or Lieutenant General. The students who qualified at the schools held at Albury in 1911 and 1913 were appointed as Warrant Officers Class II (generally known as Staff Sergeants Major) and were allocated to C.M.F. units throughout Australia. They trained the first intake of Universal Trainees, as the C.M.F. was generally known, and the first intake had just about completed their training when the 1914-18 war commenced.

Claude Easterbrook was an early enlistment as a Warrant Officer with the Light Horse and was later commissioned. He served with 2nd Light Horse and 7th Light Horse, was awarded the Distinguished Service Order, Military Cross and was made a member of the Order of the British Empire. He served in various staff appointments after being wounded at Shellal in April 1917, and in March 1918 was Staff Captain 2nd Light Horse Brigade. In September he became Brigade Major—a posting he held until the end of hostilities. On return to Australia, under the existing regulations, he reverted to his substantive rank of Warrant Officer, but was granted the Honorary rank of Major Quartermaster and posted as Area Officer to the C.M.F. He served in various appointments mostly with Light Horse Units until 1926, when he became Brigade Major (Temporary) at 1 Cavalry Division and then in 1929 was posted to 1st Division A.A.S.C. In 1930 he became A.D. S. & T. in 2nd Military District where he remained until the Royal Military College moved to Victoria Barracks when he was appointed Quarter-

master at the College. He stayed at Duntroon until 1940, when he was appointed A.D. S. & T. at Army H.Q. where he remained until his retirement. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in June 1942 and to Temporary Colonel in July 1942. On retirement he was granted the rank of Colonel.

Claude Easterbrook was a model of the best of the A.I.C., a most popular figure, with a keen sense of humour, and one always ready to advise younger members of the Corps. He would, I am sure, be well remembered and admired by senior Army officers who were Staff Cadets during his period as Q.M. at Duntroon.



MEDALMAN

New Australian Awards: It is hoped the new awards will be manufactured by the Australian Mint in time for the Queen's visit in March 1977. The Australian Mint is making the full size miniature and lapel badges for issue with each award.

It is hoped that someone has sat down and worked out how many of each award should be manufactured—in the case of the National Medal (for 15 years service) the Armed Forces, Police, Ambulance and Fire Brigade, qualifiers must total around 20,000. It was thought the list of recipients of the National Medal would have been gazetted by this—rumour has it that stacks of the medal ribbons are available.

High Quality Copy George VI Military Crosses: The society has received complaints that very high quality copies of Second World War Military Crosses have turned up in Australian groups. Informers say the groups concerned are also of doubtful quality, but as Medalman has not seen the items comments are reserved. There are many good quality copies of decorations and medals on the market which are popular with the collector for making up displays. However, such items are sold as copies. Readers are reminded that the Society will verify and or value any medal or groups that are in doubt for a nominal fee of \$2. A wise investment as the unwary could lose several hundred dollars on a bad purchase. It is stressed that the Society will not enter into arguments between individuals on exchanges or purchases.

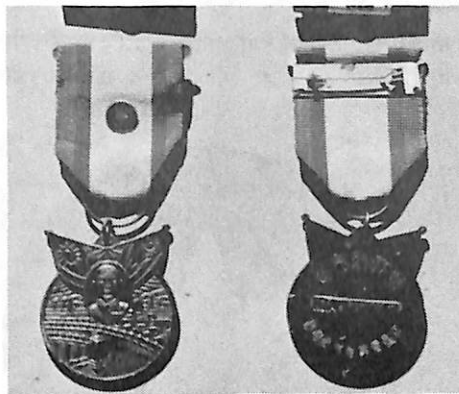
Birthday Honours 1976. It was most pleasing to see in the Birthday Honours List for 1976 the lack of C.B., C.B.E. and O.B.E.s which in the past have in cases been given to senior officers for undistinguished service. There is no doubt that the level of rank to be recognised should be junior officer, N.C.O. and soldiers as promotion to high rank and the high pay for such rank seems more than enough reward. However, it is a great pity that the new Australian system of honours is continuing to reward merit in accordance with rank. What bearing does the rank of a person have in relation to an award for merit? It may be that all citations should be submitted without rank or name and only after the honour is allocated should the name of the recipient become known. As can be seen from the following even the Brits are not happy with the honours system:

There are indications that our honours system is in for a shake-up! Mr. Benn, Energy Secretary, is quoted as saying, "Any society must have a system for rewarding service, but what is peculiar about the British system is that awards are given on the basis of the status of the person who has performed the

service rather than the quality or character of the service for which he or she is being rewarded." And: "Commissioned officers get the D.S.O., D.S.C., M.C. or D.F.C. while N.C.O.s and other ranks receive only plain medals which rate below officers' decorations regardless of the degree of courage shown. Only the V.C. and G.C. are awarded to all ranks. There is no justification whatsoever for maintaining any distinction in honouring gallantry according to a man's rank rather than the guts he has shown."

I.C.C.S. Medal for Vietnam: The International Commission of Control and Supervision for Vietnam has issued a medal to those troops of the I.C.C.S. involved during 1973. The medal is in gilt having on the obverse the emblems of the four countries involved—Canada, Indonesia, Poland and India. The reverse has "Service Vietnam 27.1.73" surrounded by a wreath. The ribbon has a green central stripe with four equal stripes of white and red extending from the centre to the edges. The medals are manufactured by Shinchong Trading Company, Saigon, a firm which no longer is in existence. A certificate accompanies the medal. The Society has obtained a limited number of these rare medals which are for sale or exchange. Note this medal is different from the International Commission For Supervision and Control Service Medal awarded up until January 1973.

Nationalist China Medal for Australians: As mentioned in a previous issue of Sabretache, those Australians who served in China during the Second World War qualified for the Nationalist China Military Medal in Commemoration of Victory in the Resistance Against Aggression. The medal which is well made and most interesting to those who collect medals to Australians can be purchased from the Federal Secretary, M.H.S.A., who obtained a very limited number from official sources. Cost \$25.



Nationalist China Medal for Resistance to Aggression World War II.

BADGEMAN

Present-Day Badges: The shortage of present-day badges should soon be over as orders have been placed to manufacture further stocks. Things must be tough with the Army when items such as badges go out of stock because of financial constraints. The Society, as an approved supplier of insignia, etc., will be obtaining a quantity of each different badge produced. These will be available for sale to members. Unfortunately, the Society will not be obtaining items at Service contract prices.

Reproduction Badges: Little response was received for detail on reproduction Australian badges so a comprehensive list of such badges is not available. Of interest a number of collectors wrote expressing strong support for restrikes of the rare badges providing they were sold as restrikes. Recent reported sightings of a number of 29 Port Phillip Light Horse badges (1912-18) without lugs and poor quality enamelling could indicate another reproduction, so collectors beware.

Present High Badge Prices: The collector who purchases at some recent high prices may find it some time before his purchase reaches the value he paid for it. It is often worthwhile offering a similar period badge to a dealer to obtain a more realistic value. Still I am told the value of any collector's item is what someone will pay for it and if the buyer is happy then that puts an end to an argument on price.

Distinctive Insignia: North Russia Relief Forces (From Peter Burness): How many collectors have this rare patch which was a white star on a blue background?



First Pattern Rising Sun Badges: Melbourne collectors seem to be the 'lucky ones' at the moment as an unconfirmed source has related how a local collector has uncovered a small number of the rare first pattern rising sun badges. The badges are in both gilt and oxidized and are still in the original wrapping. Let's hope the badges end up in Australian collections and are not traded overseas.

Stop Press: My informat tells me that the badges will be passed to the M.H.S.A. for sale to raise funds for publications, etc. Suggest the rising sun fanatics get onto the Secretary as the last one of these badges to come on the market sold at \$35. The dealer said he had several takers for the badge.

Gurkha Badges: The cap badges of seven Gurkha Regiments are available for \$5 which includes postage. Proceeds from the sale of badges go to the Gurkha Welfare Appeal. Cheques should be made payable to H.Q. Brigade of Gurkhas Fund. Obtainable from Major T. G. Blackford, H.Q. Brigade of Gurkhas, B.F.P.O. 1.



BOOK REVIEWS

By B. J. Videon

Victorian Volunteer Long and Efficient Service Medal 1881-1901. By R. Williams. Price \$10.
Available from Federal Secretary, M.H.S.A. Limited Edition.

The research for this book took the author several years to complete. However, the finished product indicates the value of research. The book is a history of the medal complete with a nominal roll of recipients, copies of orders of the day and photographs of the medals, and dies used for their manufacture are included. Full binding with printing on art paper makes the book a high quality production. The book will be of interest not only to those who collect militaria but to all who have an interest in Australiana. The author is to be congratulated for the production of an excellent quality book which it is hoped will set the standard for future publications. Highly recommended to all members, who should place orders without delay as the book will attract interest far beyond the readership for which it was originally intended.

The Desert Hath Pearls. By Rex Hall. Hawthorn Press, Melbourne. 219 pages.

The memories and experiences that make this book are of human relationships during a long life, based on actual diaries and other documents. They include service in two world wars and community service that involved the author in over 50 years with that great organisation, Legacy. The Foreword by Lieutenant-General the Honourable Sir Edward Herring, KSMG, KBE, DSO, MC, ED, KStJ, QC, who was Chief Justice and Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria for many years, reads in part: "This book of reminiscences tells, in a most readable way, a great deal of the life story of the author, which obviously has been a most colourful and eventful life . . ."

Colonel Hall has the unique record of having commanded a Light Horse Regiment and an Infantry Battalion in World War II as well as having been a Staff Captain and Acting Brigade Major in World War I. But it is his experiences that hold the reader's interest, dealing as he does with a wide range of incidents and sequences, sometimes controversial, in both service and civil life. His service with the Imperial Camel Corps, A.D.C. to General Sir Harry Chauvell and as a member of the 1937 Coronation Contingent is of interest to all historians. The mystery on why the Light Horse received relatively

few decorations is explained as is the Coronation uniforms.

This book is most highly recommended reading both as an interesting personal story and as a historical account of important happenings. The book is available from the Federal Secretary at \$10. Includes many interesting photographs taken by the author.

Australian Contingents to the China Field Force 1900-1901. By J. J. Atkinson. Published by the N.S.W. Military Historical Society (N.S.W.M.H.S.). Available from Federal Secretary, P.O. Box 67, Lyneham, A.C.T. 2602 at \$5.50.

This is a much better produced, updated version of the first edition on this subject put out by the N.S.W.M.H.S., "Australian Contingents to the Boer Rebellion" by Major R. Clark. The format and medal rolls are similar to the first edition. However, this edition has been extended to contain some 18 excellent illustrations, a section on The Military Order of the Dragon and a sketchy bibliography—even omitted the first edition. The publication has an attractive card cover and its 70 pages are printed on quality paper. As the book will be of great interest to medal collectors, detail on all long service and other awards to members of the Contingent would have been welcomed. Some members service in other wars has been omitted, e.g. J. F. Albon, Victorian Contingent, served as 660 Pte. in 2nd Australian Comm. Horse; service of R. C. Creer in W.W.1 and W.W.2. A number of comments obtained on the first edition are not included. As with the previous edition the author lists the V.D. as being awarded to all Naval officers, yet we must wonder how many officers listed as having been awarded the V.D. (Colonial Auxiliary Forces) in fact were awarded the V.R.D. No mention is made that The Military Order of the Dragon which is still in existence in Victoria.

The minor omissions mentioned do not detract from an excellent publication which is highly recommended to all with an interest in Australian military history and a MUST for all who collect medals to Australians.

Sopwith—The Man and His Aircraft. By Bruce Robertson. Publisher Argus Books Limited. Publisher's Representatives, Thomas C. Lothian Pty. Ltd. Size 11½in. x 8½in. 244 pages, including Index and Tables. Numerous illustrations, including photographs, line tracings, drawings and colour paintings by well-known aviation artists. Hard covers and dust jacket design by J. D. Carrick.

One of the Harleyford Series, this book tells of the life and achievements of Sir Thomas Sopwith, C.B.E., whose name was a byword during the early years of aviation, and who has spent 50 years heading one of the best-known aircraft manufacturing groups in the British Commonwealth.

Although his Sopwith Camels, Pups, and Triplanes are better known than many British aircraft, he was in fact responsible for the production of many types, from flying boats to fighters, civil aircraft to bombers . . . you name it, he built it!

Sopwith aircraft were used not only by the British, but also by several foreign nations, including the Americans. They were also used by the Australian Flying Corps, and a special point of interest to Australians was the Sopwith Wallaby, built after the First World War to try for the England to Australia Flight. One of his great colleagues was Harry Hawker, who demonstrated a Sopwith Tabloid in Australia during 1914, and who continued in association with Sopwith for many years afterwards. The name of Hawker is famous, of course, for the aircraft that bore his name.

This is a fine solid book, with meticulous detail of the aircraft of the Sopwith family, 29 of which are illustrated by line drawings to 1/72 scale. For all who love old aircraft, and for the seeker after information, this book could not be bettered. Australian Price: \$15.00.

The Collector's Pictorial Book of Bayonets. By Frederick J. Stephens. Publisher: Arms and Armour Press. Australian Representative: Thomas C. Lothian Pty. Ltd. Size 8½in. x 5½in. 127 pages, card covers.

In this little book, the writer set out to tell the collector of bayonets what he should know about bayonets. Illustrated are more than 280 types, and in each case attention is drawn to the important and the not so apparent features that identify each one. Stephens covers the period from the 17th Century to the present day, and many unusual types of bayonet are shown, together with some of the unusual associated equipment or accessories. Dealing with bayonets of over 20 countries, this book is great value at the Australian price of \$4.50.

If criticism can be levelled, it can perhaps be in the fact that, as the bayonets are dealt with in chronological rather than country-of-origin order, it can be a little difficult to locate in it a particular bayonet that one wishes to identify.

German Half-Track Vehicles of World War II. By John Milsom. Publisher: Arms and Armour Press. Australian Representative: Thomas C. Lothian Pty. Ltd. Size 9½in. x 7½in. 96 pages with Appendices and Technical Data Tables. Hard covers, dust jacket, and over 150 illustrations.

Historians and modellers will be fascinated by this book, with its photos and detail drawings of the many types of half-tracked vehicles used by the Wehrmacht. Though not favoured by the British, this type of vehicle seemed to be particularly popular with the Germans, who developed the first one in 1926, and carried them in use right

up to the end of the Second World War. In many cases, great ingenuity was used to bring out a particular feature in a production model, and we find many adaptations to suit particular needs. This is a valuable work of reference and an interesting book for the shelf.

Military Headdress—A Pictorial History of Military Headgear from 1660 to 1914. By Colonel Robert H. Rankin. Publisher: Arms and Armour Press, London, and Hippocrene Books Inc., New York. Size 10in. x 7½in. 128 pages, fully illustrated in black and white. Hard covers, beautiful dust jacket.

Most militaria collectors at some time become interested in the collection and study of headgear. Hats seem to have a fascination for most of us, and the first thing one sees most viewers of headgear do, is to try one or more on themselves! While this makes the collector grit his teeth, it does show how a hat or helmet grips the imagination.

In this book, Colonel Rankin has done more than grip the imagination—he has taken us by the hand, and led us through almost three centuries of military headdress, and shown us the hows and whys of each type. In 230 very clearly reproduced illustrations of actual specimens, he shows the distinctive features of the various types, and describes colours and materials, so that anyone fortunate enough to acquire one of these rare and beautiful pieces, will know whether or not he has a gem or a “dud”. And those of us who are fated merely to read about them, have at last a book devoted especially to our subject. One only wishes that Colonel Rankin had been able to cover even more ground than he has done. However, we accept with pleasure and praise the results of his labour! English price: 4.95 Pounds.

Colonel Colt, London. By Joseph G. Rosa. Publisher: Arms and Armour Press, London, and Fortress Publications Inc., Ontario. Size 11½in. x 9in. 215 pages, including Index and over 360 illustrations. Hard cover and attractive dust jacket.

Most laymen think of Colt revolvers as being exclusively American, mainly “Wild West”, and generally of .45 calibre. They are far from the truth. While Samuel Colt certainly was an American, and his revolvers were used in the roaring days of the old West, he and his weapons were well-known on the international scene, and he spent much time and effort to ensure their use and popularity in many lands.

Colt must have been one of the early “hard sell” salesmen, for he was a tough man in business, with many ideas on salesmanship that were far ahead of his time. That his weapons might not always have been better than those of the competitors whose markets he took did not concern him greatly—he was concerned, however, that his

organisation should triumph over the design and manufacturing problems that were encountered, so that his weapons could become the most favoured by the military and by private users alike.

It was in 1835 that Samuel Colt was granted his first revolver patent, and most of the materials for his weapons were purchased from Britain. In 1851, Colt exhibited a stand of weapons in the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace that aroused great interest, and not a little comment from that most excellent paper "Punch". Colt was not content, however, with static displays, but he arranged for demonstrations to the British Services, and among the most influential citizens, and he made presentations to many, including Prince Albert himself.

In this fascinating book, Rosa tells the story of Colt's activities in England, and of his London Armoury during its existence from 1852 to 1857. The story is lavishly illustrated with drawings and photos of weapons made by Colt and by some of his competitors. The research has been extensive, and includes enquiries in Australia, where Australian collector, Mr. Neil Speed discovered Navy Colt No. 2 and numerous other specimens, many of which are illustrated.

Several Appendixes, a Bibliography, and the satisfactory Index make this specialist book a most useful work of reference, while Rosa's treatment of the subject results in a most pleasing book for the average student of firearms. Tremendous value at the English price of 10.95 Pounds.

Review of D. Featherstone's Solo Wargaming. Key & Ward, London, 1983. 2.40 Pounds.

Solo Wargaming was Donald Featherstone's tenth book on miniature warfare. The book is intended for the "lonely wargamer"; the person who is forced, or chooses, to pursue the hobby without the benefit (or hindrance) of a live opponent. I was in this position for several years and can sympathise with the wargamer who faces the problems of bias, boredom, lack of inspiration, and the sheer effort of shifting all those figures, while the solo wargamer cannot lose he can contract a nasty case of arm ache.

The usual Featherstone annoyances crop up. About one-third of the book is either irrelevant, flippant or plagiarized. Much of the relevant information is familiar to readers of *Advanced Wargames*, a situation which does not encourage the reader to believe that he is deriving full value for money. One can do without the chapters 'The Press Gang', 'Wargaming in Bed', and 'Personalized Wargaming', while the chapter on terrain, while interesting, is a little off the topic.

Featherstone's point is that a more thorough, realistic, well-researched, leisurely, and certainly less acrimonious game or campaign is possible when one plays on one's own. I wholeheartedly agree; nothing spoils a game more than a bloody-minded opponent, or one who doesn't know the period as well as he ought, or fails to appreciate that he is not SUPPOSED to defeat your favourite Regiment. Having played many solo games myself, and watched my brother play a detailed World War II air campaign solo I agree with many of Mr. Featherstone's methods. However, as only nine out of 23 chapters tackle the problems of solo wargaming, often not satisfactorily, I question whether the coverage of this challenging area has been adequately handled.

The appendices include a useful summary of wargames literature. Eleven of Featherstone's books are included, and while I would not call all of them examples of the best available information, his work in encouraging and nurturing the hobby is to be applauded and acknowledged.

As Featherstone notes: "When you put two or more wargamers together you sow the seeds of an argument," and my appreciation of Solo Wargaming illustrates this maxim. If Mr. Featherstone plays to some of the rules he enjoins us to use, I am not surprised that he is a "lonely wargamer". Rules provided for the management of single player games seem rather unrealistic to me, especially when the American wargamers Scruby, Eberling and Schuster are cited. These gentlemen tend to place more emphasis on 'game' than on 'war'. For example, "The cavalry regiments fight to the last trooper," says Mr. Schuster, and he thinks that since all volley firing is simultaneous "if a regiment is destroyed by enemy fire it still gets return fire." What absolute rubbish! Featherstone does not seem to disagree, which casts doubt upon whether his games really are "well researched".

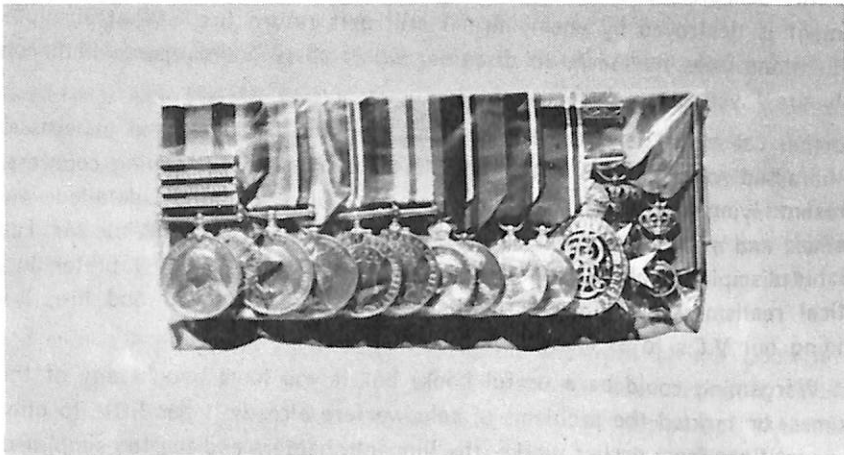
A further cause for disagreement is found in the many minor and unnecessary details the harassed solo player is encouraged to adopt. Ideas for strewing counters about to represent lying down figures, ammunition supplies, minutely detailed war diaries, weather, and even naming and decorating officers are included. While Mr. Featherstone and his disciples might like to employ embroidery of this sort I prefer to strive for tactical realism. When I am satisfied with morale, movement and fire, I will begin handing out V.C.s to as many men as you like.

Solo Wargaming could be a useful book; but if you have bought any of the previous volumes, or tackled the problems of solo warfare already it has little to offer. Without the repetitions from earlier works, the flippant chapters and the too simplified American chapters the remainder is not worth the ten dollars plus one pays for it. It has something to say, but could have been produced more cheaply and effectively.

A Short History of Guerrilla Warfare. By John Ellis. Distributed in Australia by Cambridge University Press (Australia) Pty. Ltd. Price \$16.40.

When studying guerrilla wars many accept the common modern fallacy that guerrilla warfare and its techniques originated with Mao Tse-tung and has been developed from his teachings. In this book the author, who has spent many years researching his subject, shows that in fact guerrilla warfare is as old as man himself. Throughout history guerrilla warfare has frequently been a specifically chosen tactic employed alongside more orthodox measures during otherwise 'regular' wars. The examples he quotes range from struggles of Biblical times through to the highly successful and well planned campaigns of the Viet Cong in more recent days. The book which is well illustrated has 220 pages which does not allow examples from all campaigns, however those selected are most interesting and cover many areas of conflict. Malaya and Vietnam are covered as is Algeria, all campaigns of interest to the present day soldier or student.

The book is carefully researched and is a well documented history essential for the professional reader and interested layman who wishes to acquire an adequate perspective of the historical development of what many believe the only form of armed struggle possible in the nuclear age.



FEDERAL SECRETARY'S NOTES

It is some time since I have been able to put you in the picture on recent happenings within the Society so I thought it time to put pen to paper.

First of all, our President, Ian Barnes, has forsaken the beauty of Canberra, to return to his old stamping ground (no pun intended) of Geelong. Best wishes to him in his joint business activities with fellow member Pat O'Rourke, in Collectors Corner. Another departure is that of our Assistant Secretary, Ivan Lomasney, who as a reward for good service has been posted to Singapore for three years. Ivan (or Chief Lurkman) will be badly missed, not only personally, but for his willingness to undertake any job asked of him. In all sincerity these two stalwarts will be missed and I am being kept busy trying to find replacements.

At the request of our resident member in Albury, Don Campbell, a number of A.C.T. members recently visited Albury-Wodonga for two days and put on a fine display at the Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen's Club, thanks to the wonderful hospitality of President Mr. Merv Bourke and his members. As a direct result of the display and the attendant publicity, a proposal has been made to Federal Council to form a branch with an initial membership of ten members. Congratulations to Don for his fine effort and our sincere thanks to the Commanding Officer of R.A.A.O.C. Centre, Bandiana, and his officers and men for their assistance in making the display a success.

And now the crunch. In these difficult economic times, we are experiencing some problems on the financial front, due mainly to late payment of subscriptions. I won't bore you with the details except to say that if every member paid his subscription when due, we wouldn't have a problem. My thanks to those members who have paid and a plea to those who haven't—do so NOW. Put \$10 in an envelope now, with your name and address and send it either direct to me or to your Branch Treasurer.

On to more pleasant things. As will be seen elsewhere in the Journal, the Society has quite a few badges and books for sale. Have a good look at the advertisements and don't be afraid to buy as all profit comes back to you in the long run. While on the subject, support our advertisers as they also help the Society and without them we would have an even greater financial problem than we have.

In conclusion, on a personal note, both my wife and I have had spells of illness over the past 12 months and I take this opportunity to thank those who sent their best wishes and also to apologise for any delays in answering correspondence. Thank heavens we are now both in the best of health and I'm hopeful that no further delays will occur.

KEN WHITE, Federal Secretary.

W.A. BRANCH NOTES

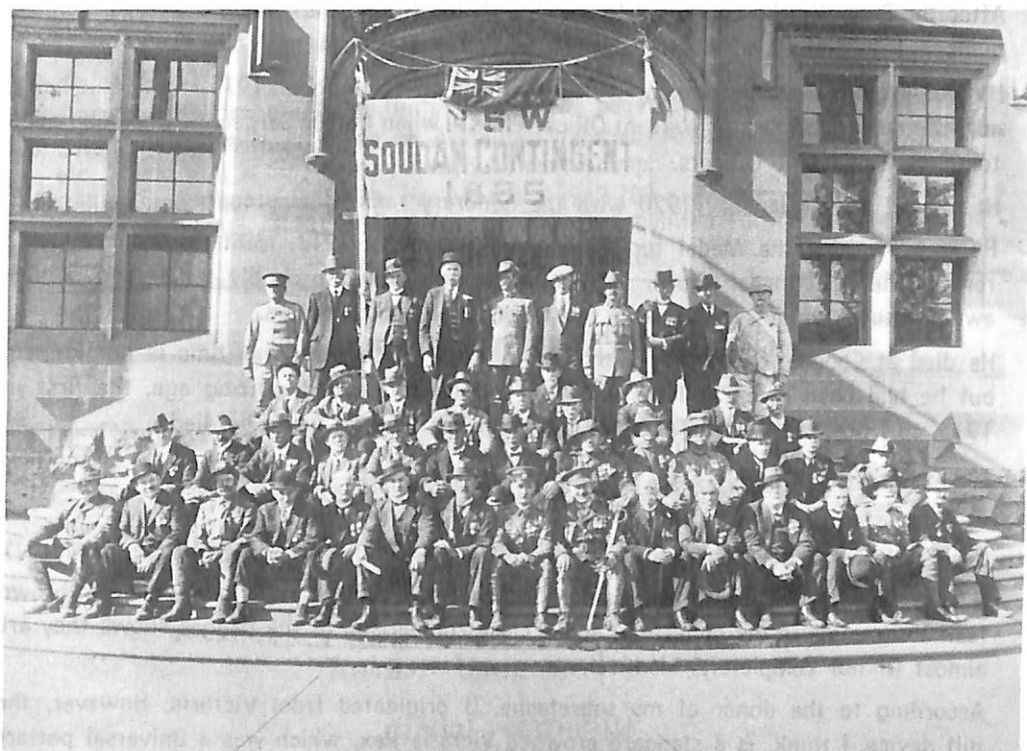
This branch is still managing to attract a steady core of members to its monthly meetings which are held by permission of the U.S.I. and the Army at the U.S.I. Library in Swan Barracks in Perth on the third Thursday of every month. This venue proves central for most members and has an atmosphere of military history about it. Part of the walls are decorated with display frames of the U.S.I. medal collection and there is quite a large collection of books on many aspects of military history which members may browse through during some of our informal meetings. The medal display is the result of the efforts of a former President of the W.A. Branch, the late Captain John Le Tessier, E.D., of the Western Australian University Regiment.

1975-86 has seen a few new members recruited into the branch and the return of one or two former branch members back to our ranks. During 1975 efforts were made to create a more varied program of branch meetings in the way of slide evenings, guest speakers, etc., and at some of these meetings we have had record attendances. Perhaps the most successful event for 1975 was the organisation of a militaria and arms exhibition, held in October in conjunction with the Arms and Armour Society of W.A. The exhibition was put on at the regimental depot of 10th Light Horse, Western Australia's Army Reserve regiment of the R.A.A.C., as part of the regiment's open day to the public. W.A. Branch, H.M.S.A. acted as co-ordinator for the two societies and a great deal of co-operation was received from the Army. This was the first exhibition organised on such a scale by the W.A. Branch and members of both societies have agreed to co-ordinate their efforts for a similar display in the future.

One of our most interesting guest speakers for 1975 was Mr. Jack Sue who gave members some insight into the operations of 'Z' Special Force with whom he served in Borneo during the Second World War. Mr. Sue was born locally in Perth of Chinese parents and was selected for special duties due to his ability to speak Chinese. He is well known in W.A. for his underwater diving activities. Mr. Sue gave a follow-up talk to members and their wives and friends in June this year. His subject covered the final operations in Borneo prior to the Japanese surrender and the fate of Australian P.O.W.s held on the island. He is at present working on a book on this subject. In March this year members were given a very interesting talk by Mr. Arthur Bancroft, a survivor of the sinking of the H.M.A.S. Perth during the battle of the Java Sea in February 1942.

The Branch social evening for 1975-76 was held in January this year at the home of the Branch President, Peter Shaw. An enjoyable evening was had by members, wives and friends. For a change of venue to our normal meetings the Branch Secretary Jim Grant, invited members to his home for our August meeting, where we were able to view some of his militaria items or just have a friendly chat. The program for the remainder of the year has now been set and it is hoped we have the continued support of members as we have had over the past 12 months.

P. A. SHAW, Branch President.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir

With reference to Sabretache, Vol. XVII, No. 3, of April 1976, plate opposite page 234. From the photograph, it would appear that the demedalled gentleman was Battery Sergeant Major William Hammond Coleman. He served with the N.S.W. Contingent to the Sudan as Battery Sergeant Major, Number 304, hence the Khedives Star and the Egypt Medal.

He then, apparently, served with the N.S.W. Permanent Forces until the Boer War during which he served with 'A' Field Battery, still as Battery Sergeant Major, Number 304.

After the Boer War he continued to serve with the N.S.W. Permanent Forces, becoming number 1 in the Royal Australian Field Artillery stationed in N.S.W.

He was promoted to the rank of Warrant Officer on 1st October 1915, that rank being automatically upgraded to Warrant Officer Class 1 when Colour Sergeants were upgraded to Class 2 Warrant Officers.

He retired on 1st January 1920 with the honorary rank of Lieutenant.

He was awarded the Medal for Meritorious Service in 1913, Military Order 493/13 refers. The fifth medal shown in the photograph would probably be a long service award issued while serving with the N.S.W. Permanent Forces.

He died at Coogee, N.S.W., on 27th August 1942. His age at that time is not known, but he had been given at least two year extensions beyond retiring age, the first in 1915, so I presume that he must have been in his nineties when he died.

G. R. VAZENRY.

Badge Identification Vol. XVII No. 2 (Dec. 1975)

I can assist with the identification of the gilt pouch badge (lower L/H badge, page 151). It is a field service sabretache badge, which I say, with conviction. I have a brown leather example in my collection, and a close comparison of the badges shows they are almost (if not completely) identical.

According to the donor of my sabretache, it originated from Victoria. However, the gilt device, I think, is a standard crowned Victoria Rex, which was a universal pattern and not distinctly Australian.

Please advise if yourself and other readers agree with me.

Yours faithfully,

SCOTT A. LIMB.

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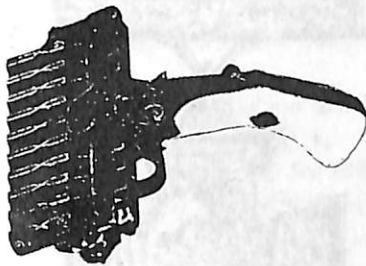
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