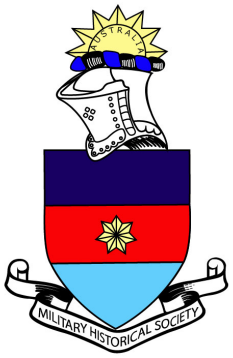
Military Historical Society of Australia
Sabretache



Sabretache policy is that the submission of material gives the Society permission to print your material, to allow the material to be included in digital databases such as the MHSA website, Australian Public Affairs-Full Text, INFORMIT and EBSCO. Reprints to non-profit historical and other societies will be approved provided suitable attribution is included and a copy of the reprint is sent to the author. Copyright remains with the author who may reprint his or her article or material from the article without seeking permission from the Society.

The Society encourages the download and distribution of *Sabretache* for personal use only and *Sabretache* can not be reproduced without the written consent of the Society.

www.mhsa.org.au

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

Journal and Proceedings of the MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

SABRETACHE

Vol XXIX April/June 1988 Number 2

Registered by Australia Post — Publication No. NBH 0587

SABRETACHE

The Journal and Proceedings of The Military Historical Society of Australia (founded 1957)

APRIL-JUNE 1988
VOLUME XXIX-NUMBER 2

Contributions in the form of articles, book reviews, notes, queries or letters are always welcome. Authors of major articles are invited to submit a brief biographical note. The annual subscription to *Sabretache* **is $26.**

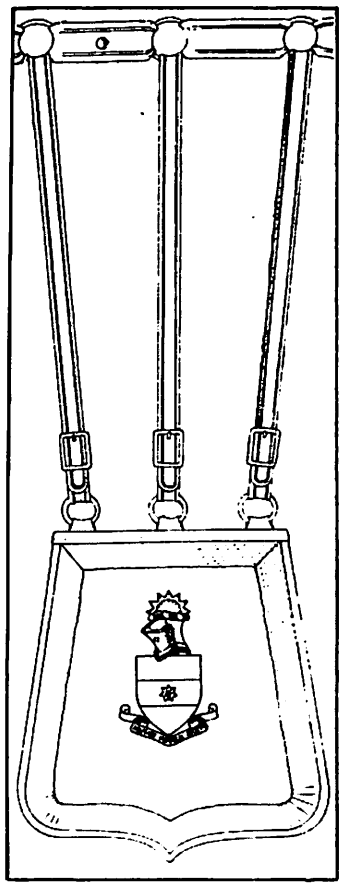
Published by authority of the Federal Council of the Military Historical Society of Australia. The views expressed in the articles in this Journal are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society.

SABRETACHE

MHSA Bicentennial Publication. The Federal Council of the MHSA has chosen Max Chamberlain's chronology of Australian military movement in Asia 1945–1973 as its special publication for 1988. Tentatively titled 'Asian Battle Diary', this work will be available later in 1988 — probably around August-September. Destined to be an essential reference for those interested in Australia's recent military involvement, the 'Diary' will be produced in an A5 format, with numerous illustrations, and will be available through MHSA books. Further details, including price, will be available in the next issue of *Sabretache*. Congratulations to Max (MHSA Victoria) for what will undoubtedly be a valuable and successful contribution to Australian military history.

Military History Symposium. The MHSA Bicentennial Military History Symposium, held on the Queen's Birthday Weekend will be over by the time *Sabretache* goes to press. A full, illustrated, report of this event will appear in the next issue.

Collectors. It is intended to include a 'Collector's Corner' page as a regular feature of *Sabretache* in forthcoming issues. MHSA members interested in militaria, weapons, uniforms, etc. are invited to submit short features on their areas of interest and collections. This is an ideal way to share your interests, and to highlight your collecting needs on a national basis. Illustrations of your collectables are particularly welcome. Black and white photographs will reproduce with the best quality, but colour photographs, or even good photocopies can be reproduced in *Sabretache*. All forms of submissions, *of any length*, are welcome for this new feature, from full-length articles, to snippet length items.



Reorganisation of Research Centre. Researchers are advised that the Australian War Memorial's Research Centre has recently undergone a reorganisation. The former structure has been replaced by a three-section format. The *Photographs, Film and Sound Section* replaces the Audio-Visual Section, while the *Printed and Written Records Section* has absorbed all other collections. The new *Information Services Section* has been created specifically to assist researchers and to answer queries about the collections — tasks formerly carried out by collection curators. The new structure includes a single point of contact for all reference queries — whether dealing with audio-visual or other collections. As previously, the reference desk (the new single-point of contact) can be contacted on (062) 43 4315.

Included with this issue is the Directory of Members for 1988–1989. Any members wishing to amend their entry for the next Directory are advised to get in touch with the Federal Secretary.

Anzac Day. This year's Anzac Day ceremony was marked at the Australian War Memorial by the presence of three of Australia's surviving Victoria Cross winners, and two George Cross recipients. During the day two new features of the Memorial were also unveiled. Peter Corlett's sculpture *Simpson and his Donkey* has been installed outside the main entrance of the Memorial, while an eternal flame, donated by the Australian Gas and Light Company, has been added to the Memorial's pool of reflection. Short biographies of the attending VC and GC recipients have been prepared by Anthony Staunton (MHSA ACT) and are reproduced here. Those attending were:

Charles Grove Wright Anderson VC

Lieutenant Colonel Charles Grove Wright Anderson won the Victoria Cross while commanding the 2/19th Battalion of the 8th Australian Division in Malaya. In January 1942, the Australian and Indian troops in the Muar area were surrounded and Colonel Anderson took control of all forces and led a fighting withdrawal through Japanese lines but was taken prisoner of war at the fall of Singapore. Anderson was born at Capetown, South Africa, in 1897 and is the oldest living 1939–45 Victoria Cross winner. Only the two surviving 1914–18 War VC winners are older than Colonel Anderson who also saw service from 1916–18 with the King's African Rifles in East Africa where he was awarded the Military Cross. From 1949 to 1951 and again from 1955 to 1961, he was a member of the House of Representatives representing the Country Party in the seat of Hume. He lives in retirement in Canberra.

Sir Roden Cutler VC

Sir Roden Cutler was born at Manly in 1916. He won the Victoria Cross during the Syrian Campaign in 1914 as an atillery observation officer with the 2/5th Field Regiment of the 7th Australian Division. He was commended for sustained gallantry over a period of eighteen days from 19 June until 6 July when he was seriously wounded in one leg which was subsequently amputated. He was invalided home to Australia where after a year as secretary of the NSW Branch of the RSL he joined the Commonwealth Public Service in 1943. He transferred in 1946 to the then Department of External Affairs where he held a number of overseas posts.

Shortly after taking up the post of Ambassador to the Netherlands in 1965 he was appointed Governor of New South Wales, a position he retained for 16 years. He presently lives in Sydney.

Edward Kenna VC

Ted Kenna was born in 1919, at Hamilton, Victoria. In 1945 he was a member of the 2/4th Battalion of the 6th Australian Division which ws fighting near Wewak in New Guinea. On 14 May he was a member of a support section that was to provide covering fire for a platoon attack. Because of the nature of the ground he was unable to bring his gun to bear and so without orders and in full view of the enemy, he stood up and engaged a Japanese bunker with Bren and rifle fire at fifty metres. Miraculously he was not hit although three weeks later he was wounded in a similar operation. He returned to Hamilton after the war where he still resides.

Daphne Pearson GC

Daphne Pearson was a Corporal in the Women's Auxillary Air Force in England in 1940, stationed at Dealing, Kent. On 31 May 1940, an aircraft crashed near the WAAF quarters and although aware that the aircraft contained unexploded bombs, she entered the wreckage, revived the pilot and helped him from the plane. When 30 metres from the crash, a 120lb bomb exploded, she threw herself on top of the injured and dazed pilot. The citation for the Empire Gallantry Medal stated that she almost certainly saved the pilot's life. Daphne Pearson was born in England in 1911 and migrated to Australia after the war and was a Horticulturalist with the Commonwealth Department of Transport from 1968 to 1976 when she retired. She now lives in Donnybrook, Victoria. Of 396 George Cross awards, only 14 have been to women and she is one of 5 living recipients.

Leon Verdi Goldsworthy GC

Lieutenant Commander Leon Verdi Goldsworthy is Australia's highest decorated naval officer. He was one of a group of officers of the Royal Australian Navy Volunteer Reserve engaged in bomb disposal work in England during 1939–45. He was awarded the George Cross for the period June 1943 to April 1944 being particularly cited for underwater disposals at Sheerness on 13 August 1943 and at Milford Haven on 10 April 1944. He was also awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the George Medal. He was born at Broken Hill in 1909 and now lives in South Perth.

VC and GC Party at the 1988 Anzac Day Ceremony. Sir Roden Cutler VC, Leon Goldsworthy GC, Ted Kenna VC, and Daphne Pearson GC.

Robert Fraser

The New South Wales Corps and their Occupation of Massachusetts during the Anglo-American War of 1812

The Anglo-American War of 1812, fought from June, 1812, to February, 1815, was a result — but not a part of — the great Napoleonic war in Europe. Neutral America was trading with both belligerents, but Britain and France each tried to control this commerce for their own benefit — the British by Orders-in-Council and the French by Napoleon's Decrees. British warships also sailed off America's coast, stopping U.S. merchantmen and impressing any likely sailor into the Royal Navy —'retrieving our wayward seamen' was how the Admiralty put it. France was employed exclusively in Europe (out of sight, out of mind), so the United States declared war on the more visible Great Britain.

America gave three reasons for war: Britian's interference with her trade, the impressment of her sailors, and the arming of the Indians along her western frontier.

New England, urged on by a rich Massachusetts, argued against the war, stating that Britain sought only to control America's trade, while France was actually seizing American ships and cargoes as they entered European ports.

U.S. Secretary of State James Monroe stated in 1812 that 6257 American sailors had been impressed into the British Navy. The year before, Lord Castlereagh, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, admitted to Parliament that there were about 3300 sailors in the Royal Navy claiming to be American citizens. The Massachusetts State Legislature put the impressment question to a group of fifty-one leading Boston shipowners, including those both for and against war. They replied that they employed some 1500 sailors in their combined merchant fleets but only twelve of those men had been taken by British warships in the period 1802-1812.

The real reason for the war, and almost everyone knew it, was the Indian problem in America's Northwest Territories — now the present states of Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. With or without British help, the Red Man had stopped the flow of American settlers into their lands. Despite the public cry 'Free Trade and Sailor's Rights', the war on land was primarily fought in the Great Lakes area.

Neither side was ready for war. Britian was alone in fighting Napoleon. The British Army in Canada numbered 5600 soldiers, mostly in five infantry regiments, while the British Navy had 94 warships in four stations in North America. Canada, then a British colony, was a loose confederation of provinces having neither army nor navy, but she did have a standing militia of 8000 men. The U.S. Army had about 12 000 soldiers in seventeen infantry regiments, and the U.S. Navy had only twenty warships. To augment its land force, the U.S. ordered a draft of 100 000 militiamen from the fifteen states which then comprised the nation.

Massachusetts, which then included the present State of Maine, refused to co-operate because war was bad for business. At that time, almost all of America's merchant fleet was based in that state. When the Secretary of War called upon Massachusetts for its quota of militia, its governor, Caleb Strong, refused. Strong pointed out that only the U.S. Congress could order the militia into war and only then if there was an invasion or armed insurrection. Because neither of these conditions existed, Strong would not allow the state militia to be taken into U.S. service. Upon Strong's third refusal, all U.S. Army forces in Massachusetts were withdrawn, leaving the state defenseless. Yet the state was still forced to pay the special tax levied to support the war. The arguments between New England and the U.S. Government became so bitter that, late in 1814, New England attempted to secede from the union.

Britain was desperate for American goods to support the army fighting Napoleon. Thus, on the outbreak of the Anglo-American war, Britain blockaded only part of the American coast. This blockade was to so disrupt America's domestic commerce that it would force submission to Britain. Spared were the waters between the Canadian border and Nantucket island — the area of New England's major seaports. Boston, the capital of Massachusetts, was also then America's largest seafaring centre. Only a few British warships sailed in that area, to battle any American warship that dare appear. However, the British naval captains noticed that those New England merchants who sent out their ships to trade with Britain were also sending out privateers to destroy English commerce. Their complaints to London were temporarily ignored due to the official 'hands off' policy, but they were not forgotten.

Finally, in the spring of 1814, Napoleon was defeated and Britain turned to deal with America. Actually, the Anglo-American War could have stopped at this

point. The Orders-in-Council against American trade had been repealed in mid-1812 and with the French defeat, the impressment system was no longer needed to man British warships. And the Indian problem ceased in mid-1813 with the death of the great Indian chief Tecumseh who had banded together all the Indian tribes in the Northwest Territories against the United States. Tecumseh's death broke up the confederacy for all time. But, many high-ranking British officials wished to punish the United States. Hordes of battle-seasoned troops and fleets of warships sailed for America.

Placed in command was Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Ingles Cochrane, one of those Briton's who resented America's declaration of war when Britain's back was to the wall. He wrote to the Earl of Bathurst, British Secretary of War and Secretary of State for the Colonies, saying: 'I have it much at heart to give them [the U.S.] a complete drubbing before peace is made ...' Bathurst agreed, telling Cochrane: '... if in any descent you shall be enabled to take such a position as to threaten the inhabitants with the destruction of their property, you are hearby authorized to levy upon them contributions in return for your forbearance.' A delighted Cochrane immediately added New England to the blockade and initiated a policy of harrassment in the area. Happiness reigned on the British warships off New England. The wily Yankee was to be repaid.

To face Britain's might, Massachusetts had a force of approximately 57 000 militiamen in thirteen divisions. About 35 000 would be called out during the war by orders of the governor. But this force was little more than an armed mob — the men elected their officers annually, and were thus led by superiors more skilled in winning friends than in winning battles. Discipline suffered, for the officers went out of their way to curry the favour of their troops and to avoid the risk of losing an election and being returned to the ranks. More than one muster turned out to be a picnic with the officers paying for the food. Orders were explanations, talked over by the men, then acted upon only after an agreement had been reached. Saluting was non-existant, privates greeted their captains with a 'How d'ye do' while leaning up against some object with hands in pocket. The militiamen's uniforms were their own work clothing with the insignia consisting solely of a pewter badge bearing the state seal pinned to their hats. Officers were distinguished only by their swords although many managed a home-made blue coat, crimson sash, and perhaps a gorget and epaulettes. However, home defense was not taken lightly. Any militiaman who failed to appear at muster or had missing or dirty equipment was heavily fined. Brave as these men were, they were severely handicapped by their lack of discipline, poor training, and low morale. No wonder they often panicked and fled

when faced by a small, determined force of professionals. In later years, the U.S. Government assumed increasing control over the various states' militias, and today have evolved into the National Guard — a respected arm of the U.S. Army.

The Federal Government did provide some help to protect New England. In 1813, the U.S. 40th Regiment was organized, recruited in Massachusetts. The force of 615 men, under Colonel James Loring, garrisoned the eleven Federal forts along the New England coast. The U.S. Navy's help consisted only of a coastal defense force proposed by the administration of President Thomas Jefferson in 1807: half a dozen ridiculous gunboats. These small, single-gun schooners could easily be overwhelmed by a tiny force of armed British rowboats, but they did provide some comic relief.

On April 28, 1814, Bathurst sent orders to Sir John Sherbrooke, Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, that all islands in Passmaquoddy Bay 'be occupied and possession maintained'. This bay, on the U.S.-Canadian border, separates Maine from New Brunswick. Britain had always claimed every island in the bay, particularly Moose Island which held America's easternmost seaport, Eastport, Maine. At this time, it was a major smuggling center. Goods disappeared from its wharves to magically reappear in St. John or St. Andrews, New Brunswick. Manifests were altered to show that no trade had taken place. Customs officials were powerless to stop the smuggling. When war broke out, the merchants on both sides made a gentlemen's agreement of neutrality and it was 'business as usual'.

Admiral Cochrane had received similar orders from Bathurst, and he chose the 102nd Regiment of Foot, at Bermuda, for his invasion force. This regiment was the original New South Wales Corps, which had been brought from Australia to the war in Europe and increased to regimental strength in 1808. In the spring of 1813, it was transferred to the war in America, first serving as part of the invasion force attacking the large U.S. Naval base at Norfolk, Virginia, in June, then attacking Ocracoke and Portsmouth, North Carolina, the following month.

On June 23, 1814, the 102nd sailed from Bermuda for Canada aboard the troopships *Ceylon* and *Phoenix*, guarded by the 74-gun battleship *Ramillies*, Captain Thomas M. Hardy (Nelson's Hardy), and the bomb-vessel *Terror*, Captain John Sheridan. The force came to anchor in Shelburne Harbor, Nova Scotia, on July 6. The regiment numbered 696 men of all ranks, including the commander, Lieutenant Colonel John Herries. Just how many genuine Australians were members of the regiment by this time is uncertain, however, 200 of them are known to have been Germans and Austrians.

The occupation of the islands was to be a claim of Canada. Sherbrooke placed Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Pilkington, Deputy Adjutant General of Nova Scotia, in charge of the expedition. Pilkington had lived in the area and was well acquainted with the bay. His aide-de-camp was Lieutenant William Oates of the 64th Regiment of Foot.

Added to the force was Captain William Dunn with the eleven men and four 6-pounder cannon of Captain H.M. Farrington's company, 1st Brigade, Royal Artillery; and Lieutenant Colonel Gustavus Nicolls, Royal Engineers, with a colour sergeant and six sappers.

The next day, July 7, 1814, the 18-gun brig *Martin*, Commander Henry F. Senhouse, and the stores ship *Mary*, from Halifax, joined the force at Shelburne. In all this time, the soldiers had remained aboard the transports. Their only excitement was when the *Terror* test-fired five bombs from each of her two mortars.

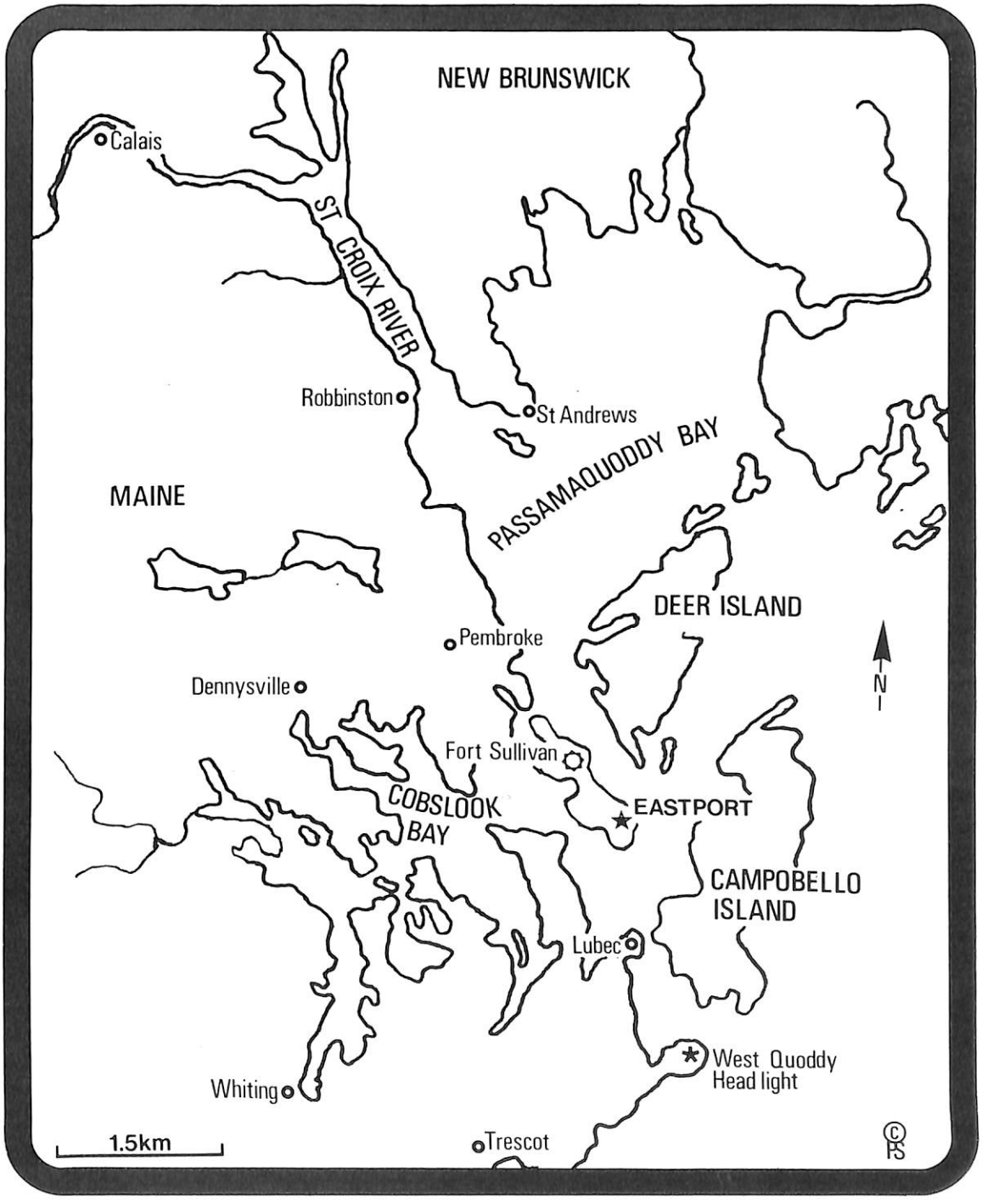
The force set sail at 9.30 a.m. of July 8. In a few hours, the transport *Essex*, carrying the artillerists and sappers, with the 18-gun brig *Borer*, Commander William Rawlings, caught up with the main fleet. At 4 p.m. of July 11, the British ships anchored off Eastport. The trip had gone without incident.

As mentioned, Eastport is on Moose Island (the original name of the town) which is located in the southwest corner of Passamaquoddy Bay. The island is separated from the mainland by the shallow Cobscook Bay. Eastport is located along the east side of Moose Island. At this time, the port was guarded by Fort John Sullivan, named for the American general of the Revolutionary War, built in 1808 atop a high rocky bluff at the northeast end of the island. In the summer of 1814, its garrison was composed of 87 men of the U.S. 40th Regiment, commanded by Major Perley Putnam. The fort mounted four 18-pounder cannon, two 9-pounders, four 6-pounders, and two 12-pounder carronades. (At the end of the U.S. Civil War in the 1860's, Fort Sullivan's barracks were moved to downtown Eastport and now serve as the headquarters of the local historical society.)

The Massachusetts militia in this area was the 3rd Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 10th Division — a force of about 140 men from Eastport and the then surrounding towns of Lubec, Dennysville, Calais, and Robbinston. The regiment was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Oliver Shead, an Eastport merchant, with Major Joseph Whitney of Calais and Major John Balcom of Robbinston. Shead died in the summer of 1814 and at the annual election that September, Whitney became Colonel Commander and Whitney's place was taken by Captain Thomas Vose, Jr., commander of the Robbinston militia. No captain was promoted to take Vose's place and that town militia continued on under a lieutenant. Eastport's militia numbered 73 men, composed of three infan-

try companies. Captain James Gould and Captain John Reynolds commanded the common units while Captain Seward Buckman commanded the elite Eastport Light Infantry.

As the British fleet approached Eastport, the two brigs were sent on ahead. The *Borer* went into Cobscook Bay, where she was soon stopping and sending back those Americans trying to flee to the mainland.



The *Martin* sailed on to Eastport. Aboard was Lieutenant Oates and his staff, who went ashore under a white flag. The *Martin* also carried the Light Company of the 102nd which disembarked and marched to the rear of Fort Sullivan.

Oates demanded the surrender of the fort, but Major Putnam refused. As the rest of the British expedition hove into sight, the selectment (the elected town leaders) and the merchants went to Putnam and begged him not to fight. Seeing the hopelessness of the situation, Putnam ordered the American flag at the fort lowered. In taking possession, the British officers promised to respect all private property of the inhabitants.

Once the area was secure, the British made an accounting. Pilkington reported that Moose Island was four miles long, two miles wide and in 'a great state of cultivation'. He added that the population of Eastport was about 1500 and that the militia (which had not been mustered when the British appeared) numbered 250 men.

In the fort, besides the cannon, the British found: 42 paper cartridges holding 6 pounds of gunpowder, 5 flannel cartridges holding 6 pounds of gunpowder, 452 18 pounder cannon balls, 55 18-pounder grape shot, 389 6-pounder cannon balls, 95 6-pounder grape shot, six 100-pound barrels of corned gunpowder, 100 muskets and bayonets and belts, 6 swords with scabbards and belts, 3376 musket cartridges, 72 tents (with a notation that they were incomplete), and one U.S. flag.

The Vice-Admiralty Court at Halifax records:

> Captured at Moose Island, July 11, 1814, by detachment of His Majesty's army and navy, sundry goods and merchandise valued at 29,464 14.6 currency, perishable goods belonging to American citizens, now resident, 6 boxes tin, 5 casks sadlery, 9 musquets, 15 bayonets, 15 belts and scabbards.

Pilkington's report and the American flag from the fort were sent off under care of Oates to Governor Sherbrooke on July 16 aboard the *Borer*. Rawlings noted in his log that night that the Americans continued to exhibit a beam from the nearby West Quoddy Head Lighthouse. Three days later, Sherbrooke ordered Oates off to England with the reports and captured flag to Bathurst.

The American officers of the fort were released on parole but the rest of the garrison were taken to Melville Island Prison in Halifax Harbour.

The British then enlarged Fort Sullivan, renamed it Fort Sherbrooke in honour of the Nova Scotian governor, and placed sixty guns there. On the morning of July 27, the fort fired a salute of seventeen guns. The *Ramillies* returned the salute and then she and the *Terror*, the last remaining British warships at Eastport, weighed anchor and sailed away.

Soon, the people of Eastport were required to sign an oath of allegiance to King George III or leave. Many professed to be neutral and matters were allowed to stand. Local tradition says that a few families did leave and founded the nearby town of Lubec, but this in error for that town had been incorporated in 1811.

The British were delighted to find $9000 worth of unsigned U.S. Treasury Notes in the Eastport Customs House. As hard as they tried, they could not make Major Lemuel Trescott, the customs officer, sign the Notes to make them legal tender. Finally, the British gave up.

Colonel Herries became military commander of the area. He told the residents of Eastport that all private property would be respected and that he would punish any of his men who stole. It is said that a soldier of the 102nd, an old man, died after a severe flogging for stealing. A few nights later, some of the soldiers dragged Herries from his bed and beat him so badly that the officer was invalided for a week.

The British soldiers were lodged in the fort's barracks but the officers resided in private houses of the town. After a few months of occupation, a Mr Wood, owner of the local tavern Quoddy House, took down his sign. Business had been brisk, and he explained that he had made enough money to satisfy himself —probably the only person in history to admit it.

Colonel Herries was succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Gubbins, Inspecting Field Officer of Militia of the Halifax Command. Gubbins was a regular Army officer on the retired list and this posting proves that Canada intended to retain permanent possession of the area. Gubbins was followed in 1816 by Hercules Renney who, in turn, was succeeded by Herbert Anstruther, the last military commander, Both Renney and Anstruther were lieutenant colonels and inspecting field officers of the Canadian militia.

While they were in Eastport, the British amused themselves and the residents by putting on plays and dances. Major Trescott wrote: 'Fine times at Moose Island now: balls, parties, etc., and everyone swallowing the oath.' Later, he reflected: 'People are not to blame for trying to save their property.'

In 1816, the 102nd became the 100th Regiment of Foot in the post war reduction of the military and regimental renumbering. It seems only a coincidence that Colonel Renney became its commander at the same time.

The British also invaded Penobscot Bay and Penobscot River early in the fall of 1814, marching as far as Bangor. Another small force of occupation was placed at nearby Castine. Canada had now annexed eastern Maine, at least on paper. But many politicians and military leaders in England ridiculed this occupation and soon after the war's end, the force at Castine was withdrawn.

However, Canada was most reluctant to give up Eastport. The post-war Anglo-American talks of 1815 reaffirmed the U.S.-Canadian border as settled by the Paris Treaty of 1782 ending the American Revolution. These 1815 talks actually ended with a 'status quo ante bellum'. Finally, on 30 June, 1818, the British quietly left Eastport. A few months later, an American-Canadian arms limitation treaty was signed, so strictly obeyed by both sides that the great forts on either side which once fired at each other are now proudly displayed as museums.

When the now 100th Regiment left Eastport, they were to be the last enemy force to ever occupy any part of the United States.

SOURCES — SPECIFIC

United States

Eastport and Passamaquoddy by William Henry Kilby, published by Edward E. Shead and Company, Eastport, Maine, 1888

The Border Historical Society, Eastport, Maine

Great Britain

Colonial Office: CO 217/93, pp 29–57, 161–164, 192–194 — Sherbrooke's report to the Earl of Bathurst on the capture of Eastport.

Colonial Office: CO 217/93, pp 196-197 — Pilkington's report to Sherbrooke on the capture of Eastport.

War Office: WO 10/1037, WO 10/1070 — Returns of the Royal Artillery at Eastport, 1814

War Office: WO 17/60, WO 17/61, WO 17/16 — British military commanders at Eastport, 1814-1818.

War Office: WO 17/282 — Returns of the 102nd Regiment of Foot, June of 1814.

Admiralty, British warship log books:
Adm 51/2178 — *Borer*
Adm 51/2557 — *Martin*
Adm 51/2027 — *Ramillies*
Adm 51/2894 — *Terror.*

SOURCES — GENERAL

History of the United States During the Administrations of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison (9 volumes), Henry Adams, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York City, 1891.

The Maritime History of Massachusetts by Samuel Eliot Morison, published by Houghton, Mifflin Company, Cambridge, Mass., 1921

British military records in the Public Record Office, Richmond, Surrey, England.

American military records in the National Archives, Records Group 45, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

Massachusetts military records in the Massachusetts State Archives, Boston, Mass., U.S.A.

Canadian military records in the Public Archives of Canada, Ottowa, Ontario, Canada,

and the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Elizabeth Burness

The Menin Gate Lions

In 1936 two large guardian lions, carved from a calcium carbonate rock or limestone,[1] were donated to the Australian War Memorial by the Burgomaster of the Belgian City of Ypres. Others involved in the donation were the Imperial War Graves Commission and the High Commissioner for Australia.

The lions were originally donated to the Australian Government as a gesture of friendship, and, in exchange in 1938 the Australian War Memorial gave a bronze casting of C. Web Gilbert's statue 'Digger'[2] on behalf of the Australian Government. The inscription on the casting of the 'Digger' reads:

> In assurance of a friendship that will not be forgotten even when the last digger has gone west and the last grave is crumbled.

In 1988 the two stone lions look very different to the state they were in when they arrived in Australia in September 1936.

In the First World War both lions had been toppled by shellfire from their plinths as they stood on either side of the Menin Gate access into Ypres. The gate was, in fact, only a cutting between the ramparts of a fortified wall. This was one of only two access points into the medieval fortified city of Ypres, through which the Allies marched to the Battlefields of the Ypres Salient between 1914 and 1918.

Once toppled from their plinths the two lions sustained extensive battlefield damage. Both suffered lines of deep chipping across their backs. One lost its right foreleg, but the second lion had areas of pulverization on one side of its head, and major losses to the rest of it which reduced it to only a head and trunk ending just below the rib cage.

When the lions arrived in September 1936, the building of the Australian War Memorial was not yet complete.[3] It was intended that the lions would be restored, but as relics of the First World War they presented problems in display. Their size alone would have necessitated an extensive display area. Whether they should have their missing portions reconstructed to make them whole and able to be displayed also posed an ethical problem in recent years since they were regarded as historical relics. For several years the lion with the missing leg[4] was on display in the Memorial, but the lion with only a head and torso has never been shown.

In 1985 a decision was made to reconstruct the missing pieces of both lions in such a way that the original and the reconstructed parts were obvious. The reconstructions could also be dismantled thus enabling the lions to return to their original status as war relics.

However, in order to complete this reconstruction it was crucial to discover what coat-of-arms was on the missing shields which had been held in the paws of both lions before their wartime damage.

In 1986, during a visit to Ypres, the missing information was recovered with the help of the Curator of the Salient Museum in Ypres, Mr Tony De Bruyne.[5] Information from the Tourist Office in Ypres, material on the seals of the city from the public library and, particularly, access to the original photographs by the prominent 'Yprian' photographer 'Antony', contributed to the gathering of this vital information. Mr de Bruyne was able to contact the daughters of the late Mr Antony[6] who hold the glass plate originals of all the pre and post World War 1 photographs taken by their father.

In 1987 the reconstruction of the two lions was completed by Mr Lucas Zywuszko, a Polish-born sculptor. The method decided on involved modelling the missing parts in clay, with the assistance of the period photographs obtained from Ypres. Plaster moulds were then taken, and these were filled with a mixture of block crushed marble and Araldite, with pigment tints added.

Once set, the moulds were broken free and the cast missing pieces finished by hand. The pieces were not glued to the original stone so that any reconstruction could be physically reversed. The battered appearance of the lions was still apparent and the effects of the shellfire could still be seen.

Rose Coombs in her book, *Before Endeavours Fade*, has a photograph of the lions as they stood on their plinths in 1914. Her caption states that 'virtually every man who fell in the Salient would have passed the twin lions which guarded the spot in 1914'.

Certainly members of the original British Expeditionary Force in 1914 would have seen the lions in situ.

The events of 1914-1918 throw some light on what happened to the city of Ypres and to the lions, and, in some way, account for their subsequent devas-

One of the Menin Gate Lions, as reconstructed by the sculptor Mr Lucas Zywuszko for the Australian War Memorial (courtesy Elizabeth Burness).

tated appearance. The German and British forces faced each other in the area of Ypres. The Germans were attempting to take control of the Channel Ports. On 14 October 1914 British and French troops entered Ypres and occupied it.

By 22 October the Germans had decided to concentrate their bombardment on Ypres since they had attempted to take the city, and failed. Guns firing from ten to twenty shells per minute were aimed at Ypres. The Germans brought up a railway gun to Houthem which, directed by observation balloons, rained incendiary and explosive shells on the city. By 10 November German aeroplanes were also dropping incendiary bombs on Ypres. The Germans heaped ruin upon ruin and, by 22 November, the famous medieval Cloth Hall had been set on fire and St Martin's Church, as well as many other historically important buildings were destroyed or badly damaged.

The Menin Gate lions however, remained intact, certainly till February 1915 with only a small amount of rubble at the base of their plinths. A photo from this date shows three British officers posing with the right hand lion on his plinth.

In Ypres, 1915 started quietly with some of the civilian population trickling back to their ruined homes from such refuges as the French seaport town of Le Touquet Paris Plage. However, by 14 April during the Second Battle of Ypres, the Germans commenced a bombardment which lasted nearly a month and which once again nearly completely destroyed the city. Many of the civilians were killed by the shells or were burned beneath their crashing houses. 'Ypres became a city of the dead, limited numbers of troops, a few stray animals and legions of rats'.[9]

By 9 May 1915 the civilians were finally and compulsorily evacuated from Ypres. A British soldier F.C. Hitchcock wrote in his diary: 'The city was deserted and desolate. The atmosphere was heavy with the smell of decaying bodies, for the first shells had surprised the inhabitants and had caught many in their beds'.[10] In this year lethal gas and liquid fire were used for the first time by the Germans.

In the Ypres Salient the remainder of 1915 and the whole of 1916 seemed to be passed in trench warfare, or local attacks, with the British still holding the city of Ypres. During this quiet period many civilians returned once again to their homes. In September and October of 1916, the First Anzac Corps changed places with the Canadian Corps and came to the Ypres Salient from fighting at Pozieres in the French Somme. During this period the Ypres Salient was unnaturally quiet.

The Australians spent two months improving the front-line defences and established new lines further back. This quiet time before returning to the fighting in France enabled some Australian soldiers to write up their diaries. Their entries reveal a very different atmosphere to that experienced by the Allies in the earlier stages of the war.

Lance-Corporal Eric W. Moorehead of the 5th Battalion AIF wrote:[11]

> 19 September 1916, across the fields was the town of Ypres, not really so damaged as you'd think. The many fine buildings, appearing comparatively intact. The front-line at Ypres is very peculiar, they are so close at points, that artillery fire is risky and rifle grenades "minenwerfers" etc. are the means of offence. It is terribly quiet there compared to the Somme, in fact they are nearly neutral.

Quite possibly the lions were still relatively intact during 1916.

Officers under Lion at Gate, May 1915 (courtesy Elizabeth Burness).

1917, however, brought the Third Battle of Ypres, where all five Australian Divisions were engaged. From July to November 1917, the Battle raged with Australians featuring at such places as Polygon Wood and Passchendaele Ridge. The author's great uncle, Corporal Gordon Rinder, 2233, 48th Battalion, died in this Battle on 12 October 1917, aged 28. His name appears on the British Memorial to the Missing at the Menin Gate, Ypres.

Some entries from the diaries of Australian infantrymen at this time are very revealing. Private Leicester Grafton Johnson of 20 Infantry Battalion AIF[12] wrote:

> Monday 17 September 1917 "...marched to Ypres taking shelter in a long line of dugouts in the old wall, constructed since war broke out ... we were crammed in like sardines two battalions being billetted in them. Although tolerably safe from shells, I could not help thinking of the result, if a heavy 9.2 or larger shell was to get a direct hit on top of the place. Ypres that much war worn city is now reduced to a mass of ruins. Only the walls of the fine old Cathedral are left standing. It is wonderful the number of guns there are all over the city nearly everywhere you look there is a gun or even a battery. I saw all kinds of heavy guns from 6 inch to 15 inch no doubt there are even larger. Oh, the roar when a number of these guns open up its positively ear splitting.
>
> 18 September 1917 ... Nothing doing during the day Maclean and I spent out time looking through the city and watching our artillery in action.

Private J.N. Shearer of the 15th Battalion AIF[13] noticed different things.

> Sunday 23 September 1917, hundreds of refugees from Ypres were seen housed in temporary huts on wheels. These are moved by motor power is [sic] occasion arises for evacuation. Monday 24 September 1917 ... Marched in the early morning to the ruined city of Ypres and were billetted in the shattered ramparts on the canal banks.
>
> The world famed Cloth Hall and Cathedral lay in ruins. On the hillside a forest of white crosses marked the last resting place of comrades who had made the last sacrifice in the cause of justice and righteous [sic]. A feeling to avenge on the morrow the sacrifices of these martyred slain came over us.
>
> Tuesday 25 September 1917...shells were falling amongst the ruins of the city throughout the day. Our big guns bustled along either banks of the canal, and other commanding positions...shells from guns of huge calibre were tearing up the swampy marshes behind and in front of us...the muddy roads were strewn with wreckage of transport lorries; dying horses and mules writhed in agony along the Menin Road.

That the Menin Road and its access into the city of Ypres was constantly bombarded by the Germans is well supported. The fate of the lions given this bombardment remains unclear especially in the later stages of the War. Rose Coombs says 'the Lille Gate was perhaps even more familiar to the BEF than the Menin Gate as, due to the extremely exposed position of the latter, the more sheltered southern exit was used as the main route to the front by the troops leaving Ypres.'[14]

The Menin Gate, before and after the first world war. The Lions (circled at top) are no longer visible in 1919 although the ruined outline of the gate base is apparent.

The Menin Gate access had a small railway operating through it for the movement of stores. C.E.W. Bean notes; 'To keep the columns clear of the mighty stream of wheeled traffic on the Menin road, four tracks, mainly leading across country had been prepared one for each brigade, three passing south of Ypres, the fourth through the Menin Gate.[15]

Perhaps the best description of the Menin Gate and the barrage it was subjected to in 1917 comes from a newspaper article in the *Lyttleton Times*, (Christchurch, New Zealand) of 3 September 1927. The writer signs himself 'an Old Stager' and his letter is written from London dated 21 July. He was writing prior to the unveiling of the British Memorial to the Missing (the Menin Gate Memorial), on Sunday 24 July 1927, by Field Marshal Plumer, commander of the old Second Army at Ypres. This unveiling was done in the presence of Albert, King of the Belgians and several thousand relatives of those whose names it bore.

The 'Old Stager' contended that the gathering at the Menin Gate would also include near on a million friendly ghosts.

> 'Their little neat white graves amidst blossoming French and Belgian flowers still 'hold the fort'. Little they dreamed of a day when a splendid memorial would mark the spot where the Menin Gate gave access to the battered desolation of the 'Wipers', (Ypres) front-line trenches amidst the shell-holed swamps and pestilent wilderness of No Man's Land.

There are 137 Allied cemeteries in the vicinity of Ypres, 40 000 graves contain the remains of unidentified soldiers.

Of 'Wipers'[16] (Ypres), the Old Stager writes:

> 'that comic name became a household word with the Khaki legions. It's mention conjured visions of a crumbling charnel house of cellars under ruined ruins, the thunder of relentless batteries, a network of trenches and saps, acres of rusty wire and the stench of dead men and horses... and since the German gunners had it, [the Menin Gate], ranged to the last inch, it was about the unhealthiest spot in all Wipers.
>
> There were traffic controls stationed at that Gate. Two lone sentries, with a little dug-out in the end of the ramparts, whose duty it was to warn those who would hazard on the exit from Ypres.

Somewhere in the rubble of the Menin Gate were to be found the two guardian lions.

After the Armistice of 11 November 1918 it took three years of active search in the Ypres area to find the unburied Allied dead and those buried in scattered graves where they fell. Once these bodies had been buried in the 137 cemeteries around Ypres it was time to decide on a Memorial to the 88 500 officers and men, including 6176 Australian soldiers who had no known grave.

The celebrated British architect Sir Reginald Blomfield was commissioned by the British government for this task. He chose the Menin Gate cutting in the medieval ramparts as the site for the largest British and Commonwealth countries Memorial to the Missing in the world. An imposing archway[17] surmounted by a recumbent lion, this memorial bears the names of 54 900 dead of the British and Commonwealth countries who have no known grave. So many British soldiers passed through this cutting, on their way to the front never to return, that it seemed a fitting site for the Memorial to the Missing.

The lions were referred to in a letter received at the Australian War Memorial in 1971. Mrs G.H. Webster of the United Kingdom sent a letter asking about the Menin Gate lions. She enclosed a photograph she took in Ypres in 1920 of the very dapper gentleman posing with the most complete of the lions. The lion, minus his shield and right foreleg is down from his plinth and Mrs Webster states that the photograph was taken 'by the roadside near the Menin Gate at Ypres'.

Unfortunately Mrs Webster died before she could give more information about the photograph.

The history of this particular site, the Menin Gate cutting, is of interest. The French besieged and captured Ypres in 1678 and the architect and military engineer Vauban was entrusted with the remodelling of the defence works for the city by his king, Louis XIV. At this time there had been six gates, a wall and moat beyond which the Spaniards had formed defences of demi-lunes around Ypres.

Vauban reduced the number of access points into Ypres to four, three of which had ornate facades. The Antwerp Gate or Porte d'Anvers (1688), originally the medieval Hangoart Gate, was the most beautiful and eventually became known as the Menin Gate. After being fought over by the Austrians, Dutch and French, in 1804 Napoleon Bonaparte visited Ypres and this main gate was named after him, having an imperial eagle carved into the stonework. After Waterloo, June 1815, when Belgium was united with Holland, the Napoleon Gate was renamed the Menin Gate, since the road led to the town of Menin. In 1838 Ypres became Belgian, and in 1852 the government decided that the fortifications around Ypres were no longer required. All the gates were removed except the Lille Gate, dating from 1383, and the Menin Road cutting remained open. The lions, which had been in the Grand Place, or at one of the other gates, were put in position on either side of the cutting sometime between 1852 and 1858.

Work began on the foundations for the British Memorial to the Missing at the Menin Gate cutting site in April 1923. The British architect Sir Reginald

Photograph of one of the Menin Gate lions, taken by Mrs G.H. Webster in 1920 (courtesy Elizabeth Burness).

Blomfield was horrified to find running sand where he intended putting the foundations for the Memorial Arch. He had to build a huge raft of concrete piles which were sunk thirty-six feet into the ground. Work on the Memorial to he Missing took four years to complete. It is probable that the two stone lions were still in the rubble around the Menin Gate cutting from 1920 when Mrs Webster took her photograph till April 1923, when work on the Memorial foundations commenced.

Many of the inhabitants of Ypres had returned by this stage, and now had the awesome task of deciding what to do with their devastated city. The lions were removed to a place of safety back to the Grand Place along with other shattered remains of buildings and statuary. They were then shifted and stacked with other broken masonry under the ruins of the Cloth Hall.

Before 1914, when Ypres had unfortunately been in the path of the warring nations, the city had been in decline. It was described in 1905 by Camille Lemonnier in *La Belqique*,[18] as 'a dead or phantom town, a cemetery, deserted by industry and trade, but carefully guarding the great buildings erected in its prosperity'. What a terrible irony that the city of Ypres, which had started in about the year 962 AD as a cluster of small huts situated on swampy ground, should be reduced to that squalid state again.

Ypres had grown up in the tenth century around a fortified castle. Well situated in a rich, flat, grassy maritime plain, well intersected by canals, Ypres prospered. The chief source of wealth was the manufacture and sale of cloth.

From the coat-of-arms held in the paws of the lions it is possible to trace more of Yprian history. The patriarchal cross, (the emblem of the Greek orthodox patriarchs of Antioch in Syria), apparently points to some involvement with the First Crusade starting in 1096. The Crusades were military expeditions undertaken by Western European Christians,

(marked by the sign of the Cross), in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, for the recovery of the Holy Land from the Muslims. The Crusades were authorized by the Popes, originally Pope Urban II in Rome, and some of the first to respond to the Pope's appeal for support were several armies from northern France. Ypres is currently about seven miles from the French border and was under French rule in its early days. The armies of common people from Northern France, known as the Franks, were led either by powerful feudal princes or popular common leaders.

Antioch was taken in 1098 and became a Frankish state with knights garrisoned in many of the castles which guarded its frontiers. The Crusader states were constantly supplied and maintained from Europe. One of the results of the Crusades was that knights learnt to use heraldic emblems on their coats-of-arms in order to identify themselves when they were far from home.

Often the coat of arms for some of the oldest European towns have heraldic emblems which allude to the cause of the town's growth. In feudal society the use of heraldic devices became an important means of communication at a time when only clerks could read and write. In the case of the coat-of-arms on the shields held by the lions from Ypres this would most certainly be true since the other major heraldic device on the shields is the Vair.[19] Defined as a fur obtained from a variety of squirrel with grey back and white belly, vair was much used in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as a trimming or lining for garments. Vair is one of the heraldic furs, which is represented by bell or cup-shaped spaces... disposed alternately (in imitation of small skins arranged in a similar manner). However it is more likely they were used as an heraldic background.

A merchant and artisan class in Ypres prospered through the textile trade which flourished between 1187 and 1383. The merchants of Ypres enjoyed royal protection from the Counts of Flanders, and free-trading with Britain. In 1100 the town was first fortified. In the twelfth century, Ypres had seven churches and a population of 20 000. By 1260 the town had a population of 40 000 and was the centre of a population of around 200 000. It supported 8000 looms.

The renowned Cloth Hall, the largest in the world of its type was constructed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries to house the unspun wool. Linen was also sold here. The oldest part of the Cloth Hall was the belfry. Its foundation stone was laid in 1201 by Earl Baldwin IX of Flanders and his consort Margaret of Champagne, and its Campanile dated from 1330.

The Cloth Hall was used for many purposes. Apart from the extensive warehouses the hall was also used as a covered market into which ships could sail up the River Yperlee to load and unload their cargoes onto the covered quay. As well, it was an archive, a meeting house for the representatives of the international guilds, a prison, a watchtower, a treasure house, an armoury and a carillion. Forty-eight doors led from the street directly to the vaulted sale area with store rooms on the upper floor. In these store rooms rats proliferated. To control the rats, cats lived in the Cloth Hall and flourished prodigiously. From the end of the twelfth century till 1817, excess cats were annually ceremoniously hurled to their death by the 'Town Fool' from the middle floor, originally the town armoury and repository for the town's banners.

Ypres itself began to decline from the fourteenth century onwards. The economy plummetted when there was a shortage of local wool, leaving England the sole supplier. Consuming markets, particularly linen to England, were reduced, then the city itself was hit by disease in 1316. After the Battle of Cassel in 1328 many craftspeople left the city, and the final coup came with the siege of Ypres and the destruction of the suburbs of the city in 1383. The martial Bishop of Norwich, with the help of 20 000 troops from Ghent, laid siege to Ypres for two months. With the help of 'Our Lady of Thuyne', and the French army, Ypres withstood the siege. Our Lady of Thuyne subsequently became the patroness of Ypres.

Many of the weavers left rather than starve in Ypres, thus taking the livelihood of the town with them. Ironically some went to East Anglia in Britain. Plague towards the end of the fifteenth century and again, in the middle of the following century further decimated the population. Ypres had lost much of its splendour by 1559. The town was just beginning to recover when it was captured by the French, who massacred most of its inhabitants. By 1584 the population had dwindled to 5000 people.

A series of occupations by different nations followed. These included the French, the Austrians, the Dutch and the Spanish. By the middle of the 1800s when the Dutch and then Belgian governments attached less importance to it, Ypres seemed to be gently asleep. A main industry in the nineteenth century was agriculture, with Ypres as a centre for hop, chicory, beetroot, corn and tobacco growing. It also became one of the most important butter markets in Belgium. By 1914, as well as agriculture, industries in Ypres includes the manufacture of woollen goods, printed cottons, linens, ribbons and Valenciennes lace. Tanneries and dye works featured as well. The population of Ypres had grown to nearly 18 000 by 1914.

Fiercely guarding this heritage, the people of Ypres were then hit by the catastrophe of the First World War. Their city was virtually reduced to a swampy mess — certainly it had been pounded to rubble by the Germans. They decided to rebuild the

city exactly as it had been in its 'heyday'. All the work involved in the rebuilding was paid for by the Germans as one of the penalties imposed upon it by the Treaty of Versailles which officially ended the war in 1919.

The people of Ypres were helped immensely by the accurate documentation of the city by the photographer Antony. They were also helped by the fact that many of the original plans for the city, especially of the Cloth Hall, had survived. Obviously they had been taken to a place of safety, since the Cloth Hall had been set on fire on 22 November 1914 by a great artillery barrage. Under the guidance of the architects J. Coomans and P.A. Pauwels this great building was rebuilt in its original form externally, between 1920 and 1962. But more than anything it was the dedication of the people of Ypres to take on this task of rebuilding their city which is most remarkable.

In essence, the present day city of Ypres is the same age as Canberra. While the emphasis has been on the medieval and later splendour of the city, celebrated by the famous biennial 'Cats Parade',[20] when lottery beribboned, velvet toy cats are hurled once again from the Cloth Hall, and 2000 medieval-garbed participants parade throughout the city, the First World War is not forgotten.

Housed in the rebuilt Cloth Hall is the Salient 1914-18 War Museum. The Museum has concerned itself with every aspect of the Great War, particularly as it relates to the Ypres Salient. As well as dioramas, models, badges, weapons, equipment, photographs, pictures, maps, relics of 'Old Ypres', documents, uniforms (particularly that of a World War I Australian presented to the Museum in 1986 by the Australian War Memorial), there is the Web Gilbert bronze casting of an Australian 'Digger'. Also, the city of Ypres received the honours of the British Military Cross and the French *Croix de Guerre*. Both these and their documents are on show.

The emphasis in the Museum is on how the Great War affected everyone in that area at that time. Belgian, French, British, Australian, New Zealand, American, Canadian and other British Commonwealth countries, as well as German viewpoints are shown. Nearly every relic relates to that area. The dioramas include a representation of the old Menin Gate.

Mr Tony de Bruyne, the curator of the Salient Museum, in his efforts to help date the lions, postulates the theory that they may have been originally at the foot of one of the stairways leading into the Cloth Hall, facing the Grote Markt — the Grand Place.

Postcard of the Cloth Hall, Ypres.

The medieval city of Bruges has such a pair of lions. Certainly the Ypres lions were moved to the Menin Gate access in the 1850s. Another theory is that they were at one of the other gates into the city which Vauban closed in 1678. Through their coat of arms they would declare to visitors coming to Ypres, the city's illustrious history and prosperity.

The present British Memorial to the Missing at the Menin Gate is certainly an imposing edifice, topped by its recumbent lion. The citizens of Ypres have not forgotten the efforts of the British and Commonwealth Countries to help save their precious city. Every evening at 8.00pm firemen in civilian dress sound the 'Last Post' in honour of the soldiers of the British Empire who fell at Ypres, or in the neighbourhood, during the war of 1914-1918. Perhaps there is irony in the fact that an Allied joke at the time of the 1914-1918 war was: 'Tell the last man through to bolt the Menin Gate'. The simple service of the 'Last Post', with the aid of the police, stops all activity in the area, while the dead are remembered. This tradition started 11 November 1929 and continues to the present day, except for a break from 20 May 1940 to 6 September 1944, when the Germans occupied the city. According to Rose Coombs 'the day the Germans left Ypres the 'Call' sounded out in the evening'.[21] [22]

In 1966, the city of Ypres became a 'twin town' with the city of Siegan, Westphalia in the Federal Republic of Germany. Previously in 1964 Ypres 'twinned' with Sittingbourne, Kent in the United Kingdom. The tradition continued in 1968 when Ypres twinned with Saint Omer, Pas-de-Calais in France. The town of Zillebeke just outside the city of Ypres twinned with Sielbach, Black Forest, in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1983.

While the idea of twinning between towns and cities has great merit, the Australian War Memorial has a more permanent reminder of friendship and commemoration between Australia and Ypres. Embodied in the two huge reconstructed guardian lions is their status as battle-scarred relics, but also now with their reconstructed shields, we have an inkling of the heritage they represent. The lions embody not only Ypres' link of nearly 1000 years ago with the Crusades, and the prosperity of the Yprian textile industry, but also the tenacity of the people of Ypres to rebuild their smashed world. They didn't opt for a modern form, but harked back to the great past that they were so carefully guarding, before the First World War.

NOTES

1. Correspondence from the Australian War Memorial suggests that pierre-bleue granite possibly from the quarry at Seignie was used. Tests undertaken by the War Memorial identify the rock as calcium carbonate or limestone.
2. The original is at the War Memorial.
3. Construction on the building commenced at 1934 but it was not opened until 11 November 1941.
4. Giles John *Flanders Then and Now — The Ypres Salient and Passchendaele*, an After the Battle publication, Great Britain, 1987. Giles states that this lion had a wooden leg to replace the missing right foreleg. This story could be apocryphal. Page 49.
5. The author and her husband Peter Burness, Senior Curator of Military Heraldry visited Ypres in May 1986.
6. Miss Gabrielle Antony, Ostende, Belgium, daughter of photographer 'Antony'.
7. Coombs, Rose *Before Endeavours Fade: a Guide to the Battlefields of the First World War*. An After the Battle publication, Great Britain, 1986 page 29.
8. A print of this photograph in the War Memorial collection is captioned March 1915.
9. Giles John, *Flanders Then and Now*, an After the Battle publication, Great Britain, 1987, page 33.
10. Ibid. page 38
11. Diary of L/Cpl Eric W. Moorehead 5th Battalion AIF page 33 DRL 3/7253.
12. Personal Diary of Private Leicester Grafton Johnson of 20 Infantry Battalion AIF DRL 3/7349.
13. Personal diary of Private J.H. Shearer, 15 Battalion AIF DRL 3/3662.

14. Coombs Rose *Before Endeavours Fade*, page 31.
15. Bean C.E.W., *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-18 The AIF in France* Volume IV page 752.
16. There are at least twenty-seven spelling variations of the name of the city. A British soldier writing in the eighteenth century referred to it as 'Wypirs'.
17. It is, in fact, a 'Hall of Memory', 120 feet long and 66 feet wide covered in by a coffered half-elliptical arch in a single span.
18. War Memorials of the British Empire 1914-18 War Memorial Register 29, Ypres, parts 1-6 page 7.
19. *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* Vol II.
20. The biennial 'Cats parade' is held on the second Sunday in May.
21. Coombs Rose, *Before Endeavours Fade*, page 30.
22. In May 1986, two German Officers saluted the British and Commonwealth dead at the ceremony the author attended.

Bibliography

—Fox-Davies Arthur Charles, *A Complete Guide to Heraldry*, Bonanza Books New York 1978

—Neubecker Ottfried, *A Guide to Heraldry* Cassell London 1979

—*Encyclopaedia Britannica*

—Milbourne J.S., *Heraldry*, London 1950

—Boutell Charles *Heraldry Historical and Popular* Richard Bentley, London 1864

—*Ieper* (Ypres) Belgium, *Tourist Information* 1985-1986, Ieper Dienst Voor Tourisme Tourist Office Stadhuis (Town Hall) B-8900 Ieper.

—*Michelin Illustrated Guides to the Battlefields* (1914-18) Publishers and publishers Michelin and Cie Clermont-Ferrand, France, 1920

—*Lyttleton Times*, (New Zealand) 3 September 1927 (clippings file)

—Bean C.E.W., *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-18*, Vol IV, *The AIF in France* 1917, Angus and Robertson, Sydney 1940.

—Personal Diary of Lance Corporal Eric W. Moorehead 5 Battalion AIF DRL 3/7253

—Personal Diary of Private Leicester Grafton Johnson 20 Infantry Battalion AIF DRL 3/7349

—Personal Diary of Private J.H. Shearer 15 Battalion AIF DRL 3/3662

—Menin Gate lions, AWM file 748/22/1

—Giles, John, *Flanders Then and Now* The Ypres Salient and Passchendaele After the Battle publication Great Britain 1987

—Holt, Tonie and Valmai, *Holt's Battlefield Tours —The Ypres Salient*, Leo Cooper N.D.

—Coombs, Rose E.B., *Before Endeavours Fade: a Guide to the Battlefields of the First World War.* An After the Battle publication, Great Britain 1986.

—The Register of the names inscribed on the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Belgium, Memorial Register Number 29, compiled and published by order of the Imperial War Graves Commission London 1928.

—Photographs from the A.W.M. Collection.

Peter Stanley

The uniforms of *The Remote Garrison:* an argument about interpreting historical dress

'...to produce a uniform book without error or omission is an almost unattainable ideal...'
Michael Barthorp, reviewing Monty Wedd's *Australian Military Uniforms, 1800–1982*, Kangaroo Press, 1982.

The omission which I most regret in producing *The Remote Garrison: the British Army in Australia, 1788–1870* (Sydney, Kangaroo Press, 1986) was neglecting to include references to the sources on which Lindsay Cox and I based the book's twenty-four illustrations depicting the probable appearance of British soldiers in colonial Australia. Even more importantly, it seems that on reflection, even though the book was intended as a 'popular history', I should have more fully explained the process of reasoning by which I arrived at these interpretations. Most reviews of the book were favourable, but one, by Len Barton in *Despatch*, the journal of the New South Wales Military Historical Society, identified numerous supposed and a few actual errors in the illustrations, and has prompted me, as I had long planned, to publish an article explaining (rather than excusing) the illustrations.

It is usually considered unwise for authors to dispute in print criticisms made by reviewers, and I have no intention of contesting Mr Barton's views specifically or in detail. However, Mr Barton's review reinforced my impression that I had erred in failing to include a note on the sources which I drew upon in reconstructing the dress worn by soldiers in colonial Australia. I hope that this response encourages a debate rather than a brawl.

Despite the wealth of sources on the dress of the British army in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, relatively little is known definitively on the dress which soldiers *actually* wore in contrast to that which they were *supposed* to have worn. Dress regulations are, of course, the foundation of this question, but they provide no reliable guidance on their implementation, regimental or local variation, or the appearance of troops in particular circumstances. The lack of definite evidence is particularly acute for the dress of soldiers who served in remote parts of the empire, and the student of military dress in Australia must use the few available pictorial or physical sources and a mixture of documentary descriptions, an awareness of what occurred in comparable contemporary cicumstances, and, it is frankly admitted, common sense and conjecture. It is the degree and results of this conjecture which seems to have bothered Mr Barton, and I hope that this article will reassure him, and others who may have wondered at the basis for the representations in the book, that they were indeed based on both evidence and reasoning.

I should clarify that I do not consider the matter of what soldiers wore to be, as it may seem to some, a question of simple 'accuracy' or 'authenticity'. In principle, indeed, the interpretation of military dress is no different to the interpretation of historical sources generally. There is so little definitive pictorial evidence relating to what British soldiers in the Australian colonies actually wore that the issue is rather one of reaching a reasonable, reasoned interpretation.

It is often possible to be certain of the pattern of particular badges or uniforms (and I freely, if rather abashedly, acknowledge Mr Barton's corrections of one or two of the insignia which appear). However, it is more difficult to be precise about how a soldier would have appeared in a particular historical context, though this seems to me to be by far the more significant issue. It is important to stress that the stipulations of dress regulations may often bear little relation to how uniforms were worn in practice. The point can be made by recalling the differences between dress regulations and how uniforms were actually worn by, say, Australian troops in Papua in the second world war to realise that the standard set by a sergeant major on parade is not always maintained in practice. In relation to the British army of the nineteenth century, Michael Barthorp's *The British Army on Campaign, 1816–1902(1): 1816–1853* (Osprey, London, 1987) indicates the extent to which practice differed from prescription.

I would not suggest that details such as shoulder-belt plates don't matter, but, rather, would argue that it is more important to get the impression right: I favour historical significance over heraldic detail. If compelled to choose I would prefer a figure in a

justifiable, if conjectural, context over a parade-ground figure correct in every regulation detail but which may not reflect the circumstances in which the men it presents served. Such a parade-ground figure might be accurate, and a safer bet, but might equally present an impression which is essentially misleading or even untruthful. Naturally it would be preferable to be sure of both context *and* detail, but it seems to me that there is not much to be gained in depicting soldiers as robots, as they have so often been portrayed.

The plates reproduced in *The Remote Garrison* were skilfully and often wittily rendered by Lindsay Cox, but were largely based on my research. The following notes may help to clarify the basis of the interpretation of the probable appearance of British soldiers in colonial Australia which they portray.

(1) Marine, 1788

The plate depicts a marine private working as a sawyer at Sydney Cove shortly after the arrival of the first fleet. It is based on the regulation uniform modified by the shortening of skirts noted by Private John Easty in his diary, published as, *Memorandum of the transactions of a voyage from England to Botany Bay, 1787–93*, Sydney, 1965, p. 58. Whether or not side levers were forbidden they appear in several contemporary illustrations, so their presence is disputable.

(2) Marine officer, 1788

The marine lieutenant is depicted in more-or-less regulation full dress. It has been claimed that his shirt frill is incorrect, but strict uniformity of appearance was uncharacteristic of the period, and such matters were often left to an officer's discretion and are therefore impossible to pronounce on with any certainty.

(3) Marine corporal, 1790

This plate, depicting a member of one of the parties led by Captain Tench from Sydney to Botany Bay in pursuit of 'Indians', provides a good example of the method adopted in composing the book's illustrations. The evidence for the soldier's dress is quite clear. Marines are depicted in cut-down hats, shortened coats and overalls in the George Raper watercolour reproduced on the facing page, and in the engraving which appeared on the title page of John Hunter's *An Historical Journal of the Transactions at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island...*, London, 1793, while in the American war this type of dress was common. The soldiers dishevelled appearance is explained by the account of Tench's expeditions, based on Tench's journal, which accompanies the plate.

(4) Private, New South Wales Corps, 1795

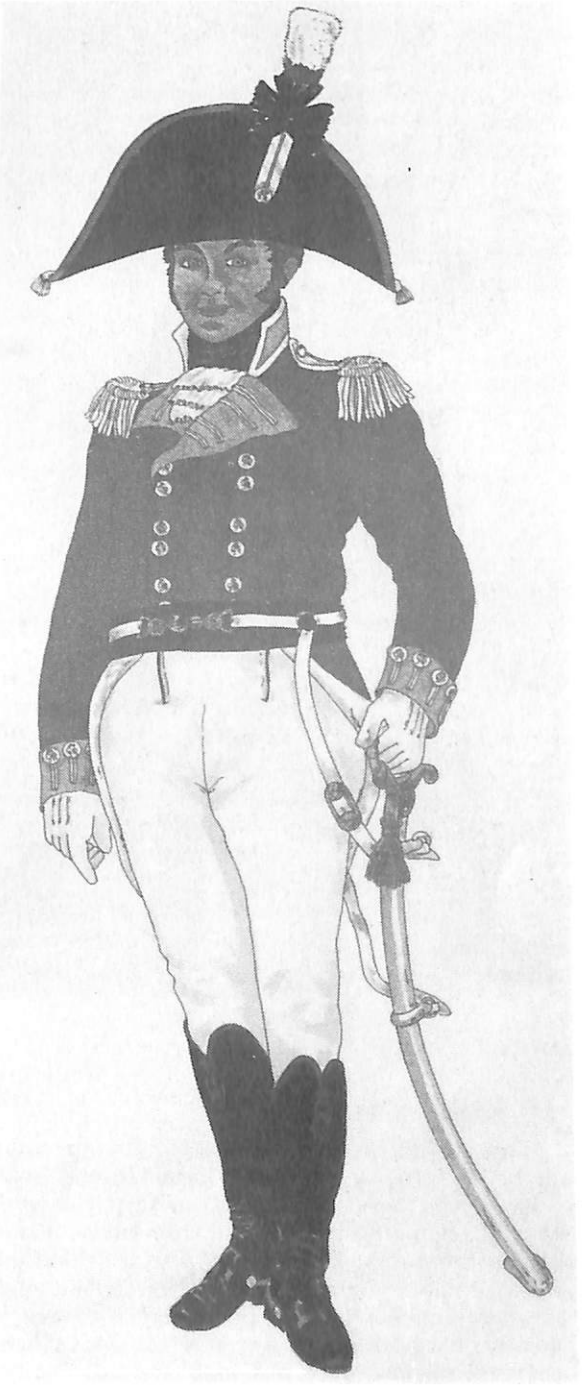
This drawing, showing a man of the corps in the Hawkesbury area, is rendered according to the uniform regulations, with the exception of his hair, which is not dressed. I reasoned that soldiers in small detachments in the bush would probably dispense with the business. The man's coat bears a 'fall down' collar, as the stand up collar seems not to have become universal before 1796, and the distant New South Wales Corps may still have been wearing the older pattern uniform. Such frugality was not unknown in the contemporary army. The shoulder belt plate is, as Mr Barton pointed out, conjectural; no examples of the corp's plate has survived, but in this case we followed the pattern depicted by R.J. Marrion in his representation of the New South Wales Corps's uniform in *Military Modelling*, No. 12, vol. 12, December 1982.

(5) Private, Parramatta Loyal Association, 1804

No details of the Loyal Association's uniform is known except that they wore the uniform of the New South Wales Corps. Monty Wedd, in *Australian Military Uniforms*, Kangaroo Press, Kenthurst, 1982, depicted the associations' members as identical to regular soldiers, but I reasoned that a part-time soldier wearing a cast-off uniform, perhaps, might not be too particular about wearing the entire uniform, especially if called out at short notice.

(6) Officer, New South Wales Corps, 1809

This plate was based on a portrait of Major George Johnston in the collection of the Mitchell Library in Sydney and reproduced in Ron Montague's valuable pioneering work, *Dress and Insignia of the British Army in Australia and New Zealand, 1770–1870*, Sydney, 1981.



(7) Private, 73rd Foot, 1810

"The Journal of Ensign Huey', a typescript account of the 73rd's voyage to Australia held in several libraries including the National Library of Australia reveals that the regiment was issued with new uniforms and kit just before reaching Sydney. This provided the basis for this depiction of a soldier in regulation full dress in parade ground order. There is evidence, admittedly not indisputable, that the 73rd's light company men wore the plate depicted.

(8) Private, New South Wales Invalid Company, 1815

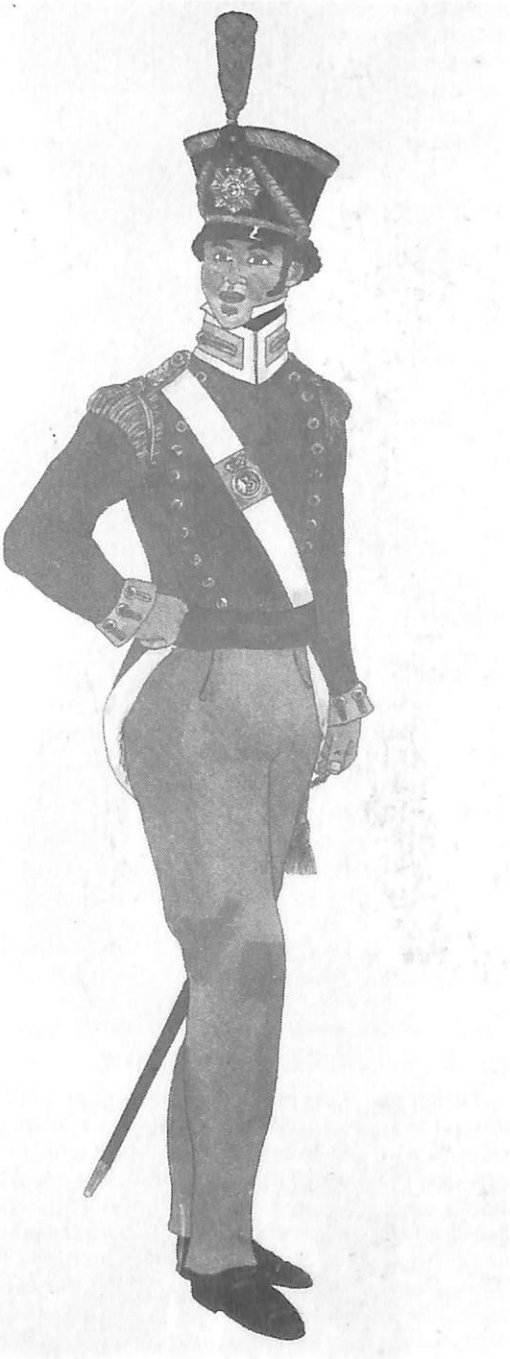
The Invalid company established by Macquarie from men of the New South Wales Corps who wished to remain in the colony was authorised to wear royal blue facings. Mr Barton believes that the man's side whiskers would have been forbidden by regulation, but I was moved to include them by a watercolour showing a be-whiskered military pensioner depicted by Captain Owen Stanley, RN (admittedly dating from the next decade), reproduced in Elizabeth Scandrett's *Breeches and bustles: an illustrated history of clothes worn in Australia*, Melbourne, 1978.

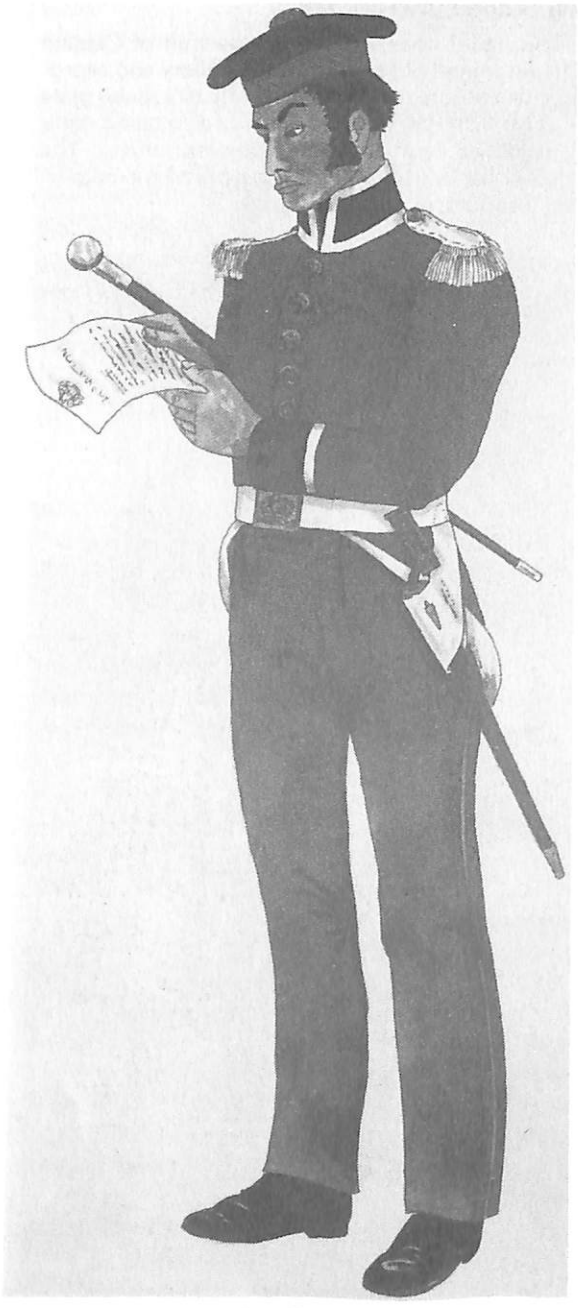
(9) Corporal, 46th Foot, 1817

Mr Barton appears to have been upset by this portrayal, of a very shabby soldier as he might have appeared after several months campaigning in the bush of Van Diemen's Land. The departures from the regulation uniform specified in the caption are explained by the rigours of months of service in the field as described in Richard Cannon's *Historical Records of the 46th South Devon Regiment of Foot*, London, 1851. Mr Barton describes this interpretation as 'a libel' on the 46th, quoting a half-yearly report by Macquarie indicating his approval of the regiment's 'clean and soldier-like appearance'. This soldier's detachment was far from the parade ground on which Macquarie inspected his comrades.

(10) Officer, 3rd Foot, 1826

This figure was based on the portrait of Captain Charles Innes held by the Dixson Gallery and reproduced in Montague's book. The officer's shako plate is, as Mr Barton pointed out, that of a battalion company rather than of a light company officer. The white collar lace is simply due to a mistake in colouring. It should, of course, be gold.



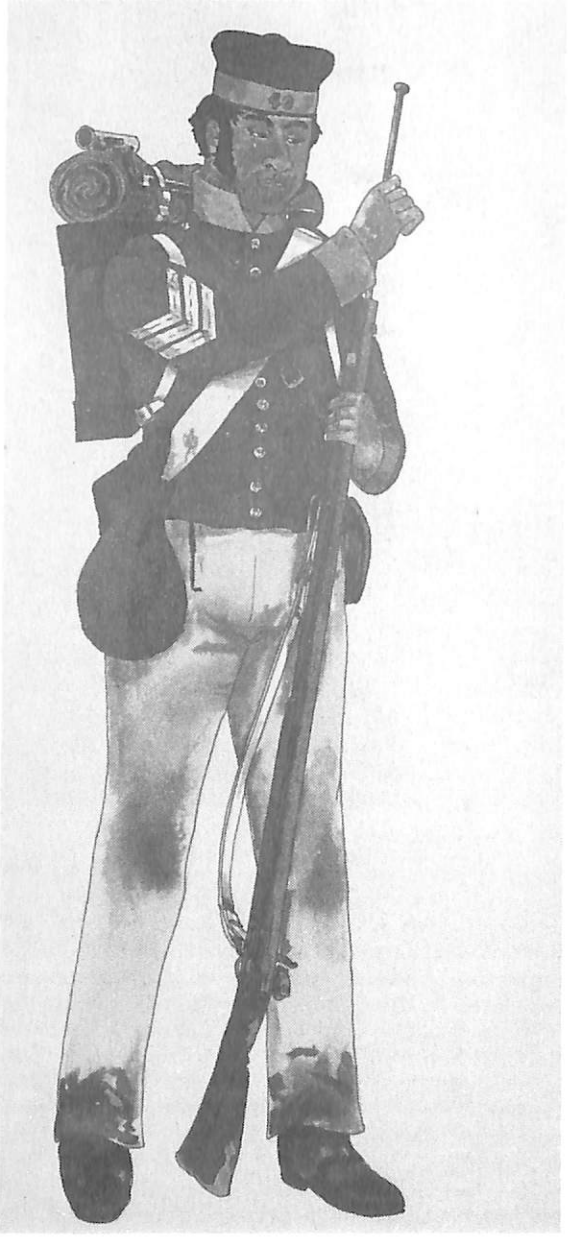


(11) Corporal, Royal Staff Corps, 1828

The familiar Augustus Earle drawing of a convict iron gang, reproduced in *The Remote Garrison* on page 41, and the details in Ron Montague's book provided the basis of this illustration. The royal blue facings appear to be a purple blue in some copies due to a hitch in printing. As Clem Sargent pointed out in his review of the book in *Sabretache* (Vol. XXVII, October-December 1986, No. 4) the caption to this illustration suggets that the Royal Staff Corps was also used as orderlies and messengers, whereas it was in fact a corps of artisans and engineers.

(12) Sergeant, 40th Foot, 1829

A report in the *Historical Records of Australia (HRA)*, Vol. 15, series 1, Twiss to Darling, 6 January 1830, p. 317, provided the basis for this illustration. The board of enquiry convened by the 40th to inquire into the hardships suffered by the parties in the bush of Van Dieman's Land seeking out Aborigines mentions their lack of haversacks. That the man is shown wearing a shell jacket and forage cap is, of course, supposition, but it is hardly likely that soldiers would have risked their full dress uniforms on such service, and the experience of other regiments campaigning in India and Africa justifies this approach.

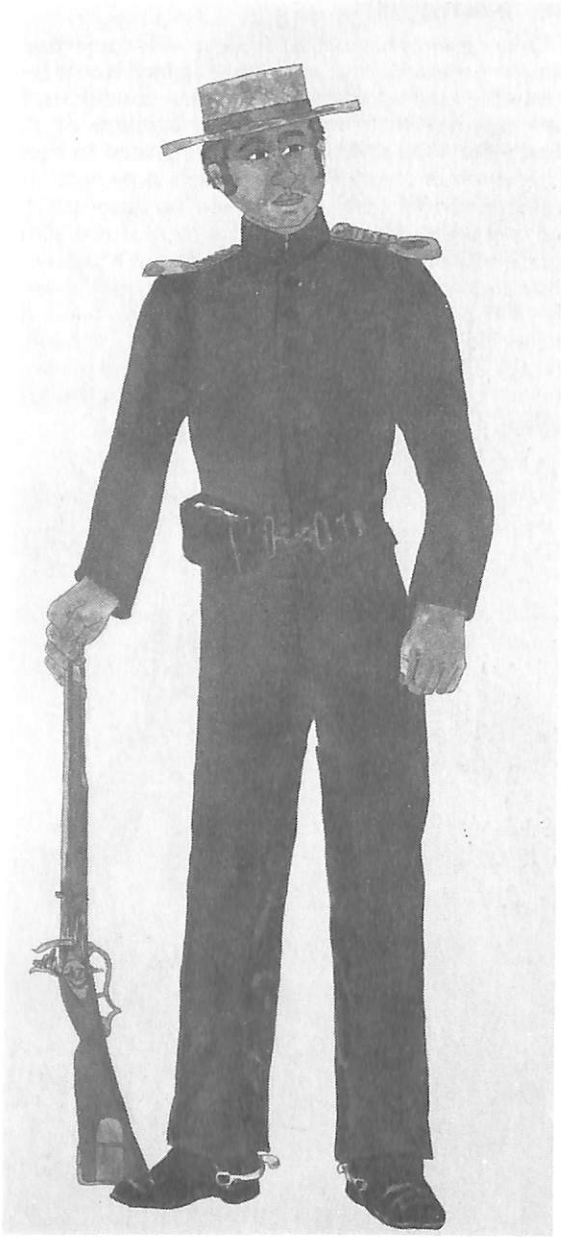


(13) Trooper, Mounted Police, 1830

Evidence on the earlier uniform worn by the Mounted Police is available as a by-product of the opposition to the administration of Governor Ralph Darling expressed by E.S. Hall, proprietor and editor of the *Monitor*. A despatch reproduced in *HRA*, Vol. 13, Series I, Darling to Hay, 23 March 1827, pp. 183–84, records the Mounted Police's uniform as a plain dark blue shell jacket and overalls, The man's hat is a civilian one, since the source gives no details of regulation headgear.

(14) 80th Foot, 1838

Once again, imagination supplies the conjectual details — the neck cloth and scarf — which would be a sensible local adaption to Australian conditions. I later discovered (from the Sydney *Monitor* of 11 November 1836) that in fact soldiers posted to iron gang stockades were given straw hats as protection from the sun. Mr Barton mentions a 'pompon' [sic?], but a contemporary portrait of a man of the 80th (preserved in the Staffordshire Regiment Museum) shows no such adornment. The evidence on whether the 80th's forage caps featured a yellow band is inconclusive. The portrait does not show a band, though a decorated powder horn showing a man of the 80th in a forage cap, in the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia, does.

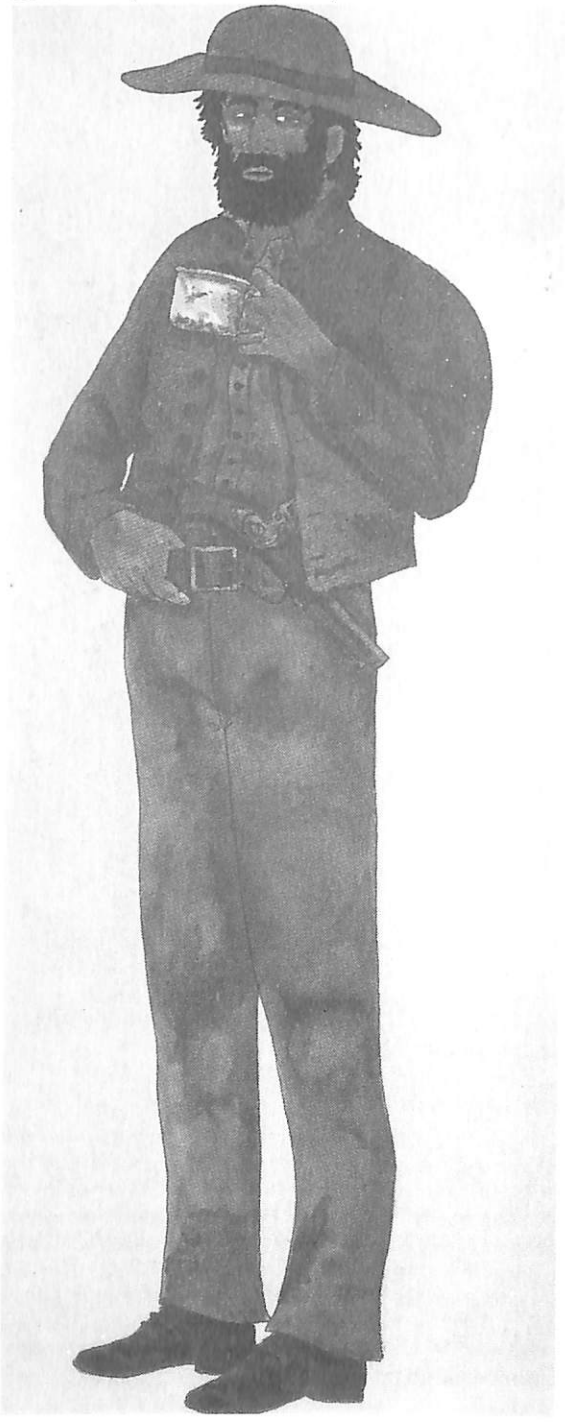


(15) Trooper, Mounted Police, 1838

Hazel King's thesis, 'Police Organization and Administration in the Middle District of New South Wales, 1825–1851', MA, University of Sydney, 1956, p. 294, the Troop Order Book, New South Wales Mounted Police, 1832–38 (National Library of Australia ms 3221), and the engraving in Godfrey Mundy's *Our Antipodes* (reproduced on page 53) provided the information on which the illustration was based. The only conjectural elements are the belt clasp and the leather inserts. I reasoned that inserts would have been a sensible adaption, given that contemporary mounted troops used them.

(16) Trooper, Border Police, 1843

The Border Police was a shabby outfit at the best of times, composed of transported soldiers, unpaid and virtually uncontrolled. It is unlikely that their non-descript uniform, specified in Hazel King's thesis (p. 311) as a brown and green jacket and trousers would have long survived intact, and we gave the man depicted blue civilian trousers (though neglected to say so in the caption).



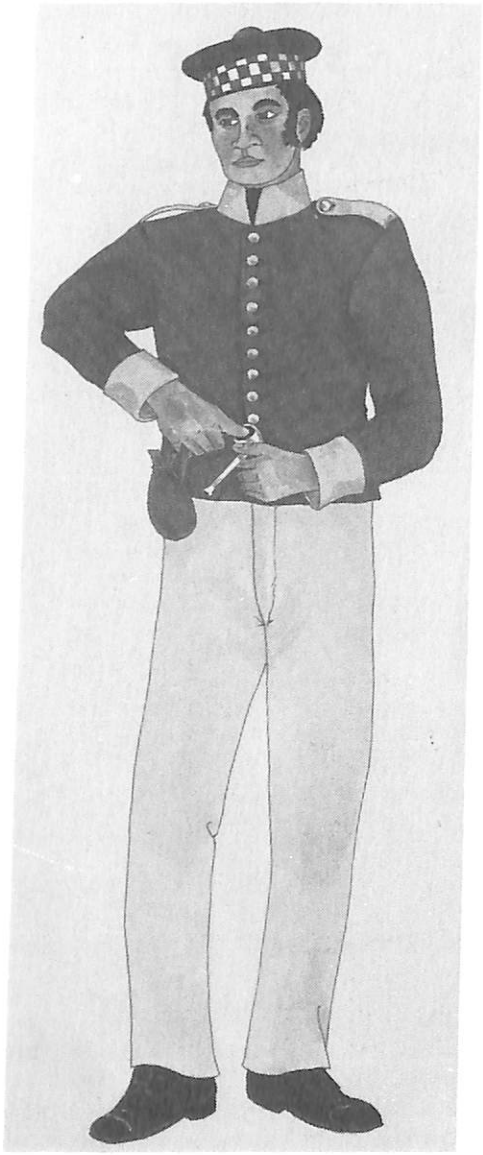
(17) Trooper, Governor's Body Guard, 1844

Determining the uniforms worn by the Governor's Body Guard presents more of a challenge than most others worn by British soldiers in colonial Australia. The evidence for the uniform its members wore in the 1840s is quite confusing. On the one hand the *Sydney Gazette* for 4 January 1842 mentions that the Mounted Police (with which the Body Guard was later amalgamated) was to wear the uniform of the 3rd Dragoon Guards. On the other hand a contemporary engraving (reproduced in the book) suggests that in the mid 1840s the Body Guard wore a light dragoon uniform, which is supported by a reference to such a uniform in the mid 1830s in the British parliamentary papers, (1835 vol. VI, *Report of the Select Committee on Colonial Military Expenditure*, p. 14). The uniforms of light dragoons and dragoon guards were of course completely different, thereby posing a conundrum. Confusingly, contemporary watercolours present varying impressions. John Fowles' *Government House, Sydney*, c. 1845 (Mitchell Library) shows a mounted figure in what looks to be a light dragoon uniform in dark blue with red facings riding in the grounds of Government House, while F.G. Lewis' *General Post Office, Sydney*, c. 1847 (Dixson Galleries) shows a mounted figure in dark blue with yellow facings and another, presumably a Mounted Police trooper, in a blue stable jacket with a soft blue cap.

None of these appear to be in dragoon guard uniform, while light dragoon dress would seem to be more in keeping with the Mounted Police's and the Body Guard's function. A further reference to the Body Guard wearing the uniform of the 3rd Light Dragoons (which I have temporarily mislaid) seemed to indicate that the reference to 'Dragoon Guards' was 'a reporter's error' for 'Light Dragoons' and that the Body Guard wore the uniform of the 3rd Light Dragoons. This was the uniform in which the trooper was eventually depicted. The uniforms depicted in the watercolours cannot be fully explained, unless the former two are muddled depictions of the blue undress uniform mentioned in the Mounted Police Troop Order Book referred to above.

(18) Private, 99th Foot, 1845

This figure is based on the details of the 99th's fatigue uniform given in Montague's book.



(19) Private, 12th Foot, 1854

The uniform worn by the infantry at Eureka is not known with certainty, and even contemporary depictions differ. I based my interpretation on the shell jackets shown in H.B. Henderson's watercolour, reproduced on page 70, and the probability, based on contemporary photographs of troops in the Crimea, that they would not have worn the unwieldy Albert shako in action if they could help it. There are, however, other reasonable ways of looking at this question, though I doubt that a definite version will be reached.

Comment by Lindsay Cox

Within a single page of words the writer can cover many aspects of a subject. The artist, however, is confined to one aspect, and particularly one instant in time.

Mr Barton was obviously unimpressed with my renditions of Peter Stanley's research; he seems not to be able to conceive of the British soldier in the colonies ever being 'scruffy, filthy and ill-clad' — even after weeks, or months, in the Australian bush!

I completely support Peter Stanley's interpretations of the dress of the British soldier in Australia, particularly in the context of the situations in which they are placed. I must add that my only reservation concerns the illustration of the 12th Regiment private at the Eureka uprising, for I would argue for him to wear the shako and braided coatee.

(20, 21) Trooper, Gold Escort (40th Foot), 1855

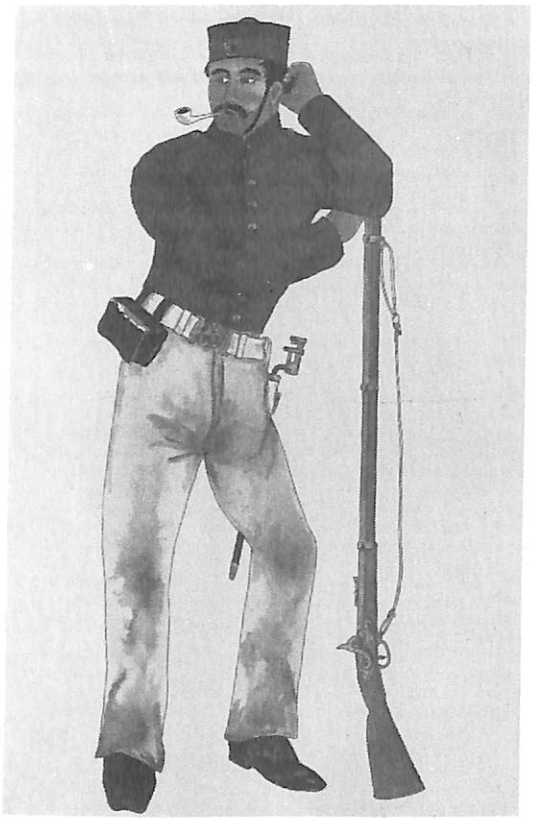
These two depictions of the Gold Escort's full and working dress are primarily based on the Jess water-colours, in the Australian War Memorial's collection, modified by Samual Brees's engraving of the Gold Escort in his *How to farm and settle in Australia*, London, 1856 and details in Montague's book.

Peter Stanley's clarifications ably cover most of Mr Barton's criticisms (as well as Mr Sutton's disappointment in that 'the illustrations cannot be accepted as authentic'). However, in the case of the illustration of the officer of the light company of the 3rd Regiment of Foot (page 35), I acknowledge Mr Barton's corrections in two of his three points. As noted by Mr Barton the officer should be wearing the light infantry stringed bugle-horn rather than the 3rd Regiment's badge. Light infantry regiments had adopted the bugle-horn in 1800, along with the introduction of the shako, but light infantry companies of line regiments wore the normal badge of the regiment until 1814 — as correctly depicted on the light infantry company private of the 73rd Regiment on page 27.

Also noted was the incorrect white border on the collar of the same officer. This is a bad oversight as I forgot to colour it in (my preliminary drawing attests to this). It should of course be gold.

It was also mentioned that the shoulderbelt plate is incorrect. The detail for the plate came directly from that particular officer's portrait held by the Dixson Gallery.

References and research will often provide conflicting evidence, both of which may be correct. This is where interpretation and friendly debate begins.



(22) Marine, Royal Marine Light Infantry, 1865;
(23) Officer, 2nd Battallion, 14th Foot, 1867;
(24) Bombardier, Royal Artillery, 1870

The uniform details on these illustrations were based directly on information provided in Montague's book. The only feature which must be mentioned is that in some copies of the book the Marine's facings accidentally came out more purple than dark blue.

I hope that these notes illustrate the interpretation of soldiers' dress offered in *The Remote Garrison*. I hope, too, that they make clear my view that illustrations convey interpretation as much as do a book's text — they likewise filter a contemporary observer's impressions through an author's (and an artist's) ideas of a subject. There are, of course other ways of depicting the British soldiers who served in Australia, but there is no one way, and any portrayal must reflect historical context as well as literal detail.

Historical understanding proceeds by argument. Just as the interpretations of dress offered in *The Remote Garrison* amend or complement previous views, so further research or publication will alter the impressions which have been presented. I look forward to the results of other researchers on a subject which, despite the pioneering work of Ron Montague and others, promises to promote much stimulating debate.

Anthony Staunton

Seaman James Gorman, VC

The mystery regarding the fate of one of the first heroes of the Victoria Cross has finally been solved. For nearly one hundred years it has been wrongly thought that Seaman James Gorman, VC lived his years after winning the Victoria Cross in Crimean War in London where he died in 1889. In fact, he had a distinguished career in New South Wales' public service in which he worked for fifteen years before his death in 1882 on Spectacle Island in the Parramatta River. The fact that the real Seaman James Gorman lived and died in New South Wales has been suspected for some years but it is only recently that the situation has been put beyond any doubt with the Australian descendants of Seaman James Gorman coming forth to defend their great grandfather's reputation. That the VC pension of £10 per year had only been paid in Australia, that it had ceased in 1882 in which year a detailed obituary appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald* tended to point to the fact that Seaman James Gorman did settle in Australia. However, his descedents have in their possession not only a portrait of him wearing his medals but more importantly all his medals including the Victoria Cross.

Thanks for bringing this information to light go to Mr Harry Willey, husband of James Gorman's great granddaughter; Mr John Winton, author of the standard work on naval VCs who discovered that the VC pension was only paid to Sydney and not to London as previously thought; and Mr Dennis Pillinger, curator of the Lummis VC and GC records of the Military Historical Society.

Seaman James Gorman, VC

A.E. 'Bert' Denman

A Typical Bunch of Blokes

Bert Denman remembers the 10th Reinforcements, the draft with which he joined the 1st AIF in training in England, and on the battlefield in France.

There were about one hundred and fifty in the tenth reinforcements to the 51st Battalion. They were a pretty good crowd, much as one would find in any similar body of troops during the first world war, but it was almost impossible to get to know them all. I'm sure they represented a fair cross section of society at that time and included a variety of civil occupations — some of which today are non-existent such as horse driver, blacksmith, skilled labourer, sleeper hewer, ironmonger, telegraph operator to name a few.

Had we still been in civil life, those younger ones amongst us, who had been brought up to respect our elders, would have addressed most of our senior members as Mister or even Sir. But among other things war was a great leveller. We were now, old and young alike, all volunteers of the same rank. So all titles went by the board and we became known to each other by our Christian name or some nickname. We were all in the same age group, officially eighteen to forty-five. But allowing for those who had to put up their age and for those 'old timers' who had to put theirs down to 'get in', the age group really was from sixteen to forty eight or even more. Nicknames however for the NCOs (even if only acting, as all of them then were) were out. It was strictly nothing but 'Sarge', Corporal, or 'Corp', at the risk of being charged with insubordination.

Everyone adapted quickly. It did not seem incongruous for our youngest sixteen year old to address our oldest (almost old enough to be his grandfather), as Joe or Sam. Or vice versa for our doyen to reply to him as 'Mac' or 'Blue', when it would have been more appropriate to refer to him as 'son', or 'young shaver' or even 'hey, kid'.

There was old Victor, quite a big chap, pink-faced, and with snow-white hair, who would 'take on' and beat all-comers on the boat at draughts. In retrospect, I feel sure that Victor, who looked so old to us, was really the 'Albino' type. He gave his age as nearly forty, but we reckoned he must have been nearer sixty.

'Charlie', eighteen, fair, well-built and very athletic was a bootmaker by trade and once played 'footy' for West Perth. His young cousin, 'Harry', a doubtful looking eighteen, slightly built with fair curly hair, was a bugler in the Senior Cadets some time before joining up. 'Eric', nearly nineteen, was thick set, dark and a bit above medium height and weight, a city lad he later became a 'guide' at Battalion H.Q.

Big John, a mountain of a man, hailed from a Balkan State. A single man, he came to this country a few years before the war and worked on the goldfields in the Kalgoorlie area. His English was still very broken, especially when he was excited. When he swore he was almost incoherent. Like a lot of migrants, he learnt all the swear words first, but he just couldn't put them together in any sequence. I have heard many men swear over the years, at times with great fluency, to the point of being almost poetic. But not Big John, the words just tumbled out, without rhyme or reason, jarring the ears. At breakfast, one cold morning in the training Battalion at Codford, England, following a plate of thin porridge, each man was served with one rissole. Big John glared at the seasoned meat ball with animosity, let rip a disjointed burst of profanity, grabbed it and flung it through the open door of the mess hut out into the snow and roared 'not enough breakfast for one man'. I was hungry enough to have retrieved the appetising morsel, but he was so cross, he probably would have thumped me. A few weeks later we were on leave in London and staying at the War Chest club in Horseferry Road. We were having breakfast and Big John asked for fish. They served him up an enormous helping of North Sea Gunny shark. As he looked at the over generous serve, his temper began to rise. He stood up and roared and let fly with a stream of swear words which shocked those within hearing who'd not heard him before. 'Too much breakfast for one man', he yelled and shoved the plate and its contents across the table and onto the floor.

There was a sequel to Big John's story. He was discharged from the army in 1919, medically unfit and granted a full pension. He never married and decided to return to his homeland. With his pension of thirty shillings a week and a very favourable exchange rate he was able to rent a small house and employ a servant. He would have also received the War Gratuity of one shilling and sixpence per day, paid to all of us from the day of embarkation until the signing of the Peace Treaty on 28 June 1919. He was twenty-seven years older than me, so would have long since passed away.

'Tommy' was a lack-lustre little fellow and to all of us obviously well under age. He was five months at Black-boy Hill before embarkation. Later at Codford he made heavy weather of the 'Bull-Ring' training, and seemed to catch every complaint that came along. I never ever knew if he went to France or not.

'Webbie' about five feet nine, was a couple of years older than me, a country lad, and a farm hand, quiet, friendly and a good mate. 'Jogger' was about my build, five foot eight and ten and a half stone, a bit of a lad, a 'life of the party' sort. Surprisingly he was a Law Clerk when he enlisted. He initiated me into the art of pennybluff poker one night at Codford. It was a few months later. Jogger and I were talking in the main street of Corbie, a few days after I joined the unit. Two Officers rode up and dismounted outside battalion HQ. One of them called to us, 'would you lads mind holding the horses for a few minutes'. We took a bridle rein each and they disappeared into the building. We rolled a cigarette each and went on yarning while we waited. Half an hour passed and they were still inside.

Several of our chaps were about, for we were billeted in the town. Suddenly a 5.9 shell burst in the neighbouring town of La-Nivelle, about a mile away. As we looked at each other, we knew the daily strafe was beginning. The usual pattern was to step down the two main streets with gun fire (one shell at a time) at about two hundred yard intervals. There was another crash, but no danger (to us) and a minute later, another. The other chaps in the street were quietly disappearing, no doubt into some nearby cellar, until the strafing had passed.

We rolled another smoke and hoped the officers would not be long. There was another crash near the end of our main street. We held onto the horses, but we were getting a bit nervous. As the minutes passed, the shells got closer. The horses were getting restless now and so were we. The next crash was less than a quarter of a mile distant, two more, and they'd be on top of us.

Suddenly, the two officers appeared at the Headquarters doorway. They just stood and roared with laughter. Jogger, the bridle rein over his arm stood with shoulders hunched and waving his hands rapidly over his head (as he explained) later to keep off any stray fragments. I was half way down the steps of a cellar leading off the main street, clutching the rein tightly as I tried to drag the reluctant horse down with me. We couldn't give up the reins quickly enough and bolted down the nearest cellar as the next shell crashed fifty yards away. Until that moment, it was the closest I'd ever been to an exploding shell.

'Freddie' not very robust and with a deeply-lined face, was in his early thirties, very quiet and quite friendly. He got on well with all ages. 'Alan', another of the younger fellows, was taller than me, thin-faced and sober-sided who got on well with everyone. 'Smithy' (one of three) was twenty-one and a fine looking chap, rather plump and with a good sense of humour. He was a match for the younger lads and kep most of us in line and was well liked.

Peter was another farm hand from the wheat belt. A good type of country boy, popular with his mates. Patrick too, a robust type had been on the land in the Northam area. Like most country lads he was friendly, well mannered and easy to get along with. 'Nobby', another eighteen year old, who looked about twenty five was an engraver in civvy life. Like pretty well all of our crowd he was a good sort of mate. He and Allan were close to each and always hung about together. Martin was an engine driver in the railways. In his late thirties, he was single, a fine looking chap with greying wavy hair. He was a serious chap and in spite of the difference in our ages, a good mate. 'Jimmy', eighteen, was a shop assistant, fairly tall, dark and well built, who fitted in with the rest of us. One whom I've never forgotten was an acting corporal, nearly thirty. I once tried to borrow a quid from him, just before pay day, on the boat. He agreed to lend it, but wanted to charge interest. I was disgusted and decided to go without for a while. Another 'John', a short thick-set dark chap with a handlebar moustache was about the same age as my dad. He kept me in rolled cigarettes on the troopship and all I did was to buy the papers, the cheapest smoking I ever enjoyed. He was a kindly old fellow and also got on well with the younger blokes. 'Cookie', with the initials H.H.H., was in his mid thirties and a bit deaf although he had passed his medicals. Like a lot of deaf people I've met, he was quietly spoken and a nice fellow to know.

'Billy' was quite dark, swarthy in fact. His father was an Army instructor. Billy was born in India. 'Pudden' as you may guess, was round-faced, not too tall and a bit of a heavy weight. We were later in the same platoon at Villers-Bretonneux. He was a Lewis gunner too. We dug a two-man pit together on Chipilly Spur in August. We slept in it that night. We were cold as we had only one greatcoat between us and a German 'Ersatz' army overcoat. We were both mustard-gassed in the night and paraded sick in the morning at the RAP in the gully below. 'Pud' was granted one day 'no-duty' while I was given 'medicine and duty'. I had a relapse a few hours later and was evacuated from the unit and never returned. Jack was slim-built and rather a fine looking bloke and a bank clerk. We 'dug in' together at Villers-Bretonneux against a low bank in record time. French Moroccan troops were to attack through our position and 'Zero hour' had been advanced. A half hour inferno followed the opening of the attack as we crouched close together in the narrow confines of our pozzie, hoping for the best. A shell dropped a few yards past us, followed by a crash as part of the rock wall behind us was struck. Jack yelled above the din, 'I'm hit'. I shouted back, 'it's only a bit of rock'. I reached over behind, to convince him, but instead picked up a still quite hot base plate of a 'daisy cutter' shell. It had hit him flat on

the backside but never broke the skin, much to his disgust. 'Ashy', well over forty was a 'returned' soldier having served on Gallipoli with the 11th Battalion. He was quietly spoken and respected by the others in the light of his previous service. Interesting to talk to, he was especially popular among the young fellows.

'Ted' was about my age and much the same build. I knew little about him except that he was a clerk until the night we came out of Villers-Bretonneux. We were given a rum issue just before we left. Whether the sergeant had given him a bit over the issue or that he just couldn't take it, I don't know, but it was enough to loosen his tongue. He told me as we stumbled across the broken ground that he had an older brother. Ted complained he couldn't get on with him or his father. He went on to tell me more intimate family details. I didn't ask him, he just seemed to want to tell me, but I'm sure it was the rum talking. I never ever told a soul about it nor did I ever remind him, so he never knew. 'Bunny' nearly forty, was a rugged individual, a bit bow-legged with craggy featues, which belied his good nature. He was single and came in for a bit of chaffing from the lads. He took it in good part and gave as good as he got, but was popular with the young fellows.

'Paddy' short, stocky, red-haired and pugnacius, was an ex-jockey. Brought up in a tough school, he'd had plenty of scraps and was very handy with his fists. He was not that easy to get on with but wasn't a really bad chap. Another, 'Charlie' was not one of our crowd. He had been badly wounded in France and hospitalised and sent to England. After a spell in a convalescent camp he was sent to the training battalion at Codford. He had migrated to Australia as a rosy-cheeked fifteen year old a few years before the war. When we met him he was about twenty-three and a really likeable bloke. He was a poker player and always seemed to be 'in the money'. He got together four bikes, which he kept under his hut on sloping ground. He hired them out for two bob a night or afternoon. They were popular among the lads as there was no local inter-village transport. I rode one to Steeple Langford one Sunday evening (about five miles from camp) I had tea at the vicarage, but coming back the chain broke. I have almost nightmarish memories of wheeling it along the long lonely road in pitch darkness. I passed a high stone walled old Manor House, high hedges, lonely fields and isolated cottages with never a light to be seen and without meeting a soul.

'Alfie' arrived at Codford with the previous reinforcement to us. But he was hospitalised with pneumonia and remained behind when his mates went on draft to France. He was rather tall and pretty thin, for his bout of sickness had pulled him down. He was a timid sort of chap who'd had little to do with other people and lacked self-confidence, having left school quite early. He got on well with the younger chaps and sought our company. He met up with a girl from a local village and they seemed suited to each other, and he was quite proud of her. We were out walking one Sunday afternoon and rounding the corner of a village street we came face to face with Alfie and his girlfriend. He became quite flustered and stuttered a bit. Then getting hold of himself, he looked at us and then at his fiancee, then with a wave of his hand towards her and then to us, he blurted out, 'This is 'er — this is the boys'. Poor Alfie, he had never hurt a soul. All the young fellows wished him well.

There was another chap in his late twenties. He did not cut a great figure, being a bit on the plump side, five feet six and wore round rimmed glasses. He was quite inoffensive and mild mannered, but got on fairly well with most of the other fellows. He had some sort of girl trouble. She had followed him from Australia and was living in London. He saw her on his disembarkation leave, but for some reason, shortly afterwards went absent without leave for a protracted period. He was court-martialled and sent to Lewes, a detention centre for Australian troops. We were still in England when he was returned to the training battalion and what a changed man he was. Smartly turned out and much thinner, he was more alert than we'd ever known him. Training while in detention had continued in true bull ring style. The instructors, all Military Policemen bore the rank at least of Lance-Corporal and were armed with a cane. Our Comrade complained bitterly that whenever addressed by name he had to spring smartly to attention with a brisk 'Yes Lance-Corporal' or 'No Lance-Corporal' as the occasion demanded. Failure to comply incurred swift reaction, in the form of a swish around the legs with the cane. Everything, he claimed, was carried out at the double. This extended to meal parades, to and from the various classes and lessons and to and from the toilets and ablutions. The inducement of course was the threat of the ever ready cane. He swore that they would never get him back inside again.

Our CSM at Codford was a member of the Camp Staff and not one of us but deserves a mention. Tall, dark, well-built and with a pointed black moustache, he had seen active service in France. He wore leather lace up knee boots. While the last notes of Reveille still lingered on, he was to be seen every morning, framed in the open doorway of our hut. With a long stout cane, he beat a noisy tatto on the three ply lining and shouted 'wakey wakey'. Any sign of hesitation, was a signal for him to lift the edge of someone's blankets and get into the bed, slush and snow covered knee boots and all, resulting in a hasty exit from the other side of the bed. It never failed, much to his fiendish satisfaction.

It seems incredible to me, that even the youngest members of our under-age group are now in their late eighties. It is almost beyond the imagination to realise that all of them were once so full of life, brash, impetuous, clear-eyed, clean-cut healthy specimens of young manhood on the threshold of life. Yet as I close my eyes I can conjure up pictures of the past

and see them as they were. I can almost hear their shouts of laughter and their vehement protests at things that were not fair. I remember them in their training and their marching and in snow fights and when on leave together. I can recall sharing a smoke when they were short. A couple of deep 'drags' meant such a lot and the feelings between mates was just great and had to be experienced to be really appreciated.

Between wars, I marched with the 50th, a sister battalion of the same brigade, as my unit was from the West. It is now more than half a century since I last saw any of my old mates. A doctor shook his head (sadly, I thought) at me in January 1931, so my wife sent me to the West, a few weeks later, to see a few old mates. I saw lots of them and marched with them on Anzac Day. It was the first time I'd seen any of them for thirteen years and the feeling between us was tremendous.

The war caused many disabilities and because of the natural ageing process there cannot be many of us left. There is something about being a survivor when there are others. But as the years roll on and numbers shrink, one really begins to feel alone. Without being mawkish, it must be a terribly sad thing to be a sole survivor. It is certainly not a distinction to be sought after.

It is a sobering thought to realise that most if not all of the older members have long since gone the way of all old soldiers and simply faded away.

Bert Denman's reminiscences of service will be continued in forthcoming issues of Sabretache.

Les Hetherington

"Little Bertha" — The Amiens Gun

The 8th of August 1918

The 8th of August 1918 was regarded by military leaders from both sides in the first world war as an extremely significant date. The victory achieved in France over the Germans by British and allied troops was described by German General Ludendorff as 'the black day of the German Army in the history of the war'.[1] The Australian commander, General Monash, later said that 'the tactical value of the victory was immense'.[2] Lieutenant-Colonel Neil Freeman, commanding officer of the 31st Australian Infantry Battalion, which took part in the offensive on that day, claimed that

> By far the most interesting period to me was that of the open fighting from the 8th August 1918 to 31st September 1918. This also appeared to me to be the most important period, as for the first time, the enemy forces appeared definitely beaten and disorganised, lacking any power of counter attack.[3]

Less personally involved commentators agreed. The Australian Official Historian of the war of 1914-1918, C.E.W. Bean, has said about the 8th of August that

> By evening, when orders were given to continue the thrust next day, it was certain that a tremendous victory had been achieved, far beyond any previous success of the British Army in that war...The blow struck had been a shattering one.[4]

The German 'official monograph' concerning this period of the war repeated this judgement from the point of view of the defeated army.

> As the sun set on the 8th August on the battlefield the greatest defeat which the German Army had suffered since the beginning of the war was an accomplished fact.[5]

On this day the war moved decisively out of the trenches. Advances of miles were made, instead of yards, and the great offensive which ended in the armistice of 11 November 1918 commenced.

But, despite these fundamental changes in the nature of the war and the relationship of the competing armies, the 8th of August and the subsequent campaign, as Monash pointed out, 'has never yet been fully appreciated by the public of the Empire'.[6] The bloody Gallipoli campaign, and other battles marked by their high casualty rates and acts of heroism by the soldiers rather than by any tactical or strategic value (such as Fromelles and Pozieres), are better remembered. The 8th of August 1918, in comparison, resulted in few casualties and was characterised more by the success of the concerted effort of units and formations than by individual endeavour.

In Australian military tradition, however, the 8th of August 1918 deserves more recognition. It was the first time the five Australian divisions went into battle together,[7] and it was the day on which the Australian soldiers demonstrated most effectively that 'mastery over the enemy such as has probably not been gained by our troops in any previous period of the war'[8].

The Amiens Gun

Such recognition for the actions of the Australian corps on this day was obtained for a time in Australia by the display here of 'undoubtedly Australia's greatest war trophy'[9] — the Amiens Gun. The barrel of the gun is still on display at the Australian War Memorial, and a plaque there[10] states that the 11 inch railway gun was captured by the A.I.F. near Harbonnieres on the 8th of August. It had been used, the plaque continues, to shell Amiens, 15 miles away, in an attempt to destroy the railway centre in that city. The barrel is 41 feet long and weights 45 tons, but this represents less than a quarter of its original weight.[11]

Its Capture

The gun was well behind the German lines before the commencement of the offensive of the 8th of August, beyond the Australian infantry's third objective for that day, in what became No Man's Land, north of the village of Harbonnieres. It was over seven miles from the Australian line in front of Villers-Bretonneux.[12] From this position, with a range of 20 miles, it could fire its 600lb shells into Amiens, expending '200 shells against the Australians between May and August'.[13] During the advance of the 8th of August, however, its crew was possibly taken by surprise by the speed and penetration of the Australian attack.

The Australian infantry began its advance at 0420 hours, moving off in fog, accompanied by a heavy barrage. The 5th Division, of which the 31st Battalion was a part, followed the 2nd Division, which was to take the first objective — the Green line. This was accomplished and the 31st Battalion reached this line, after passing the village of Warfusee-Abancourt, at 0820 hours. Passing through the 2nd Division, it took up the advance on a 500 yard front, A and B Companies leading, C Company in support and D Company in reserve.[14]

Accompanied initially by tanks, five of which were destroyed within a very short time, the 31st Battalion proceeded towards the second objective, the Red line. During this phase of the battle, 'the real resistance to the Australians...came from the German artillery...',[15] the infantry apparently not having the heart to resist. At around 1025 hours the 31st Battalion reached the Red line and, encountering virtually no opposition, continued on to the final objective, the Blue line, which was, in fact, a line of trenches to the east of Harbonnieres, the old Amiens Outer Defence Line. B Company commenced consolidating on this line at 1050 hours on the Battalion's northern most point, with C and A Companies manning the line down towards Harbonnieres railway station — 'no opposition or interference was encountered by them whilst so engaged and by 3.00 p.m. all three companies had consolidated their positions'.[16]

It was on reaching the Blue line that members of B Company noticed the burning train in front of their position. The rear of the train had been hit by a bomb dropped from an aeroplane, and the crew had been captured by British cavalry, when

> at 10 a.m., the 5th Dragoon Guards...leading squadron, though fired at from Harbonnieres, raced for the Outer Defence Line, which it found unoccupied. Seeing a train with a large railway gun, set on fire by a bomb from a British aeroplane as it was trying to steam away from Proyart, ... [the squadron] assisted the left squadron in killing or capturing its occupants.[17]

The officer commanding B Company, Captain George Herbert Wilson, a school teacher from Brisbane who had risen through the ranks after enlisting at the end of May 1915,[18] formally took possession of the gun and its train, and a large sign — saying 'captured by the 31st Battalion' — was written on the gun carriage.[19] However, no one in B Company was capable of getting up steam and making good their prize. It remained in No Man's Land until Lieutenant George Burrows of the 14th Field Company Engineers arrived with two sappers from the 8th Field Company, John Henry Palmer and Leslie James Strahan. Burrows had been an engineer in civilian life, while Palmer had been a boiler maker and Strahan a motor mechanic.[20] These combined skills must have been adequate for the task, as the 8th Field Company war diary provides the following description of subsequent events.

> On reaching the Blue line Lt Burrows and two sappers went forward to the railway siding in front of the final objective to where a 11.2" German railway gun, 2 ammunition wagons, 2 armourer's coaches, and other carriages abandoned by the enemy, was standing. The carriages at the end of the train were on fire. These were disconnected and shunted clear. Steam was raised and Railway gun complete, two wagons of ammunition and two armourers coaches were brought behind our own lines to a point on the line...where the rails had been broken by shell fire.[21]

When writing his report of the events of this day, on 12 August, Captain Wilson stated that "when the 8th Engineers arrived a driver was obtained who brought the gun to the rear of our lines".[22] After a false start early on 9 August, the train was finally moved back to safety well behind the front on the night of 9-10 August.

The 31st Battalion diarist was obviously impressed with the capture of the gun. He wrote —

> The 28cm Railway gun is the most important capture as it is probable that this [sic] about the first occasion in the war in which a railway gun has been captured from the enemy. The Battalion is extremely proud of itself in as much as it has such an interesting trophy to its credit.[23]

There followed an admission that the battalion did have help in capturing the gun.

> As there seems to be some doubt as to the claim of this Battalion to its capture, it is only right to say here that the airman who dropped the bomb on the train was instrumental in its capture as well as the cavalry.[24]

Controversy

In anticipating the claims of others to a role in the capture of the gun, the 31st Battalion overlooked the one party which was to dispute the prominence given to the infantry.

This was the engineers.

Although the infantry claimed the gun and followed the practice of identifying it with their battalion number,[25] their capture of it was not taken to have involved any danger from the enemy. The engineers did not have the same view. Burrows received a bar for his Military Cross, and Palmer and Strahan were awarded Military Medals for 'conspicuous bravery, initiative and devotion to duty', for their actions in retrieving the gun and its train. The recommendation for Burrows' award states that

> On the 8th August this officer was in charge of a section of Sappers accompanying one of the assaulting battalions of the Left Brigade, in the attack east of Villers-Bretonneux, near Amiens ... Without hesitation Lieut. Burrows and two

> sappers went forward, and in spite of enemy machine-gun, shell and rifle-fire, raised steam on the locomotive, shunted the burning coaches into another siding, coupled up with gun and ammunition wagons and then brought these back well within our own lines. His great courage and initiative in the face of the enemy, resulted in the capture of an extremely valuable gun, ammunition and locomotive and is deserving of the very highest recognition.[26]

The recommendations for Palmer and Strahan were couched in similar terms.

Thus, although the 31st Battalion war diary claimed the gun as a prize and the gun carriage was designated by the battalion's identification as its prize, it was the engineers who were rewarded for its capture. Later in Australia, when the Melbourne *Argus* published an account of the incident, attributing the honour of the gun's capture to the infantry,[27] Major J. Coghlan, 'late O.C. 14th Field Co. Engineers' wrote

> Under the heading of "An A.I.F. Souvenir" in "The Argus" today, it is stated that the big railway gun was captured at Harbonnieres by the 31st Battalion. This is incorrect. It was captured by Lieut. G. Burrows...who, together with two sappers of the 8th Field Company Engineers, went out under fire in front of the infantry, and drove the locomotive into our lines...The credit of this capture was therefore due to the Engineers, and not to the 31st Battalion.[28]

Other than the recommendations for the awards of the Engineers, no other contemporary account of the capture goes into detail as to the conditions under which the train was brought behind the Australian lines. The nearest there is to such a comment is the statement from the 31st Battalion war diary that the front was quiet while the battalion was consolidating its position on the Blue line during the afternoon of the 8th. Captain Wilson's report is non-committal and matter of fact. Many years later he was to provide more information.

In 1932, Wilson wrote from Charters Towers, where he was again teaching, that

> I was in command of the front line company which captured the gun. The actual capture was as follows:— An aeroplane fired tracer bullets into the train which was carrying a good deal of petrol and set it on fire. Almost immediately afterwards the cavalry advanced and captured the train's crew. Our advance followed on the heels of the cavalry. The train was practically spread across the front of my objective. I searched for an engine driver but did not have a man suitable. Later in the day Captain Burrowes of the 8th Brigade Engineers came up with a Sergeant and a sapper and with the assistance of my men got up steam and took the train to the rear. This took place about 4 p.m. in the afternoon, the front then being very quiet...Captain (or Lieutenant) Burrowes, I think, stood at the time in conversation with me at the Railway Junction... There is on record a photograph of the gun taken by the official photographer with Paddy McAleer one of my men sitting on the barrel.[29]

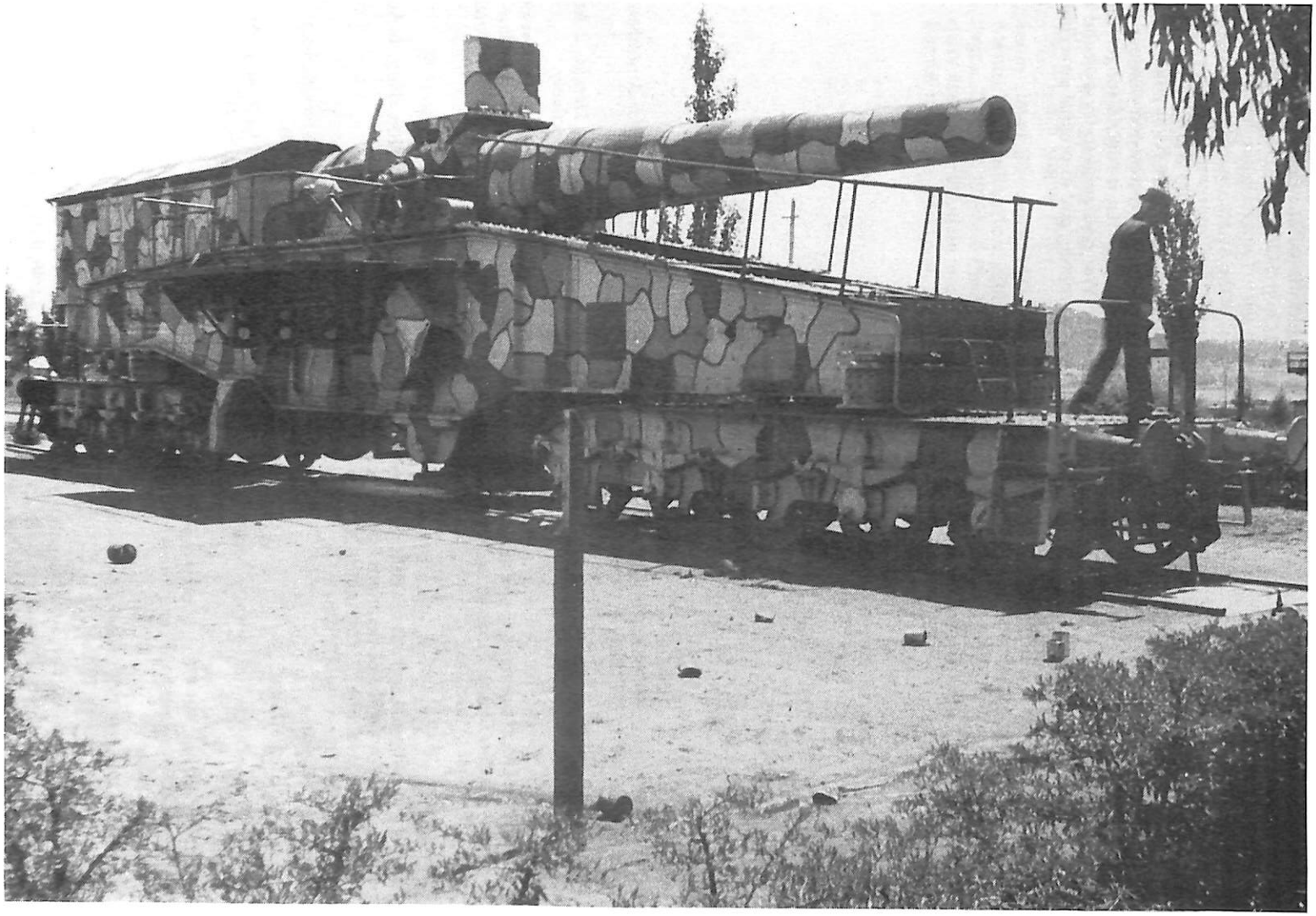
In the final analysis, however, the precise allocation of credit for the taking of the gun is not as significant as the general circumstances. On the day of possibly the most sweeping victory for the British and Imperial troops (the III British Corps and the 1st and 2nd Canadian Divisions were also involved in the advance with the Australians)[30] in the war, one of the greatest prizes captured from the enemy on the field of battle in France was taken through the combined efforts of the oldest and the newest methods of waging war. For it is true to say that, although it was not capable of capturing the gun and its train, had the aeroplane not rendered it for a time immovable, it would have safely steamed away.[31] Subsequently, the train may still have made good its escape had not the cavalry, charging ahead of the infantry, killed or taken prisoner the crew. The infantry were then able to claim the gun as their own, but were unable to move it. The arrival of the Engineers, as Captain Wilson admitted, meant that the train could be shunted behind the Australian lines. Thus, all of the elements of the attacking forces — artillery and tanks had aided the earlier advance of the infantry — on the air, on horseback and on foot, each played a role in the capture of the Amiens Gun.

Little Bertha

The railway gun became a celebrated exhibit, and was shown in Paris, where it was dubbed 'Little Bertha',[32] before being taken to Woolwich. From there it was shipped to Australia aboard the *Dongarra*, which docked in Sydney on 3 March 1920. Although bound for the planned War Museum, the gun and carriage was displayed first in Sydney, as the New South Railway gauge was the same as that of the gun's bogies —4 feet 8½ inches (the Victorian and South Australian gauges being 5 feet 3 inches and the Queensland gauge 3 feet 6 inches).

On Friday, 26 March 1920, the gun was officially unveiled at a site 'in Railway Reserve, facing Eddy-avenue'. Attending the ceremony were the Chief Commissioner of Railways, Mr Fraser, the District Commandant, Major-General Lee, General Sir Charles Rosenthal, the New South Wales Minister for Works, Mr Ball and Brigadier-General Cox. General Rosenthal spoke of the way in which many units had combined to enable the capture of the gun to take place — 'it was only fair to remind his audience', he said.

> that captures in war, whether personal or in the way of material, were the result of organisation bigger than a battalion or a brigade in its general scope...Captures such as this would have been impossible but for the magnificent support given



"Little Bertha" — the Amiens Gun, at Canberra Railway Station, probably during the late 1930's. (Photo courtesy of Fred Allen, MHSA South Australia.)

by the artillery,...the tanks..., the armoured cars and the Flying Squadron...[33]

The unveiling itself was undertaken by the 'Diggers', who held the tarpaulins ready. At a given signal 'amidst cheers the monster gun was revealed in all its portentous might'.[34]

The Gun Today

The position of the gun in Sydney was not permanent, and it was eventually moved to Canberra, where it stood adjacent to Canberra Railway Station. Today, we do not have the opportunity to view the gun in its complete 'portentous might', as the gun mounting, a 60 ton undercarriage and possibly other 'pieces and parts' weighing 50 tons,[35] was 'made available' in 1942 for the artillery proof range at Port Wakefield, South Australia, and the railway bogies have been put in store No. 1 Central Ordnance Depot, Bandiana.[36] The gun, which was to General Rosenthal 'a tangible illustration of what the Australian troops had done in the war', 'the great black monster' which was 'the latest type of German artillery' and 'Australia's greatest war trophy'[37] is now represented by only its barrel, one of a number of exhibits in a crowded outdoor display area. It seems a pity that it can no longer impress visitors to the War Memorial today as it did those involved in its capture and its original unveiling.

NOTES

1. Quoted in Monash, Sir John, *The Australian Victories in France in 1918*, London, 1920, p.130; also in Bean, C.E.W., *Anzac to Amiens*, Canberra, 1946, p.473.
2. Monash, op. cit., p.130.
3. Freeman, N.M., statement in Australian War Records Section biographical forms, Australian War Memorial (AWM 183).
4. Bean, op. cit., p.473.
5. Quoted in Edmonds, Sir James E., Editor, *History of the Great War Military Operations France and Belgium 1918*, volume IV, 8th August-26th September, The Franco-British Offensive, HMSO, London, 1947, p.88.
6. Monash, op. cit., p. 130.
7. Adam-Smith, Patsy, *The Anzacs*, Melbourne, 1981, p.404.
8. Bean, op. cit., pp. 469-470 — quoted from comments made by a British officer in the 4th British Army war diary.
9. *The Argus*, 2 August 1919; also the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 March 1920.
10. This plaque is mounted on a shelter painted in the same camouflage colours as the barrel.
11. *The Argus*, 2 August 1919; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 March 1920.
12. Ellis, A.D., *The Story of the Fifth Australian Division*, London, 1920, p. 334.
13. *Argus* and *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 August 1919 and 3 March 1920 respectively.
14. The account of the advance, except where otherwise stated, is based on the 31st Battalion War Diary (AWM 4, 23/48), Ellis and Bean, *Anzac to Amiens*.
15. Edmonds, op. cit., p. 64; see also p. 66.
16. AWM 4, 23/48, 31st Battalion diary, 8 August 1918.
17. Edmonds, op. cit., p. 69.
18. AWM 140, Official Historian's biographical index cards — Captain G.H. Wilson.
19. Williams, H.R., The Gallant Company. An Australian Soldier's Story of 1915-1918, Sydney, 1933, p. 222.
20. AWM 140.
21. 8th Field Company Engineers War Diary (AWM 4, 14/27), for the period 4-10 August 1918.
22. AWM 4, 23/48, 31st Battalion War Diary, Appendix H7 for the period including 8 August 1918.
23. AWM 4, 23/48, 8 August 1918.

24. ibid. The contribution of the British cavalry is referred to in a letter published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 31 March 1920.
25. Williams, H.R., op. cit., p. 218 — 'German battery positions had been overrun...Every gun had been chalked with the name of the battalion that had captured it'.
26. Honours and Rewards, 5.8.18-12.8.18 (AWM 28), 5th Australian Division, 14th Field Company Australian Engineers.
27. *The Argus*, 2 August 1919.
28. *The Argus*, 6 August 1919.
29. Letter dated 28 March 1932, Australian War Memorial classification 2DRL, 177A/7. *The Argus*, 2 August 1919 and the 31st Battalion war diary state that the train was immobilised by bombs from the aeroplane, not tracer bullets. The photograph referred to is possibly that reproduced here.
30. *Anzac to Amiens*, pp. 469-470.
31. The account printed in *The Argus*, 2 August 1919, states that prior to the attack by the aeroplane the train was "shunting, apparently trying to get off one line on to another to escape". It was stopped by the pilot's action.
32. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 March 1920.
33. ibid.
34. ibid.
35. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3 March 1920.
36. See the plaque mentioned in note 10; also Bean, *Anzac to Amiens*, p. 472, note 5.
37. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 March 1920.

Book Reviews

Henri de Wailly, *Crécy 1346: Anatomy of a Battle*. Blandford Press, Dorset, 1987. £14.95.

Despite more than six centuries of wars, progress and change, it is incredible to think that there still remains enough topographical evidence to reconstruct a battle and its preliminaries. Henry de Wailly manages just this, with a good deal of authority in 'Crécy 1346: Anatomy of a Battle'.

Certainly the written evidence (primarily the chroniclers/history Froissart, Villani and Jean le Bel) is relatively abundant, as are studies by later historians. They all agree on the basic facts, despite enormous differences in estimations of the size of the armies involved. (Froissart, de Wailly reminds us, had a perchant for large numbers.)

Taking all this information a step further, the author, with the help of recent aerial surveys, maps, photos, studies of the arms and armour used and succinct personality sketches, places the battle (with self-admitted recklessness) squarely onto the map. This style, reminiscent of similar reconstructions of recent twentieth century battles, works well because, in this case, it is meticulous, well structured and convincing.

My only criticism of this otherwise highly readable account is that Crécy, should have been placed in the wider context of the 'Calamitous fourteenth century', as Barbara Tuchman describes it. The English victory at Crécy, sandwiched between the Battle of Sluys and the arrival of the plague in 1347, was negated almost immediately by Edward III's year-long, resource-draining siege of Calais. Although the book's title ('anatomy of a battle') is both self-defining-and-limiting, the wider view is important to consider, if only briefly.

That aside, de Wailly brilliantly evokes the continuous, brave but suicidal charges by the French and allied knights against a small, well-organised English barrage of arrows. English losses were few; the French lost their 'flower of chivalry' to those excluded from chivalry — the Welsh pikemen and the peasant longbowmen. It is perhaps worth quoting one of de Wailly's conclusions:

> Courage could change nothing. . . Rapid firing weapons, well supplied, dense and skilfully used, inflicted defeat well before hand-to-hand fighting even commenced.

It is a comment that brings a chill of recognition to anyone familiar with the slaughters of Gallipoli and the Western Front. History is always studied but the lessons rarely heeded.

Chris McLaughlin-Goddard

Ashley Cunningham-Boothe and Peter Farrar (eds), British Forces in the Korean War, British Korean Veterans Association, Halifax, 1988, pp xiii + 200, £12.50 + p+p.

The above title brings together the accounts and recollections of British veterans of the Korean War, copiously illustrated with photographs from personal collections. Highlights include an account of Operation COMMANDO in October 1951, in which 3 RAR distinguished itself, by the commander of the 28th Commonwealth Brigade, Brigadier George Taylor. The book is available by direct mail order only, at a cost of £12.50 plus £2.32 surface post and packing. Orders should be sent to the British Korean Veterans Association, 32 Hatherall Road, Radford Semele, Leamington Spa, CV31 1UE, Great Britain. all proceeds from sales of the book go to benefit the work of the British Korean Veterans Association.

Letters

Eaglemont,
VICTORIA, 3084
1 May 1988

Sir,

The Mobilisation of Land Forces a Neglected Subject

The subject of *Mobilisation* has never been a popular one in Australia's military circles for after dinner speakers or for lecturers at monthly meetings of U.S.Is. But in recent times interest in this subject has been changing.

I had much pleasure in reading Major H. Zwillenberg's interesting paper in *Sabretache* for December 1987 on the mobilisation scheme which was implemented in South Australia for the sending of troops to the South African War of 1899-1902. Then in *Defence Force Journal* No. 68 for February 1988 attention was invited in a review to Colonel J. Wood's comprehensive book *Mobilisation* which was published in Canberra in 1987. These two publications indicate a refreshing expansion in the development of Australia's professional military literature.

Mobilisation is not something which occurs only at the beginning of a major war. In the latter half of 1916, for example, General Monash formed, trained and mobilised the 3rd Australian Division in Southern Command, England for war in Western Europe.

Ideally, Mobilisation planning is a continuous task in peace and in war for a staff which is adequate in numbers, training and experience. A mobilisation plan needs to be rehearsed periodically in peacetime and also on a reasonably large scale so that all participants can play their parts quickly, quietly and effectively. Likewise the planning staff should watch the plan continuously to ensure that any relevant changes in general circumstances are provided for. A mobilisation scheme is not something that is drawn up, wrapped up neatly as a parcel, and placed on a shelf until an outbreak of war demands its rapid implementation. This method results in aimless activity, confusion much abusive shouting and perhaps ultimate chaos where order is indispensable and urgent.

The mobilisation of a nation's landforces is a major administrative operation and it precedes strategical and tactical operations. Nevertheless, the foundations of successful strategical and tactical military operations remain always administrative operations. No ammunition, reinforcements, petrol, oil and water in the right places, at the right times and in the required quantities then no military operations.

Now that Colonel Wood's *Mobilisation* and Major Zwillenberg's paper on South Australia's Mobilisation scheme to send its troops to the South African War of 1899-1902 have stimulated interest in this neglected subject other *Sabretache* readers may be moved to write research papers on this subject.

WARREN PERRY*

* Sometime Federal President of the Military Historical Society of Australia.

D.W. Pedler
24 Richmond Road
KESWICK SA 5035

Dear Sir

For many years I have researched Adelaide's South African War Memorial.

I wish to enlarge my knowledge of Memorials to this war and would be pleased to hear from anyone with details of the location and, if possible, a brief description of any statue or plaque. I have a small selection of photographs and postcards and would like to know a little more about the Memorial in Hay Park, NSW, the Soldiers Memorial Gates, Stawell, Victoria, the Memorial in Parramatta and others.

I am not limiting my postcard or photo collection to Australian or New Zealand units and was recently fortunate in obtaining a card showing a memorial to a young Boer in Pretoria Cemetery.

Yours sincerely

D.W. Pedler

Members Wants

Buttons Colin Simpson of Canberra Branch has recently expanded his collecting interests to Australian military buttons (pre-Federation and post-Federation) and wishes to make contact with members with a similar interest, and those who may have any buttons for sale, trade, etc. Write to Colin at 73 Beasley Street, Torrens, ACT 2607.

Survival Axe Brian Wallis is interested in obtaining the following: U.S. Survival Ax type IV MIL-S-8642C, plus canvas cover marked 'Survival Ax Kit NO-1121-4, Frank and Warner, Inc 65' — with U.S. belt hooks and original U.S. property mark on canvas. The Ax is shaped like a small brush hook cum machete, with a cutlass type belt of leather ring handgrips. If anybody can help Brian contact him at 46 Market Street, Warialda, NSW 2402.

Wanted World war two propaganda leaflets, Pacific Theatre: Allied to Japanese and Japanese to Allies; also leaflets from the Malaya emergency and the Vietnam war. Needed for overseas researcher. Also wanted are textbooks (preferably British and U.S. service textbooks) on explosives — the older the better. Also, Lyman 12 gauge slug mould. Rifling swage not essential. For all of the above, pleased contact Syd Wigzell, 17 Royal Street, Alexandra Hills, Qld 4161 or phone (07) 824 2006.

Notes on contributors

Ron Montague is a member of the MHSA and the British Army in Australia Research Group. He served for twelve years in the British Army before coming to Australia to settle in the Hunter Valley about thirty years ago. Since then he had had a number of papers published by historical societies including the Royal Australian Historical Society and the NSW Military Historical Society. His book *Dress and Insignia of the British Army in Australia and New Zealand* was published in 1981.

Robert Fraser is a resident of Cohasset, Massachussetts. Formerly Senior Curator of the Cohassett Historical Society, he is now active as an historical consultant and researcher on various local historical projects. Mr Fraser's main interest is the history of Massachussetts and the War of 1812.

Peter Stanley is the author of The Remote Garrison: The British Army in Australia, and is currently head of the Historical Research Section of the Australian War Memorial. Peter is a long-standing member of the MHSA, and is convenor of the British Army in Australia Research Group (BAARG).

Anthony Staunton is a Senior Research Officer with the Veterans' Review Board, Department of Veterans' Affairs. He is an acknowledged authority on medals and awards to Australian service personnel, with emphasis on recipients of the Victoria Cross and George Cross.

THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

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

ORGANISATION

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

SABRETACHE

The Federal Council is responsible for the publication quarterly of the Society Journal, *Sabretache*, which is scheduled to be mailed to each member of the Society in the last week of the final month of each issue. Publication and mailing schedule dates are:

Jan.-Mar. edition mailed last week of March
Apr.-Jun. edition mailed last week of June
Jul.-Sept. edition mailed last week of September
Oct.-Dec. edition mailed last week of December

ADVERTISING

Society members may place, at no cost, one advertisement of approximately 40 words in the 'Members Sales and Wants' section each financial year.

Commercial advertising rate is $120 per full page; $60 per half page; and $25 per quarter page. Contract rates applicable at reduced rates. Apply Editor.

Advertising material must reach the Secretary by the following dates:

1 January for January-March edition
1 April for April-June edition
1 July for July-September edition
1 October for October-December edition

QUERIES

The Society's honorary officers cannot undertake research on behalf of members. However, queries received by the Secretary will be published in the 'Notes and Queries' section of the Journal.

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Society publications advertised in *Sabretache* are available from:
Ken Kindness, G.P.O. Box 1052, Canberra, A.C.T. 2601.
Orders and remittances should be forwarded to this address.

THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

Please address all Correspondence to:

The Federal Secretary, P.O. Box 30, Garran, A.C.T. 2605, Australia.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I/We ..... of .....
(Name, Rank, etc.) (Address)

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

..... Branch
*(Strike out non-applicable alternative)

My main interests are .....
I/We enclose my/our remittance for $26.00 (Aust.) being annual subscription, due 1st July each year.

ISSN 0048-8933

Price $6.00