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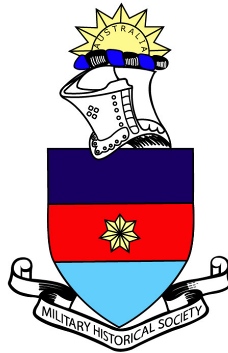

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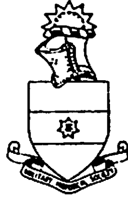

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Contributions in the form of articles, book reviews, notes, queries or letters are always welcome. Authors of major articles are invited to submit a brief biographical note. The annual subscription to *Sabretache* is $20.

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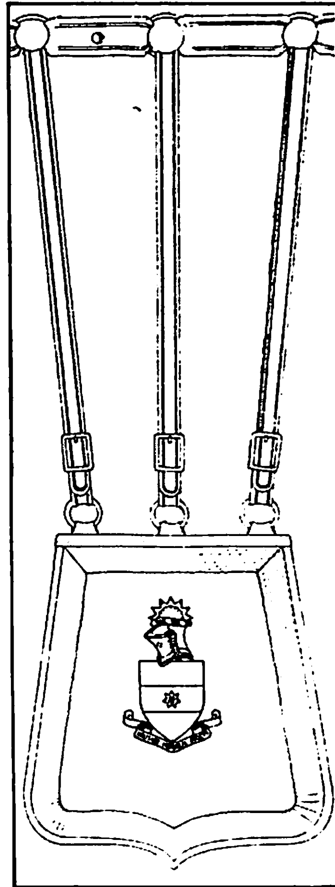

Editorial Note Returning from leave last month I was delighted to find a copy of *Medical Soldiers* waiting for me. I had had a little to do with the book's editors early in their project and they had remembered my small contribution by presenting me with a copy.

Medical Soldiers, edited by Ray Connolly and Bob Wilson, and published by the 2/10th Australian Field Ambulance Association, tells the story of that unit; its raising at Liverpool in 1940, its service in the Malayan campaign of 1942 and the three and a half years imprisonment by the Japanese endured by its members. It is a moving book and a credit to a very small unit association; but rather than review *Medical Soldiers* here—I hope *Sabretache* will be able to do so at greater length in another issue—I would like to make several points which it has caused me to consider. These points will, I hope, stimulate society members to think about making their own contribution to written Australian history.

Medical Soldiers is very much an amateur effort. Ray Connolly and Bob Wilson are neither professional writers nor editors, something which does not detract at all from what they have achieved. But they did apply themselves intelligently, and I believe effectively, to compiling their old unit's history. What they did was to get members of the 2/10th Field Ambulance to write their own stories. The result is a compelling and often moving collection of reminiscences, which conveys the spirit of their old comrades, the tension of the retreat to Singapore, the horror of their long captivity and the courage and fortitude of what must have been—and is no disgrace to say—an ordinary bunch of blokes. This leads me to say that there are thousands of such stories of individuals waiting to be told, each of which has something—however minor—to contribute about the way Australians have gone to war. They need not be the stories of distinguished soldiers; nobody deserves to be forgotten. Perhaps *you* could research and set down the story of a former soldier, or encourage him to write his own. Like those of the men of the 2/10th, it may well make interesting, and perhaps even inspiring, reading.

Depending on how you look at it, *Medical Soldiers* is about a unit, a campaign, a period of captivity or the individuals who took part. Military history presents us with a broad canvas and those not inclined to write about individuals may choose to approach military history from another angle. Whichever way you choose, *Sabretache's* editors will be happy to consider your contribution.

Most importantly, though, *Medical Soldiers* has been written by people who do not aspire to be professionals historians, but are simply interested in recording part of their—and our—history. Their motivation may be stronger (a glance at the unit's nominal roll shows that only a quarter of those who went to Malaya are still alive) but their aims were the same as those of the MHSA and its members.

I hope that this brief note will have two effects—firstly to alert you to *Medical Soldiers* (which is available from the 2/10th Field Ambulance Association, 10 Monaro Street, Kingsgrove, NSW, 2208) and secondly, to stimulate more members of the society to emulate Ray Connolly and Bob Wilson.

Peter Stanley

Acts of Reverence The following is an extract from a report by the OC First Line Transport of the 41st Battalion, AIF contained in the battalion's war diary for January to April 1918:

On March 3rd, the Section...left Rossignol Camp for Quesques, reaching the latter place on March 8th. The journey was good, the weather fine and men and animals reached their destination in good form...During the night of 7th-8th, a brakeman [of a limber] while on duty 'issued' himself with an extra large rum ration and he finished the journey on the 8th on top of a limber, with his face 'turned to the skies', quite unconscious of the beautiful country we passed through. His corpse-like appearance and position were responsible for many acts of reverence on the part of the citizens of several towns we passed through.

The rum 'issue' referred to cost the recipient 14 days pay.

Journal of the Australian War Memorial The April 1985 Journal (No 6) is a special colonial issue and includes a first look at the 11th Regiment in Australia (Matthew Higgins) and articles on the NSW Sudan Contingent (Malcolm Saunders), the seaward defences of Hobart (Ray Jones), colonial art depicting war subjects (Ann Gray), the 1st Australian (Volunteer) Horse Regiment (Peter Burness) and a defence of the 5th Victorian Mounted Rifles in the Wilmansrust affair (Max Chamberlain). Subscription details may be obtained by writing to the AWM, GPO Box 345, Canberra, ACT, 2601.

Ian Jones

The Case of the Vanishing Regiment

The Fourth Light Horse in France and Belgium 1916–18

THE Lighthorseman provides one of the great symbols of Australian military history—the sun-tanned bushman in a handsomely plumed slouch hat, riding through the Old Testament landscapes of Sinai, Palestine and Syria.

A steel-helmeted digger with a gas mask on his chest, riding a winter-coated horse across the muddy moonscapes of Flanders, simply doesn't fit our image, our model of the Lighthorseman. Yet men of two light horse regiments—the 4th and the 13th—served on the Western Front. This paper examines one of them, the 4th; because it was a remarkable unit of the first AIF; because it has been given a particularly low profile in histories of the European campaigns; because its story is both interesting and elusive; and because, in its very elusiveness, this story may help to illuminate military history itself.

Published material about western front Light Horse is notably thin on the shelves. Most authors simply ignore their existence. The Official History provides a paper chase of footnotes and references that has led more than one researcher up the wrong track. But two fairly recent works by reputable historians give us a broad picture. They agree that the 13th Light Horse Regiment and *one troop* of the 4th Light Horse went to France, where they served principally as traffic police.[1]

A Light Horse troop is about 30 men. Such a tiny group engaged in non-combatant duties would explain the low profile already noted.

C.E.W. Bean provides another glimpse of this elusive little group when, late in the war, he describes a Corps Cavalry Regiment as 'mainly New Zealanders but including *a remnant of the old 4th Light Horse*'.[2]

So our picture would seem complete. A rather sad handful of diggers who have lost their regimental and national identity along with any hope of military glory.

The Roll of Honour at the War Memorial offers a meagre epitapth. Under the 4th Light Horse are listed the names of only three men who died on the western front.[3] But further research confuses our picture.

The Menin Gate Memorial in the Belgian city of Ypres honours 56 000 men who died in the Ypres sector and have no known graves. The names of thirteen Australian Lighthorsemen are recorded. Twelve of them are from the 4th Light Horse. Twelve men whose bodies or graves were destroyed by battle or lost in disputed territory. Men who died at the sharp end of war.

The mystery is partly solved, partly deepened, by a unit citation of 31 December 1918. General Sir Alex Godley, GOC of the British XXII Corps, writes:

> On the departure of 'B' and 'D' Squadrons of the 4th Australian Light Horse Regiment from this Corps, I wish to place on record my high appreciation of all the good work that they have done while incorporated for the last two and a half years in the Mounted Regiment of this Corps.
>
> For the first year, after their turn in the trenches about Armentieres and training with the regular cavalry, they qualified themselves for the brilliant part they took in the battle of Messines in June 1917. Last winter they again took their turn with distinction in the trenches in Ypres salient.
>
> This spring during the Flanders fighting, they were thrust into the line both with the IX Corps and our own, and no troops contributed more to stem the tide of the German invasion.
>
> In the summer of this year they took a conspicuous part in the operation of the Corps in Champagne and earned the high commendation of the French Army to which they were attached, and the 51st and 62nd Divisions with which they were particularly associated.
>
> In the autumn, on returning from the Champagne front, while in temporary command of the III Corps, I specially asked to have the services of my own mounted troops, and these squadrons then came and did most excellent work in covering the front of the III Corps in advance from the River Ancre to the Hindenburg Line.

Recalled subsequently to Arras, they have been incessantly in the forefront of the battle during the heavy fighting about Cambrai and Valenciennes, and the advance of this Corps up to the conclusion of the Armistice.[4]

Godley has described two years of distinguished service, incorporating three major phases of dismounted action and four major phases of mounted action. It is a remarkable record yet it has been obliterated from our own history and from the military history of the world. Strangely perhaps, the record itself may largely explain that oblivion.

The 4th had been raised in 1914 as divisional cavalry to the First Australian Division, its three squadrons, A, B and C, hand-picked from the first 2000 Victorian volunteers for the Light Horse. They served at Anzac as infantry and returned to Egypt. Here, as the infantry embarked for France, many Lighthorsemen chafed to join 'the real war'. On a single day early in 1916, 900 troopers applied for transfer to the infantry.[5]

After weeks of rumour and counter-rumour, exciting news reached the 4th on 10 March. B Squadron was to go to France. The next day a new squadron, D, was formed to take its place. B Squadron—six officers and 137 other ranks—sailed on 21 March. The complete regimental headquarters and the new D Squadron would follow on 6 June.

They left behind in Egypt a rather disconsolate 'rump' of the regiment under the command of a major. They'd spend almost a year scattered in dull, desert duty, destined for the Camel Corps. Then in an eleventh hour reprieve, they would become part of a new 4th Light Horse Brigade and win glory at Beersheba. These Cinderalla squadrons would live happily ever after in military history. But what went wrong in France?

Two months after they left Egypt, B Squadron arrived at the northern French village of Sercus where they joined a squadron of the 13th Light Horse and a squadron of New Zealand's Otago Mounted Rifles to form the 1st Anzac Mounted Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Grigor of the Otagos.[6]

They marched out for a particularly boring month of training. Then, with the Otagos, they returned to Sercus in time to welcome the new D Squadron and the regimental headquarters of the 4th on their arrival from Egypt.

The other two squadrons of the 13th also arrived to join their advance squadron as a complete regiment. In a military version of pea-and-thimble, this now became the 1st Anzac Mounted Regiment while B and D Squadrons of the 4th and the single squadron of the Otagos became the *2nd* Anzac Mounted Regiment. Lieutenant Colonel Long, Commanding Officer of the 4th, would soon replace Grigor as the CO.[7]

Despite anything to the contrary in any published work, this remained the basic composition of the regiment until the end of the war; two squadrons of the 4th, one of the Otagos, under the command of a 4th Light Horse officer, and wearing the original red and white colour patch of the 4th. Also attached were the 5th Division Cyclists Battalion and the British 7th Motor Machine Gun Battery.

The mounted troops had originally been intended as a mobile force under the direct control of the divisional commander. But in trench warfare, the Corps rather than the Division had become the main source of control and the mounted troops were allotted to the Corps commanders.

The regiment came under the control of Major General Godley of the II Anzac Corps. Godley was a regular British officer who had commanded the New Zealand forces before the war and at Anzac. More than any other single factor, Godley's confidence in and enthusiasm for his mounted troops would dictate their destinies in the years ahead.[8]

By this time the reader may be rather bored and/or confused. So were the men of the 4th. But the boredom didn't last long. On 21 July, three officers and 100 men of B Squadron (with a similar strength from the Otagos) were sent to reinforce the 53rd Battalion in the trenches near Armentieres. More precisely, to a place called Fleurbaix—a name which should be as chilling to Australians as Passchendaele or Pozieres.

Three days before, on 19 July, the new 5th Australian Division, on loan from II Anzac Corps, had taken part in a doomed and almost pointless attack on the German line adjoining the formidable Sugar Loaf salient. In a single night the division lost 5 500 men.

An Australian intelligence officer wrote, 'The sight of our trenches that next morning is burned into my brain...If you had gathered the stock of a thousand butchers' shops, cut it into small pieces and strewn it about, it would give you a faint conception of what those trenches were'.[9]

This was the 4th's baptism of fire on the Western Front. They were in the line here for six weeks alongside battle-dazed recruits. The Lighthorsemen were trench-wise from seven months at Anzac and, as ever, lucky. They lost only four men. Three privates became commissioned officers with the infantry.

Three weeks after this detail returned to the regiment, another 117 officers and men went into the trenches for a six weeks tour, while the worst

winter for more than 30 years was turning Flanders into a sea of frozen mud. Winter became the enemy.

Lance Corporal Wally Grayson, a wonderful character with a grin like a torn sand shoe, wrote in his diary, 'mud all round like pea soup...' and later, 'Frost, snow, frozen roads and tracks like glass, icicles hanging from spouts and very cold'.[10]

In the heart of winter, they moved to a cavalry training area at Cremarest for an exchange of officers and NCOS with the 19th Hussars—an attempt to indoctrinate the men of the Regiment with the spit-and-polish ideals of British cavalry. It was a sometimes amusing interlude which threw into high relief the difference between the English and Australian ways of doing things.

After a week's instruction, the 19th Hussars' crack Hotchkiss machine gun team met a team from the 4th in a contest. Trooper Leonard Parker recalled, 'They took three minutes, fifty seconds to lead their pack horse over some jumps and a water jump, dismount, and fire a burst of machine gun fire into a target. We worked out they were too particular altogether. They were perfect in what they did, but no good in open country. We had our pack horse carrying the gun trained so he'd come up behind us without being led. And none of this 'foot in the stirrup and grip the back of the saddle'. We were onto the horse without stirrups or anything. We cut three quarters of a minute off their time. It upset them. We never got asked to any more competitions.'[11]

Two months of intensive training in open warfare prepared the regiment for what Wally Grayson called 'our part in the coming push'.[12]

In May 1917, the regiment moved to Steenwerck and was rapidly absorbed in the titanic preparations for the attack on Messines Ridge. This long, low ridge which carried the main road from Armentieres to Ypres and commanded the Ypres salient, had been transformed by the Germans into a nine-mile fortress, studded with the new, reinforced concrete pill boxes. After almost two years of British tunnelling, four and a half miles of underground galleries were nearing completion, and nineteen huge land mines containing more than a million pounds of explosives were being laid under the German front line.

It was a classic medieval siege attack. Explode the mines, then storm the breaches in the defences, like Henry V at Harfleur. And, in line with this medieval scenario, Corps troops would go into action mounted.

At any time, the prospect of taking horses into action across No Man's Land would have been forbidding. Now, in the last week of May, British artillery began to pound the Ridge in a pulverizing

Sergeant Wally Grayson, 'a wonderful character with a grin like a torn sand shoe'.

bombardment. It would be estimated that four million shells had been fired, producing a shell crater every nine square yards.[13] Daunting ground for mounted action.

On 30 May, officers and NCOs were briefed on the Regiment's role in the attack. After an advance by the New Zealand Division of the II Anzac Corps in the key Messines sector, the mounted troops would ride forward under a protective barrage to establish an observation line a little way down the far slope of the ridge and screen preparations for a further advance by Australian infantry.

At midday on 6 June, officers' watches were synchronised for zero hour at 3.10 am next day.

The foredawn of the 7th was still and strangely quiet. Seven seconds early, nineteen volcanic blasts began to shatter the German line, merging to a single explosion which was felt in London. Massed artillery opened fire. In parts of the line, eighteen-pounders stood wheel to wheel, plastering every known German gun position with high explosive and gas.

As dawn threw colour into the clouds of smoke and dust above the ridge, 80 000 infantrymen swarmed up the slope towards the German lines.

In full daylight, B and D Squadrons of the 4th rode forward and spread out across the mangled slope, D to the right towards Ploegsteert Wood, B on the left, covering Messines Village. As German shells started falling among them, the troopers spurred to a canter up the long slope and, incredibly, some managed a gallop over the impossible terrain as the walers caught the excitement of the advance.[14]

At the head of the slope, just below the crest of the ridge, the Lighthorsemen passed through two waves of Anzacs. On the far left, the haphazard German artillery fire became heavier and Lieutenant Percy Fullerton ordered his D Troop to disperse, sending six men, including a Hotchkiss team, to cover in a small hollow. They had barely reached it when a shell burst beside them. Three men were killed, three wounded, and all six horses were injured and had to be shot.[15]

Under cover of a further British barrage, the regiment's advance continued to the observation line a few hundred yards down the eastern slope.

'Over the top we went,' wrote Wally Grayson, 'cantering nicely, dodging wire and shell holes, we made for our objectives and reached them without a loss.'[16] He neglected to record that he and his horse were blown into a shell crater and rescued with some difficulty. Despite being bruised and badly shaken, he carried his Hotchkiss machine gun into action and prevented a German field gun being withdrawn. He was awarded the DCM.[17]

All along the regiment's line, retreating German artillery were harried by rifle and Hotchkiss fire.[18] They held their position for about two hours, then retired as the seasoned Australian Fourth Division moved up through them, ready for the afternoon advance.

The 4th Light Horse had lost seven men killed, 12 wounded and about 20 horses. While officers like Lieutenant Fullerton decried the use of mounted troops in this action, the men of the 4th had done everything that was asked of them. Inexplicably, the Official History dismisses their work at Messines in some two lines and suggests that they failed to carry out their role on horseback because of casualties.[19] General Godley and all available evidence would disagree.

A few days later, men of B Squadron went into action dismounted and helped Australian infantry establish a dangerous forward position under heavy shell fire. They lost four men.

It is hard to believe, but some men of the 4th Light Horse galloped over this section of the Messines battlefield during their advance. See Note 14.

But most of the summer passed in routine duties. Traffic work, fatigues, anti-aircraft duty, grazing horses. Then, in autumn, the regiment moved to the Ypres sector. The Third Battle of Ypres was in progress. By early November, Passchendaele Ridge would be taken in the bloodiest battle in history.

The regiment was based at what had been the village of Zonnebeke, now an extra-terrestrial landscape of dark, cratered mud and pale stalagmites of rubble that had once been a church and town hall.

Some men served on traffic duty—often at hot spots like Hellfire Corner. Corporal Jack Taggart recalled, 'We lost about 8 men on a traffic job. The Germans used to shell all the crossroads so we'd be there to stop traffic all day. If anyone had a special pass, you'd let them through. This'd go on until about 8 at night then we'd let them through—taking rations up and one thing and another—motor traffic and horse drawn. And while we were going, you could hear Fritz doing the same thing. It was practically a truce.[20]

Other parties were on fatigue duty, some dull, like salvage work or filling sandbags; some less dull, like carrying ammunition up to the artillery batteries. Hotchkiss teams were usually detached on anti-aircraft duty—sometimes on what were considered 'cushy jobs'—well behind the lines on ammunition dumps. But, as Jack Taggart explained, 'When you got right up under the eighteen-pounders it wasn't so good. Fritz'd be pounding the artillery and we'd get it as well.'[21]

Men of the 4th also served as front line infantry, at one stage holding what was known as 'the shell hole line'. It was literally that—shell holes linked by a single strand of wire to mark the line. Sergeant Bill Scott said, 'We'd occupy the shell holes each night. I remember being between two German skeletons. I knew they were German because there were still some scraps of uniform on them. The trick was to pick a shallow hole. That meant you could drain it into the others.'[22]

Some of the regiment celebrated Christmas 1917 in the line, sheltered in captured German pill boxes while snow covered the ground and the mud froze hard as iron. The year came to an end with 200 men of the regiment scattered on a variety of detached duties.

Then on 1 January 1918, a remarkable new phase began. It started with another change of name. In a re-shuffle for the Spring offensive, all Australians had by now left the II Anzac Corps. With only the New Zealand Division (who would leave in a few months) and the mounted troops to provide an Anzac identity, the Corps became XXII Corps of the British Army, still under the command of General Godley. And the 2nd Anzac Mounted Regiment became 'XXII Corps Mounted Regiment'—still two squadrons of the 4th and one of the Otagos. But a little deeper in military oblivion.[23]

The first three months of 1918 were very much the calm before the storm as the Germans gathered for their Spring offensive, their second-last bid for victory. The attack came on 21 March along a 50-mile front.

While British and French were being driven back on the Somme, the XXII Corps Mounted Troops were organized as an infantry battalion and sent to support the British 49th Division holding the line in front of Hill 60 outside Ypres. They moved to a line of captured pill boxes, as recently promoted Sergeant Wally Grayson put it, 'in touch with Fritz and in the midst of desolation'.[24]

A week later, Wally found himself as one of a six-man party taking over a forward outpost in a shell hole for three days. He wrote, 'During daylight we can only kneel up in it. Wet and cold hole. I know of many better holes and would not mind being in any of them'.[25] Wally wrote this on April 9, 1918. That day the Germans launched a second phase of their offensive—an attack in the north designed to smash through to the Channel ports and the narrow strait of Dover.

At dawn on 9 April, what would be called the Battle of the Lys began with a hurricane attack on a section of line held by a weak Portuguese division. The Portuguese broke and fled. Their retreat remains a legend in France to this day—a benchmark for all retreats in both World Wars.

Now the attack moved to the Ypres sector. On 10 April, men from B Squadron met a German raiding party in Bulgar Wood and drove them back in a brisk exchange of rifle fire and hand grenades.[26]

By 11 April, the British battalion on the right of the 4th was falling back. The regiment's outpost strength had been reduced from a company to one officer and 24 men. The officer was Lieutenant Joe Nott, a big, rather gentle lad who had been a grocer's assistant before the war and saw his first action less than a year before. The citation for his Military Cross records, 'Even when the Battalion on his right withdrew to Support Line, he held his posts, occupying different pill boxes in turn and firing from them in order to deceive the enemy and was largely instrumental in preventing him from continuing the advance he had made on his left'.[27]

Corporal Jack Taggart gives his own perspective. 'We were in Polygon Wood. Fritz broke the Portuguese on our right and they got back to near Hazebrouck and we didn't know what was going on. We were just holding our ground. Fritz sent out fighting patrols and we knocked them back.

That night they pulled us back from the pill boxes we were holding on to higher ground and we sent back fighting patrols. But instead of doing any fighting, we went along the line of pill boxes and at each pill box we'd fire ten rounds rapid. Oh, we went along nearly a mile. Of course, Fritz didn't know what was what. But it was a show. Bit of a Peninsular stunt in that.'[28]

The men of the regiment were relieved by Tommies on 12 May. The next day they were ordered south to Locre 'at quick pace in order to restore situation near Neuve Eglise, the position of the enemy and our position being obscure'.[29]

The regiment now came under control of the British IX Corps. Operating on the edge of the huge bulge driven into our line by the breaking of the Portuguese, the 'obscure' position became very clear. The enemy was advancing and we were retreating.

Sergeant Bill Scott: 'The Germans had got in behind our lines—about a mile behind us—and we got out, rather a circuitous route to get around Fritzie. We'd been in the trenches for 10 or 14 days and were a bit weary and when we came out on to the road, we met this jumble of horses—a hell of a mess. General Godley and his staff went to our horse lines and saddled them with the help of the stable pickets and drove them along the road like a mob of sheep. Some of them had saddles under their bellies, there were broken reins... a terrible mess'.[30]

The Regiment had ridden back to Westoutre, imagining they were returning to their billets, when word came that they were to proceed dismounted to occupy a position on Kemmel Ridge. Kemmel—variously called Mont Kemmel, Kemmel Hill and Kemmelberg—was a low, abrupt, thickly wooded hill which formed a vital strongpoint in the Lys sector. It was the target of repeated and now constant German attack.

As the dismounted party of 12 officers and 230 men marched towards Kemmel they met retreating British troops.

Corporal Jack Taggart: 'We met Tommies running for their lives when we got near the hill. "Look out Aussies. The Jerries are coming!" '[31]

Sergeant Bill Scott: 'On the way to Kemmel we gathered up remnants of the British Army. I dropped Corporal so-and-so off to pick up this bunch of half a dozen English Tommies. "Bring this mob up with us." I soon ran out of Corporals and Lance Corporals and came to a bunch of six or so men. Got to think again. "Thousands of hoons oop there!" they said. "Okay. If you come back with us, we might be able to stop him." Only a few troops complied so I said to Sandy Cohen, "Better bring this bunch up." But there was a sergeant among them. "I've got three stripes and

Sergeant Bill Scott—an old campaigner at 21—poses in his mounted-pattern greatcoat.

you can't get a private to order me." Sandy took the rifle off his shoulder and put a shot into the ground a couple of yards from him. "Three stripes have you! You'll get a bloody stripe somewhere else!" They were alright when they got there. But their officers were dead.'[32]

The men of the regiment soon got an idea of what was in store for them. Jack Taggart: 'British engineers met us and showed us where to dig in. A British artillery officer was observing with just his head sticking out of a well. A whizz bang came and took his head right off'.[34]

Trooper Arch Sullivan: 'The Germans blew that hill bloody near flat. There was a farm there with a great big windmill. Pigs and chooks and everything running around wounded.

The men spent all night digging support trenches under heavy bombardment. Wally Grayson: 'During the morning we thought to take a rest, but Fritz...gave us a taste of every shell he has, also gas. Talk about a warm time! It beat all I've ever been in'.[35]

The second day of endless bombardment passed as the toll of dead, wounded and shell-shocked steadily mounted. It seemed that the Regiment's luck had at last run out.

At dawn next morning, the Germans planned to launch a devastating attack on the hill. They shifted their barrage to the lower slopes, shortened range too much and wiped out their first wave of assault troops just as they prepared to go over.[36]

The regiment was relieved by French troops at 8.30 that night after three days of constant

Sergeant Bill Scott poses in the village of Strazeele.

bombardment. They had lost 10 killed, 33 wounded and two missing. The following day, the Germans captured Mont Kemmel.

Now for five days the regiment was placed in Corps reserve under orders to be ready to move in two hours. On 24 April, Wally Grayson wrote, 'Spent day instructing new Hotchkiss gunners. Nine Hotchkiss gunners killed and wounded in last tour of line'.[37] The rest of the page is blank. The rest of the diary is blank.

Next day, 25 April, the regiment was attached to the British 27th Brigade and ordered to send out patrols 'in order to get in touch with and gain information of the enemy'.[38] Three patrols went out, each consisting of a lieutenant, a sergeant and three troopers. They rode into the teeth of a German advance that had smashed the British outpost line, front line, and first support line.

As Wally Grayson's patrol was entering the village of Vierstraat, Wally was killed by a German sniper. His mates removed his dead meat tag, took the last volume of his diary and his wallet from his pockets, then obeyed standing orders and left his body as they rode off to complete their patrol. Wally's name is on the Menin Gate.

Just to the north, the second patrol under Lieutenant Neaverson was being guided by that shrewd old campaigner, Sergeant Bill Scott, when they came in sight of the German front line, 400 yards beyond a raised road with poplars and a telegraph line along it. Neaverson wanted them to take the shortest route back to headquarters to make their report. The shortest route lay along that raised road.

Bill Scott urged Neaverson to return the way they had come. 'We'll never get through. As soon as we go out through that gate we'll be sitting shots.' But Neaverson insisted, so each of us marked the German positions on our map. I thought 'Perhaps one of them will get through'. I led the way out through the gate and as soon as I hit the road, rifles and machine guns opened up. I started to gallop. Damned telegraph wires had been shot down off the poplars and posts. They were breaking across my chest as I rode. I remembered an old brewery about half a mile away, with a sandbagged yard. A bit of shelter. When I got there eventually, I pulled up with two wounds in my horse, and one spur broken. Then the others came in. I heard yelling. Neaverson was riding Pack Vallance's big horse. He came in where the rest of us were and pulled his horse up until I thought it'd fall over backwards. And he fell off dead. I stayed long enough to take his papers, rip off his badges and empty his pockets. And we got back. His name is on Menin Gate'.[39]

At 3 pm the regiment was ordered to move into the line dismounted. The war diary records, 'British troops were supposed to be holding a line

in front of our position but...it was discovered that our positions were actually the front line, the troops supposed to be in front either evacuated or annihilated. We inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy while in these positions and also captured a few prisoners'.[40]

They fought in the line for a week, suffering heavy casualties which were made up by bringing fifty men from the horse lines. On 29 April, fighting between the Duke of Wellington's Regiment and the 4th York and Lancaster, they helped beat back the last German attempt to win the Channel ports. On 1 May, they were relieved by the 3rd Worcestershire and returned to their horse lines. Seven men had been killed, 42 wounded. The Battle of the Lys was over.

They had been in action for five weeks and had lost 94 men in the last two. In General Godley's estimation, 'No troops contributed more to stem the tide of the German invasion'.[41]

Now they reformed and spent two months in reserve, eventually moving down to the Somme Valley near Villers Bretonneux.

The last great German offensive came in July. Half-a-million troops crashed through deliberately weakened French defences and poured down across the Marne River. By 18 July, the German line bulged south like a great bladder, bloated with success and looted champagne, stretched to breaking point, ready for the long-planned counter-offensive.

Godley raced his XXII Corps to the crucial Ardre River Sector and called in his mounted troops. The regiment and its horses boarded the longest train they'd ever seen which ran non-stop to Ay-le-Champagne near Rheims.[42]

Attached to the Yorkshire 62nd Division, the regiment was ordered to push forward some two miles up the valley of the Ardre, without infantry support, and seize a mile-long line between the village of Bligny and Montagne de Bligny. Their battlefield was broken by belts of timber along the river and standing crops in the fields, overhung by timbered spurs on both sides of the valley.[43]

Infantry found the terrain threatening, providing cover for what was described as 'an extraordinary quantity of machine guns'.[44] But it also provided superb cover for a mounted advance. By a brilliantly co-ordinated series of thrusts by squadrons, troops and small patrols, German resistance was located, identified and eliminated in a remarkable five days of continuous mounted action which takes up seven closely-written quarto pages in the war diary's bald recital of 'what happened'. To know 'what it was like to be there', we can gain some insight from the citations of two Croix de Guerre with Palm, a Military Cross and six Military Medals won by the regiment in the first two days. Some of those citations read like stories from 'Boys' Own Paper'.

Trooper Bill Bell, a burly and normally rather dour young man, was in charge of the first patrol to enter Bligny that first day. The citation to his MM reads, 'Although knowing the town to be occupied by the enemy, he galloped straight in past the enemy machine gun covering the road and remained half-an-hour in the town locating enemy positions. In the dash back his horse was shot under him but he escaped on foot and arrived back safely with his information'.[45]

When Captain Bertram Burnie's squadron was held up by machine guns, he galloped out into the open with a Hotchkiss machine gun and took the enemy guns in the flank. He inflicted heavy casualties, drove the surviving gunners away, and captured the guns. Captain Burnie virtually repeated this exploit later in the day. He won the MC.

Corporal Jack Taggart, riding at the head of a patrol, suspected a trap when a German lancer galloped off into the woods. Jack halted his patrol and proceeded on foot with Trooper Vic Grist. They found three German machine guns well hidden in thick timber on the banks of the Ardre and attacked them with their rifles. 'As soon as we opened fire, they let us have it. We stood up behind trees and fired on with bullets flying everywhere. This went on about ten minutes. As soon as we got a chance we ran for it.'[46] Jack was able to warn his squadron of the trap. For this and a subsequent reconnaissance when he again came under heavy machine gun fire, he was awarded the MM.

The day's hectic action had a revelatory postscript. About 4 o'clock next morning, four wounded Lighthorsemen were carried back to a British field dressing station whose men were in bed and didn't want to get up to handle the Australians. 'You don't belong to our crowd,' they said.[47]

The regiment gained and held their objective line until it was occupied by the infantry, then patrolled ahead of the advance until 31 July. They had only one man killed in this remarkable action. The battle of the Marne ended the following week. The great bladder had been punctured and deflated.

Now came the long-awaited Allied offensive. Godley had temporary command of the III Corps in the Somme offensive and asked for his own mounted troops to lead the Corps' advance from the River Ancre to the Hindenburg Line. At last the war was moving, and mobile troops came into their own.

Infantry officers and men who had grown up in four years of trench fighting had little concept

Corporal Jack Taggart and his mate, Trooper Vic Grist, on Paris leave in 1918. Grist was probably the last Australian soldier wounded in the war.

of open warfare; their map reading and navigation was faulty. Adding to the problems, four basic national groups were involved—British, American, French, Belgian—with three and, arguably, four different languages, four different arms and ammunition systems, four different lines of communication.

Several times in the coming months, small patrols of 4th Lighthorsemen would locate crucial gaps in our line where armies had simply failed to link. A few troopers would hold the line while an officer or NCO drew together the units on either side.

But the most spectacular role they played was in handling the innumerable machine gun posts left behind to cover the German retreat. The Lighthorsemen would ride forward in patrols of six to eight men, often two or three miles ahead of the infantry advance. When they came to a 'dangerous' ridge or stretch of open ground, the patrol would carefully move forward in open formation until a machine gun opened fire. They would then ride to cover, split to either side, and move in on the machine gun position from both flanks.

Sergeant Bill Scott's war ended on 29 August. Again riding ahead of XXII Corps, he and his patrol found a German machine gun post on a road. The gun crew raised their hands and, because it was late in the day and Bill had to secure a safe position for that night's halt by the British infantry, he rode forward alone to take the surrender. As he approached, one German threw a hand grenade, another opened fire. Bill was blown from

his horse, wounded in the face and leg. And blinded.[48]

There are two postscripts to the story. It appears the men of that machine gun crew never reached a prisoner of war compound. And Bill Scott regained his sight in time to see London celebrate the end of the war.

When the last phase of the great push began in November 1918, bad weather prevented aerial reconnaissance and made roads impassable for wheeled traffic. Mounted troops became the eyes of the advance.

XXII Corps, with the Canadians on their left, went over on November 5 into a blizzard of machine gun and artillery fire.

Men of the 4th Light Horse won two MCs on that first day. The next day, a DCM. On the 9th of November, another DCM. On the last night of the war, the 10th of November, a DSO.[49]

Almost symbolically, the last man of the AIF wounded in the First World War is said to have been a 4th Light Horseman—Lance Corporal Vic Grist, wounded in the arm at 11.15 am on November 10.[50]

As far as the war went, that was the end of the regiments's remarkable story. But there was a final irony to come. In December, when the Otagos left the XXII Corps Mounted Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Hindhaugh of the 4th became Commanding Officer of the 13th Light Horse and B and D Squadrons of the 4th were designated as A Squadron of the 13th.[51]

To the end, their story was confusing. Historians and even the AIF Records Section tended to lose the pea under the three thimbles. But I don't think that's why they've dwindled to such obscurity in every history of the Western Front campaigns. Nor do I think we can blame entirely the incomplete and curiously inadequate war diaries.

To me, the reason is symbolised by the regiment's repeated role of filling gaps in a non-existent front line between men of different armies. Or perhaps, more vividly, by the remark of the men in the British field dressing station, 'You don't belong to our crowd'. They had apparently ceased to belong to Australia; New Zealand had its own history to write, England and France had theirs. Each a different story with its own principal cast of national characters.

It's something more than Chauvinism. It seems rather more the Myth of Central Position which we form as babies, never quite lose as adults and demonstrate as nations.

Complicating the situation, we have the unattainable ideal of objectivity, unattainable in any arena of history, least of all in a war. Combatting an orthodoxy in which my Light Horse friends scarcely existed, I could be accused of portraying them as too gallant, too successful, too significant. This may be true. But at least this blank page of our military history now has something scribbled on it; a first attempt to fill this blindspot between the war histories of Australia, England and New Zealand. Or, at least, to indicate that this blindspot does exist.

Notes and References

1. Bill Gammage, *The Broken Years*, Penguin, 1981, note p. 126, and Suzanne Brugger, *Australians and Egypt*, Melbourne, 1980, note p. 156.
2. C.E.W. Bean, *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-18*, Sydney, 1937, Vol. VI, note p. 782.
3. Most of the 4th L.H. deaths on the western front are listed under '22nd Anzac Regiment'—a non-existent title which seems to represent a combination of 2nd Anzac Mounted Regiment and XXII Corps Mounted Regiment. Only 29 names are listed, including two 'ring-ins'. The Regiment lost 35 men killed in action or died of wounds on the western front—13 in the 2nd Anzac, 22 in the XXII Corps Mounted. Three of the missing names are listed under the 4th L.H., five under the 2nd L.H. (a confusion with 2nd Anzac). (*Officers and Other Ranks Killed and Died of Wounds* file from the Hindhaugh Papers, 4th Light Horse Collection, Melbourne).
4. Q. Capt. Cyril Smith, *The Fourth Light Horse—Some Aspects of its War Service*, privately printed, Melbourne, 1954, p. 11.
5. *Sydney Mail*, May 17, 1916, p. 23.
6. Bean, Vol. III, note p. 91. On this same page Bean says of the Corps cavalry regiments, 'During most of the campaign which followed these troops were used largely for police duties and traffic control.' This seems a dangerously broad and misleading generalisation which Bean may have intended as a comment on the immediate fortunes of the 1st Anzac Mounted.
7. The respective war diaries show the 1st Anzac Mounted formed (actually re-formed) on 2/7/16 and 2nd Anzac Mounted on 6/7/16.
8. Bean, Vol. III, p. 91, and Col. H. Stewart, *The New Zealand Division 1916-1919*, Auckland, 1921, p. 328, discuss the re-organization.

9. Captain R. Hugh Knyvett, *'Over There' with the Australians*, London, 1918, p. 155.
10. Diary, Corporal W. R. Grayson, 9/2/16 and 19/1/17.
11. Interview Tpr. Leonard Parker, August, 1974.
12. Grayson op. cit. 3/6/17.
13. Sir J. A. Hammerton, *A Popular History of the Great War*, London, n.d., Vol. 4, p. 196.
14. An album compiled by Sergeant Major R. Taggart, 4th Light Horse, has a photo of shell craters at Messines captioned, 'This is the ground we advanced over at the gallop, some of us.'
15. Interview, Lieutenant P. Fullerton, May, 1976.
16. Grayson op. cit., 7/6/17.
17. Citation *4LH Awards and Honours* file, Australian War Memorial.
18. W. Grayson op. cit. 7/6/17, int. P. Fullerton, May, 1976.
19. Bean Vol. IV, p. 617.
20. Interview, Corporal J. Taggart, August, 1974.
21. Ibid.
22. Interview, Sergeant W. Scott, March, 1979.
23. Bean and Col. Stewart discuss the re-organization. Bean, Vol. V, note p. 13, says, correctly, 'there remained with it (XXII Corps Mounted Regiment) to the last two squadrons of the old 4th Aust. Light Horse Regiment' but claims, incorrectly, that the Otagos were replaced by British cavalry. However, in Vol. VI, note, p. 782, he has the Mounted Regiment consisting of 'mainly New Zealanders' with 'a remnant' of the 4th L.H.
24. Grayson op. cit., 30/3/18.
25. Ibid, 9/4/18.
26. Ibid, 10/4/18.
27. Citation, *Decorations* file, Hindhaugh Papers, 4th Light Horse Collection, Melbourne.
28. Interview, Corporal J. Taggart, October, 1981.
29. XXII Corps Mounted Regiment War Diary, 13/4/18.
30. Interview, Sergeant W. Scott, December, 1981.
31. Interview, Corporal J. Taggart, June, 1974.
32. W. Scott op. cit.
33. Interview, Corporal J. Taggart, June, 1976.
34. Interview, Trooper A. Sullivan, June, 1974.
35. Grayson op. cit.
36. The British Official History, *Military Operations in France and Belgium, March to April, 1918*, considers it likely that this happened. The violence and precision of the bombardment as described in German accounts leaves no room for doubt.
37. Grayson op. cit. 24/4/18.
38. XXII Corps Mounted Regiment War Diary 25/4/18.
39. Interview, Sergeant W. Scott, August, 1974.
40. XXII Corps Mounted Regiment War Diary 25/4/18.
41. Smith op. cit. p. 11.
42. Ibid. p. 10.
43. Stewart op. cit. p. 379.
44. Hammerton op. cit. Vol. V, p. 158.
45. Citation, *Decorations* file, Hindhaugh Papers, 4th Light Horse Collection, Melbourne.
46. Interview, Corporal J. Taggart, August, 1974.
47. Ibid.
48. Interview, Sergeant W. Scott, April, 1976.
49. *4 LH Awards and Honours* file, Australian War Memorial.
50. Lance Corporal Grist's wound is recorded in a 'Wounded' addendum to *Officers and Other Ranks Killed and Died of Wounds*, Hindhaugh Papers, 4th Light Horse Collection, Melbourne. The time is from an August, 1974, interview with Corporal J. Taggart, a close friend of Grist.
51. 13th L.H. War Diary, 7/12/18.

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H. J. Zwillenberg

The Defence of South Australia 1836-1901

THE problem of defence in a society of free settlers who by the middle of the century had universal military service on its statute book, addressed itself basically to two issues, the maintenance of law and order and the safeguarding of its shores against aggression from outside.

From the foundation of the province—note, *not* a colony—until the Crimean war the first issue predominated. Little attention, if any, was paid to the possibility of hostile acts on the part of England's enemies. There hardly were any at that time and the colonists by virtue of their sociological background and of the ideals which underpinned the establishment of their society were not interested in England's wars or power politics. For the first decade or so the problem of law and order had been the concern of the Imperial regulars, introduced into South Australia in 1841 after the province had gone bankrupt and colonial status was established. Eventually a civilian police force looked after the law and order aspect and the British regular military by and large were the only formal link with the Crown which, however, never at any stage admitted responsibility for protecting the colony against external aggression. One must bear in mind that at that time anti-Empire sentiment predominated in England.

As the century progressed the English attitude to Empire changed. There grew the realisation of responsibility, on England's part, of protecting the sea lanes. Concurrently, a number of foreign powers extended their colonising activities into the Pacific. As a result, South Australians began to realise, slowly, that Empire defence had tangible benefits and they developed in addition to their traditional loyalty to hearth and home, an affinity with and loyalty to Empire. This expressed itself first in offers of military assistance (Sudan) and later in actual participation in the defence of the Empire. '. . .the Russians must not be allowed to occupy the mountains contiguous to *our* Indian frontier' (Register, 29.4.1885). As distinct from earlier on in the century, South Australia now thought of itself as part of the Empire and consequently was likely to experience hostile acts against its shores as soon as the Empire became involved in a military conflict. Hence there was a need to mount an effort to defend the colony against such a possible external aggression.

The organisation of South Australia's defence effort continuously faced two issues: one was concerned with the type of military force best suited to the colony's need and the other with the strategic framework of the defence effort. In respect of the former, a number of alternatives presented themselves: should the colony rely on British regulars—it could have done so even after 1870, at a price—or on a compulsorily enrolled militia? Should the defence of South Australia be entrusted to a partially paid volunteer force or on a voluntarily enlisted force receiving no pay whatsoever?

What were the strategic options? Should external threats, depending on the way they were likely to materialise, be countered by a mobile force or should the colony's efforts be concentrated on fixed defences and their logical extension to naval forces, both designed to protect the approaches to Adelaide?

Basic to these issues were two political principles, namely:

- the concept of universal military service, first expressed in 1831 by the Colonisation Society (D. Pike, *Paradise of Dissent*, 1951, p.59), then in the *Register of Free Passages, June 1936*, and finally, in the *Militia Act of 1854* (S.A. Statute 2/1854), and
- the principles of self-support and self-reliance derived from the non-conformist and non-convict background of the early settlers. The *South Australia Act* in Article II empowered the governor to levy taxes for defraying the cost of 'maintaining peace, order and good government of His Majesty's subjects.' (Government Dispatches/Inwards. Sp.8.9.63, O 31.10.63) In other words, the colony was expected to obtain the funds for its own protection by its own efforts.

So far the principles, but what was the reality? Almost right from the beginning these two basic principles underpinning the defence of South Australia fell into abeyance. Colonists arriving in a wilderness or into a very primitive environment just had no time to undergo military training, something Governor Gawler never appreciated when he raised the Volunteer Militia (this phrase was a contradiction in terms). It was the first citizen force of South Australia. However, things soon

changed. When in 1841 the British Government assumed responsibility for what had now become a colony, Governor Grey would have nothing to do with the principle of self-reliance in matters of protecting the colony. He relied on Imperial regulars, one company of the 96th Foot under Captain Butler arriving in the colony from Hobart soon after Grey's commencement of his appointment. Nevertheless, the idea of self-support was retained: the colony from about 1844 onwards had to pay, out of its own coffers, for their protection, £47 per annum per soldier exclusive of some of the allowances, as compared with £88 it would have cost to maintain a civilian policeman. This contrasted sharply with the situation pertaining in NSW, and elsewhere for that matter, where the Imperial troops were maintained totally by Great Britain, because they were there for Imperial purposes and deemed to be in the position of occupying a foreign country (C.M. Clode, *The Military Forces of the Crown*, London, 1860, vol i, pp. 125–129).

As the century progressed Britain increasingly insisted on colonial self-reliance in matters of protection, particularly after the problem of maintaining law and order had been resolved by the establishment of a regular colonial police force. The Imperial forces whilst they were in the colony were expected to assist South Australians in implementing the principle of self-reliance by helping in the training of the colonial forces, something that did not work. Also, they were there for certain constitutional reasons, something that made some of the Establishment want to retain them, irrespective of the cost; but the large majority of the colonists saw no virtue in the presence of Imperial troops in their midst. They were a state within the state, and there was much in the general administration and the social character of the British regulars that irritated the locals, to the extent that the British garrison met with indifference if not outright rejection.

Having ultimately accepted the principle of self-reliance, the colonists asked themselves whom they had to fear and why, and secondly, having wrestled with the strategic framework of their defence effort and the problems met when trying to implement it, they wanted to know just how they fitted into the general scheme of Empire defence, and what their relation with Britain in matters of defence should be. In the event it took almost half a century to sort out these problems.

All Australian colonies occupied a unique position in Empire history of the 19th century: their security was never threatened. Until the mid-fifties the Empire was at peace and in any case England was expected to guard the sea lanes, the first line of defence. When it dawned on the colonists that England had begun to withdraw her legions and when the colonists thought that their affluence (gold discoveries) might be quite a tempting prize they became afraid of the odd raider that might evade the vigilance of the RN and descend upon their doorsteps. But who might such an enemy be, or, to use modern parlance, where would the perceived threat come from? Any threats from Asia were immediately discounted. At first the French were thought to be the enemy. Animosity vis-a-vis France was traditional and moreover they were catholic, something the *Paradise of Dissent* did not like very much. Nevertheless, by 1860 fear of French aggression had ceased. The colonists were afraid of Americans, not as a nation, but rather as privateers. One or two incidents with whalers operated by Americans seemed to strengthen this anxiety. The major fear occupying the minds of the colonists off and on for most of the century was the possibility of Russian aggression. The Russians had been active explorers in the Pacific during the 18th century and were seen in Australian waters and ports between 1804 and 1835. There were no Russian visits between 1836 and 1862. Nevertheless, anti-Russian sentiment was on the increase; first fanned by the Polish

Three officers of the South Australian Militia Forces (Scottish Company) in ceremonial dress, 1900. (AWM A3855) The captions to this and the accompanying photograph are inadequate. Could any member of the Society more closely identify the units concerned?

insurrection, and subsequently, of course, by the Crimean war.

Apart from political considerations, the colonists were aware that until the third or even fourth quarter of the century, the Russians had a strategic advantage over England. They had safe communications between St Petersburg and Vladivostok, the base of their Pacific fleet. They had handy coaling facilities there and a unified military/naval command. The possibility of England becoming involved in the Russo/Turkish war of 1877/8 fanned the flames of anxiety, breaking out into what was almost a panic during the Sudan crisis of 1885. Hannibal was indeed *ante portas*. Despite attempts to keep this fear alive, the political rapprochement between Russia and England late in the century began to lessen colonial anxiety. By 1904 it had disappeared.

The foregoing comments illustrate that the question, 'Who is our possible enemy?' was closely associated with another question, namely, 'What should our attitude be to wars in which England becomes involved because she is a European power?' Up to the seventies, there was quite a strong neutralist sentiment in South Australia bordering almost on separatism. However, eventually, South Australians began to accept the view that self-defence within the Empire was the only practical way of safeguarding hearth and home. Nevertheless, it was not until the Sudan campaign that South Australia was prepared, albeit somewhat half-heartedly, to share with England the burden of Empire defence. If the colonists accelerated their defence preparedness, it was not due to any desire to participate in the expansion of Empire—South Australia had no McIlwraith*—but rather to a growing awareness of the dangers associated with being members of the British Empire.

Turning now to the development of the South Australian defence policy we notice some basic considerations, some of which have already been mentioned:

- Should the colony have mobile or fixed defences and to what extent had changing technology a bearing on defence policy formulation?
- To what extent could assistance from England be expected?
- What type of defence organisation was best suited to the colony?

* Sir Thomas McIlwraith (1835-1900), Premier of Queensland. On 4 April 1883 he authorised annexation of south-eastern New Guinea to forestall an anticipated annexation by Germany. (This move was subsequently disallowed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Derby.)

As far as South Australia was concerned there were, as distinct from some of the other colonies, always four lines of defence:

1. The international sea lanes
2. The approaches to the territorial waters
3. The territorial waters themselves (3-mile limit)
4. The shores and their immediate hinterland

There was never any doubt that Britain was responsible for the protection of the sea lanes carrying the trade to and from South Australia, and Britain always recognised this. However, despite the existence of a Royal Navy Australia Station, a Commodore's command, nobody in the colonies believed that Britain would or, indeed, could protect the second line of defence. In fact, Britain virtually abrogated her responsibility in this regard by passing the *Colonial Naval Defence Act* of 1865 which was explicitly designed to make colonial self-reliance in naval matters possible. The third and fourth lines of defence were clearly a colonial responsibility. In most of the Australian colonies the second and third lines merged into one, mainly due to the large land-locked harbour areas, which favoured flat-bottomed non-ocean-going, floating gun platforms such as HMCS *Cerberus*. Not so in South Australia. The Colony had long stretches of easily accessible coast lines close to Adelaide and the city was prey to any raider who had penetrated the second line of defence. Thus the South Australian naval policy would have to be based on ocean-going cruiser-type naval craft constituting a viable second line of defence in the region of Back-Stairs passage and Investigator Strait.

Three schools of thought emerged in South Australia, each stressing the predominant significance of their line of defence. Thus the Blue Water School (second line of defence) was sometimes backed up or rivalled by the Bricks-and-Mortar School, which saw the safety of the colony in efficient and powerful fixed defence installations on the coastline, hence the forts at Glanville and Largs and the proposed gun emplacements at Glenelg. The fourth line of defence was the mobile force to prevent an enemy which had been able to land from gaining access to the 'riches of Adelaide'. (Some of the appreciations at the time saw the mobile force consisting of ten squadrons of mounted infantry supported by four to six batteries of field artillery.) However, it was not until the middle eighties that a firm defence policy had been established. There were several reasons for the vacillations shown by the South Australian decision makers.

The modern habit of convening a committee when the responsible body does not want to make

a decision was quite the thing in South Australia a hundred years ago. Between 1854 and 1887 there were no fewer than eight or nine official commissions and enquiries into the defence of the colony. Their findings were supplemented and in some instances superseded by appreciations and advice both from local defence 'experts' and from 'visiting firemen' such as Commodore Sir William F. Wiseman, Commander G.H. Parkin, Major General Sir William Drummond Jervois (later Governor of South Australia), Major General Sir Peter Scratchley and finally, relatively late in the century, Major General J. Bevan Edwards.

Early, in the sixties, the prevailing opinion was to defeat an enemy by mobile forces; in other words it was the fourth line of defence that counted. Apart from the relatively low cost of maintaining a mobile defence force, it implied reliance on the skill and courage of the individual citizen rather than on impersonal bricks and mortar. The right type of naval craft for defending the second line of defence did not exist at that time. Towards the end of the sixties and during most of the seventies both naval and military opinion swung about in favour of fixed defences. Heavy artillery had improved considerably since the Crimean war and had achieved ranges that out-gunned most of the naval armament of the period. The trend towards bricks and mortar was helped along quite considerably by the difficulties experienced in the maintenance of the mobile forces. The emphasis on fixed defences was superseded by the Blue Water School stipulating the need for ocean-going defences to stop a potential enemy at the approaches to the territorial waters. The proponent of this school of thought was, ironically, an engineer officer rather than a sailor. The major consideration was that modern naval gunnery had developed to the extent where it could easily outgun the heavy batteries on the shore emplacements. It was inevitable that defence considerations went a full circle. Major General Downes, when on his second tour of duty in South Australia, pointed out that naval technology could render the fixed defences inoperative and could easily subdue the ocean-going naval craft South Australia could afford, meaning of course, HMCS *Protector*. Again, manning problems rendered the *Protector* something of a white elephant and, moreover, the cruiser was very expensive to maintain and to operate. Thus the emphasis swung back to the fourth line of defence; an efficient mobile force was the solution to the Colony's defence problem. This solution evoked a strong response among the colonists; the blue water and bricks-and-mortar defensives not only cost a lot of money, but required for their efficient operation a considerable number of professional and permanent sailors and soldiers, something that was, politically, always somewhat suspect in the *Paradise of Dissent*. At that time also, federation was anticipated not only by the military people but also by quite a few of the colonists who saw the protection of the second and third lines of defence as a federal, and towards the end of the century as an imperial, responsibility.

Four sergeants of the South Australian Militia, 1878. (AWM A3857)

Assistance from England was sporadic. Apart from the ordnance (rifles and artillery), the colony barely received any assistance from the British regulars when in the colony. England made several middle to high ranking officers available, who acted in the capacity of consultants. Towards the end of the century the Colonial Defence Committee played a major role.

Turning now to the development of the defence organisation, initially, 1854-1865, the mobile forces of the Colony consisted of a number of loosely co-ordinated and partially-paid volunteer units. Towards the end of that first phase, a battalion organisation, the Adelaide Regiment of Volunteer Rifles was established in 1860. At or about the same time some cavalry and artillery sub-units were also raised.

The second phase, 1865-1878, saw the colony divided into eleven military districts. The force consisted of an active, partially-paid component,

called the Volunteer Force, consisting of four troops of mounted infantry, two half batteries and ten infantry companies, and of the Reserve Force, ten infantry companies but, in fact, they were nothing else but sporting rifle clubs, loosely associated with the military through the South Australian rifle associations.

The third phase, 1878-1886, saw the birth of the permanent naval and military forces, the paid Voluntary Military Force (VMF) and the unpaid Rifle Volunteer Force (RVF). Both these latter components eventually adopted the British battalion organisation of ten companies. The other two arms remained essentially the same. However, in order to train and subsequently employ more commissioned and non-commissioned officers, the two components, the paid and the unpaid, were reorganised into two battalions each. One of the major difficulties at that time was that the unpaid component, the RVF, varied greatly in strength and, more importantly, in military efficiency. The unpaid force consisted of the more well-to-do citizens of the colony. For them soldiering was mainly a sport, rifle shooting and a venue for social activities. They wielded considerable political clout and made the life of the commandant, a permanent officer, a misery.

It was for this reason that Brigadier General J.F. Owen introduced a number of changes, thus ushering in the fourth and last phase of the development of the South Australian defence force. At first, these changes were cosmetic; the paid force was renamed the Active Militia Force and the unpaid one became, eventually, the Volunteer Militia Reserve Force. Both forces had mounted and artillery components. However, the renaming was, in fact, a basic reorganisation by stealth, designed to bring the unpaid component under more effective military control and to curb its illusions of independence and social grandeur. The Volunteer Militia Reserve Force companies were organised into a second battalion, not unlike the British territorial or linked battalion concept. Thus, for instance, the Laura, Gladstone and Crystalbrook companies became the second battalion (reserve) of the First Regiment, Active Militia Force.

While he was about it, Owen standardised on the strength establishments. Each mounted troop had 3 officers and 54 other ranks; the corresponding figures for an infantry company were 5/100.

Finally, mention must be made of the innovations introduced by the Premier, Charles Cameron Kingston, under the guidance of the then military commandant, Colonel J.M. Gordon. The principle of national service, latent in all previous defence legislations but only held as a *vis-in-terrorem* if people would not volunteer, was re-enshrined, but people could volunteer. The 1895 legislation made no reference to volunteers or militia men, but only spoke of soldiers. There were to be three forces, the Permanent Military Force, the Active Military Force in which a soldier served for two years, after which he was automatically transferred to the Reserve Military Force for a further five years. The wheel had come a full circle. What had started off with a universal training obligation sacred to the radical elements in the *Paradise of Dissent* became progressively diluted by promoting the volunteer concept, particularly the unpaid version, very much along English lines, but without being as successful. With the growth of the working class element in the late eighties and nineties, the radical concept of the citizen soldier, almost as envisaged by the 'Adelphi planners' (the 1833 Committee of the South Australian Association had rooms in the Adelphi, a building in London) was revived and in effect formed the background of the 1895 legislation. This legislation saw military service as a universal national obligation and recognised the role of the citizen soldier as being directly in support of, and complementary to, the permanent force.

Note on the Naval Forces of South Australia

The naval forces consisted of HMCS *Protector* and one or two auxiliary vessels. *Protector*, a twin-screw vessel displacing about 920 tons, cost approximately £80,000 delivered in Adelaide. With an indicated horse power of 1600 she had a speed of 14 to 14.5 knots. She carried one 8-inch gun and seven 6-inch guns, both types breech-loading. The auxiliary armament consisted of 3-pdr quick-firing and several Gatling guns. She carried a complement of about 45-50 all hands. South Australia also had a Whitehead torpedo installation for port protection. The naval personnel were enrolled in a Naval Brigade consisting of a permanent and a reserve component. The latter was paid on the basis of daily drills.

* * * *

The above article is the transcript of a talk given by Hans Zwillenberg on 15 February 1985 at the seminar on the development of Australia's colonial forces at the War Memorial's History Conference. We are grateful to Major Zwillenberg for permission to publish his address.

J.C. Gorman

The Arsenal at Graz

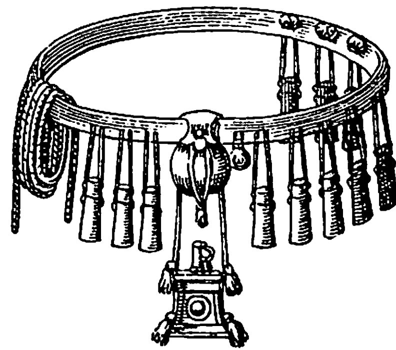
GRAZ, in lower Austria, houses one of the wonders of the world. Here, in the Arsenal, is held and maintained enough equipment to outfit an army of the Renaissance of about 30 000 men.

Austria was the eastern bulwark of Christendom against the Turks from about 1453, when the Turks took Constantinople, until 1717 or so when Eugene of Savoy finally drove them back to Turkey and the lower Balkans. Never again were the Turks a threat to Christendom. However, for 250 years—from about 1450 to 1700—they were a continuing threat, roving and probing forward as far as Vienna from where they were repulsed in 1683. It was thus necessary for the Holy Roman Empire to maintain a standing army and to hold in an arsenal sufficient equipment to arm the masses in the face of any Turkish threat.

It was fortunate that Styria, a province in south-east Austria, possessed iron ore and great forests of timber. Thus an arms industry sprang up and forges were established all over the country, at Innsbruck and other places, and spreading into Germany at Augsburg and Nuremberg. By 1642 a great arsenal had been established at Graz (pronounced 'Gratz'), containing many field guns and all the light arms required at that time.

By 1749, with the threat from the Turks long gone, the State wished to demolish the arsenal but fortunately the city's petition to Empress Maria Theresa to allow it to keep the arms was agreed and they remain to this day.

Musketeer with musket and rest. (Jacob de Gheyn, ***The exercise of armes,*** *1607)*



The exercise of caliver. (J.J. von Wallhausen, ***Defensio Patriae****)*

The building has four stout floors. Only a few artillery pieces remain but there is a multitude of other items, including 'fortress' muskets fitted with a metal guard to rest on a fortress wall, and thousands of matchlocks, flintlocks and wheel-locks, all in mint condition, polished and usable. Various types of bayonet are held, starting with the plug bayonet, and there is a forest of horse pistols. These appear to be inlaid with ivory, but it is the bone of young calves, a local quirk. All are elaborately engraved. A ceiling is covered with powder flasks.

There are many full suits of armour of superb quality. Their arms move up, down and back—as smooth as silk—steel plates slipping over other steel plates. Only one full set of horse armour is held as this was too expensive for local soldiers. The Emperor's armour—one of his many suits—found its way here; it is covered in designs. Holdings include an enormous number of suits of half-armour, back and breast plates, one of which brought £10 000 in London recently. Many are on display but most are simply stacked like goods in a supermarket.

The ceiling is lined with helmets, many thousands of them. Most are fairly simple casques and many are of the Spanish style of 1492, so familiar in pictures of the Conquistadores. There are cavalry lobster-tail helmets with sliding face guards. The full armour helmets go with the full suits of armour and include one helmet within a helmet.

Halberdiers. (Graz Arsenal guidebook)

Swords are of surprisingly poor quality. The heavy cavalry weapons seem to have little temper and a stiff and clumsy style. The lighter swords are better but do not approach the standards attained in the Napoleonic Wars. There is a number of the huge—more than 1.5 metre—swords of the lansquenets, the mercenary foot soldiers, swung two-handed like scythes and serrated throughout.

Holdings include many thousands of ordinary pikes—perhaps four metres long—of simple design with stout staves. Propped in the ground at 45 degrees they made an effective barrier to protect the arquebusiers. Halberds are held in large numbers, many with unusual designs, as though each armourer had his own ideas as to how many hooks and blades were necessary to hook a man off his horse and cut his throat. There is a small number of round steel shields and two Polish shields, cut on an angle at the top to protect the back of the head. There are no crossbows or longbows.

Hanging from pegs, like suits at a dry cleaners, are row after row of shirts of mail. It was said that it took one blacksmith a whole year to make one shirt, for each tiny ring had to be circled and welded and to it another three rings had to be added. The arsenal also holds special swords, somewhat like heavy, thin rapiers, designed to pierce chain mail!

It is an unbelievable collection.

Two-handed swordsmen. (Graz Arsenal guidebook)

Leather bandolier with wooden leather-covered powder charges, each for one shot. (Graz Arsenal guidebook)

Syd Wigzell

Those German and Turkish Bullets

WHEN confronted with the sobering casualty lists of Australian soldiers in World War II and the even more tragic figures for World War I, one can hardly but contemplate the means employed by our opponents to accomplish such destruction. Artillery, aerial bombing, gas warfare and so on undoubtedly caused many casualties, but this treatise is concerned with the nature of enemy projectiles as fired from 'the soldier's best friend' and from rifle calibre machine-guns.

A brief perusal of the citations of Australian VC winners in World War I will provide proof of the devastation wrought by small arms fire, particularly from machine-guns, and the supreme heroism involved in braving such swift and deadly projectiles. In facing up to German and Turkish forces in World War I and German forces in World War II, Australian troops were fired upon with three main types of bullets in addition to a miscellany of less significant types. This article will be restricted to dealing with the three main types, viz, the German S. ball bullet, the German S.S. ball bullet and the Turkish 7.65 ball bullet. 'Ball', a diehard term from the days of leaden spherical musket bullets, in this treatise refers to the ordinary issue bullet; that is, non-tracer, non-exploding, non-armour piercing and so on.

The German S. bullet was officially called the *Spitzgeshoss* or pointed bullet and was loaded in the 7.9mm S. Patrone as adopted in 1905. Some seventeen years earlier, the German 7.9 mm Patrone 88 (variously known as 7.92 German, the 8 mm German, the 8 x 57 and the 8 mm Mauser cartridge) had been adopted. Its historical significance is due to its being the first rimless cartridge to be loaded with smokeless powder and thus the parent of the modern military cartridge.

The S. bullet, used so widely in World War I, differed considerably from the earlier bullet as loaded in the Patrone 88. The Patrone 88 bullet was a heavy (14.7 grams or 226.87 grains) round-nose type similar in appearance to the Mark II and Mark VI British .303 inch bullets and was driven at a velocity of 630 metres per second (2200 feet per second). The newer S. bullet was lighter (10 grams or 154.3 grains), pointed (as the German name implied) and was driven considerably faster at 870 m/s (2854 f/s) from the 29 inch barrelled Gewehr 98. Length was 28 mm (1.102 inches). The lead core and soft steel jacket, which was plated with copper, cupro-nickel or gilding metal, combined to produce an efficient bullet with a sectional density (grams/cm^2) of 20.4. The base of the bullet was in some versions produced with a slight concavity in the lead core to aid in bullet-to-barrel obturation. In the middle of World War I a crimping cannelure was added to the bullet to ensure a more positive core-to-jacket bond and to lessen the chance of bullet looseness when cartridges were being fed through weapons.

The ballistic characteristics of the S. bullet as fired from the short rifle (24 inch barrel) are as shown below:

Distance in metres	*Time of flight in seconds*	*Remaining velocity in metres/ second*	*Height of trajectory in metres*
0	-	855	-
200	0.26	677.4	0.09
400	0.60	524.6	0.44
600	1.03	406.1	1.32
800	1.59	328.1	3.19
1000	2.24	286.0	6.59
1200	2.98	258.5	12.00
1400	3.87	230.4	20.64
1600	4.78	209.8	31.81
1800	5.91	186.4	48.58
2000	7.11	161.0	71.00

Extreme range=3700 metres

This then was the main bullet fired at Australians by Germans in World War I, and was expended, as front line survivors related, in enormous quantities. Though the Germans never ran out of S. Type ammunition, their resources, particularly towards the end of the war, were strained to the limit in keeping up the supply.

As the war progressed, the Germans felt the need for a machine-gun bullet that would be effective for long range harassing fire. The solution was, and had been for a few years, all too close at hand. The French rifle bullet was known as the M1898 Balle D. The same calibre as the German S. bullet, the Balle D. was a heavy (197.5 grains) sharp pointed, streamlined (boat tailed) projectile with excellent long range ballistics. One unusual characteristic of the Balle D. was that it was made entirely of 'bronze' (in reality, brass)—no inner core, no jacket—simply a solid 90% copper and 10% zinc alloy bullet.

In an effort to utilize the large numbers of captured French rifles and machine-guns, the Germans in 1917 made up for these weapons ammunition featuring a close copy of the Balle

D., but a bullet made in the conventional manner. Although German troops had for years been subject to the irritation and fatal consequences of long range harassing fire of French machine-guns, it was not until the closing months of the war that this German copy of the Balle D. was put to use in the new Patrone S.S. 7.9. Officially introduced into service on 28 July 1918, this cartridge was reserved for use in those Model 08 machine-guns with sights altered for long range indirect fire. Fortunately for our Diggers and other allied troops on the Western Front, the introduction of the S.S. bullet came too late to cause the number of casualties commensurate with its long-ranging potential.

Tests conducted by the United States Ordnance Department in the United States during 1919 and 1920 showed that the German S.S. bullet was just a trifle superior to the original Balle D. in ballistic performance.

The German S.S. (*schweres Spitzgeschoss* or heavy pointed bullet) was a graceful, streamlined bullet approximately 35 mm (1.377 ins.) long and weighing 12.8 grams (197.5 grains). The lead/antimony core was enclosed in a soft steel jacket with copper or gilding metal plating. The bullet was provided with a crimping cannelure to ensure trouble-free feeding in automatic weapons. The ballistic characteristics of the S.S. bullet as fired from a short rifle are shown below:

Distance in metres	*Time of flight in seconds*	*Remaining velocity in metres/ second*	*Height of trajectory in metres*
0	–	760	–
200	0.28	660	0.10
400	0.61	574	0.40
600	0.98	495	1.1
800	1.43	426	2.3
1000	1.96	367	4.5
1200	2.56	322	8.0
1400	3.23	293	13.5
1600	3.94	274	20.0
1800	4.70	259	29.0
2000	5.51	245	41.0

Extreme range=4700 metres

Just before World War II the S.S. bullet was adopted as standard for both rifles and machine-guns in Germany and remained so right through World War II. Thus in World War II the S.S. bullet was the main bullet fired at Australians by Germans in Tobruk, El Alamein and elsewhere.

When the Anzacs landed at Gallipoli in 1915 they were fired at by Turks using rifles and machine-guns chambered for the 7.65 Turkish cartridge. This same cartridge enjoyed wide popularity and is known by various other names such as the 7.65 Belgian, the 7.65 Argentinian and the 7.65 Peruvian. Curiously, the 7.65 bullet had the same diameter as the .303-inch British bullets (.311"-.312"). The 7.65 bullet was 1.06" long and weighed 10 grams (154.3 grains). It was sharp pointed, flat based and resembled the 7.9S. bullet very closely in construction and external appearance. The 7.65 Turkish cartridge case was slightly shorter than the German 7.9 case (53 mm v. 57 mm) and consequently the muzzle velocity of the Turkish bullet was at 830 m/s (2725 f/s) slightly less than that of its German cousin, but still a deal faster than the .303 British Mark VII bullet. The ballistic characteristics of the 7.65 Turkish bullet as fired from a short rifle are as shown below:

Distance in metres	*Time of flight in seconds*	*Remaining velocity in metres/ second*	*Height of trajectory in metres*
0	–	830	–
200	0.27	674.5	0.09
400	0.60	539.6	0.44
600	1.02	430.2	1.27
800	1.53	351.1	2.94
1000	2.15	302.8	5.93
1200	2.92	267.9	11.33
1400	3.70	245.4	18.62
1600	4.62	221.6	29.50
1800	5.57	203.8	43.04
2000	6.72	183.7	62.60

Extreme range=3700 metres

The Turks in World War I were allied to Germany, and as the Turks needed continuous logistical and technical assistance, more and more German weapons found their way into the Turkish inventory. Despite the logistical problems involved, it is highly likely that German-supplied S. bullets were also fired at Diggers at Gallipoli. What the actual proportions of the mix may have been, however, the author has not been able to ascertain. The literature on the campaign is strangely silent in this regard. As the war progressed and Turkey became more and more dependent on Germany, one would assume that the proportion of German S. bullets fired at Australians increased.

How then did the Turks cope with this problem of very similar looking but non-interchangeable small arms ammunition? Were some units armed entirely with 7.9 weapons and ammunition while all other units were issued with 7.65 weapons and ammunition, or was it a free-for-all mixture? The author simply does not know and would welcome correspondence on this intriguing question.

One thing is certain though. Our chaps fighting Turks from 1915-1918 were very much shot at as the Turks never seemed to run out of ammunition. But when it comes to determining which kind of bullet was being used at any particular time or place, a definite answer seems an impossibility. In any case, the two bullets were so close in appearance and ballistics, it made little difference to any hapless recipient who had travelled so far from home to be involved in the greatest conflict the world had ever seen.

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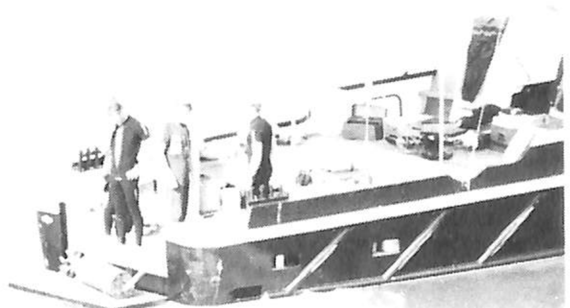
P. A. Rosenzweig

'Japanese bomb' alert in Darwin

DURING excavation work being conducted for a cyclone anchor at Darwin's Old Fort Hill Wharf, what appeared to be an old unexploded bomb was unearthed by blasting under 15 metres of water. It was first seen on 15 January this year by diver Mick Frost, of Baxter Diving and Marine Services, and was examined by his colleague and veteran diver Harry Baxter. Harry stated that the 'long and cylindrical' bomb did not appear to be Australian, but rather believed that it might be of Japanese origin—a legacy of their first raid on Australia on 19 February 1942.

This raid was conducted by the twin-attack combination of Aichi D3A1 Type 99 carrier bomber and Nakajima B5N2 Type 97 carrier attack bomber, code-named 'Val' and 'Kate' by the Allies. In all, 188 planes from the carriers Hiryu, Soryu, Kaga and Akagi, all veterans of the earlier attack on Pearl Harbour, took part in the attack.

The two divers did the right thing and left the bomb in situ, and on hearing of the discovery, the area was cordoned off by the police to a distance of 300 metres, effectively closing down two-thirds of the port. The Port Authority suspended all activity at the wharf, leaving one freighter sitting idle in port—its cargo ironically being a load of Japanese cars.



The RAN Clearance Team returns to Darwin Naval Base with the recovered bomb.

The torpedo-shaped bomb is raised ashore.

The following day, RAN Diving Clearance Team 1 from HMAS Waterhen in Sydney flew into Darwin to identify the bomb and dispose of it as required. The team has the role of travelling around Australia to deal with such disposal tasks, although the leader of the team, Lieutenant George Graham, RAN, remarked that the discovery of ordnance of such vintage today was 'not as common as it used to be'. The team made an exploratory dive and resolved to deal with the bomb the next day.

The wharf was the scene of much inactivity after 0800 on Thursday 17th in contrast to the busy industry going on below as indicated by the blue and white flag. By 0915 the bomb had been examined, photographed and floated to the surface using an air bag. It was then carried around the coast to Darwin Naval Base and raised onto the wharf where it could be examined by all concerned.

An Allied rather than a Japanese bomb, it was identified as an 80-kilogram anti-submarine mortar round, fired from a 'Squid', or anti-submarine mortar of early 1950s vintage. 'It is a practice round,' said Naval Operations Officer Lieutenant-Commander Ian Gibson, 'although to the layman it would appear quite dangerous'. The initial reports from the civilian divers of a long cylindrical object with stabilising fins on the tail suggested that it may have been a Japanese 250-kilogram high explosive bomb from the first and heaviest raid on Darwin 43 years ago. If this were the case, it could have presented some danger, so although the outcome was relatively anti-climactic, Commander Gibson remarked that the expense incurred was certainly justified.

'These practice rounds were used for calibrating the firing systems', said diver Lieutenant Graham, 'and were designed to float for later recovery'. They were fired over the destroyer's bow from two triple-barrelled mortars called 'Squids' which 'had been replaced by the current Mortar Mark 10', remarked the Naval Officer Commanding Northern Australia (NOCNA) Captain David Farthing, DSC, RAN, 'and had been phased out in the late 1950s, certainly by the time I commenced my service in the early 1960s'.

This was the first such round recovered by the Navy Diving Team and the only one found in the Darwin area. 'We are investigating the matter', said Commander Gibson, but the naval officers present all concurred that it would seem to be a relic of calibrating practices conducted in the Darwin area in the early 1950s prior to the construction of the wharf, and that it drifted into the harbour area where it settled. The recovery of this dummy mortar round was certainly something of an anti-climax, particularly after the build-up by the local press about the 'unexploded Japanese bomb from WW2'.

As for its fate—after the obligatory investigations and photographs, it seems destined to become a white-painted monument in the Naval gardens of Darwin.

Leader of the Diving Team, Lieutenant George Graham, RAN.

John E. Price

Naval Brigades in the Second South African War 1899-1902

1. Introduction

IN general terms the Second South African War, which commenced on 11 October 1899, was a series of land based campaigns fought predominantly by soldiers. However, during the first nine months of the war, there was quite an amount of activity by naval brigades supplied by Royal Navy vessels based at Simonstown.

The Crown Colony of Natal possessed a small naval volunteer force which was active on its home front. Also it is fairly safe to assume that, had there been no Boxer Rebellion, the Australian Colonies—New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, in particular, would have sent naval brigade contingents to serve in South Africa and thereby open up a glorious new field for collectors of Australian medals. But in the main, naval operations in the southern portion of the African continent were undertaken by Royal Navy personnel.

The war was far from popular with the rest of the world and nations such as the United States, France, Germany, Holland and Tsarist Russia had very strong pro-Boer sympathies. They also had navies and—although Britain and the United States had entered a gentlemen's agreement not to meddle in each others affairs, the British in the Spanish-American War and the US in South Africa—there was little to stop the other nations from joining forces and challenging Britain's naval supremacy by sending aid to the Boers. The fact that they did not is one of the enigmas of the war.

It might be termed 'sour grapes' to opine that because no Naval Brigade member was awarded the Victoria Cross, in either the First or Second Anglo-Boer Wars, then the force was given very little coverage in the major written histories of those conflicts. Yet they played a vital role in both and this account, hopefully, will redress part of the omission.

2. The Involvement

On 4 September 1899 HMS *Powerful*, a First Class Protected Cruiser, left Yokohama for home waters. She had spent four years on the China Station and was now about to change with her sister ship HMS *Terrible*, which sailed from Portsmouth on the 19th of the same month. Upon arrival in Hong Kong the *Powerful* received orders to proceed via the Cape of Good Hope, instead of Suez. On 4 October she called at Mauritius to embark four companies of King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry—a regiment which would be closely associated with the Naval Brigade on the advance to Kimberley. After disembarking the KOYLIs at Cape Town on 13 October, *Powerful* went on to meet her sister at Simonstown. *Terrible* had an uneventful run, having coaled at Las Palmas and calling in at St Helena, arriving at the rendezvous a day later.

Also in port was the Super Dreadnought HMS *Monarch* and the Second Class Protected Cruiser *Doris*. On 20 October marines from the *Powerful* with two 12-pounder guns and crews were sent ashore to join marines and naval gun crews from other ships. They were to form the first Naval Brigade of the war led by Commander Ethelstone of *Powerful*. Leaving by train, their destination was Stormberg on the central front, joining Lieutenant General Sir William Gatacre's command. However, by 16 November the situation had altered and the Brigade was sent back to the coast to be reorganised, leaving two of its guns behind. The Brigade was then despatched to join Lord Methuen's expeditionary force whose aim was to relieve Kimberley, in northern Cape Colony.

To gain some idea of the composition of a Naval Brigade one has to examine the organization of an 1897 battleship's landing party. Four companies, each with a complement of 60 rifles, were formed from the forecastle, foretop, maintop and quarterdeck men. These were known as A, B, C and D companies. The force had access to two 9-pounder RML and two Maxim machine guns, one of each attached to a company.

Each company had signallers, armourers, pioneers and medical personnel. At the battalion headquarters were included a telegraph, searchlight, hospital—complete with doctors—commissariat parties and even a band which

assumably, would undertake their traditional wartime role of providing stretcher bearers. When drawn up on shore they formed a small but self-sufficient fighting force, capable of taking the field for lengthy periods.

The Second Anglo-Boer War was the first occasion on which seamen and marines were provided with khaki uniforms in place of the blue serge service dress and, as always with new innovations, the change was not popular. Royal Marines served with the relief force but were not an integral part of the Naval Brigades, even though they worked in close co-operation. The sailors joined Methuen's command at Belmont on 22 November. On the next day their artillery cleared the height known as Mont Blanc. This was the start of a series of hard-fought battles intended to clear the railway line extending from Orange River Station to Kimberley. Two days later, further up the line, between Graspan and Enslin stations they were blooded in no uncertain manner.

The night before the battle, the Naval Brigade was told it would have the honour of leading the assault. 'By Jove, what sport' exclaimed a middy. 'Is it really true, sir?' an excited marine sergeant asked. 'The news seemed almost too good to be true', wrote one officer later 'and it was some short time before we could believe it and realise our "luck" '. The main objective was to clear the Boers from a series of kopjes, which blocked the way north. One of the attacking waves—forming the right and deployed into single line spaced four paces apart—consisted of the Naval Brigade, 55 seamen and 190 marines.

The complete order of battle was as follows:—

Front Line:	One naval company, 55 rifles; three Royal Marine companies, 190 rifles; one company of KOYLI.
Supports:	Seven companies KOYLI.
Reserve:	Half a battalion KOYLI.

The composition of the front line section which consisted of the Naval Brigade was as follows— from right to left:—

Commander A.P. Ethelstone; Lieutenant the Hon. E.S.H. Boyle; Gunner E.E. Lowe; Midshipmen C.A.E. Huddart and W.W. Sillem; Captain G. Senior, i/c 'A' Coy. RMA; Lieutenant W.T.C. Jones, i/c 'B' Coy RMLI; Lieutenant F.J. Saunders, i/c 'C' Coy RMLI.

The remainder of the Naval Brigade, comprising some 150 men, helped to cover the attack by bringing the guns into action at approximately 2600 metres range.

Early in the morning the still elated naval brigade formed into neat lines and stepped out forward towards the waiting Boers. An onlooker noted how 'each hard, clean-cut face was from time to time anxiously turned toward the directing flank, so as to satisfy each individual that the interval and dressing were properly kept... No better kept line ever went forward to death or glory'. It was impossible for them to stay extended, however, and in places they were soon almost shoulder to shoulder. The Boers waited patiently until they were only 600 metres away and then opened 'a fierce hurricane of fire' that swept across their front and more deadly still, enfiladed them from their left.

The eye-witness watched 'as they were picked off like deer, but they never flinched and fell with their faces to the hill and their officers walked ahead with their swords drawn'. The officers, who had insisted on walking in front, carrying their swords and wearing polished belts, were nearly all hit.

Powerful bearded Captain Prothero, the naval brigade commander, was one of the first to drop, calling as he fell, 'Take that hill and be hanged to it'. Major Plumbe of the Royal Marines fell dead alongside his fox terrier, who had been trotting beside him. Victorian-born Midshipman C.A.E. Huddart of HMS *Doris* was twice hit but staggered on until a third bullet killed him, earning him a posthumous Conspicuous Service Cross. Nearly half the brigade was down before they reached the foot of the kopje; yet, without swerving or changing their pace, the survivors pressed on.

Supported by the KOYLIs and Loyals, they carried the kopje, but by the time they reached the crest the Boers had mounted their ponies and ridden off. 'Did you watch the naval brigade?' asked one Staff Officer of another. 'By Heaven, I never saw anything so magnificent in my life!' *The Times History* said that the charge, now virtually forgotten, 'will live to all time as one of the most splendid instances of disciplined courage'. It was disciplined and courageous, but it was tragically anachronistic. The days of stand-up, shoulder-to-shoulder attacks were past. Casualties were almost 50% of the entire force. Nearly all the petty officers and marine ncos were killed or wounded.

For sixty years the Naval Brigade dead lay in the precincts of Rooilaagte Farm close to where they fell. Nowadays a black marble stone stands as a mute symbol of their sacrifice, on a kopje alongside the main Kimberley-Cape Town highway. Their bodies, after being exhumed, were re-buried in the West End cemetery at Kimberley, the northernmost terminus of the Naval Brigade's march on the western front.

Now before we return to Cape Town and consider the exploits of the *Powerful* and *Terrible*, it would only be right to say something of the only official Australian naval member to serve in South Africa. Lieutenant Commander William J. Colquhoun of the Victorian Navy went as Special Service Officer, and served as transport officer with the First Australian Regiment—the forerunner of federation, when several colonial First Contingents amalgamated at Cape Town in November 1899. However, he wangled an attachment to the Naval Brigade and arrived just in time to join the batteries shelling the Magersfontein ridge. Fellow Australian Special Service Officers Johnstone, Grieve and Umphelby—the latter two to die shortly afterwards—used to stroll over in the evening and chaff at Colquhoun's shooting.

On the drive with French to Kimberley, Colquhoun commanded one of the 12-pounder naval guns in the action at Klip Drift, on the Modder River, where the gun he was working was hit by a shell which smashed one of the wheels. The wheels and carriage had been hastily improvised at Simonstown. Not to be beaten, Colquhoun surprised everybody, including Lieutenant Dean of the Royal Navy, who commanded the other gun, when at the end of 12 hours solid work and improvising in the field, he succeeded in modifying the wheels of a buck waggon sufficiently to fit them to the gun carriage. The gun was ready for action again.

The naval guns were in action quite early at Paardeberg participating in the shelling of Kitchener's Kopje and in the bombardment of Cronje's laager. The day before the surrender both of the 12-pounders became immobilised through wheel troubles.

Under instructions to get the guns to the depot at Cape Town, a mission which would have taken weeks, Colquhoun chose a daring alternative. He decided to vary the orders by taking the guns to Kimberley, where he appealed to Cecil Rhodes for assistance. Rhodes placed the De Beers engineering shop at his disposal.

The Australian scrounged his way around Kimberley and managed to find wheels that could be used. Soon both guns were mounted for service again and Colquhoun got them back to the army at Paardeberg in time to join the column about to set out for Bloemfontein. The naval guns took part in every action right up to the entry into the Orange Free State capital. In 1978 I found it somewhat incongruous to climb up Naval Hill, in such a land-locked city.

Colquhoun's resourcefulness resulted in his being awarded the Distinguished Service Order. He later went to London where he was decorated personally by Queen Victoria.

3. The Natal Front

Shortly after the Stormberg party was despatched, an urgent appeal for naval guns and

Boer gun position outside Ladysmith during siege. (AWM A 4920)

crews was received by the Flag Officer, Cape, originating from Sir George White, the commander of the Ladysmith garrison. *Powerful* was immediately sent to Durban with two 4.7" guns and four 12-pounders. 5000 rounds had been requested but Admiral Sir Robert Harris sanctioned only 500.* At 10 rounds per minute the two major guns would have exhausted the lot in 25 minutes. During the 25-day voyage, timber field-gun carriages were constructed in the ship's workshop and the men issued with small arms. Upon arrival the guns and crews entrained and they reached Pietermaritzburg at midday on 30 October, where they were welcomed by the Colony's Governor who expressed doubt whether Ladysmith could be reached before the town fell.

That day the disastrous Battle of Ladysmith was in progress. However, in late afternoon a fantastic piece of timing took place; 280 men of the *Powerful* arrived hauling their guns. The matelots were dressed for action, in full sea-going rig. Then, under Captain the Honourable Hedworth Lambton, they quickly hitched their guns behind bullock teams and trundled out to Limit Hill, promptly squaring up to the major piece of Boer artillery 'Long Tom', which swiftly replied and with its second 94-pounder shell struck the leading Royal Navy gun right under its wheels and overturned it, wounding every member of the gun crew.

The other naval guns took up position and replied to the Boer position, on Pepworth Hill, at a range of 6 000 metres. After a few rounds 'Long Tom' was silenced, as were the rest of the Boer battery. As the *Powerful* sailors and guns returned to Ladysmith, the sight did much to steady the cracking morale of the population.

The sailors quickly named their two 4.7" guns 'Bloody Mary' and 'Lady Anne'—the latter as a compliment to Captain Lambton's sister. The soldiers insisted on calling it 'Weary Willie'.

The Royal Navy gun race, which is a popular event at the Royal Tournament in London, has its origins in the speed with which the Navy went into action at Ladysmith.

On 2 November there was a heavy artillery duel between the naval gunners and the Boers who had dragged their guns up to Lombard's Kop to the NNW of the town and began to throw everything they had at the citizens. The Naval Brigade replied from a kopje near the Newcastle road, limited by the fact that they had only been allowed to bring 500 shells with them instead of the 5 000 that they had requested.

Lieutenant Egerton lay close to the barrel of his big 4.7, directing fire. An enemy shell came through the battery's earthworks, without bursting, hitting the young man across both his legs. He looked down and said, 'My cricketing days are over now.' The doctors amputated one leg at the thigh and the other at the shin. By afternoon Egerton was cheerfully sitting up, drinking champagne and smoking cigarettes. But during that night he died. On 9 November a Royal Salute was fired to celebrate the Prince of Wales's birthday.

On a more mundane but nevertheless vitally important note, Chief Engineer C.C. Sheen of the Naval Brigade devised a method for distilling river water after the Boers had destroyed Ladysmith's water mains. The system was capable of producing 1 500 gallons of pure water daily and provided water for the whole garrison between 11 December 1899 and 25 January 1900.

Captain Scott of HMS *Powerful* was appointed military governor of Durban, which was the main base for operations in Natal and therefore its safety was vital. He was authorised to make use of all naval vessels in the harbour and toured the port's defences and planned his defence.

On the morning of 6 November 1899, Scott's little force of 450 men and 30 guns formed up and to 'A Life On The Ocean Wave' marched out to take over the defences. The guns were two 4.7s, sixteen 'Long 12s', two 8-cwt 12-pounders, one 9-pounder, two 3-pounders, two Nordenfeldts and four Maxims. All the local rifle associations turned out and a corps of local gentlemen undertook the scouting. By 4.00pm two days later, every approach to the city, by road, rail and sea was sealed. Durban was safe. After the war South African Prime Minister and former Boer leader, Louis Botha, told Scott that had it not been for the naval guns Durban, and the whole of Natal, would have fallen.

Naval gunners from 1st Class Cruiser *Terrible*, Light Cruisers *Philamel* and *Forte*, as well as ratings from the Natal Naval Volunteers, served in the relief column, pushing on to Ladysmith, and were in the disastrous fight at Colenso.

Sailors from Torpedo Cruiser *Tartar* manned the guns of an armoured train which strove to keep the rail link free. They served during the notable occasion when it was derailed between Estcourt and Chieveley and passenger Winston Churchill, then serving as a war correspondent, was captured.

The Naval Brigade displayed its versatility by opening up communications between the relief

• It is likely that in authorising this meagre ration, the admiral had in mind the possibility of foreign intervention in the war and did not wish to greatly deplete his outfit of ammunition in case it was needed for a major naval action.

column and the military forces in Ladysmith—and for that matter in Kimberley—by nightly aiming searchlight beams at cloud banks and sending reassuring messages in morse.

Ladysmith was relieved on 28 February 1900 and the next day, 1 March—1900 not being a leap year—a number of the Naval Brigade who had been blasting their way for many weeks towards the beleagured town, decided to travel the ten miles or so to visit in particular their fellow seafarers belonging to HMS *Powerful*. Captain Jones, Royal Navy, wrote in his despatch '...before leaving crammed our holsters with whisky, tobacco and cigarettes for the *Powerful*, but our route lay through the neutral hospital camp of Itombe; we were pretty well plundered before we ever saw them.'

After the relief of Ladysmith the sailors were slowly returned to sea, the *Powerful* journeying on to Britain, where the ship's company were feted like heroes by the citizens of London. The *Powerful's* Marines stayed and were garrisoned at Bloemfontein. Many of the guns were handed over to the Royal Garrison Artillery. HMS *Terrible* went to the China Station, where some of the guns used in South Africa continued with equal success in the Boxer Rebellion, and afterwards many of the sailors gained the unusual distinction of qualifying for both the Queen's South Africa and the Third China War Medals.

Thus ended another interesting chapter in naval history, when Jack again proved that he is at much at home upon land as he is at sea.

* * * *

This paper was delivered by John Price to a combined meeting of members of the ACT Chapter of the Naval Historical Society of Australia and the ACT Branch of the Military Historical Society of Australia on 12 February 1985. We are indebted to Mr Price for permission to publish his paper.

T.C. Sargent

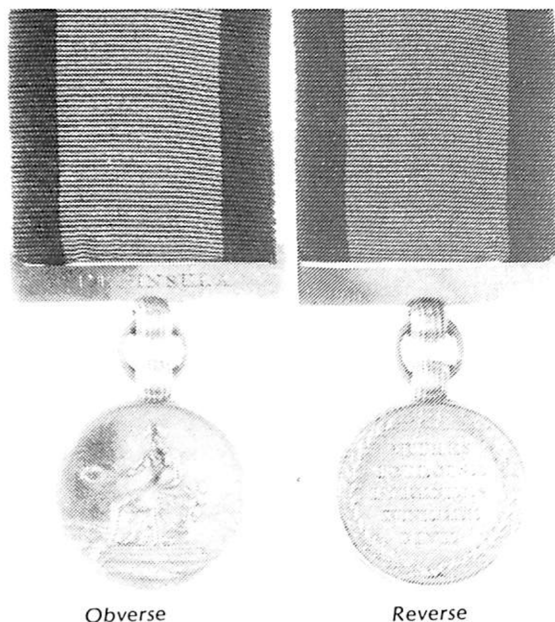
Two Peninsular Pairs

Part II—The Peninsular Pair Of Connaught Ranger Thomas Rafferty

THERE are few true Peninsular pairs, among them the Gold Medal and the Military General Service Medal (MGS) 1793–1814 awarded to some officers, but the incidence of this group in private collections must be unusual. Major Thomas Bell, CB, who was in command of the detachment of the 48th Regiment, the Northamptonshires, in Hobart from 1818 to 1824 was awarded the Gold Medal for Salamanca, Pyrenees, Nivelle and Orthes, in which actions he had commanded the regiment, and the MGS for Albuera, Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz and Toulouse, where he had been a company commander.[1]

For Other Ranks the only prospect of being awarded a pair occurred if the regiment issued a regimental medal. This happened in several instances, firstly to individuals for some singular act of bravery, such as the gold medal awarded to J. Murphy of the 88th 'For Valour' at Badajoz, 5 April 1812 or secondly, as a regimental medal such as the one illustrated here, awarded to the then Private Thomas Rafferty, who also received the MGS with four clasps in 1848.

It was while at Edinburgh that Colonel J.A. Wallace, the Commanding Officer, sought permission from the Duke of York, Commander-in-Chief, for the issue of a 'Regimental Order of Merit' to the Peninsular veterans in the regiment. The issue was authorised on 28 June 1818. The Order of Merit was manufactured at the expense of the officers and issued in three classes. The first class, for the twelve general actions in which the 88th had fought, was a silver maltese cross with the names of the actions stamped on the arms of the cross. It was suspended from a bar bearing the word 'PENINSULA' and was worn with a ribbon similar to but broader than the Waterloo Medal. The recipient's name was engraved on the reverse.



Obverse Reverse

The 88th Regiment, the Connaughty Rangers. Regimental Order of Merit 1818.

The second class, illustrated here, was a silver medal 35mm in diameter, showing Hibernia, seated, holding a wreath and with an Irish harp by her side. On the reverse appeared 88 and a laurel wreath in which was engraved the seven to eleven actions for which the medal was awarded. A similar medal of smaller diameter was awarded for those who were in less than seven general actions. The suspender and ribbon for both medals were as for the first class award and for both medals the recipient's name was engraved around the rim.[4]

Rafferty's medal is authenticated by his name on the rim of the medal and the appearance of his name in the roll of the award which is in Richard Cannon's history of the regiment, in the listing of awards of third class medals.[5] This raises one of two anomalies concerning Rafferty's medal, as his is a second class award—for seven to eleven actions. This is explained in Lieutenant Colonel Jourdain's article.[4] It was simply that the supply of third class awards was not equal to the demand and surplus second class medals were substituted to meet the shortfall. However the second anomaly, why 'Pyrenees' is engraved on the reverse, is not so easy to explain. It adds one honour above those authorised for the MGS and the Pyrenees actions were over by the end of July 1813, about the time that Rafferty was first attested in Ireland, and certainly weeks before he could have reached Spain.

This can be attributed to an error when the regimental records were consulted to confirm entitlements, although Jourdain says 'Every man had to make good his claim for every general action in which he claimed to have served'. Perhaps it was an error by the engraver as 'Pyrenees' is out of chronological sequence, appearing between Nivelle and Orthes. Perhaps also it occurred because of difficulties meeting third class awards with the second class medal.

Again, the purist may argue that regimental medals are not significant in the collecting field but this particular medal is so well documented that the existence of the pair does become significant. It is probable that the award of regimental medals for service in the Peninsular War, 1808–14, occurred mainly amongst the regiments which were not at Waterloo. Their veterans, some of whom had served in twelve or more general actions in the Peninsular without reward, must have been dismayed to see a medal awarded for this one action, irrespective of its historical significance, and their own sacrifice and service passing unrewarded. There was, of course, consolation for the twenty-five to twenty-six thousand officers and men who survived to 1847 and were awarded the MGS, issued in 1848, thirty-four years after the Peninsular War.

Thomas Rafferty, by then a retired sergeant of the 52nd Regiment, was one who survived to receive his MGS with four clasps—Nivelle, Nive, Orthes and Toulouse.[2] More than these could not

Obverse Reverse

Military General Service Medal 1793-1814

be expected as he had only enlisted in the 88th on 23 August 1813. He joined as a 'substitute'. *The Regulations and Orders for the Army* of the period provided that a serving soldier could arrange, through his 'friends', for the enlistment of a substitute who spent one month being assessed at the regimental depot. If the recruit was judged suitable he was re-attested at the depot and the serving soldier, for whom the recruit was a substitute, was granted a discharge.[3]

Rafferty was an eighteen year-old servant from Clonmanough (or Clamanough) County of Westmeath, when he was sworn before a local magistrate at Athlone on 31 July 1813 for enlistment as a substitute. He then went to the regimental depot at Dartmouth, Devon, where, after a period of assessment, he was re-attested on 23 August for service in the 88th Regiment 'The Connaught Rangers'. It is interesting to speculate how Rafferty was persuaded to accept the role of substitute. Did perhaps the 'friends' offer some financial persuasion additional to the bounty granted on enlistment?

Private Thomas Rafferty duly joined the 88th in Spain. He served in the four remaining battles of the Peninsular War in 'many skirmishes with the Light Troops' indicating that he was most likely in the Light Company of the Regiment. On the fall of Toulouse and the end of the Peninsular War, the regiment was shipped to North America and took part in the abortive attempt on Plattsburgh. The 88th arrived back in England just too late for Waterloo but formed part of the garrison in France until the spring of 1817 when the regiment was ordered to Edinburgh.

Thomas Rafferty remained with the 88th until 24 August 1825 when he transferred to the 52nd, the Oxfordshire Light Infantry. No doubt his experience with the 'Light Troops' qualified him for the transfer. With the 52nd he served a further five years in North America and three in Gibraltar, as well as periods at home. Rafferty was promoted corporal in March 1826 and sergeant in 1837. He was discharged in Dublin on 3 November 1841 '...from the effects of age and length of service and varicose veins in both legs...' The Regimental Board processing his discharge were '...of opinion that his conduct has been that of a very excellent faithful soldier—seldom in hospital trustworthy and sober'.[6] Rafferty signed the acquittance for pay and clothing on his discharge documents with a flourish—Thos Rafferty—a far cry from 'his mark +' with which he had signed his attestation documents twenty-eight years earlier.

Although Rafferty was a late-comer to service in the Peninsular War his medals have left us with an interesting study on a 'Peninsular pair' and remembrance of 'a very excellent trustworthy soldier'.

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Peter Stanley

The Soldiers on the Hill: the defence of Whyalla 1939–1945

Part 3: 1942 *'Defence of Whyalla'*

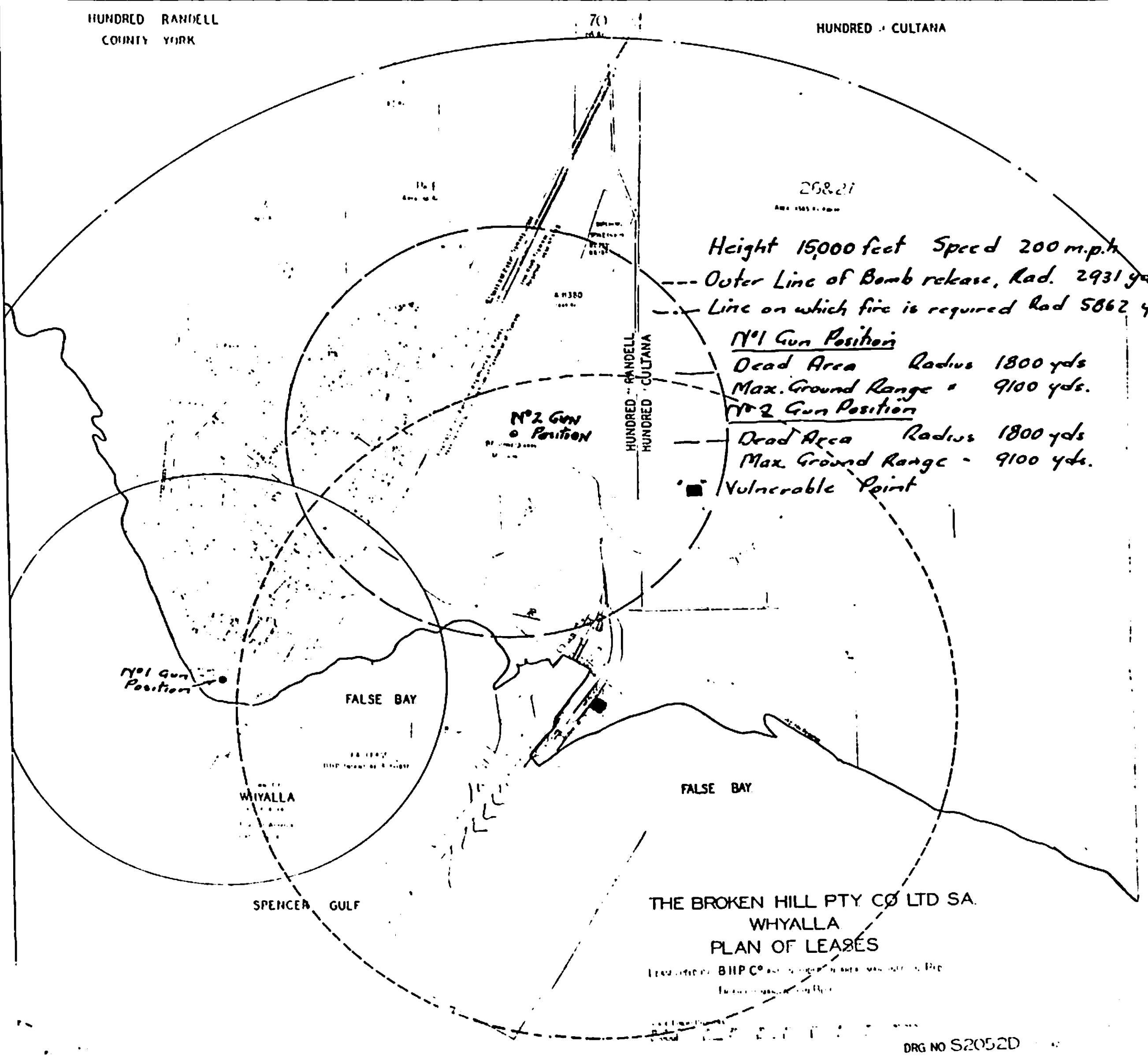
BY the end of March 1942 Captain Moorfoot's battery had been sufficiently trained to allow two of its 3.7-inch guns to be manned operationally. Even so, Moorfoot faced serious difficulties in defending Whyalla, not the least being that the town might actually come under Japanese attack. It seemed during the first half of 1942 that with the fall of Singapore and the collapse of the island defences to the north Australia faced attack or even invasion. The Curtin government, far from minimizing the crisis, attempted to alert the Australian people to the peril which they supposedly faced. Australia, Curtin declared, was by mid-February 'fighting for her very survival'.[1] Whether this was so is not altogether clear. It is possible that Curtin knew from British and American interception of Japanese codes that Japan had no intention of invading Australia, and that he stressed the danger of invasion in order to stimulate Australia's war effort.[2] Even if he did exaggerate the danger which Australia faced, however, the effect on the Australian people was the same as if the threat had been real.

One of the unforeseen consequences of the atmosphere of anxiety created early in 1942 was to heighten the apprehension of those like Captain Moorfoot who were responsible for Australia's defence. Moorfoot was required to defend a vital but vulnerable part of Australia's heavy industry with a barely-trained, if enthusiastic, battery and four guns. The calibre of the unit he had largely hand-picked was not in doubt, though it was less numerous than he would have preferred. His main worry, however, was that his material resources were insufficient for the task he had been given. He had been promised a further four guns, but by the time his men were ready to use them they had not arrived.[3] He had expected to be able to cover Whyalla's extensive industrial installations with up to three batteries—and had selected his personnel on the assumption that more NCOs and junior officers could be found from among them—but two months after his arrival could still continuously man only two guns.

Even if 26th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery were able to operate all four of its guns, however, their effectiveness was dubious. Moorfoot discussed his difficulties with BHP's Whyalla superintendent, R.T. Kleeman, who reported to head office that only a part of the company's works could be protected. He forwarded a sketch map showing that 'the dead area of the battery now installed embraces only the Whyalla sections of the work, including the loading jetty, and the principal section of the township'. As the ore jetty was the main reason for the location of guns at Whyalla, Captain Moorfoot and Mr Kleeman could, in the uncertain autumn of 1942, have felt justifiably apprehensive about the protection of the town and its industries.[4]

Unbroken Japanese successes, particularly their exploitation of the element of surprise, must have contributed to their unease, as may have deficiencies in security, which disclose the extent of Australia's unpreparedness. Security was, of course, a wartime obsession, though in relation to Whyalla's industrial contribution it was often inconsistent. The town's industries were a source of pride and made useful propaganda. Whyalla's shipbuilding, particularly, featured in news stories in metropolitan and interstate newspapers and magazines. Though after December 1941 reports of launchings mentioned only 'a South Australian shipyard', other, more general, stories named the town and its shipyard. The town's anti-aircraft battery was also inconsistently censored. At the same time as security agents confiscated Mother's Day brooches showing guns on Hummock Hill (an inadvertent consequence of Gunner Bleckley's father's letter) the *BHP Review* informed its readers that the battery's football team's 'shooting for goal is as accurate as its gunfire'.[5] Few were as conscious of the need for security as the Whyalla boy scouts who, seeing a man photographing a warship (probably HMAS *Moresby*) in False Bay, surrounded him, impounded and exposed the film and then bought him another roll.[6] A battery order a few weeks later stressed the 'necessity for maintenance of security discipline'.[7]

Such was the atmosphere in which 26th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery awaited a possible attack early in 1942. Moorfoot's unit apparently received little assistance from the RAAF station at Port Pirie, though whether it was requested is unclear, but from February 1942 it was joined by a succession of RAN guardships.



A plan of the actual and proposed anti-aircraft defences of Whyalla, showing their inadequacy early in 1942. (BHP Archives, file A9/4)

On 20 February 1942 HMAS *Moresby* received the signal, opening with the traditional words 'Being at all times ready for sea and to engage the enemy' ordering her 'to be stationed as a Guard Ship at Whyalla'. Her main task was 'the defence of Whyalla against attack'. *Moresby* was to keep station seven kilometres south east of Hummock Hill, watching the ore ships using the port. In July *Moresby* was replaced by HMAS *Bermagui* which was relieved by HMAS *Wongala*, which remained at Whyalla until 1944.[8]

Though ready to engage the enemy it is doubtful whether any of these vessels would have been able to do so effectively. *Moresby*, a former survey ship, looked like a harbour ferry, *Bermagui* was a converted coastal steamer, while *Wongala* resembled a trawler and in 1945 was donated to the Adelaide sea scouts.[9] All were inadequately armed and, though they probably reassured the people of Whyalla, and may have comforted the seamen on the ore ships, they would not have been a very powerful deterrent to a Japanese raid.

Such a raid became more of a possibility in June 1942. On the night of 31 May–1 June three Japanese miniature submarines penetrated the defences of Sydney Harbour.

Although all the attackers were sunk they destroyed the naval depot ship *Kuttabul*, killing

twenty seamen. HMAS *Whyalla*, the first vessel built at Whyalla, helped to locate and sink the raiders. The attack seems to have prompted Captain Moorfoot to protest to the commander of the South Australian L of C Area that Whyalla's defences were inadequate. He pointed out, in a memo headed 'Defence of Whyalla' and dated 8 June, that 'if this place is subject to enemy action...Australia's war effort would be crippled'.[10] Moorfoot sought eight additional 3.7-inch guns and eighteen light machine guns. His main worry, however, (perhaps as a consequence of the raid on Sydney), was that he would be unable to deal with attack from the sea. He asked for searchlights and for Spencer Gulf to be mined. 'At present', he wrote,

> there is nothing to stop an Under-Surface craft getting up this gulf,...await nightfall off Whyalla, and then...come to the surface and with a 4" Gun...pound the blast furnace installations and loading jetty.

Moorfoot asked for armour-piercing shells ('our present ammunition...would be practically useless against [submarines]') and more men: he had only two-thirds of his establishment and needed four men to reach it.[11] He pointed out that his battery was attempting to function as both an anti-aircraft and coastal artillery unit, but was ill-equipped and untrained for the second role, being compelled to make its own range tables and to devise its own gun drill for coastal defence.

Moorfoot's demands may not have been taken seriously by his headquarters in Adelaide—there must have been many reports dealing with the possibility of submarine attack following the raid on Sydney Harbour; and in any case it would not have had access to unlimited amounts of equipment. On the other hand, Moorfoot's report succeeded to some extent, perhaps because his superiors were now also nervous of another submarine raid. Spencer Gulf was never mined (though Moorfoot was not the first to suggest that it should be)[12] but within weeks two searchlights arrived in Whyalla. They were installed by 3 July, one on the southern side of Hummock Hill, the other on a spit at the seaward end of the blast furnace wharf.[13]

Despite difficulties in the provision of men and equipment, Captain Moorfoot had turned his recruits into highly proficient gunners by the winter of 1942. In October, for example, one of the battery's crews hit a drogue towed at nearly 1000 metres with its first shot.[14] One of its sergeants proudly recalled that 'we even did it in respirators on a hot day'.[15] From March 1942 pilots of Spencer's Gulf Aero Club flew practise flights for the gunners, at first in daylight, and from July at night as well. By doing so they were able to keep flying when the activities of most civilian flying clubs had been curtailed for lack of fuel.

Moorfoot set a high standard for his gunners: one pilot recalled how

> on one occasion there was a solid low level layer of cloud. I kept a careful record of course changes and time. Later...the commanding officer was able to tell me very precisely where I had been at each point of the flight.[16]

From May the battery was used to train drafts of up to forty gunners sent from Fort Largs near Adelaide, a testament to the speed at which its members had become proficient.[17]

In August, South Australian L of C Area headquarters issued what was apparently its first detailed defence plan since the outbreak of war with Japan.[18] It aimed to prevent a Japanese landing or to destroy any force succeeding in doing so. The forces by which the state was to be defended were, however, not much more impressive than they had been in December 1941. The navy possessed only three mine sweepers and some auxiliary vessels, the RAAF only obsolete training aircraft. AMF forces mostly comprised 'service units...scattered in small detachments over the whole area...Their military training is not of a high standard...'

Besides ten Volunteer Defence Corps battalions, South Australia had only three 'full-time' battalions, two of which garrisoned the prisoner-of-war camp at Loveday in the Riverland, and an AIF training battalion at Tanunda. These forces were to be deployed to defend the 'vital area' of the Adealide plains where most of the state's industries were found.

As one of the few fully formed, trained and equipped AIF units in South Australia, 26th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery's role in the defence of Whyalla was particularly important. Anti-aircraft batteries were detailed to 'at all times defend themselves against direct enemy action either by infantry or armoured fighting vehicles'. Moorfoot's battery was also to 'carry out a coast defence role and engage any hostile ship which approaches within range'. It was thought that the Japanese might attempt a commando raid, (of up to 500 men strong, though the figure must surely have been arbitrary), in which case Moorfoot was, somewhat optimistically, to 'detail a portion of the personnel of all units stationed in that area and all VDC personnel to attack such enemy tps [sic]'. These plans were not based on any appreciation of Japanese intentions, and would probably have been useless against a serious attempt to seize or disrupt Australia's ore supply.

Captain Moorfoot's ability to implement these instructions was marginally increased by the arrival

in Whyalla in August of Captain Stuart Nash's 69th Anti-Aircraft Searchlight Company. Nash's unit assumed control of the searchlights which in July had been manned by a detachment of the 58th AASL Company from Adelaide, from which the new company had been formed. At first accommodated in the battery's barracks on Hummock Hill, the thirty sappers (searchlight companies were until May 1943 part of the Royal Australian Engineers) were housed for the rest of 1942 in a camp on the foreshore south of the hill.[19]

With the arrival of Nash's searchlight company (his thirty sappers were later to increase to around fifty) Captain Moorfoot began to command a larger force, and one which (with the exception of fighter aircraft) at last resembled the scale of defences recommended by the Fortress Reconnaissance Party which had examined and reported on Whyalla's defence requirements two years before. His battery had become a modest military outpost, comprising not only gunners but also detachments from the Australian Army Medical Corps, the Australian Army Service Corps and the Australian Army Ordnance Corps. The town's 200-strong VDC company also came under this operational command, and he worked closely with the RAN guardships and the town's Naval Auxiliary Patrol, and, to a lesser extent, the RAAF at Port Pirie. Whyalla's defences did not receive the addtional heavy anti-aircraft guns which Moorfoot had expected, but by October 1942 he had three searchlights (all that the guns required), the ammunition he had requested, and had either acquired or been promised at least two Bofors 40mm light anti-aircraft guns. Moorfoot even obtained enough men to almost fill his war establishment by November 1942.

Revised operational instructions issued in November 1942 required Captain Moorfoot to use these disparate forces to fill 'Operational Instruction No 10 Defence of Whyalla', which was now directed towards meeting carrier, ship-borne or submarine raids rather than full-scale landings.[20] As had occurred earlier in the year, however, circumstances conspired to prevent him from being able to carry out his instructions. Shortly before receiving the new instructions he had testily reported to headquarters that:

> Owing to the withdrawal of rifles on issue to 26th Aust. A.A. Bty and 69 A.A.S.L. Coy, these defences cannot carry out the role allotted in Operation Instructions No. 10.[21]

Though Whyalla's defenders were for the time being without rifles as a result of a bureaucratic error, it was not true that Whyalla could not be defended. They may have had difficulty in carrying out Operational Instruction No. 10 to the letter—it required them to resist 'at all costs'—but despite such inconveniences Whyalla could have been much better defended than in November 1941, when the sixty Great War veterans of the VDC were the town's only protection. Though his force fell short of what Moorfoot would have wished for, it was at least equipped and prepared for the defence of Whyalla.

Notes

1. *Advertiser*, 13 February 1942.
2. See D.H. Wilde, 'Curtin and the secret war in Australia, 1941-1942', BA Hons thesis, Flinders University, 1979, pp. 42, 50 and 60-61. Peter Stanley, 'Don't let Whyalla down', p. 47. Litt B thesis, Australian National University, 1984.
3. 243/2/1, AWM 53 (Australian War Memorial, Canberra).
4. Superintendent, BHP Whyalla, to Chief General Manager, 18 March 1942, A 9/5, 'Defence Measures—Whyalla', (BHPA).
5. War diary, 26 HAAB, May 1942: *BHP Review*, June 1942, p. 16.
6. *Whyalla News*, 5 June 1942.
7. War diary, 26 HAAB, June 1942.
8. AP 613/1, item 57/1/2, 'HMAS MORESBY-GUARD SHIP WHYALLA 1942', (Australian Archives, Adelaide): Ross Gillett and Colin Graham, *Warships of Australia*, Adelaide, 1977, pp. 252-53, 213-14, 261.
9. *Wongala* later returned to the RAN as the *Wyatt Earp*, a name it had held before the war, and was used for Antarctic exploration.
10. AP 613/1, item 57/1/5, Army Office correspondence file, 'Defence of Whyalla 1942', (Australian Archives, Adelaide); Moorfoot to HQ, SA L of C Area, 8 June 1942. war diary, 26 HAAB, June 1942.
11. War diary, 26 HAAB, June and July 1942.
12. 243/6/13, AWM 52, (Australian War Memorial, Canberra).
13. War diary, 26 HAAB, June and July 1942.
14. War diary, 26 HAAB, October 1942.
15. Questionnaire, Mr J. Maddern.
16. Letter, Mr Russell Matthews to author, 27 August 1981.
17. War diary, 26 HAAB, May and July 1942.
18. 243/6/127, 'Appreciation of the Situation and Defence Plan, South Australia L of C Area, 20 August 1942', AWM 52, (Australian War Memorial, Canberra).
19. War diary, 26 HAAB, August 1942; letter, Mr Stuart Nash to author, 2 February 1981; 1/9/26, War diary, HQ 4th Military District DAAG, 5 August 1942. Mr Nash disputes the date of his company's move to Whyalla (given as 11 August in the war diary of 58th Anti-Aircraft Searchlight Company) because he recalled that he returned from Whyalla to be married on 1 August. The reason for this discrepancy is unclear.
20. 243/6/68, 'South Australia L of C [Area]—Operation Instructions Nos 1 to 10, issued in conjunction with SA L of C Area Defence Plan Operational role of the Area 1942', AWM 52, (Australian War Memorial, Canberra).
21. Moorfoot to HQ SA L of C Area, 19 November 1942, War diary, 26 HAAB, November 1942.

J.W. Meyers

Lance Corporal Arthur Megson, MM

BECAUSE of his diminutive size, Arthur Joseph Megson was rejected twice before being accepted into the second AIF. He was mentioned in dispatches for his work in North Africa and was later awarded the Military Medal for an action at Labuan Island in Borneo.

Arthur Megson was born on 7 January, 1914 in Mosman, Sydney, New South Wales. At that time, both his father and grandfather were employed by the *Sydney Morning Herald*. His grandfather had been with the paper since about 1870 and his father retired as Publisher at the end of the 1939–45 war.

Young Arthur started his schooling at Hurstville but when the family shifted to Manly transferred to the Fort Street School at Miller's Point. He was always keen on horses and became an apprentice jockey at twelve years of age with Albert Wood, at that time one of the leading trainers in Sydney. However, he continued his schooling at the Central Technical College, Ultimo and received his leaving certificate before he reached his fourteenth birthday.

About this time, due to ill health, trainer Albert Wood moved to Roma, Queensland and with the dark days of the depression upon him, young Arthur, like so many others of that era, 'went bush'. Over the next few years he tried various occupations including milking cows, cooking on a sheep property and goldmining at Tumbarumba, near Wagga with a mate named Bob Dunn, who was later killed at Tobruk. Strangely, Arthur did not know that Bob was killed until after the war although they were in Tobruk at the same time, but in different units.

From about 1932 until the outbreak of the war, Arthur worked on and managed cattle stations in the Northern Territory and Western Queensland.

It was while on holidays from his job as manager at Limbri Downs, Hughenden, that war was declared. He attempted to enlist at Young, New South Wales, but was rejected. His second attempt was made at Shepparton, Victoria. Again he was rejected. Undeterred, he returned to Hughenden and was successful on his third attempt. The enlisting officer told him that because of his size and knowledge of animals the army would probably employ him as a batman for a mounted infantry officer. (At that time, mounted infantry units had not converted from horses to motorised transport).

Arthur was enlisted into the 2nd AIF on 25 May, 1940 and allotted number QX2439. After a medical examination at Townsville he was sent by train to Redbank for recruit training and was then allotted to the 2/7th Field Company as a storeman.

The 2/7th boarded the troopship *Orion* which sailed for Haifa in Palestine. Megson's unit was attached to the 6th Division during its operations in North Africa, including the retreat to Tobruk and the subsequent seige. By this time Arthur had been promoted to Lance Corporal.

At Tobruk, during a particularly violent sandstorm, the Sergeant Major, in his wisdom, decided to carry out a full arms inspection. Listening to the men of his section being verbally assaulted by the Sergeant Major for having gritty rifles was too much for Arthur. He took a pace forward and struck him with the butt of his weapon. Megson was court-martialled at Tobruk and the penalty was two months Field Punishment, carried out in the front line, exposed to the enemy, doing pack drill twice a day for two hours at a

Arthur Megson on enlistment into 2nd AIF, May 1940.

time and loss of pay for the full period. It appeared the enemy were aware of his circumstances, because not once did they fire a shot at him while he did his pack drill.

Because of his knowledge of the bush and above average night vision, he volunteered to reconnoitre enemy minefields. This hazardous task involved leaving the Australian lines after dark with an escort of two or three infantrymen and locating and mapping the Axis minefields. After completing their task, the patrol would return to their own lines before daylight. On one occasion they located and mapped a minefield ten miles from Tobruk, five miles behind the enemy's rear positions. For this work Arthur Megson was mentioned in dispatches.

After seven and a half months at Tobruk the 2/7th was sent to Fe in Syria for recuperation. Whilst there the unit constructed a road from Fe to Onfe, further up the coast near Tripoli on the Turkish border.

The unit then returned to Tobruk and later assisted in the push from El Alamein. It was during this time that Megson was attached to a British unit and taught to operate a Scorpion flail minesweeping tank. There were only three Australians involved in this work, one from each Field Company in the Division. They cleared mines at El Alamein for over five months and for this hazardous duty Megson was awarded a special commendation. The 2/7th then returned via Egypt to Sydney on the liner Queen Mary for six weeks recreation leave, after which it was sent to Kairi in Queensland for some time before leaving Townsville on a Liberty ship for Milne Bay to prepare for the invasion of Lae.

The unit built roads and bridges in the Milne Bay area and after service at Finschhafen returned to Australia and was stationed between Ravenshoe and Mt Garnet, west of the Atherton Tablelands in far north Queensland. Here the unit built a number of chimneys for the cookhouses. Those chimneys are now the only visual evidence that a large army base was situated in that area.

The 2/7th returned to Townsville and boarded an American troopship bound for Morotai, later taking part in the invasion of Borneo.

It was during the operations at Labuan that Lance Corporal Megson was awarded the Military Medal. The sitation reads as follows:

Citation

LABUAN ISLAND Date—16 Jun 45

L/CPL MEGSON was attached to a troop of 2/9 Aust Armd Regt which was supporting an attack by 2/28 Aust Inf Bn on strong enemy positions in the LABUAN "pocket" area (807854) on 16 Jun 45.

After allowing the leading tanks and infantry to advance about 40 yards into a partially cleared area, the enemy opened fire with light and medium Machine Guns from well concealed positions on both flanks, causing heavy casualties to the infantry and bringing the advance to a standstill. The tanks had meanwhile been held up by a heavily mined area, with aerial bombs laid on the ground and suspended from trees.

Medal group of Lance Corporal Arthur Joseph Megson, MM, 2/7th Field Company.

Noticing that the tank advance had been halted, L/CPL MEGSON got into communication with the tank commander and after crawling forward under fire to make a reconnaissance returned to guide the tanks forward through the mines. For more than 3 hours he then assisted to direct the tank fire on to machine gun positons as they located them.

Later when the troop leader's Besa had been knocked out and the troop began to run short of ammunition, Megson again moved forward under fire and reconnoitred another route through the minefield, by which a fresh troop could be brought forward. Meanwhile he continued to direct the tank fire for a further 30 minutes until the relief had been completed.

It was largely owing to the gallantry and initiative of this NCO that the action of the tanks proved effective, and our infrantry were able to consolidate on the ground already won.

The operations took place during the closing stages of the war in the Pacific and on completion of its duties on Labuan Island the 2/7th returned to Australia and the men were demobilised at the Sydney showground. Typically, Arthur Megson declined to be presented formally with the MM and it was posted to him together with a cheque for £20.

After the war Mr Megson took a number of jobs including operating a grader for Coonabarabran Council, share farming, managing properties and preparing Dorset Horn rams at Molong for shows and exhibitions. Returning to Sydney he spent his last nine working years managing the Allied Mills poultry farms at Castle Hill.

Upon retirement in 1973 Mr and Mrs Megson moved to live north of Cairns, overlooking the Coral Sea.

Seeing him now in his twilight years, walking his Pekinese dog along the beach, one finds it hard to conjure up the vision of this man as the fearless fighter of bygone days.

Notes on Contributors

Ian Jones is a television and film writer/producer who devotes most of his spare time to historical research. Best known for his work on Ned Kelly, he is also a keen student of the Light Horse— the subject of two papers presented by him at Australian War Memorial History Conferences.

Hans Zwillenberg is the immediate past president of the Society, of which he has been a member for some years. He is a frequent contributor to *Sabretache.*

Major John Gorman graduated from RMC in 1947 and later served in cavalry units in Japan (BCOF) and in Germany and Korea with the 11th and 8th Hussars. He was serving in the Royal New South Wales Lancers on his retirement from the Army in 1960 and is now pursuing grazing interests in the Queanbeyan area.

Syd Wigzell is a member of long standing and has been Secretary of the Queensland Branch for over ten years. He is a book collector and is interested in all aspects of military history, with particular emphasis on weaponry. He has previously contributed articles to *Sabretache.*

Paul Rosenzweig holds an honours degree in zoology and a diploma in education and now teaches science at Casuarina (Northern Territory) High School. He is a sergeant (ARES) in the North West Mobile Force (Norforce) and is a frequent contributor to *Sabretache* and other publications.

John Price is a regular contributor to *Sabretache.* He is presently overseas on a tour of places of military historical interest, including a visit to Gallipoli for the 70th anniversary of the landing.

Clem Sargent has been a member of the society for many years and since 1978 Federal Secretary. He has published a number of papers on his main interest, the Peninsular War, and is presently on an overseas tour taking in, *inter alia*, the Iberian peninsula.

Peter Stanley in well known for his contributions to Australian military historical literature including *Sabretache.* His latest work was editing the Society's book on the Australian contingent to the war in the Sudan, *But little glory.* With Dr Michael McKernan, he is presently producing *Anzac Day: seventy years on*, a photographic record of how Anzac Day 1985 was celebrated.

John Meyers has been a member of the MHSA for five years and was a medal collector prior to commencing Wide Bay Antique Militaria at Gympie, Queensland. He specialises in Australian medals, badges, books, etc.

Book Reviews

The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–18.

H.S. Gullett, *The AIF in Sinai and Palestine*, 844 pp, photographs, maps, index. $35 hardcover, $17.95 paper.

F.M. Cutlack, *The Australian Flying Corps*, 493 pp, photographs, maps, glossary, index. $35 hardcover, $17.95 paper.

Both published by University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, Queensland, in association with The Australian War Memorial, 1984.

These books are volumes VII and VIII in the UQP's project to republish all of the Australian official histories of the 1914–18 war. They are reprints, almost exactly reproducing the originals but printed on thinner paper of lesser quality which reduces their thickness to approximately half that of the earlier editions—a very worthwhile feature having regard to the premium on space in historians' reference bookshelves.

Both books contain a series preface written in 1980 by Robert O'Neill, then head of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University, which outlines the background to the writing of the official history and details of its mentor, Dr Charles Bean, who wrote eight of the twelve volumes.

Volume VII records the work of the Australian Light Horse in the British campaigns in Sinai, Palestine and Syria during 1916, 1917 and 1918 and was the first volume Bean entrusted to another writer. An introduction by A.J. Hill, specific to this volume, follows O'Neill's general preface. It discusses the choice of Gullett as the author, his qualifications and defects, including a comparison with Bean, and the many problems which arose during the book's preparation. These included some difficulty with Chauvel, (and much help from him), and with the publishers over editorial revision of his manuscript.

Hill is critical of some of the book's features, judging them to be irritating or even offensive to the modern reader. In particular, Hill is disappointed by Gullett's uncritical acceptance of the Australians' attitude of racial superiority—the 'mixture of loathing and contempt with which they regarded the people of Egypt and Palestine'. He makes other comments on Gullett's work, including Gullett's views on the significance of the apparently successful employment of cavalry against modern weapons. Hill speculates on the extent to which the successes of the Desert Mounted Corps may have delayed the development of armour and a doctrine of armoured warfare in the British Army. These keen perceptions oblige one to re-read parts of the history. I strongly recommend this new edition, enriched as it is by Alec Hill's insights.

In his introduction to Volume VIII, The Australian Flying Corps, George Odgers discusses Bean's selection of Cutlack as writer and his sources and preparation of material, but it is largely a precis of the book. No attention is drawn to the deficiencies in the earlier editions. Odgers repeats the myth that Australia was alone among the dominions in establishing a flying service of its own in the 1914–18 war. In fact, India and South Africa established small flying corps and even deployed them briefly into action, in Mesopotamia and West Africa respectively; and Canada's belatedly-formed flying corps missed action in France by a few weeks only.

In an assessment of Cutlack's work, Bean congratulated him on avoiding 'the great danger of making it a mere string of dogfights'. It is, indeed, much more than that, encompassing aspects of the wider context of the war and the raising, training, equipping and deployment of the AFC, its technical development and its splendid operational record. But it is detail of the combats in the clouds accompanied by thumb-nail biographical notes on the participants which largely distinguishes the book from its six-volume British counterpart, Raleigh's and Jones' *The War in the Air*. With only four squadrons in the field, it was practicable, and useful, to include much such detail in the one-volume AFC history, something that the British writers were, perhaps for practical reasons, unable to fit in or possibly, because of the RFC/RAF's well-known reluctance to give prominence to individuals, unwilling to include.

Volume VIII, first published in 1923 and only very slightly revised in the many editions since then, needs re-writing, although it might be asked what history does not? But except to close students

of the AFC and the 1914–18 air war, its defects are not obvious; most people regard it as a first class work as it stands. A feature of this edition is the cover, which shows a remarkable *colour* photograph of a Bristol Fighter and crew of the First Squadron, AFC, in Palestine. This is one of a number of such photographs taken in 1918 by Captain Frank Hurley, using the Paget Colour Process.

UQP merits much praise for their enterprise in reprinting books which had virtually become collectors' items. Of the series, these two volumes, VII and VIII, are my favourites. They are removed from the squalid horrors of the trench warfare in Gallipoli, Picardy and Flanders and the principal characters are mounted, on horses or aeroplanes, and thus well equipped in their war of movement to demonstrate those qualities of dash and initiative claimed by Bean and Gullett and Cutlack and others to be natural to Australians, and not least to the men of the Light Horse and to those airmen who came to the Australian Flying Corps from the Light Horse. The mounted actions at Romani and Beersheba and the devastating air-to-ground attacks by the First Squadron, AFC at the Battle of Armageddon support such a notion.

These volumes are not only soundly based history but are satisfying and easily read. They make exciting reading even for small boys. Indeed, they are histories for us all.

Alan Fraser

Stephen Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The Soldier* 1890–1952, Vol. 1. George Allen and Unwin, London, 1983; 637 pp., 16 illustrations, $32.00 hardcover.

The life of General Dwight D. Eisenhower continues to charm the interests of historians in the 1980s. Stephen Ambrose, editor of the Eisenhower papers and a longtime student of the general and American foreign policy in the period 1940–1960, has written the first volume of a projected two-part biography of the only man in United States history to occupy that country's highest military and civil offices.

This work is not a study of Eisenhower's 'life and times'. It is a detailed study of Eisenhower the man and the way in which he interacted with his environment. The concern is less with examining General Eisenhower as Supreme Allied Commander etc., than it is to gain an insight of Dwight Eisenhower as a personality. This is the primary appeal of Ambrose's work.

The author begins by offering some new information and fresh perspectives on Eisenhower's formative years. The entry of Eisenhower into the US Army is traced and we are made to see the origin of his 'strong emphasis on getting things done', a sentiment he was to carry throughout his life. Ambrose then begins the chronicle of Eisenhower's two decades of frustration; failing to see combat in World War I and the following string of staff jobs which prevented him from doing what he earnestly desired, leading troops. The reader's attention is directed to the reason for Eisenhower's continual staff employment. Ambrose shows that Ike was a good staff officer, so good in fact that MacArthur refused to release Eisenhower from service as his staff officer in the Philippines until external pressure was applied. Yet it is quite apparent that even then Eisenhower had little control over the direction of his career or ensuring its balanced development. It was only because of General George Marshall's association with Eisenhower that the major of sixteen years made good his escape from mundane staff work to set out on a meteoric rise to world acclaim as an all-time great military commander.

Ambrose then leads the reader through Eisenhower's appointment to construct an overall war strategy for the US in 1942 to being placed in overall command of US forces in Europe. The creation of the Supreme Allied Command in Europe is discussed and the success and failures of Eisenhower as the Supreme Commander in North Africa, the Mediterranean and finally the cross-channel invasion (Ike's greatest hour) are assessed. Following the defeat of Germany, the author analyses Eisenhower's role as commander of the American Occupation Zone, US Army Chief of Staff, president of Columbia University, Supreme Commander of the newly-created NATO and finally his long-awaited acceptance of a presidential nomination in 1952.

The two major divisions in this work—the war years and the period between 1946 and 1952—are expertly held together by the isolation of two themes which give continuity to Eisenhower's development. The first is his effective leadership and unification of Allied forces into the achievement of a single objective, the defeat of Nazi Germany. The second dwells upon the General's gradual change of heart towards the Soviet Union and his eventual acceptance of a presidential nomination after forming a solid friendship with many rich and powerful members of the Republican Party.

The book succeeds in showing the on-going components of Eisenhower's determination, motivation and farsightedness in being able to accept temporary setbacks in favour of achieving long-term objectives and his ability to make a way open for the attainment of personal goals.

The author's admiration for Eisenhower is intense yet this is no hagiology. Ambrose is still able to state objectively the strengths and weaknesses of his subject. He is critical of Eisenhower's failure to be aggressive in his leadership of the campaign in North Africa and his vacillation over what to do about Italy. He also states that Eisenhower was 'immediately and ultimately' responsible for 'one of the great mistakes of the war, the failure to take and open Antwerp promptly (during the thrust toward Germany in late 1944) which represented the only real chance the Allies had to end the war in 1944'. Related to this mistake was Eisenhower's inability to effectively control Montgomery and his failure to replace the Field Marshal when he had serious doubts about his effectiveness. The author's discussion of these types of incident is highly personal which helps the reader to 'get inside' the personality of Eisenhower and ultimately understand why he was such a great leader. Intermixed with these events, Ambrose manages to place an assessment of Eisenhower's relationship with Kay Summersby, commenting that Ike was 'inept in such matters'. The author concludes from an examination of Eisenhower's letters to his wife, and books later published by Summersby, that 'what is important to note is that not even Kay ever claimed that they had a genuine love affair'. Ambrose also conveys the sense in which the General, too, suffered during the war; the long separation from his wife and concern for his son as a junior army officer serving within his command.

The post-war section is written as a lead-in for Volume II. The author's concern is to show the successful manipulation of Eisenhower's sense of duty by those who continually looked upon him as the nation's leader after 1945, which resulted in his about-face with respect to political ambition. Yet in a tragic incident thoroughly examined by Ambrose, Eisenhower, for reasons of political expediency, failed to defend the most important figure in the development of his career, General George Marshall, from the perverse attacks of Senator Joseph McCarthy. At the close of Volume I the reader finds Eisenhower 'eager to assume the duties and responsibilities of his new office'—the US Presidency.

This book is very well written. It is intensely readable and able to hold the reader's attention throughout. Seasoned with anecdotes, the author succeeds in bringing the reader to terms with the essential character of Eisenhower. These qualities all add up to excellent military biography and an example of this literary genre in its purest form.

In terms of production quality the book embodies a very high standard. It is clearly structured and arranged, aided by a series of photographic reproductions, contains a large body of endnotes (32pp) and a detailed bibliography. The book is well indexed and attractively bound. At a cost of $32.00 for the hardback edition, the price is not high by today's standards.

This book is highly recommended. I would imagine that in years to come Ambrose's work will be regarded as the standard biography of General Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Tom Frame

Michael Kater, *The Nazi Party—A Social Profile of Members and Leaders, 1919–1945*. Basil Blackwell, 1983. 415 pages, not illustrated. Our copy from George Allen and Unwin. Recommended price $59.65.

David Irving, *The German Atomic Bomb—The History of Nuclear Research in Nazi Germany*. Da Capo Press Incorporated, 1967. Paperback, pp 329, illustrated. Our copy from Australia and New Zealand Book Company Pty Ltd.

The two books are of peripheral interest to military historians. Kater's work is a treatise of the sociology of the Nazi party during its existence between 1919 and 1945. The first part deals with the social composition of the rank and file of the party. It shows the changes in the membership during distinct eras; from 1919 to the Beer Hall Putsch; from 1924 to the crucial election in 1930; during the rise to power; from 1933 to the outbreak of World War II; and the war years.

This is repeated for the leadership cadres. Kater concentrates on the age factor, on the role and attitudes of the women and on the educational, family and economic background of the rank and file. With minor variations, the leaders are treated likewise. Some of the more startling findings are that the traditional German elite was over-represented. The reason was the fear, on the part of large numbers of this elite, of right-wing radicalism which the traditional elite sought to prevent and which otherwise would have cost them their traditional influence in Germany. The result was

that the Nazi party did not achieve, even by force and brutality, what it originally had intended to do by persuasion, namely to remove the old class differences and forge an entirely new community. The social conditions which had prevailed in Germany after 1918 and again after 1933 were still largely intact after 1945.

The book is scholarly to the point of being dry. Over one third of it is taken up with statistics, graphs and footnotes, of which the bulk refer to primary sources. Despite its extremely high price, the book is a must for the student of the political history of Germany from 1919–1945 but the military historian would be advised to borrow it from a library rather than buy it.

Irving's book on German nuclear science developments is not new. The copy under review is a paperback edition of a 1967 publication. It is of considerable interest to anybody engaged in a comparative study of science and technology developments in Germany, vis-a-vis those that occurred elsewhere. Given much more time than they had available to them the Germans would and could have produced an atomic bomb. Two factors militated against speedy progress in implementing German nuclear projects—their work was directed by scientists, not by military commanders as in the USA, and the emphasis in the German effort on nuclear theory rather than on the production of hardware. Their primary objective seems to have been the re-establishment of German prominence in the field of pure science. Allied to this underlying theme was the German view, fortunately erroneous, that they were a long way ahead of the Americans and the British, whereas in fact the opposite was the case despite a much earlier start. The gap between science and industry had denied the Germans the necessary engineering advantage; for instance, the cyclotron, available to the allied effort as early as 1940.

The book is eminently readable, even for a layman in nuclear physics. It is well illustrated and documented. Because of its reasonable price, it would be a very useful addition to the library of a military historian, particularly in view of the strategic discussions bearing on the conduct of the war.

H.J. Zwillenberg

Peter King (ed), *Australia's Vietnam—Australia in the Second Indo-China War*, George Allen and Unwin, North Sydney, 1983. $9.95 softcover.

Dr Peter King, Professor of Political Studies at the University of Papua and New Guinea, has produced a work which examines the nature of the Vietnam conflict and its influence on Australian society. Contributors include a politician, a former diplomat and various academics with specialist knowledge. Idealogically, the authors make their positions quite clear.

Chapters concern the following areas; the foreign affairs debate; Australian Labour Party policy; Australia's military involvement; how the troops performed; national service and draft resistance; the impact of public opinion and polls; and news coverage of Vietnam.

As an introductory text, the book succeeds in its purpose. Coverage is wide but necessarily selective and subjective and the book should be read with an open mind. Opinions expressed on the evidence are backed by extensive footnotes, which are a valuable source of further information. Indeed, the book's main grace is its well researched approach to the topics. The style is pleasant and readable if iconoclastic at times. Some points raised are profound but others are diminished through lack of objectivity.

Dr Jane Ross provides a study of the performance of Australian soldiers in Vietnam. Of particular interest are the controversial aspects of 'Civic Action'. There is some suggestion that the lack of a coherent policy squandered our hopes for success, which may not be a fault of the Army so much as a problem of political control. The deployment of manpower and resources competed with strictly military priorities and the style of the individual task force commanders often affected the necessary impetus.

Dr Ross gives useful insights into the motivations of individual soldiers, producing evidence which leads to broad themes. Questions are raised which compare and contrast the differing attitudes of conscripts and regular servicemen. More questions are raised when the evidence fails to support popularly-held beliefs of the period. These insights will strike a chord in anyone who served at the

time. Dr Ross' attempts to correlate evidence and suggest explanations for types of military behavior are commendable.

The book features assessments of political attitudes in the wider community, since public debate and opinion-making had no small impact on governmental decision-making. One point was very revealing— '...in 1968 only one mass commercial organisation was regularly probing public opinion; academic surveys were scarce and polling by parties was primitive and haphazard. By the war's end, in 1975, there were four market research agencies taking regular soundings of the public's political views'. This reflected the increasing awareness of a more sophisticated electorate willing to consider and comment on public policy.

The role of the press is well covered, providing a critique of the responsibility of the press in reporting events. In a comparison of Australia's situation with that of the United States, the book records that 'Australian editorial decision-makers adopted a less serious, less probing, interest than their US counterparts'.

In his conclusions, Professor King displays some optimism for the future. He believes that 'Australia has certainly retained a measure of independence in policy'. He argues that 'Australia's location and regional interaction give us some ability to demonstrate correctly in a third world the virtues of parliamentary reforms, media freedoms, social egalitarianism, welfare politics, (etc.)'.

Overall, *Australia's Vietnam* is a thought-provoking assessment of the Vietnam legacy in Australian foreign policy and is well worth reading. It is a timely examination of some of the more controversial aspects of the period, showing the benefits of ten years' reflection freed from the emotional climate of the time.

Mike Fogarty

Roger Buckley, *Occupation Diplomacy: Britain, the United States and Japan 1945–1952.* International Study Series, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1982, 294 pp, $58 hardcover.

The occupation of Japan after World War II has often been considered an exclusively American endeavour. To correct some large misconceptions, Roger Buckley has produced the first thorough examination of British policy toward the occupation of Japan between 1945 and 1952.

Buckley examines the major issues in the diplomacy of the occupation—the preservation of British prestige, the emperor's status, the new Japanese constitution, the significance of war crimes prosecutions, the limits set for foreign supervision, the formulation of Britain's economic goals, etc. and has analysed the trends evident within the seven-year period of the occupation.

The author's three broad aims are set out very early in the book: 'to establish what British aims for the occupation were...to determine the relative success or failure of British diplomacy in achieving what were at times remarkably ambitious objectives...to examine whether British diplomacy towards Japan offers any tentative insights into the conduct of British foreign policy in the immediate post-war period'.

Within this general field of research, Buckley's book will be most useful. He has clearly exploited the relevant unpublished archives in London, the United States and Japan, thoroughly documented and referenced his arguments and expanded on an area of research only recently touched in monographs. The main thrust of the book, however, will not change the basic orientation of thinking on the occupation. Buckley's aim is to demonstrate that Great Britain and the British Commonwealth, Australia in particular, played a part in the management of the occupation, though it was always subordinate to that of the US. He goes on to show the extent of British interest in Japan and argues that it was greater than generally believed. He further asserts that strenuous efforts were made to influence American policy throughout the occupation, notably at the war's end when the British government under Attlee hoped to secure an effective voice in determining policy in Tokyo, and later between 1947 and 1951 when the British wished to discuss the proposed peace treaty. However, as a consequence of the declining power of Britain in Asia and of the intricate relationship shared by General MacArthur and leading groups within the US government bureaucracy, no real impact was achieved.

Buckley also reveals the competition which existed between Australia and Britain for Commonwealth leadership in East and South-East Asia, and correctly concentrates on the crucial interaction between MacArthur and British diplomats over the diplomacy of the occupation and its influence on Soviet-American relations.

The conclusions the author makes are both well argued and well supported with evidence (*vide* seventy pages of notes). Yet I would take issue with one of his more substantial conclusions. He states on the final page that 'the occupation years (were)...the last opportunity to arrest a growing British feebleness in the region', though he provides ample evidence throughout the book to show that in spite of British aspirations there were no available means for the situation to be altered in any fundamental way.

This book will not appeal to the general reader. It is based on a relatively minor historical theme, written in a scholarly style with heavy reliance on unpublished sources. In terms of production quality the book is of a very high standard though unfortunately it lacks photographs and contains only one small, general map. The inclusion of more of these items would enhance the presentation considerably. The quoted retail price is one of the major barriers to recommending it. At $58 in hardback, a price I found difficult to understand (it is not a large book), its appeal would seem to be limited to the keen academic of British diplomacy in Asia during the post-World War II period.

Tom Frame

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Sabretache is again indebted to Max Chamberlain for the compilation of this index.

Society Notes

Annual Subscriptions

The Society's annual subscription of $A20 for the year 1985-86 falls due on 1 July. Payment should be made to branch secretaries for branch members or direct to the federal secretary for corresponding members or subscribers. Early payment will ensure continuity of receipt of *Sabretache* and ease the secretaries' workload.

Members' Wants

Member P. Heafield of 40 Delaney Avenue, Bright, 3741 seeks the following medals for his collection:—

War of 1914-18 — AIF

1914-15 Star		
1088	Cpl K.V. Nuzum	2 FAB
BW Medal		
7528	Pte W. Knight	8 Bn
2224	Pte H.H. Skinner	54 Bn
Victory		
4412	Dvr J.R. Parker	1 Bn
	Lt W.O. Cooper	
5425	Pte J.J. McKibbin	57 Bn
5673	Pte R.A. Thompson	18 Bn
4420	Pte H.A. Fairchild	20 Bn
1880	Pte F.J. Moult	10 MG Coy

War of 1939-45

Aust Service		
19568	R.A. Hickey	

Wanted by Paul Rosenzweig, 46 Freshwater Road, Jinjili, N.T. 5792:—

1914-18 trio to Morgan Tindal, RN
1914-15 Star & Victory Medal to Major M.J. Herbert, AIF.

Corrigendum

On page 3 of the January/March issue of *Sabretache*, a paragraph in the article 'Captain William Mair's Journal' failed to print in full. It should read as follows:

The Journal

Captain William Mair, VD, was a son of Hugh Mair, an officer who served in the British Army for forty six years, being with the Black Watch (42nd Highlanders) from 1793 until the peace of 1814, including the Egyptian campaign of 1801, and the whole of the Peninsular War under the Duke of Wellington.

Society sales

Readers are reminded that the society has recently made available to members and others a Sudan Commemorative Figurine of an infantry private of the NSW Sudan contingent, finely sculpted in pewter. The price is $35 direct or $37.50 including packing and postage.

Also available is the society's new publication *But little glory*, edited by Peter Stanley, presenting a comprehensive coverage of the Sudan contingent's formation, service, heraldry and weapons and its significance in Australian military history. The price is $5 to MHSA members and $7.50 (post free) to non-members.

Both items are available from the MHSA, PO Box 30, Garran, ACT, 2605 or Neville Foldi, 9 Parnell Place, Fadden, ACT, 2904.

Sudan medal query

Michael Barthorp, author of *War on the Nile: Britain, Egypt and the Sudan 1881-1898*, who provided a number of illustrations (one of which was embarrassingly printed back-to-front!) for the society's recent Sudan commemorative book, *But little glory*, has written congratulating the MHSA on the book's publication. His comments on the book's Sudan medal roll will interest medal collectors. Can any member provide further information on the soldier of the 58th which Mr Barthorp mentions? Mr Barthorp served in the Northamptonshire Regiment, the descendant of the 58th foot.

I am not a medal man but I was nevertheless interested in the medal roll, particularly on account of 468 C/Sgt F.P. Liggins who I see served with the 58th Regiment in the Zulu War and, I wonder, in the Transvaal War of 1881 (for which no medal was awarded). The 58th remained in South Africa from 1879 until September 1885 when it went to Hong Kong so it would seem that Liggins must have gone to Australia from South Africa. Intriguing too, that he found himself back there in 1900. I wonder if any more is known about him?

Diamond Hill, where he was wounded, in what was almost the last 'proper' battle of the 2nd Boer War, had another Australian connection for, according to Winston Churchill, who was present, it was the West Australians who at the end of the battle found themselves at Bronkhorst Spruit, where the first shots of the 1st Boer War had been fired in 1881.

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Military Historical Society of Australia

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Military Historical Society of Australia will be held at 7.30 p.m. on Monday, 15 July at the Returned Services League National Headquarters, Constitution Avenue, Campbell, A.C.T. All members are urged to attend.

R.C. Haines
Acting Secretary

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:
Mike Lucas, G.P.O. Box 1052, Canberra, A.C.T. 2601
Orders and remittances should be forwarded to this address.

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