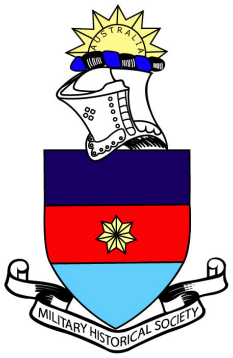
Military Historical Society of Australia
Sabretache



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Journal and Proceedings of the MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

SABRETACHE

Vol XXVI July/September 1985 Number 3

Registered by Australia Post — Publication No. NBH0587

SABRETACHE

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

JULY-SEPTEMBER 1985
VOLUME XXVI-NUMBER 3

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.

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

SABRETACHE

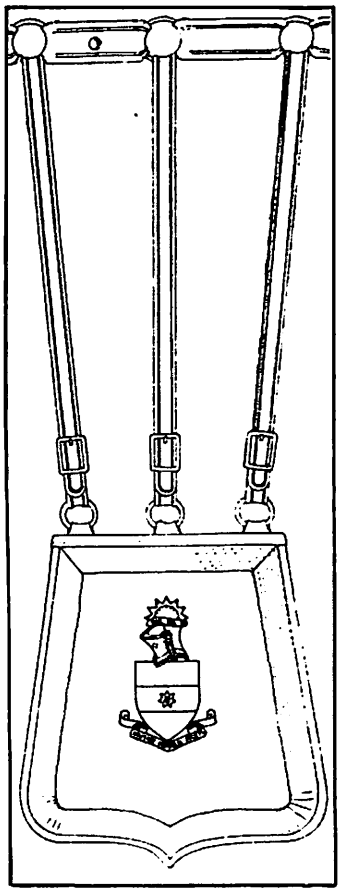
Editorial Note 1986 will be a big year for the Navy when it celebrates its 75th anniversary. On 10 July 1911, HM King George V granted the title of Royal Australian Navy to the permanent naval forces and the title Royal Australian Naval Reserve to the citizen naval forces.

The highlight of the celebrations will be the unveiling by Her Majesty the Queen of the National Naval Memorial in Canberra in March 1986. Other naval events planned for next year include port visits by ships, presentation by the Queen of new colours to HMAS Cerberus in March 1986 and staggered Navy Weeks throughout the year, with a large Navy presence in South Australia to mark that State's sesquicentenary. Probably the most spectacular event will be a fleet review on Sydney Harbour by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh on 4 October 1986. Ships from the RN, USN, RNZN and Canadian Forces have been invited to participate.

The press and specialist journals such as *White Ensign* and *Naval Historical Bulletin/Review* (from which the above program is drawn) will be publishing details.

Sabretache wishes to play a part in recognising this important anniversary and it is intended to devote a large part of the July/September 1986 issue to articles on naval matters. We hope that those of our readers with an interest in naval history will give some thought to offering contributions. Regrettably, *Sabretache* receives far too little input about our navy (and air force) and this seems a suitable opportunity to redress the balance, for the senior service. Should the response exceed our capacity to fit all suitable material into that issue, we will hold the surplus over for future publication. It is emphasised that contributions on naval matters are **always** welcome. The word 'military' in the Society's title should be read in its broad sense.

If you decide to contribute, your piece should be with the editor by March 1986. This allows us time to prepare the material for publication and to find suitable illustrations if the article needs them and you are not able to provide them from your own resources. Both major and minor



articles are sought. The shorter pieces might cover, for instance, naval personalities, naval events, a warship's history, naval militaria and decorations and medals.

If I can be of any help, please feel free to write to me care of the Society, or ring me on (062) 88 5339 (home). Happy researching!

Mike Fogarty

Liggins Query Readers may recall the query in the April/June 1985 issue by Michael Barthorp, author of *War on the Nile* (reviewed in this issue) about the service of Sergeant F.P. Liggens subsequent to his service with the 58th Regiment in South Africa.

The article by Victorian Branch president George Ward, *Forty Years an Infanteer*, in this issue provides the information sought. We hope members will take encouragement from this result and make full use of their journal to satisfy their need for information.

Armoured Centre Readers will notice that this issue of Sabretache contains several contributions by our Vice Patron, Major General Ronald Hopkins, CBE, including the first part of a major article and a book review.

On 31 October 1985, His Royal Highness Prince Charles will officially open at Puckapunyal, Victoria the rebuilt Armoured Centre of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps. This occasion will also mark an unusual (indeed, we believe, unique) tribute to General Hopkins' contribution to Australian armour in peace and war: the new Centre will be named Hopkins Barracks; we understand this is the first Australian Army installation to be named after a living Australian. A fitting tribute to one of whom it could well be said — to paraphrase the title of an article by Ronald Hopkins in *Sabretache* of October/December 1984 — 'armour is in his bones'.

We hope to publish a report on the occasion in the October/December issue of Sabretache and to include details of the new Royal Australian Armoured Corps Museum which will be included in the complex.

Tan Roberts

Maritime Museum The Federal Government recently announced plans for the development of the National Maritime Museum on a 4.75-hectare site in the Darling Harbour redevelopment area of Sydney. It is expected that the first stage of the museum will be constructed by 1988 at a cost of the order of $25 million. The announcement stated that 'The National Maritime Museum will not be a dry repository of relics but a living institution, of interest both to Australians and overseas visitors, which would provide a major educational and research facility for Australia'.

Sailors' Memorial Australia's only memorial for merchant seamen lost in the two world wars was dedicated on 25 August. The memorial, a 3.6-metre anchor, has been placed on the banks of the Yarra River, Melbourne, at the World Trade Centre.

Ronald Hopkins

'Hurry and Wait': journeys by air in peace and war

THE Army maintains an ambivalent attitude towards the Air Force. On the one hand it nourishes a strong appreciation amounting almost to envy, of the skill, courage and daring of those who fly in wartime and, by their flying, support and protect their brothers-in-arms on the ground. On the other hand, the army is very often forced to use the transport services of the RAAF for their movements to and from the battle zone.

Many are the soldiers, called to an airfield at some improbable hour to travel to some outlandish destination who find nothing and no-one to indicate where to go or what to do. Eventually, packed like sardines in hot and airless discomfort, they are left, forgotten and neglected, until, quite accidentally it would seem, a spark of interest attracts the attention of the forlorn passengers. The civil airways have a soothing formula: 'It is regretted...owing to a minor difficulty...'. Not so the air force. Hours may go by as the hot sun wheels through the heavens. Nothing moves. Suddenly activity sweeps through our hosts, 'All out' is the order; we change to another aircraft; no one knows why. Hence the Army's view that 'Hurry and Wait' is an appropriate motto for an organisation which has to use such devious means to achieve its ends.

These accounts of occasional excursions into the air over a period of 60-70 years are not confined to the RAAF. But they will take the reader back to some quite early aircraft and cover flying—or rather being flown—in two wars. I would not claim any special merit for them; rather they might be taken as a reasonable selection from any army man's experience. Most of us, with a variety of opportunity, would come up with a number of very similar examples of what can happen to soldiers in the air.

Air Contact Patrol Course—Jerusalem 1918

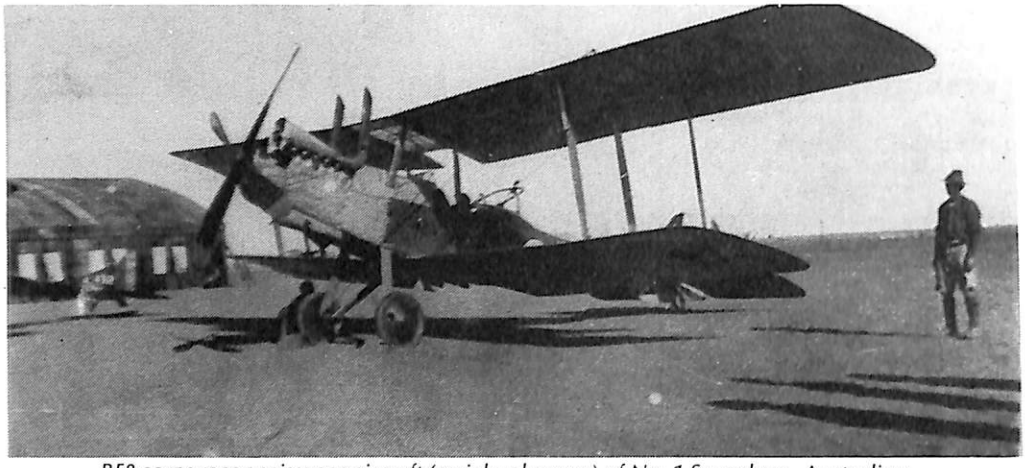
The Anzac Mounted Division, to which my first-war regiment belonged, spent the summer of 1918 holding defensive positions in the Jordan Valley against superior Turkish forces. Wireless telegraphy was still in an early stage; no equipment small enough to be carried into battle on a packhorse had been developed and we relied on visual signals during operations. The British had developed a system of communicating between aircraft and ground forces and this was being taught to Light Horse officers at the Royal Flying Corps School at the Jerusalem aerodrome.

The course I attended lasted one week. The 20 students flew daily as passengers with RFC pilots in two-seater biplanes of about the RE8 vintage and practiced reporting ground situations to reconnaissance aircraft. In brief, each army sub-unit such as a squadron of light horse carried a 2-metre square of black canvas with white flaps to allow different patterns of black and white squares to be displayed on the ground. Each variation gave a brief situation report for the pilot to carry back to the nearest ground headquarters. The aircraft would circle and acknowledge each change on the panel with a blast on its klaxon horn.

When the ground station signalled 'message ends' the pilot would write out the whole message, enclose it in a weighted bag attached to coloured streamers and drop it on the nearest headquarters. Standard messages concerned enemy strength and location, own troops' situation and requirements such as ammunition or reinforcements.

On my return to the regiment, these mysteries were passed on to the other troop and squadron leaders but there was no way of practising. The heat was intense: nothing moved in daylight as we were overlooked by the Turkish forces in the mountains east of Jordan. Week after week the situation was unchanged and we had no call to communicate with our aircraft. In the final offensive, when we pursued the Turks up to Amman and the Hedjaz railway, reconnaissance planes must have all been needed on the opposite flank. Our new canvas squares remained folded on our troop pack-horses. At least I had gained a week-long holiday in Jerusalem.

Shortly before the Egyptian riots in mid-1919 I had been appointed Staff Captain, 3rd Light Horse Brigade. When the riots began we moved to Zagazig, a large native city between Cairo and the Suez canal, and became responsible for the whole Eastern Delta area. During this period,



RE8 corps reconnaissance aircraft (serial unknown) of No. 1 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps, Palestine, late 1917. (David Packer collection per Jim Prendergast) *The RE8 was nicknamed the 'Harry Tate' after the famous music hall comedian. It is unlikely that the author's first experience of aerobatic loops and rolls would have been obtained on this ungainly type of machine.*

British aircraft occasionally visited us and I had a number of flights, including my first experience of aerobatic flying, over Zagazig.

I learnt the thrill of the loop and the half-roll. The pilots also enjoyed the steep dive at some object, such as an unfortunate donkeyman on the bank of a canal; the pilot would pull out very close to the ground and laugh at the resulting confusion he had left behind.

A site for the Armoured Fighting Vehicle Schools—December 1940

Following the 'blitzkrieg' and the fall of France in mid-1940 the Australian Government decided to establish an armoured training organisation and raise an Armoured Division for service with the AIF in the Middle East. As the only armour-trained officer in the country, I was appointed to the General Staff at Army Headquarters, Melbourne, with the task of bringing this into effect. A training organisation was the first priority, with separate schools for tank driving and servicing, tank gunnery, tank wireless and tactics. These would need living and instructional accommodation for about 600 staff and students but it was essential to locate them close to an area of at least 30,000 acres of rolling country where gunnery practice and tactical exercises could be carried out. Time was of the utmost importance. I had several possible sites in view: central Victoria, the Riverina and the country to the east of Murray Bridge in South Australia. I was fortunate in being lent a Lockheed bomber aircraft by the RAAF in order to complete the mission in the quickest possible time.

In the air, it proved relatively simple to visualise the possibilities of any particular area. As we neared a tract of country which I needed to study closely, I went into the bomb-aimer's cubby hole, flat on my stomach in the nose of the plane looking down through a wide perspex window. I was able to communicate with the pilot and so could drop to a low altitude for close inspection of any spot needing detailed study. Briefly, we flew from Melbourne to the Seymour-Puckapunyal area, then to the Riverina country and finally to the Murray Mallee. I then spent a day motoring through and around the Puckapunyal site which had seemed most suitable from the air and gave the 'go-ahead' to the various staffs concerned in land acquisition, building construction and planning for a tank gunnery range which would, I very much hoped, become the best of its size in the world at that time. Without the instant co-operation of the RAAF and the excellent Lockheed aircraft it would have been impossible to complete such a reconnaissance in two days.

To Egypt in war-time by flying boat—1941

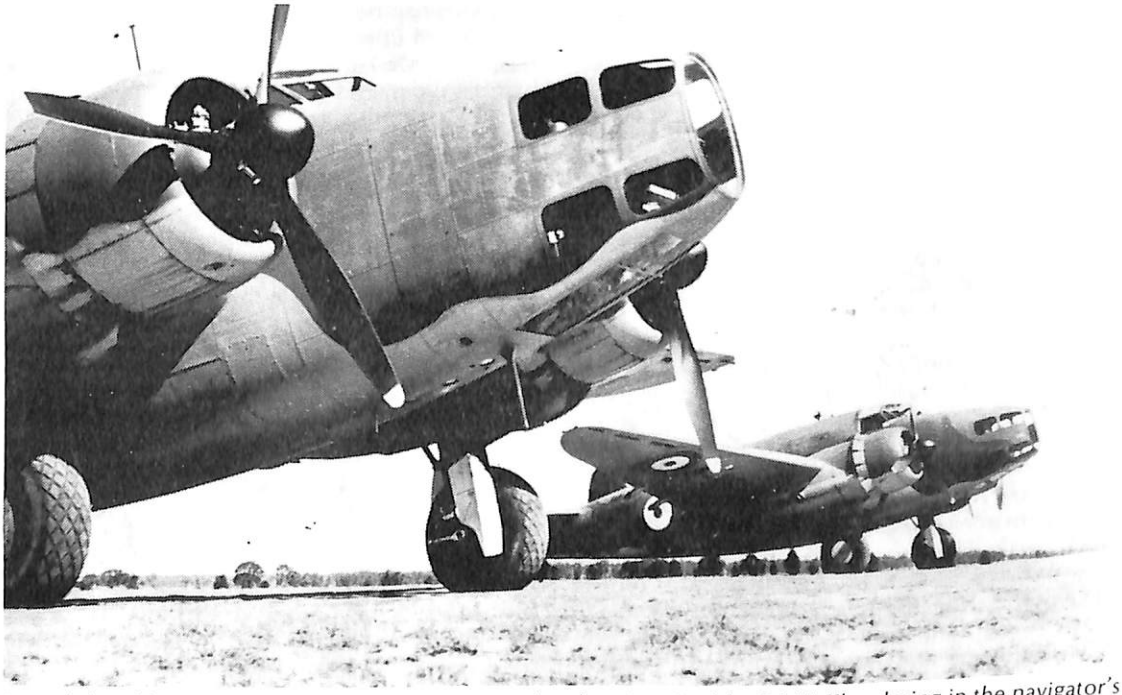
The 1st Australian Armoured Division was beginning to take shape in mid-1941 and I began to think of directing our training towards the requirements of the Egyptian Western Desert where we expected to join the 6th and 7th Australian Infantry Divisions some time in 1942.

In order to gain experience of the conditions and discover the latest tactical methods of dealing with a Nazi enemy, I persuaded General Northcott, who had been appointed to command the Armoured Division, that I should spend some

time with British armour in the Western Desert. I left Sydney Harbour by BOAC flying boat on 13 June 1941 and returned by the landplane air service on 5 August. These Short 'Empire' flying boats were most comfortable. They had a boat-shaped hull and took off from and alighted on the water. The upper deck was the flight deck where the captain, first officer, navigator and engineer had their stations. Below were the galley and saloon. Included in the latter was the 'quarter-deck', a useful space between the passenger seating and numerous portholes along the side of the hull. Here the passengers and ship's officers could stretch their legs and converse while watching the passing scenery. This was often a delightful exercise since the flying boats rarely flew at above 5000 feet and any islands or dry land below showed out in clear detail. The absurd thoughts one has! I distinctly remember as we flew over the island of Komodo in the (then) Dutch Indies that if there really were dragons living there, as I had been taught, I should easily be able to see one! The flying boats had a fairly limited range and needed to re-fuel during the day. The day's flight had to be completed before dark since night landings on water were out of the question. Being a very nautical type of flying machine, we talked of 'port' and 'starboard', and we carried 'Mae West' life jackets for all personnel. On the 1000 km hop across the desert from Lake Habbaniyeh near Baghdad to the Gulf of Akaba, there was much amusement amongst the passengers when it was discovered that, should our aircraft strike trouble, she carried no parachutes because, of course, she was a boat! 'Three cheers for the Navy' said someone. Apart from this stretch of desert, it was remarkable how frequently we passed stretches of water suitable for a landing.

From Sydney our route passed up the east coast to a point north of Townsville, skipped over the base of Cape York Peninsula and flew across Arnhem Land to Darwin. We refuelled in the Gulf of Carpentaria and passed over Groote Eylandt. The night was spent in Darwin. From there our course took us over Timor and the Dutch East Indies. The aircraft flew fairly low and the beauty of these islands was remarkable with the colour of the sea changing from deep blue to the pale green which indicated shallow water and often coral reefs. The day's flight ended at Singapore which my wife Nora and I had visited in 1929 on our way back from India.

One of the peculiar incidents of our flight now occurred. I should have mentioned earlier that our route passed through Bangkok. The Japanese



Early model Lockheed Hudson general reconnaissance bomber aircraft of the RAAF. The glazing in the navigator's position in the nose would have provided the author with a perfect view of the terrain. (AWM 128046)

had been waging war in China for several years and this had resulted in a kind of 'occupation' of Thailand by the Japanese. For this reason, although there was still peace between Australia and Japan, it had been decided that I should travel as a civilian. I was given a new passport in which my occupation was stated as public servant and all items of clothing, etc. which might link me with the army were locked away in the farthest part of the flying boat.

A new passenger boarded the aircraft at Singapore—a 'Free Frenchman'. He told us that he had escaped from France to Morocco, thence stowed away in a ship bound, he fondly thought, for America. Strictly speaking, it may be that he was correctly informed; but the ship docked at Martinique where the Nazi-dominated French held sway and once more he was flung into gaol. Finally he reached the United States, was given British Air Force rank and posted to an important liaison job in the Middle East. As confirmation he produced that morning's Singapore newspaper which carried the full story. Now he was heading for Cairo. We all went ashore at Bangkok and formed a queue to get our entry permits. The Frenchman was a couple ahead of me. We had noticed a few Japanese officers and one or two soldiers carrying rifles in the Customs enclosure. I saw one of the officers step quietly up to the Frenchman. After a few words, the latter moved out of the line and walked away with the Japanese. We did not see him again. When we reached Cairo, I sought out RAF HQ and reported the matter. They confirmed that they did, indeed, expect this man and would try to trace him at once. On my return journey I saw our embassy people at Bangkok but the wretched Free French fellow had never been seen again.

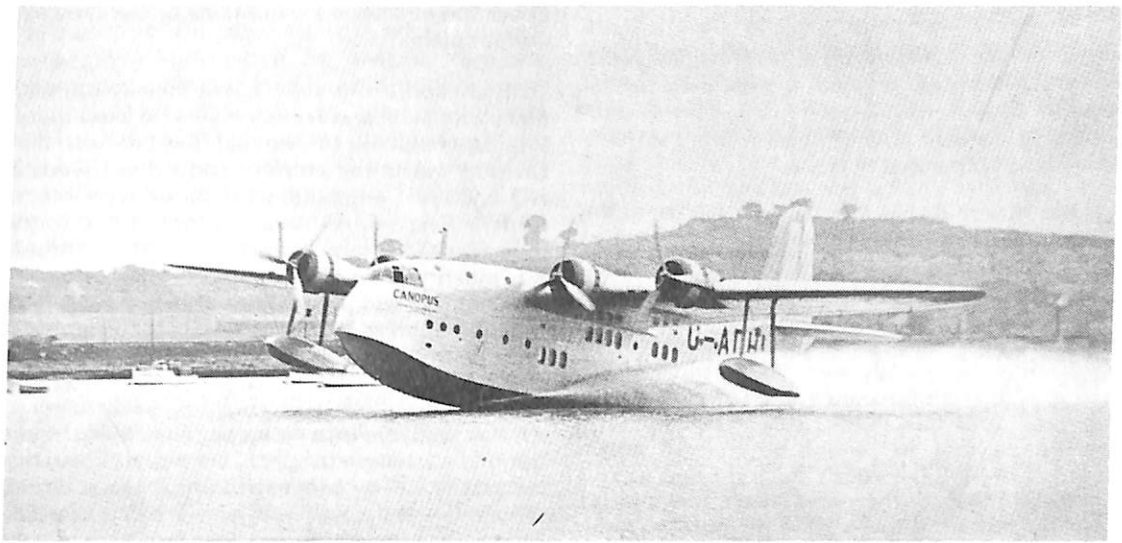
From Bangkok we flew across the Isthmus of Kra and north up the coast of Burma headed for Calcutta, our next night's stop. We battled the monsoon all day. Our progress was so slow that, north of Akyab, our captain found that our fuel was unlikely to last out. We turned south and raced back to Akyab where the weather reports were not at all promising. As the flying boat swung into the approach we saw rain squalls sweeping across the wide bay and the little launch racing ahead of us to ensure there were no floating objects in the path we were to follow. This was an essential preliminary to every alighting. This time, we got down between squalls and were on our way again very smartly. Even so, we chased the setting sun all the way. Nearing Calcutta the whole countryside was drenched with the monsoon rains; every tank and pond and stream was brimming and I succumbed to the unforgettable beauty of the last of the light being reflected from a myriad points across this vast plain of the Ganges.

Nora and I had crossed India by train from west to east in the last days of 1928. It was intensely interesting to see it all from the air. We came down on the Ganges at Allahabad and on a lake near Jaipur on the edge of the great Sind Desert. In 1927 the Staff College students had visited the Sukkur Barrage then being built on the Indus River. Floodwaters were to be led south from there to irrigate large areas of the desert. Some idea of the scale of the project can be gained from the fact that the three canals being dug were each larger than the Suez Canal. Now, fourteen years later, one could see crops of vivid green stretching in all directions.

It took us a day to traverse the Persian Gulf region from Karachi to Lake Habbaniyeh not far from Baghdad. I recall an early morning arrival at Gwadar in southern Baluchistan, and flying across the bare rocky precipices of the Oman Peninsula into the Gulf proper. We alighted at Sharjah (now in the United Arab Emirates), Bahrain and possibly Kuwait, but at each place we saw Arabs, armed to the teeth, standing by their camels, and my memory cannot separate them.

Habbaniyeh was an extraordinary sight. Previously a Royal Air Force station of considerable size with a lake suitable for our flying boat to alight upon, Arab rebels had destroyed many of the buildings while the British force had been temporarily absent in a successful pursuit and defeat of the main Arab force. In their absence the place had been sacked by rebel sympathizers: even telephone and lighting wires had been torn from their sockets. Most buildings not destroyed had been defaced and all the glass had gone.

This was our take-off point for the long desert crossing to the Gulf of Akaba and thence to our final arrival on the River Nile at Cairo. During the desert crossing I asked the aircraft's captain about the closeness of ancient Petra to our flight course. He said he had made several flights over the route but had not, so far, been able to locate the place. I told him of being in the Jordan Valley in the summer of 1918 and being able actually to see the mountains in which Petra lay, and of my dreams to see the place in reality one day. I had a good map which we studied together and decided to turn off the Hedjaz railway, which we were then following, at a certain kilo post which seemed to mark the beginning of a watercourse which became the wadi which would lead us to Petra. The captain took us very low as we followed the railway—this, we supposed was to allow the second officer to read the kilo posts as we passed them! Finally we swung away from the line and in a few minutes found ourselves following a wadi with its precipitous sides already 100 feet above.



The Short 'Empire' or 'C' class flying boat of 1937 designed for trans-ocean services. ***Canopus*** *was the first of 29 built for Imperial Airways (later BOAC) and Qantas. It carried 24 passengers in great comfort.*

We kept on snaking along with the turns and twists of the watercourse until we came out into a flat area where a stadium and the pink sandstone of the carved entrances to dwellings graced the cliff overlooking the arena. Up the wadi, as it curved away to our left, the carved sandstone entrances continued. Opposite we saw the amphitheatre of fine proportions cut into the side of the wadi. We had found Petra. Then our skipper swung away down to the Gulf of Akaba and the rest of the flight to our journey's end.

I established my status at Headquarters, Middle East Command, arranged for a car, driver and batman during my stay and met Ron Irving, then on the HQ staff, and 'Gaffer' Lloyd, out of Tobruk for a few days where he was GSO I of the 9th Australian Division. Both had much to tell me. My plan was to visit the formations in the forward area: Western Desert Force, at Bagush, the Coastal Group at Buq Buq and 7th Armoured Division in the area Bir el Sirif—Sidi Barrani. I spent only a few days with formations in contact with the enemy and the rest of the time with 7th Armoured Division. They were splendid. I got to know many of their senior officers and learned a great deal about their task, their equipment and their enemy. We were living in the open the whole time and needed to be constantly on the watch for hostile air attack since the German air force held air superiority at that period. I left for home again on 21 July by civil aircraft to Karachi via Basra.

Arrangements had been made by the Indian Army for me to attend a conference on armour on 24-27 July at Ahmadnagar, a military region about 200 km in the hill country east of Bombay. I changed aircraft at Karachi and flew to Bombay in a small, four-engined plane of the Tata Airline. Our Indian pilot proved very cool and sensible in a minor emergency on the way. All in all, it was a most entertaining journey which took us right off the beaten track. For instance, our first stop was at Bhuj*, a medieval walled town in a tiny native state called Kutch which was so fiercely independent that it was necessary to pass through Customs both entering and leaving. 'This is not India' it was patiently explained when we attempted to stroll away while the plane was being refuelled. Next stop was Ahmadabad, a huge native city in a cotton growing region where the chief industry was cotton spinning. Normally, this would have been a brief stop but as the pilot began to lose height we felt a distinct shock and saw the inner starboard engine streaming oil. It turned out to have been a kite hawk which the pilot could

* There was an amusing sequel to my visit in 1941 to the Indian Native State in the Rann of Kutch which is now incorporated in the province of Gujerat. Years later when we were living at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, we met and became friendly with the High Commissioner for India, the Maharajah Duleep Singh. One day we asked him about his home and where he came from. 'You would not know it', he said, grinning. 'An obscure little town called Bhuj'.

not avoid; it hit us with quite an impact and we landed on three engines. Kite hawks are quite large birds and endlessly circle in groups of 15 or 20 over most parts of India in their search for carrion.

Incidentally, I am writing of pre-Partition India. When Pakistan was created, it took over the far western and north-western parts of the sub-continent. Karachi in later times was in Pakistan; Ahmadabad remained in India.

It was now mid-day. Bombay was 450 km to the south. After some telephoning, the pilot told us that a relief plane would pick us up about 4 pm. I should explain that our dozen or so passengers were a rather mixed bag. Two or three Englishwomen, perhaps re-joining husbands in the services, but mostly men, Anglo-Indian from their speech and appearance, and concerned with business activities. Only one gave me any confidence that he might be helpful and I confided in him. Obviously he and I had to find a mid-day meal for the party. There was a tonga close by and we drove a mile or more into the city with the thought that there must be hotels in such a place. But it was a completely Indian city and we could see nothing even remotely clean. My next thought was to locate the club or gymkhana which would be bound to exist if there was any European population at all. Here we had more luck. We were given directions but the place looked deserted. Finally an elderly butler emerged. Of course, the club was closed during the hot weather. Nor could he do anything for us without authority. But he told us where the secretary-sahib could be found and indirectly gave us fresh hope. I had not expected it, but there was an Indian infantry battalion stationed nearby. 'My dear fellow', said the CO, 'of course you must lunch in the Mess'. Even when I explained what sort of a group I was representing, he was entirely kind and hospitable. My confrere was despatched to round up the party and the CO, having learned that I had been in the Western Desert a few days before, added a condition to his invitation. Would I give his officers a talk on the war and what was happening in the Middle East. It hadn't struck me at the time but, quite probably, I was the first Brigadier to have visited Ahmadabad for many a long day. That night in Bombay I caught a train to Ahmadnagar and next morning was back in the India I had known more than a dozen years before. It was quite unchanged in spite of the war.

Another stroke of luck came my way at the end of my few days in Ahmadnagar. Rather than return to Bombay I took the opportunity of crossing India by train for the second time. In 1928, Nora and I had followed the tourist route via Delhi, Agra and Benares to Calcutta. This time I could take a more southerly route through Nagpur and Central India. It was leisurely after all the flying and I saw a completely different India: a country of agriculture and broad open spaces quite unlike either the north-west mountains or the crowded Ganges plain.

In Singapore this time I was able to spend a night with Sybil and Freddy Hall who lived there; Sybil had been our bridesmaid. The 8th Australian Division was in the country and I met friends at HQ Malaya Command who introduced me to General Percival. Although in India I had found their way of life largely unchanged, their attitude was much more practical and greatly concerned with training and the realities of battle. Singapore shocked me. I gained an impression of a peace-time garrison unconcerned with preparation for war in any way.

I had a marvellous homecoming. It had been our first wartime separation. Both of us knew that we might never see each other again. Other separations as the war went on were much longer, no doubt, but I think our first experience gave us a feeling that we had been helped to an understanding of trust and faith. This, I believe, supported us both in future years.

To Darwin for the first Japanese air raid—February 1942

I had left the Armoured Division at the end of 1941. Japan had entered the war. Most of the AIF were returning from the Middle East because of the threat to the Australian continent. General Blamey had become Commander-in-Chief, Sturdee remained as CGS and Rowell was appointed DCGS. The latter spoke one day close to Christmas as we met casually in a corridor at Army Headquarters. 'There is nothing more for you to do with the Armoured Division', he said and went on to tell me I was to become Director of Military Operations and Plans in a few days time. This was one of the prestigious appointments and I was amazed at my good fortune. But, of course, it couldn't have been at a worse time. The Japanese were rampaging down the Malay Peninsula, half our force was on the high seas and one AIF division looked like ending up in Burma. Australia contained only partly trained militia units. Immediately I was plunged into most complex problems of whether to send garrisons

to outlying islands such as Ambon, how to defend Darwin and so on. I used to say that when I was DMO we lost Singapore, Koepang and Rabaul!

I had a good deal to do with General MacArthur's staff when he arrived from the Philippines and established himself in Melbourne. Our main business was to plan immediate measures to counter probable Japanese initiatives. We had a garrison already in Darwin and despatched a battalion group to farthest Cape York Peninsula with the task of preventing Japanese seizure of potential airfields in that region.

Both the Americans and we were unhappy with the dispositions of the force defending Darwin. As a result I was sent to sort the matter out with General Blake, an Australian Staff Corps officer whom I had known for many years. At Daly Waters, where the commercial flight I was travelling on landed to set down passengers, I noticed our pilot talking with a couple of excited looking aerodrome personnel. I was in uniform and joined them to hear that the Japanese, even at that moment, were bombing Darwin. Our flight was being grounded at Daly Waters, at least until the following morning. It was then about 9 a.m. I had hoped to finish my business that day and return to Melbourne on the morrow.

As I walked away I saw a large United States Liberator bomber circling the airfield. When it landed I was able to intercept it before it taxied into the airport buildings. I must have looked a bit odd standing alone in the middle of that great open space and raising my hand and little swagger stick in a definite signal to halt this leviathan. It stopped. About 30 feet above me a head popped out and asked my business. I said 'If you are going to Darwin, it has just been bombed by the Japs and all aircraft are being grounded here'. They said they intended going to Darwin. I asked for a lift. After a brief pause a different head appeared and said 'We've only got nine officers and twelve enlisted men aboard. Guess there's room for one more. Come aboard.' So I scrambled up and we took off very smartly. These cheerful Americans were most keen to know whether the Darwin airstrips were damaged but no-one at Daly Waters had that information. 'Waal' said the pilot, 'if we can't land on the RAAF strip we'll try the civil aerodrome. If that's out of action, guess we'll go to Batchelor or someplace else'. 'Saay', he suddenly cried, 'here's an idea. What about Melbourne? We haven't seen Melbourne yet'.

Jokes apart, we were very quickly over Darwin. There were no craters on the RAAF strip although a fair bit of damage was evident and fires were burning in various places. Our pilot swept in a wide circle above the harbour where the masts of a dozen ships which had just been sunk were showing and a large section had been blown out of the main wharf. We could see that Darwin town, too, had suffered badly as we headed back to the RAAF base. There was no difficulty about landing; a few unexploded bombs lay around and several aircraft were still burning near the end of the runway. When we climbed down to ground level there was not one living soul in sight. In fact, the entire RAAF staff seemed to have vanished.

I soon found an army liaison officer who took me to General Blake. There was, apparently no Air Raid Precautions training for the populace who mostly bolted. The RAAF seemed to have been taken by surprise also, but the Army were staunch enough and fought back with what weapons they had. I persuaded David Blake to withdraw his forces out of Darwin town in order to give himself some room to manoeuvre and left the next morning as planned.

Back in Melbourne, it was becoming obvious that the war against Japan would be fought to the north of Australia and that Army Headquarters was too far away from the operational area. The administrative and technical sections of the headquarters needed contact with national production, power and transportation and were best left in Melbourne, but the operational sections moved to Brisbane in company with General MacArthur's headquarters. We called ourselves Advanced Land Forces Headquarters (Adv LHQ). No sooner was this move made than the scene changed with startling rapidity. The 1st Australian Corps, under General Rowell, moved to New Guinea and that area became the centre of our interest.

* * * *

In the concluding part of this article, which will appear in the next issue, the author describes a visit by air to Darwin at the time of the first Japanese air raid in February 1942, his first visit to New Guinea in August 1942 and his first flight to Kokoda after its recapture.

Wendy Fisher

The Chinese Hospital in France — an oddity of the first world war

IN 1918, the best hospital in the world for Chinese was not in China, but in France, in the village of Noyelles-sur-Mer, near Abbeville. It was established as a result of Britain's decision to employ native labour to supplement her rapidly diminishing sources of unskilled manpower in Britain.

The French, who had been employing Indo-Chinese on the docks at Marseilles from the end of 1914, and for whom the lack of manpower was far more acute, signed a contract on 14 May 1916 in Peking which authorized the employment of some 200 000 Chinese. Their tasks were to service transport, work in factories and dig trenches. The British were faced with the same difficulty, a lack of manpower, and the hiring of suitable coloured labour from the colonies was at first proposed. However, the demand far exceeded the supply and the idea of the British also hiring Chinese as contracted labourers was suggested. Reaction to this was not very enthusiastic. Apart from the problem of violation of Chinese neutrality and the possible consequences of labour problems in Britain after the war, the results of the 1906 British election were still remembered. Balfour and his Unionist Party had been defeated partly as a result of the controversy over Chinese labour on the Rand Goldfields in South Africa. However, after Lloyd George took office as Secretary of State for War, and with the support of Winston Churchill and Sir Eric Geddes, the Director-General of Military Railways, the Government at last agreed to use contracted labour from North China.[1]

It was decided to use the treaty port of Wei-hai-wei in the northern Chinese province of Shantung as the port of embarkation. Wei-hai-wei had the advantage of being a British territory where recruiting could be conducted without contravening China's neutrality, and the unused South African Witwatersrand Native Labour Company's compound at Wei-hai-wei was available for loan to the British government free of cost. Mr T.J. Bourne of the British War Office arrived in Wei-hai-wei on 1 November 1916 and began a vigorous campaign to enlist not only Chinese labourers, but Chinese-speaking British personnel to become officers in the Chinese Labour Corps. Chinese companies were to recruit the labourers in the provinces, allowing them 'to find their own way' to the British territory where they could be processed as 'local inhabitants'. Some 100 000 Chinese were engaged in this way.

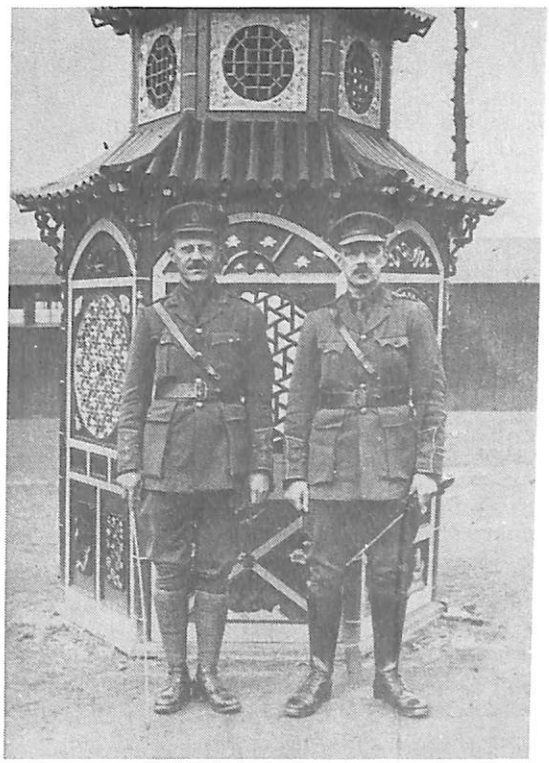
Many British citizens were contacted through the British Legation in Peking, one of the first being Dr Edward J. Stuckey of Adelaide. Dr Stuckey, a graduate of Adelaide University in Science (1895) and Medicine (1903), had been appointed by the London Missionary Society to work in China from 1905. In 1916 he was Dean of the Peking Union Medical Hospital with an interest in diseases of the eye, which were prevalent among the Chinese. Dr Stuckey, 'being subjectively physically suitable for military service' was commissioned as a lieutenant into the Royal Army Medical Corps. He embarked at Wei-hai-wei as medical officer on the *Empress of Russia* on 19 March 1917, to accompany 2006 Chinese coolies bound for France via Japan and Canada. They arrived at Noyelles-sur-Mer on 7 May 1917, where Dr Stuckey was appointed eye specialist in charge of the Ophthalmic Department of No. 3 Chinese General Hospital (known after October 1917 as No. 3 Native Labour General Hospital). His letters to his family in Adelaide provide possibly the only non-official source available on the history of this hospital, as well as fascinating information incorporating the tone of the times.[2]

The Chinese General Hospital had been established only shortly before Dr Stuckey arrived. In May, the 300-bed hospital was mainly under canvas, with water carted from a pool a quarter of a mile away. It expanded to a 1040-bed hospital within six months, capable of inspecting 1500 coolies a day and having the refinements of electric light, reticulated water, hot showers and a tennis court. The mess was the envy of many and Stuckey wrote that its 'members were fed like fighting cocks, and our Chinese cooks do us proud; rather a contrast to the rough and ready cooking of British soldier cooks!'

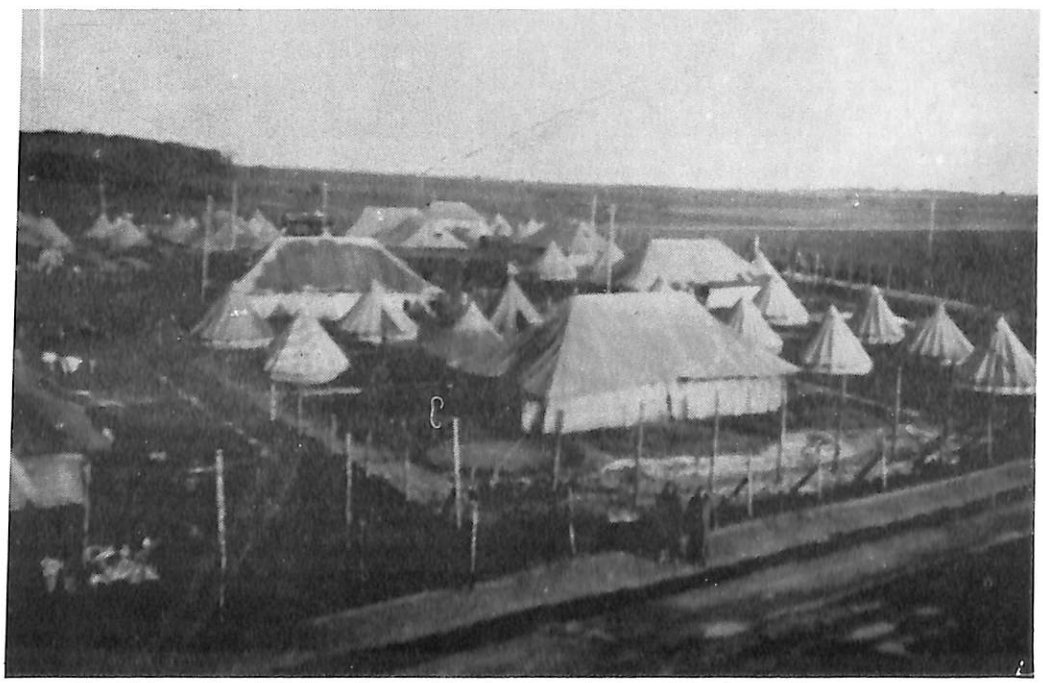
The rapid enlistment of the early Chinese contingents, the perfunctory medical examination at Wei-hai-wei (which, even so, rejected about 60% of all applicants), and the long sea voyage meant that by the time the coolies arrived in France many were suffering from diseases not detected before leaving. Therefore, upon arrival in France, another intensive medical examination was mandatory, mainly to detect the infectious eye diseases trachoma and conjunctivitus.[3] Dr Stuckey describes an examination in a letter dated 13.7.17:

> The company is marched out... They [the medical officers] feel the legs to see if there is any swelling suggestive of beri-beri or heart or kidney disease. A glance is given to the chest and 'tum-tum' to see if there is any rash, and the stretched out fingers are examined to see if there is any itch. Heart and lungs are taken for granted. Finally a good punch in the region of the solar plexis, if they stand that, severe abdominal disease is considered to be excluded ... then they are told to run up the steps ... to the eye examination ... Finally they pass from us to be examined for VD.

Once cleared as medically fit the men were drafted to work in various labour units in France or Flanders. Before long they had proved themselves capable of much more highly technical skills and were gradually deployed into areas of maintenance of aircraft and tanks, the manufacture of munitions, working in mines



Captains E.J. Stuckey (left) and E.J. Peil, RAMC, standing in front of the model pagoda, built and painted by the Chinese carpenter, near the entrance to the Chinese Hospital, Noyelles-sur-Mer, 1918.



The Chinese Hospital, Noyelles-sur-Mer, in the early days of the hospital's existence—1917.

(some with the 2nd Australian Tunnelling Company), arsenals, foundries and factories as well as working on the railroads (including the 2nd Australian Light Railway Operating Company), roads, docks, construction sites and in food, clothing and medical stations. By December 1917 Dr Stuckey wrote that there were nearly 200 Chinese on the staff of the hospital working as dressers, cooks and orderlies.

The hospital catered for eye diseases, but was a general hospital with facilities for all areas of medical care, including a mental block where coolies were engaged in making wicker carrier-pigeon baskets, and a leper compound.[4] While some hospitals did have small sections set aside for Chinese, the hospital at Noyelles-sur-Mer was the only one exclusively for Chinese, although Dr Stuckey did occasionally attend British soldiers sent to him with eye problems. Dr Stuckey wrote 'that the delight of patients transferred to this hospital from others where no one could undertand them helped them more than all the medicine in the dispensary'.

It would seem that the British did all they could to ensure that there was no hint of scandal attached to the many conditions of their employment of the Chinese. The Chinese were well fed, clothed and comparatively well treated. At the hospital a bank was set up to enable them to save and to discourage excessive gambling to which the Chinese were addicted. A small pagoda was built which became a feature of the hospital, while Chinese customs and holidays were generally respected and celebrated. A YMCA hut was also built for them. On 3 October 1917, General T'ang of the Chinese headquarters staff in London visited the hospital and commented that the men were better cared for than they would have been under their own government.

The death rate for the Chinese in France was comparatively low but it was high for a group whose contract specified that they should not work on any kind of military operation.[5] However, after China declared war on Germany on 14 March 1917, this clause was not observed so strictly and about 3000 Chinese working for the British died, many as a result of enemy action.[6] Attached to the hospital compound there was a Chinese cemetery eventually having 838 Chinese graves. The site was selected by the Chinese themselves so that the 'wind and water conditions' were correct. While the British military authorities issued strict orders that the Chinese must be buried in their own plot, not near a Hindu or a Christian, and must be buried in a coffin, the order added that 'old boxes and packing cases may be used for this purpose'.

While giving an insight into only one small area of the Chinese involvement in the war, Dr Stuckey, in his letters, does give an indication of the true

Some members of the Chinese Labour Corps, with men of the 2nd Australian Light Railway Operating Company, in Belgium, October 1917. (AWM C 1358)

perspective of the overall operation, its size and its complexity. It was, and still is, an almost invisible and ignored segment of the complete picture of the war. British imperial policy was a mixture of honourable and unethical features and Dr Stuckey's letters indicate that this was one area of which the British can be justifiably proud. The far-sighted among the Chinese also hoped that the benefit the coolies gained from their experiences in France would benefit China in the future.

The Chinese Labour Corps attracted minimal notice, officially and generally, because of the mundane nature of its role and has rarely been granted recognition for the part it played in the overall Allied effort to defeat Germany. There is very little recorded about the Chinese Labour Corps in France apart from the official sources but it is known that at least two coolies won the Distinguished Service Medal. The Chinese were brought into the war quickly and quietly to serve the Allies, and just as quickly and quietly returned to China—their role as the workmen of the war completed.

The part they played in the Allied war effort was of great strategic and economic importance. Without their efficient and comparatively cheap labour, it is difficult to know where else the British or others could have found the manpower they so desperately needed at that crucial period in 1916–1918. The colonies were unable to supply the manpower Britain needed to increase production of the war materials her technology had produced. The employment of native and contracted labour freed skilled men for production work and, more importantly, British men to fight at the front. In turn, the Chinese could only be of benefit if they were healthy. Thus the Chinese Hospital was of special importance.

Stuckey, whose work at the hospital earned him a Mention in Despatches from Sir Douglas Haig, and on the recommendation of Sir William Lister, an OBE,[7] left Noyelles-sur-Mer on 16 March 1919 for Liverpool. He joined an Australian ambulance transport ship as MO, working his passage to Melbourne. On 15 May 1919 he arrived in Melbourne to join his wife and children who had returned from Peking. He later reflected that 'taking into consideration the variety of its departments, surgical, medical, ophthalmic, infectious, mental, venereal, pathological and radiological, the Chinese General Hospital was certainly the most fully organized hospital unit in the whole of the British armies in France'.[8]

* * * *

The author would be grateful for any further information on the Chinese Labour Corps.

Notes

1. Indian troops had been in France from the end of September 1914 but the originally-formed British Labour Battalions of about 3000 men arrived in France in February 1916, soon followed by the Canadian Forestry Corps. British West Indians, employed in Egypt as ammunition supply companies, arrived in August and the South African Labour Corps in October. The South African Native Labour Corps followed in November 1916, only to be withdrawn in early 1918 because the British military authorities found it impossible to meet the segregational requirements of the South African Government! The first Chinese contracted to the British Government arrived in France on 19 April 1917, Egyptians a couple of weeks later and Fijians on 5 July 1917.
2. There are 30 letters in all dated from 21.3.17 to 10.2.18 They form a document of 86 foolscap pages of single spaced type which Dr Stuckey himself copied at a later date.
3. 'The Consulting Ophthalmic Surgeon of the BEF in France, Colonel W.T. Lister, CMG, AMS, remembered the disastrous experience of Napoleon's army in Egypt in 1798 and the widespread dissemination of trachoma among the civilian population of Europe by his soldiers on their return, and realized the grave menace to the health of the white troops and civilian population in France if these heavily infected companies were allowed to mingle at all with them.'— 'Trachoma among the Chinese in France', E.J. Stuckey, H. Tomlin, C.A. Hughes. *The British Journal of Ophthalmology*, January 1920.
4. A letter dated 29 November 1917 noted that the staff of the hospital consisted of the OC (Major Gray of the British Legation, Peking), a quartermaster, a medical divisional officer, a surgical divisional officer, a pathologist, an ophthalmic specialist (Stuckey), two other eye men (Capt. H. Tomlin and Capt. C.A. Hughes) and 11 others—19 in all, of whom 15 were medical missionaries. There were six Englishmen (four born abroad), three Scotsmen, one Welshman, five Canadians, two Australians and two Americans.
5. 'Kinds of work.—On railways, roads, at factories, mines, dockyards, fields, forests etc., and not to be employed in military operations...' From a summary of the British contract.
6. This figure is only an estimate and does not include the deaths of Chinese working for the French or the Americans. The US Army seconded some 10 000 coolies for its services when America joined the allies in 1917.
7. The OBE was presented to E.J. Stuckey at the British Legation in Peking on 3 June 1920.
8. E.J. Stuckey, *The China Medical Journal* 1920.

Jonathan Ford

The first Japanese air raid on Broome

THE collapse of the Allied forces in the Netherlands East Indies in 1942 precipitated the use of the pearling port of Broome in Australia's north-west as a staging and refuelling base for allied aircraft and an evacuation route for refugees. The evacuees left by aircraft including flying boat from the Dutch naval base of Tjilatjap in southern Java, from there to Broome for refuelling, then on to their destinations of Perth or Sydney.

Broome is situated on the edge of Roebuck Bay and its harbour provided few facilities for the constant stream of flying boats. There were only three flying boat moorings, so others either anchored or, as with the Dutch Dorniers, lay on the seabed at low tide. The moorings were laid 1500 metres from the shoreline, in deep water, because of Broome's unusual tidal situation which saw a rise and fall of as much as 10 metres. The rest of the journey was accomplished by small boat at high tide, or by walking through the mud at low tide. During the last two weeks of February 1942, Broome had seen the arrival of some 8,000 evacuees; the air traffic was so heavy that as many as 57 planes arrived from Tjilatjap in a single day.

The first move of the Japanese to close off this ABDA (Australian, British, Dutch, American) Command supply and evacuation route was to send a reconnaissance plane to Broome on 2 March. This aircraft flew over the bay at about 3pm at a height of 9,000 feet, circled the township three times and then returned to base. Following this sighting, there was some apprehension of a Japanese raid and to avoid being caught, it was intended that the flying boats in the harbour should take off early the next morning. It was expected that a move would be made at about 7.30am.

At the time of the reconnaissance there were three flying boats in the bay. They had been there for a couple of days. Four more arrived just before dusk. The only refuelling service for the flying boats, the lighter *Nicol Bay* (Capt H. Mathieson), refuelled three Dutch Dorniers that evening, it being well after dark when he finished. A further eight boats put down during the night so that at dawn on 3 March there were 15 flying boats in the harbour.

None of the night arrivals had been refuelled. In addition to these aircraft, a number of aeroplanes were parked at the nearby Broome aerodrome.

The Japanese moved fast. At 7.05am local time next day, 3 March, nine Mitsubishi A6M2 (Zero or 'Zeke') fighters and a C5M2 ('Babs') reconnaissance aircraft, of 3rd Naval Air Group, took off from No 335 Air Base, Koepang, Timor, for Broome. The strike was led by Lieutenant Zenziro Mujano, a senior pilot with experience in China, the Philippines and the Indies. Mujano's Zeros were fitted with 320-litre belly tanks which were to be jettisoned just prior to the attack.

At 9.20am, nine Zeros appeared over Roebuck Bay and some of them (reports vary as to how many) immediately began strafing the moored flying boats with cannon and machine gun fire. Others remained as top cover for the time being, but soon joined in the attack. Broome had no fighter aircraft or anti-aircraft protection.

The first target was a Short 'Empire' flying boat, *Centaurus,* which had been leased from Qantas by the RAAF as A18-10. It burst into flames. The *Nicol Bay* was refuelling it at the time and immediately cast off. The Zeros then proceeded to either set alight or sink every flying boat in the harbour as well as the aeroplanes on the airfield. They did not attack the town or its population, people waiting on the jetty or those struggling in the water or the refuelling lighter and the dinghy and rubber rafts which were engaged in picking up survivors.

A total of 23 allied aircraft, including 15 flying boats, were destroyed that day, the Dutch suffering particularly heavily. Their losses comprised five Navy Dornier Do 24-Ts (X1, X3, X20, X23, and X28), four Navy Catalinas (Y59, Y60, Y67, Y70) and, from the aerodrome, a Lockheed Lodestar (LT 918) of the NEI Air Force and two KNILM Douglas DC3s (PK-ALO and PK-AFV). The last-named aircraft, with a valuable cargo of diamonds aboard, was forced to crash land, with one engine afire, by two of the returning Zeros at Carnot Bay, some 60 miles north of Broome. Other allied aircraft lost were the RAAF 'Empire' boat mentioned above, two US Navy and two RAF

(205 Squadron) Catalina flying boats, the Qantas 'Empire' boat *Corinna* (G-AEUC), a Lockheed Hudson (A16-119) of the RAAF, two USAAF Boeing B17E Fortresses (41.2448 and 41.2454) and two B24 Liberators of the 435th Bombardment Squadron of the USAAF.

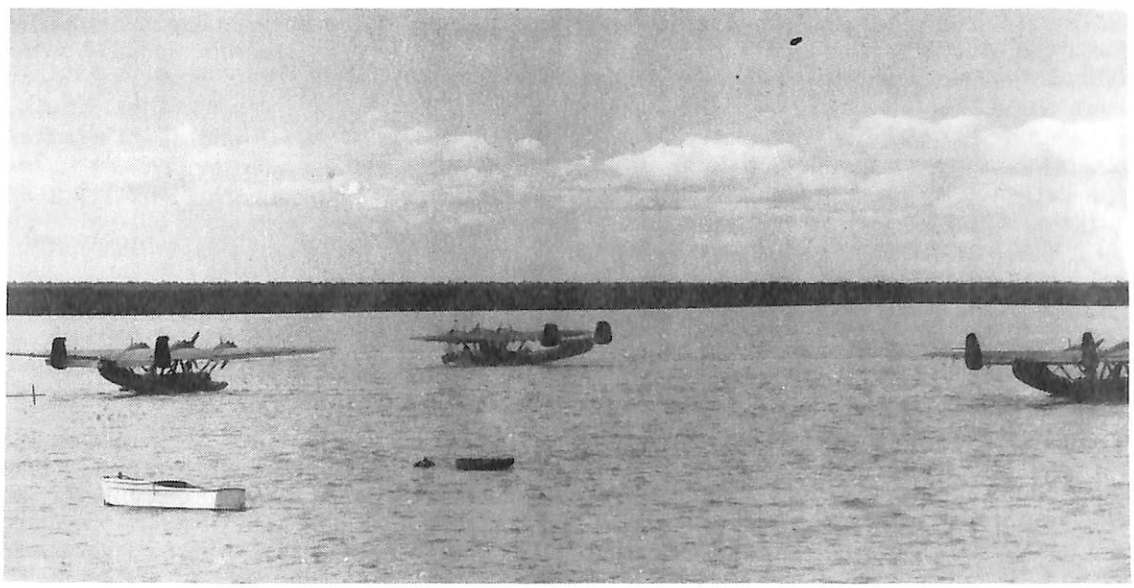
One of the Liberators managed to take off but was shot down over the sea with only one survivor from the 33 men, including wounded, on board.

The only aircraft to escape at the time was a floatplane from the American cruiser *Houston*, which had been sunk by the Japanese in the battle of the Java Sea two days before. When the *Houston* was being attacked, the pilot, Lieutenant Jack Lamondy, USN, was told to fly to the nearest Australian port. He came over 500 miles without a chart and alighted just as his motor cut out: his tanks were empty. This slow and unhandy aircraft, described in a report at the time as a Grumman J2F 'Duck'*, had been lying at the beach and taxied out and took off just before the Japanese arrived. It was fired on by a Zero flown by Chief Air Sergeant Osamu Kudo who, however, left it for bigger game when he spotted the Liberator attempting its escape. The floatplane got clean away. Kudo, who had already destroyed two Catalinas, shot the Liberator down but was himself killed soon after, a victim of ground fire, when his aircraft exploded and fell into the sea.

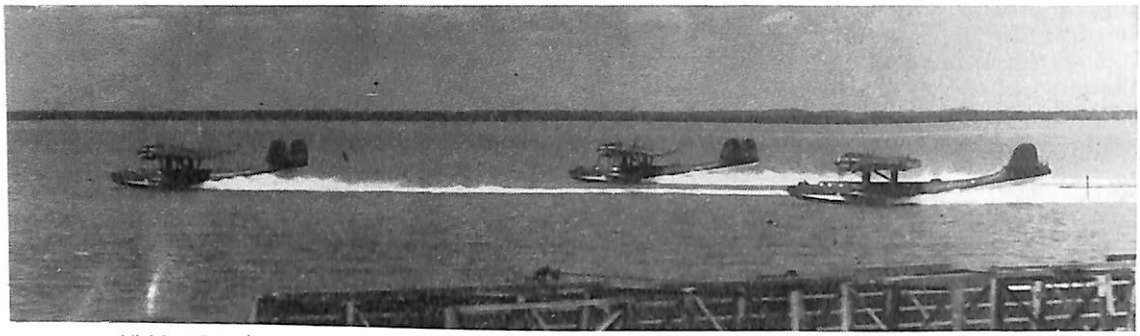
* Herb Plenty (see Editor's note below) spent several hours with Lieutenant Lamondy at the Roebuck Hotel on 2 March and recalls that the pilot described his machine as a Curtiss SOC (also known as the Curtiss 'Seagull'), which he referred to humorously as an 'SO Cobra'. Plenty did not see the aircraft himself.

Although Broome was without anti-aircraft guns, a defence of some effect was mounted, including return machine gun fire from some of the flying boats and rifle fire from several members of the Broome Volunteer Defence Corps. Shortly before the raid commenced, Lieutenant Gus Winckel landed at the aerodrome in his NEI Air Force Lodestar aircraft loaded with refugees from Java. As they left the plane, Winckel saw a group of specks approaching on the horizon. He reported the suspicious sighting to the station commander who said that there were no allied fighters in the area, nor had the Japanese sent fighters as far south as Broome. Gus ran to the Lodestar and dismantled the rear machine gun. He cradled the weapon in his arms and fired on the Zeros. The effectiveness of this meagre, but determined, defence is shown by the damage suffered by the Japanese force. Only seven of the nine Zeros returned to base and only one of those was undamaged, the others all being holed and the pilot of one of them slightly wounded. Kudo and his aircraft were lost, as narrated above, and First Air Private Yasuo Matsumoto was forced to ditch his aircraft near Roti Island, off Timor. He was rescued 18 days later.

There were many heroic rescues of survivors of the attacks on the flying boats. Several Qantas and RAAF personel received commendation or award for this work. The captain of the *Nicol Bay* received a gold medal and citation from the Netherlands Government. The extreme risk he accepted in his rescue efforts carried out in a craft loaded with aviation fuel can be appreciated.



Arrival of Dutch Dornier Do 24 flying boats on a visit to Darwin, 16 May 1941. (AWM 44615)



Visiting Dutch Dornier Do 24 flying boats taking off from Broome, c. 1941. (AWM 44614)

Apprehension spread in Broome that the raid was a preliminary to Japanese troop landings. A smudge of smoke on the horizon produced the rumour that it was an invasion fleet but it later proved to be the US cargo vessel *Admiral Halstead* loaded with aviation fuel, which then berthed at Broome although it had been warned to keep clear. Meanwhile, there was a heavy evacuation.

At 11am, half an hour after the raid ended, a MacRobertson Miller Aviation Lockheed 10A landed at Broome en route Wyndham to Perth. It had left Wyndham just prior to an attack on that town, also by Zeros from Koepang. Captain Woods crammed 22 wounded and the only remaining white woman resident in Broome at the time into his 10-seater aeroplane and flew them to Port Hedland. The Qantas 'Empire' flying boat *Camilla* (Captain Sims) alighted on Roebuck Bay at 11.15am and also evacuated wounded and survivors to Port Hedland, searching on the way for survivors of the shot-down Liberator. Other aircraft assisted in the evacuation. A land convoy of trucks and cars belonging to the company which held the contract to extend Broome's airfield headed out of town for the south-west and Port Hedland. The convoy returned on 5 March when it was found that the roads were impassable through floodwaters. An American Liberator bomber flew in medical supplies and doctors from Perth but when its undercarriage was damaged on take-off, it was burned so as to prevent it from falling into Japanese hands, although it might easily have been repaired.

The death roll was placed at 70, but was believed to be far higher than that. It was known that 32 Americans had died in the Liberator crash and another 29 unidentified bodies were buried in the Broome cemetery. Because of the chaos of the evacuation from Java, no-one knew for certain how many women and children had been on the aircraft and the bodies of many of those killed by the fires, or by drowning or strafing, were never recovered. For the Dutch, it was a disheartening introduction to their newly found haven in Australia. In the end, it was the Allied surrender in Java rather than the air attacks which served to close down the evacuation route.

In the aftermath of the Broome raid, Australian/Dutch relations became temporarily strained. A cypher message was sent to the Dutch administration in Perth, informing it of the destruction of the Dutch aircraft and requesting the evacuation of 676 men and women. The Dutch chartered their own relief planes, flew them to Darwin, and took aboard only their own nationals. For the Australians, who had the feeling that they were being abandoned by their own government, the attitude of the Dutch was interpreted as being based on self-interest and hardly fitting of an ally.

Broome remained in a state of 'invasion fever' for nearly two weeks after the raid, but although it was to receive three further visits from Japanese aircraft, it never again suffered as it did on 3 March 1942.

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Editor's note

In assisting Jack Ford with material for his Broome raid article, I consulted the files on the raid held by the RAAF Historical Section in Canberra and also discussed it with retired Group Captain H.C. Plenty, DFC and Bar, of Canberra, who was in Broome on the day of the raid, although not during the raid itself. These contacts produced

some interesting sidelights on the events of that day.

Herb Plenty, then with No 8 Squadron, RAAF, and veteran of the early attacks on the Japanese invasion forces in Malaya, was travelling south from Bandung in Java per KNILM Douglas DC3 to pick up a replacement aircraft for one of the many lost in Malaya and the Indies. The Dutch airliner landed at Broome to refuel on 2 March, the day before the raid. The Japanese reconnaissance aircraft had flown over Broome in the afternoon and to the experienced Plenty that meant that an early attack could be expected.

The authorities expected a raid, too, but not in the form Plenty anticipated. In the harbour alone were 15 flying boats dispersed over the relatively large area of about a mile and a half by three quarters of a mile and a number of landplanes were parked at the aerodrome. The most effective form of air attack the enemy could mount on such a dispersed force would be low-level strafing by heavily-gunned fighters; the alternative methods of air attack by high or medium level or dive bombers would not nearly be so profitable in results.

But the air controller at Broome could not be convinced that strafing by fighters was a real possibility, as they would not have the range to attack Broome from their bases. Plenty was familiar with the capabilities of Japanese fighters, having had several encounters with them, in one of which his Lockheed Hudson had been shot down into the South China Sea, and he tried to convince the controller that Broome was in fact within reach. He knew that Zeros fitted with long range tanks had operated effectively over Singapore from their base at Saigon, some 700 miles away. Unfortunately, the controller was not disposed to revise his evacuation plans on the advice of a 21 year-old Flight Lieutenant.

The KNILM crew needed no convincing, however. With refuelling hurriedly completed, the DC3 left Broome before dawn on the 3rd, missing the raid by several hours. Herb Plenty and the others were in the air over central Australia when the radio operator picked up messages that Broome was indeed under attack by fighters.

There is a paper on RAAF Historical Section's file which appears to support the correctness of the selection by the Japanese of fighters rather than bombers to execute the attack on the dispersed aircraft. This is a report on the second Broome raid, carried out on 20 March, 1942, written for the RAAF by Wing Commander C.W. Snook, Managing Director of Airlines (W.A.) Ltd, who was visiting Broome at the time. The Japanese objectives on that occasion appeared to be the destruction of wireless equipment, petrol dumps and aerodrome buildings and damage to the runways.

At 10am a single-engined Japanese reconnaissance plane flew over the town at 10-12,000 feet, circled, and left. At 10.45, seven bombers flew over in V formation at 6,000 feet releasing about 40 bombs in several sticks. The majority were thought to be small missiles of 50-lbs or so but three or four were much larger, perhaps of 200 to 300-lb. The bombing was described as 'extremely inaccurate'. A sketch plan of the airfield showing the bomb strikes, attached to Snook's report, indicates there was no material damage of any significance, although a man was killed.

This is not to say, of course, that the force dispatched by the Japanese was inappropriate to the types of target, merely that if they had attacked Broome in the same way on the first raid, and achieved the same accuracy, there would have been little damage, to the dispersed flying boats, at least.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that when the ineffective bombing in the second raid was completed, two Japanese fighters, thought to be Zeros, swept in at 100 feet and strafed and destroyed Snook's single-engined Stinson aircraft which was standing outside the hangar.

The failure of many of the flying boats to get off the water at Broome, even though they had been refuelled, received attention in a report on the raid prepared for the Air Board by RAAF North Western Area. Captain Mathieson, master of the *Nicol Bay*, was consulted and had this to say:

> I can't understand why the boats which had refuelled did not take off early that morning. Even at 8am, when I was alongside the jetty, there was ample water available to transport people out to the boats. The float-plane belonging to the USS *Houston* was right on the beach and she got away a quarter of an hour before the raid: the other flying boats had plenty of water.

The report had this comment:

> The state of the tides is a questionable point. Captain Mathieson offers strong argument for his statement that there was sufficient water for refuelled boats to take off, while others say an early take-off would have meant a walk of up to half a mile from the jetty through mud. Personnel spoken to at Broome by Squadron Leader Smith indicated that the delay was caused by the pilots celebrating their good fortune in escaping from the Islands with so many evacuees but no person was prepared to sign his name to such a statement. Newspaper reports (*Age* 19 January 1943) mention a light-hearted spirit in the town, particularly among Dutchmen.*

The RAAF report examines an apparent lack of control and co-ordination at Broome over the

local operation of the evacuations from the Indies. Captain Mathieson again:

> If the pilots did not come and ask for juice I didn't know whether they wanted any, and there was no central authority ashore to advise me of their needs. Apparently it was no person's responsibility to meet the boats on arrival and inquire as to their fuel requirements. Dorniers were the biggest jobs to refuel, as they had so many tanks. Usually it took 40 minutes to refuel any of the other flying boats. Qantas were the only boats for which transport was provided between the moorings and the jetty; the company had its own staff ashore, and there was never any trouble in handling their personnel because everyone knew what to do. A similar arrangement could easily have been organised for the other flying boats, because there were plenty of pearling luggers lying in the creek.

The report merely indicates that following the sighting of the reconnaissance aircraft, orders were given that the flying boats then in the harbour must take off early in the morning.

Who issued the 'orders' is not stated, nor is it at all clear from the papers seen whose responsibility it was to do so, or to see that they were complied with. A signal from the Air Board to North Western Area dated the day after the raid stated that 'the US Army officer at Broome is in charge of the evacuation of personnel from NEI to Broome and evacuation out of Broome. General responsibility for command of this area still rests with North Western Area.' It is not clear whether the US Army had the responsibility on the day of the raid or were to assume it on the fourth, the day after. If the latter, it could have little immediate effect as another signal indicated the Americans all left Broome on the day of the raid. The subject perhaps merits more research.

Broome raid files sighted in the RAAF Historical Section held no information on the alleged action of the Dutch in evacuating their own nationals to the exclusion of everyone else.

Alan Fraser

Gus Winckel, who now lives in Queensland, told Jonathan Ford that many of the Dutch pilots had flown so many hours in a constant shuttle service for evacuees that they were too tired to do anything else but savour the apparent security of Broome. The Australian official history states that one pilot recorded 84 hours' duty without rest.

Clem Sargent

The War Museum of Greece

SITUATED in Vasillissis Sofias Street, Athens, the War Museum should not be missed by MHSA members visiting Greece. Although not on the scale of the Australian War Memorial, the collection reflects deep national pride in Greek military history and a professional standard of presentation of the displays.

The displays begin in true 'pre-history', with representations of the legendary war between the Amazons and the Centaurs, replicas of architecture more of archeological than of military historical interest.

The exhibits then move through the periods of Pagan Antiquity, Alexander the Great, Byzantium, the Frankish and Turkish Occupations to the great period of the Greek War of Independence, illustrated by numerous paintings, documents, models and magnificent weapons of the period. The struggle against Turkey extended from 1821 to 1922 in various phases. It is a period of conflict about which we in Australia are little informed. The displays also cover Greek participation in the world wars, better known to Australians, and of the Greek involvement in the Korean campaign.

There is a library and reading room, a map collection and educational facilities. The uniform collection, with one exception, consists of replicas. A fine weapons collection includes many gold and silver plated weapons of the Greek War of Independence period and there is a display of Greek decorations and medals. An open air exhibition features artillery pieces, other ordnance and historic aircraft, including a replica of the first aeroplane flown by Greeks on war missions—during the Balkan Wars of 1912-13!

This is a small but well-presented collection of Greek national significance. MHSA members who have the opportunity to visit it will materially broaden their knowledge of world military history.

Matthew Higgins

Armistice 1918—a note on the Australian reaction

ONE of the many striking aspects of the Australian soldier's experience of the first world war was the way in which he reacted to the news of the Armistice on 11 November 1918. Contrary to what the non-combatant might anticipate, many men of the first AIF showed very few outward signs of joy upon reception of the news that the war was over. The keynote of the Australians' reaction (except for those away on leave in Paris or London who readily joined in civilian celebrations) was one of calmness, if not outright apathy. After four years of seemingly endless slaughter and the constant threat of death or wounds, men had become so accustomed to war that they were unprepared for peace. That the war might end could hardly be realised, and for many on 11 November daily life continued as before, though now in a strangely silent world where the sound of gunfire was no longer heard.

Bill Gammage, in his masterly work *The Broken Years*, reveals just how few Australians expressed any sort of jubilation on 11 November. 'Hardly a man anywhere reacted to the momentous news', he writes.[1] One of the best examples of the anticlimax that 11 November represented for the men and the nonchalance with which that day was accepted is provided by Private T.J. Cleary of the 2nd Pioneer Battalion. Cleary, in a back area on 11 November, wrote in his diary:

> 11.11.18 *The day of days*. We had two victory's today. We won the War and defeated the 5th Field Coy at Soccer. The news of the Armistice was taken very coolly. There were a few extra waiting for Papers when the Train came in but that was all, nobody seemed to be able to realise it.[2]

C.E.W. Bean, in the last of his volumes of the official history of Australia's participation in the 1914-18 war, also commented on the absence of a 'general demonstration' of jubilation amongst the troops. He wrote that at the front 'the sound of the guns ceased; the gates of the future silently opened. Wonder, hope, grief, too deep and uncertain for speech, revolved for days in almost every man's mind'.[3]

Both Gammage and Bean do point out, though, that there were exceptions to the rule. Some troops did write of their jubilation, others of the excitement prevailing amongst French civilians. An interesting and somewhat entertaining contrast to the general picture of nonchalance is provided by a letter that has recently come to notice amongst the private papers of Brigadier General Edward Martin, commander of the 5th Australian Infantry Brigade, together with the 5th Brigade's war diary.[4]

The 5th Brigade was in Vignacourt (about 15 kilometres north-west of Amiens) for the armistice, having spent over a month there resting, re-equipping and training since coming out of the fighting for the Beaurevoir line (the third system of the Hindenburg line) in early October. News of an imminent peace was filtering through to the troops by 8 November, for on that day Martin spoke to men of his brigade 'about maintaining their training and discipline at this time especially in view of the peace talk. It was essential for men not to slacken but to remember they were still soldiers'.[5] At 10.45 am on 11 November the word was received that hostilities would cease in fifteen minutes time. Upon receipt of the news, Vignacourt's inhabitants decorated the village and, according to the brigade's war diarist,

> at 1430 the Australian flag was hoisted on the Church. Guard of Honour presented arms and massed bands played National Anthems of all the allies. General rejoicing by the French inhabitants and the 'diggers'.[6]

Martin, a man known for his reserved, reticent nature, wrote to one of his daughters on the 19th, telling her of the armistice. Perhaps a little embarrassed, he began the letter:

> Well, I hope you have all celebrated the signing of the finish of hostilities in a proper fashion, and all swollen heads have become normal again. We had a bit of fun in a small way being in a moderately small village and I narrowly escaped being kissed in front of all the troops by all the maidens of the village, it was really due to the fact that I was on horseback that saved me.[7]

And he went on to tell her about the flag-raising and the performance by the bands.

The ceremony at the Vignacourt military cemetery, 17 November 1918 (AWM A2850)

On 12 November, a general thanksgiving service was held in the village church, attended by troops from each of the brigade's battalions, members of the local municipal council and the townspeople. A *Te Deum* was sung and that notable Australian chaplain, Father Francis Clune, gave a 'short but excellent' address.[8] The Marseillaise was played and God Save the King was sung during the service. After it finished, Martin, the brigade staff and the battalion commanders, in Martin's words, 'adjourned to the Mairie [town hall] and drank a glass of champagne with the Maire [mayor] and Counsellors'.[9] The Maire proposed toasts to the allies, the soldiers and France; Martin deputed his brigade major (Major J. Chapman) to respond. 'The meeting broke up with mutual expressions of goodwill', following which a brigade sports meeting was held.[10]

The side-effects of the armistice were still apparent five days later when another ceremony was held near the village. This time it was a more solemn affair, yet was nonetheless moving and impressive for those involved. Martin described it to his daughter:

> On Sunday, 17th in the afternoon we had a procession of the troops, i.e. my Brigade, some French soldiers, then all the children, then a firing party, then the Maire, an official from the Government, the French Commandant of Amiens and myself and Staff and Counsellors of Vignacourt, then the civillions [sic]. We marched to the British Cemetery, and we all made speeches. First the Maire telling us the children of Vignacourt would take charge of the graves and tend them for all time, a magnificent speech. Then the Govt. Official gave the sanction of the Government, then the Commandant of Amiens, who spoke in terms of the highest praise of the Australians, and of course I had to reply. Then the Marseillaise and God Save The King, followed by three volleys and the Last Post. It was a most impressive ceremony.
>
> We then adjourned to the Maire's home and had some fiz.[11]

Four days later, the brigade started leaving Vignacourt, moving up as part of the planned army of occupation in Germany.

Bean, in *Anzac to Amiens*, noted that the frequency of celebration amongst servicemen increased the further one went back from the front-line.[12] But the majority of Australians were well back from the line anyway at the time of the armistice. Thus, as can be assumed from Gammage (and the Cleary example), distance from the front didn't necessarily affect the reaction amongst Australian soldiers (except for those on leave in Paris or London). Therefore, the Vignacourt example should not be discounted merely because the village was in a back area. The activities at Vignacourt help to illustrate the way in which some Australians did recognise the armistice for what it was.

References

1. Bill Gammage, *The Broken Years*, Melbourne, 1982, p. 264.
2. Pte T.J. Cleary, diary, Australian War Memorial 3 DRL 2578. Cleary (who was originally in the 17th Battalion) is quoted, in part, by Gammage, p. 265.
3. C.E.W. Bean, *The Australian Imperial Force in France 1918*, Sydney, 1942, p. 1053.
4. Edward Martin to daughter Lillian Martin, 19 November 1918, copy in author's possession; 5th Australian Infantry Brigade War Diary, November 1918, Australian War Memorial, AWM 4.
5. War diary, 8 November 1918.
6. *Ibid*, 11 November 1918.
7. Martin, letter.
8. War Diary, 12 November 1918.
9. Martin, letter.
10. War diary, 12 November 1918.
11. Martin, letter.
12. C.E.W. Bean, *Anzac to Amiens*, Canberra, 1946, p. 515. The description of the general Australian reaction here contrasts with that given by Gammage.

A Vignacourt street some months after the armistice. (AWM E5280)

John S. Fenby

Memoir of North Head fortifications

A condensed history of the artillery fortifications at North Head, Sydney

ARTILLERY in Australia has a proud history dating back to 1788 when our coastal defences commenced with 6-pounder and 12-pounder guns deployed at Fort Macquarie and Dawes Point, Sydney.

Prior to 1934-1935 North Head and its immediate surroundings belonged to the Marine Quarantine Station. In May 1927 the area had been opened to the public for the first time to coincide with a visit from the Prince of Wales and soon afterwards a Memorial Drive was constructed around North Head with a tree planted for every soldier from the Manly-Warringah area killed in the 1914-18 war.

With the construction in 1935 of the North Head fortifications and barracks for 1 Heavy Brigade, Royal Australian Artillery (now occupied by the School of Artillery), the Artillery's association with North Head began.

Field Marshal Lord Kitchener visited Australia at the request of the Australian Government in late 1909 to examine the defence preparedness of Australia and in the opening paragraphs of his memorandum stated '...It becomes the duty of all self-governing Dominions to provide a military force adequate not only to deal promptly with any attempt at invasion but also to ensure local security...'[1]

In August 1928, the Chiefs of Staff drew the conclusion that Australia could expect '...extensive raiding of trade routes and raids on important centres...'[2] The Chairman (Chief of the General Staff) in March 1930 recognised that the coast defences were adequate in pre-war days to meet the probable scale of attack but, owing to the improvements in naval armament, had since become inadequate.

In Defence Committee Agendum No. 7/1934 it was stated that the scale of attack expected at Sydney by a Japanese fleet was '...attack by a cruiser or armed merchant vessel and submarines and air attack by aircraft carried in such vessels...' and at this stage it was suggested that four 9.2 inch guns would be adequate to protect Sydney against bombardment by cruisers armed with 8 inch guns. The Committee of Imperial Defence in 1925 had recommended that two 9.2 inch guns should be installed at North Head for the protection of the harbour.

North Head was proclaimed a defence area in Commonwealth Gazette No. 100, dated 26 September 1927, which stated, 'Parish of Manly Cove, all that piece or parcel of land near Manly containing an area of 658 acres more or less, being the Manly (Marine) Quarantine area'. It was declared a prohibited area in November 1932. So after many years of discussion and paperwork, installation of the 9.2 inch guns at North Head finally commenced.

In 1935 the civilian contracting firm of 'McConnell' started excavation and building of the magazines, engine room, pump chambers, tunnels, gun emplacements and the battery plotting room, finishing construction in early 1936. It was during this period that two workers lost their lives; one was electrocuted in the tunnels and the other was buried alive during the construction of the battery plotting room.

On 3 February 1936 a party of gunners of 1 Heavy Brigade RAA in charge of Captain 'Freddie' Nurse and assisted by Captain P. Chalmers and Staff Sergeant E. Tallagher moved into North Head to make preparation for the mounting of the 9.2 inch equipment.

The two guns were shipped out from England and unloaded at Pyrmont, then ferried across to Store Beach from whence they were transported to North Fort by civilian contractors, P. Watson and J. McMahon and Company, carriers. The gunners' job commenced with the construction of a railway to take the 20-ton gantry.

Work commenced on 19 March 1936 with the pedestal being placed over the holding down bolts of which there were 52, each bolt being 9 feet 11 inches long and embedded in concrete. On 30 April 1936 work was completed on the first gun and began on the second on 12 May 1936. It was finished on 3 June 1936. After the initial installation was completed Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and Australian Engineers

personnel then completed the mounting and installation of the guns, pumps and engines. Installation of the guns cost approximately £610,000 ($1,220,000).

The barracks for the gun detachments and other personnel were originally tents, with huts being erected later. In an effort to cover the sand, bushes and other shrubs were planted, one of these being 'pigface' (membrisium) which was exported from Homebush. Water piping was donated by the Manly Gas Company.

The 9.2 inch guns at North Head were the first of this type (a Mark X barrel on a Mark VII mounting) installed in Australia and others were later located at:

Cape Banks (La Perouse NSW)
Fort Wallace (Newcastle NSW)
Rottnest Island (WA)(still in existence)
Fort Drummond (Port Kembla)
Garden Island and Fremantle (WA)
East Battery (Darwin NT)

The role of the 9.2 inch guns at North Head was:

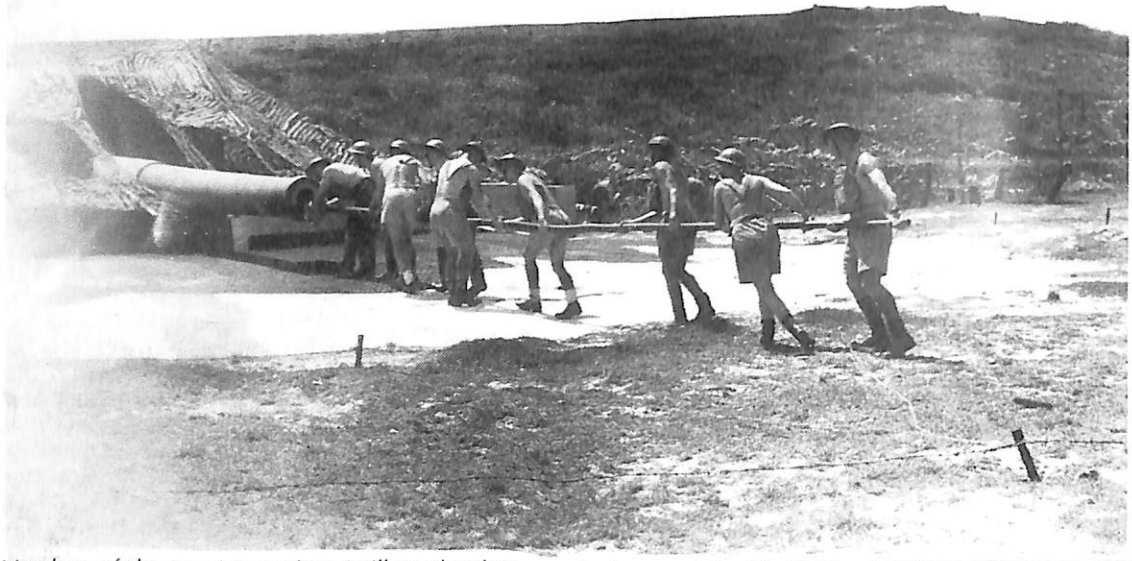
a. Primary; counter battery (CB) against:
- attack by capital ships or cruisers, and attack by armed merchant vessels.

b. Secondary; close defence (CD) against:
- submarines,
- blockers, and
- boom smashers.

Other guns at North Head were:
- three 40mm Bofors of 154 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment (110 Light Anti-Aircraft Battery)
- a battery of 3.7 inch anti-aircraft guns at North Head Barracks (9 Anti-Aircraft Battery), and
- one 12 pounder, 12 cwt, Mark 1, QF (Quick Firing) at Fairy Bower.

The amount of concrete used in the construction of the fortifications was enormous. Most ceilings had seven feet six inches of concrete, three feet of sand then another three feet of concrete, this then being covered with sand. The walls of the engine room, lower shell store and battery plotting room had a construction of three feet of concrete, two feet dry area (anti-blast recess) then a further three feet of concrete. The walls and ceilings of the tunnels were three feet of concrete. The length of the tunnels from the engine room to the two guns was 974 feet approximately, the width being three feet and the height seven feet.

Camouflaged 9.2-inch gun of the North Head Battery, Sydney Fortress Area, 20 January 1944. (AWM 63462)



Members of the Royal Australian Artillery cleaning a 9.2-inch gun at the North Head Battery, 20 January 1944. (AWM 63461)

One problem experienced with the fortifications was water. This still exists today. It is believed that a natural spring at North Fort starts at the Manly Dam and follows a natural fault in the sandstone to North Fort. The problem was so bad that a pump was installed in No. 2 gun lower shell store in the anti-blast recess. On one day 40,000 gallons of water was pumped out and pumped back for use in the main barracks. This would have helped to relieve the water restrictions in force at the time. The use of water was totally prohibited except between 0600-1000 hours and 1600-2000 hours (6am-10am and 4pm-8pm), baths being limited to four inches and car washing banned except by bucket and mop.

The actual gun was mounted on a pedestal in an emplacement. It was capable of all round traverse and could be fired between 5 degrees depression and 35 degrees elevation. The elevating and traversing gear was normally operated by hydraulic power. The cartridge and projectile were hoisted from the lower shell store by an endless electric hoist to the emplacement floor then in a cage to the gun level. The guns could be used in the direct firing (target in sight) or in the indirect firing (target out of sight) role. They had a firing rate of three rounds per minute and a range of 29,600 yards (16.82 miles). The projectile weighed 380 pounds and could penetrate nine inches of mild steel.

The barrel weighed 62,720 pounds (with breech mechanism) and its length was 442.35 inches with a calibre (diameter) of 9.2 inches. The pedestal, body, cradle, barrel and shields weighed 275,296 pounds (122.9 tons). The gun when fired recoiled 40 inches.

Power for the gun emplacements, battery plotting room and observation posts was provided by two 120 Kw Ruston Hornsby 180 hp, 6 cylinder diesel generators situated in the engine room, each producing 415 volts DC.

There were two Battery Observation Posts (BOP) located at North Head, one being for counter battery (BOP) and one for close defence (CDBOP); accommodation was provided in two blockhouses for officers and other ranks.

The range-finding instruments in the BOP were a Depression Position Finder which were connected to the Battery Plotting Room (BPR). Here bearings and ranges were applied to the Fire Direction Table and transmitted direct to the guns. Stereoscopic binoculars were also used at the BOP, one by the Battery Commander and the other by the Inclination Officer.

Housed in the CDBOP was a Depression Range Finder which was also connected by cables to the BPR. Information on the target was used in the Battery Plotting Room and the Fortress Plotting Room to produce a range and bearing, sea level of the target and speed of the target, this information then being applied directly to the guns. Other observation posts extended from Brookvale to the south of Maroubra, five of which were equipped with radar.

The original radars were built, installed and maintained by the CSIR (now the CSIRO). The CSIR designed and set up the first coastal surveillance radar on Beacon Hill (Sydney). The components were built by AWA, STC and the NSW Railway workshops. Seventeen sites were chosen around Australia in 1941 for the installation of radar, one of them being at Bluefish (North Head). The radars had a maximum range of 40,000 yards (22.73 miles).

Coast artillery searchlights were also installed at North Head and Bluefish. The two searchlights at North Head were mounted approximately halfway down the cliff face in emplacements with a directing station installed on the cliff top. Power was supplied to each searchlight by its own engine room. The searchlights were of the magazine pattern with a projector which produced 210,000 candle power with a range of 8,000 yards (5.55 miles).

Manning at the fort totalled 190 which included Artillery, Engineers, Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Signallers, Infantry and Canteen Services personnel.

The actual dates of the guns being proofed and calibrated (first firing checks) is not known. The first date of firing recorded in the Fort Record Book is 8 June 1940 and the last date 31 January 1945. It is worth noting that the guns did not fire a shot in anger during the war.

To save on training costs a Hotchkiss 6 pounder sub-calibre gun was used which was mounted on top of the parent gun to facilitate instruction on the gun.

Overhauling and preparation for long term storage of all electrical, hydraulic and mechanical systems was carried out in the middle of 1952 by a detachment from 2 Base Workshops RAEME. The site's demise in 1960 was a sad occasion for all ranks who had over a period of more than 20 years given devoted service to maintaining the efficiency of this magnificent Coast Defence system.

Members of the North Head Battery at work in the plotting room, 20 January 1944 AWAS members shown are (from left to right) Gunners M. Lundy, P.L. Johnston and M. Lindsay. Above right is Captain R.M. Hoskins. (AWM 63467)

Notes

1. MP1217, Notes by the Chief of the General Staff.
2. A2031, Minutes of meeting of the Defence Committee, dated 6 March 1930.

Acknowledgements

Australian War Memorial, War Diaries 4/1/9, 4/19/4, 1/6/7, 4/18/1 and Written Records.
Australian Archives, Sydney, SP553/1.
Australian Archives, Canberra, MP1217, and A2031.
School of Artillery, and
Private sources.

Paul Rosenzweig

Neville Cropley Swift, DSO, MC and BAR

UPON the outbreak of the 1914-18 war, a number of patriotic Australians answered 'the call of King and Country' and returned to the land of their fathers and grandfathers to enlist, often seeing action before their equally patriotic Australian compatriots in the AIF. Of these, 39 South Australians were killed in action or, in the language of the commemorative honour scroll which was presented to the grieving next-of-kin, 'left all that was dear to them, endured hardship, faced danger, and finally passed out of the sight of men by the path of duty and self-sacrifice, giving up their lives that others might live in freedom'.

Of the 39 South Australians who gave their lives, six earned British decorations for gallantry, these being M. M. Cudmore MM, W. H. Gosse MC, J. Hughes MC, A. W. Morey MC, G. P. Stewart DCM and N. C. Swift DSO, MC and Bar. One foreign decoration, the Serbian Order of the White Eagle 5th Class with Swords, was awarded to R. H. Creswell.

The DSO, MC and Bar earned by Lieutenant (Acting Major) N. C. Swift, an old boy of St. Peter's College in Adelaide, who lost his life while fighting with the British Expeditionary Force in France, is a quite remarkable group of decorations. His gallant conduct in the field not only brought him this rare trio but also a mention in dispatches and a battlefield commission into the British regular army, clearly demonstrating to his English colleagues and soldiers the keen fighting spirit and military ability of the Australian-born soldier.

Neville Cropley Swift was born on 19 September 1895, the second son of the well-known Adelaide doctor Harry Swift, MD, MRCS, and his wife Kate Jillian (nee Peacock). Harry Swift obtained his medical qualifications at Cambridge in 1887 and in Adelaide the following year, becoming a registered medical practitioner on 7 March 1888.[1]

His first son, Brian Herbert, was born on 2 February 1893 and was educated at St. Peter's College, Adelaide, Cambridge and Edinburgh Universities and the London Hospital. He served as a medical officer with the RAMC in France in the 1914-18 war and was awarded the Military Cross in 1917. A keen golfer, he became well known after he returned to Australia by winning the SA golf championship in 1924. During the 1939-45 war he continued his military medical career in the AAMC as Registrar of the 2/9th Australian General Hospital, AIF in the Middle East with the rank of major. After the war, he continued his career as gynaecologist at the Royal Adelaide Hospital (1938-53) and obstetrician at the Queen Victoria Maternity Hospital (1935-53) and lectured in gynaecology at the University of Adelaide from 1947 to 1952. Chairman of the Australian Regional Council of the Royal College of Gynaecologists from 1953-56, he received the award of Knight Bachelor in 1954 as reward for a distinguished medical career. In 1970, at the age of 75, Sir Brian Swift, MC, MD, FRCS, FRACS, FRCOG passed away, a veteran of two world wars and a medical specialist of considerable repute and esteem.

It is likely that his younger brother Neville would have had an equally distinguished career had he survived the war. Also educated at St. Peter's, Neville cut short his studies and travelled to England in April 1915 and was commissioned into the 3rd Battalion of the East Lancashire Regiment (Special Reserve).[2] He served in France from October until August 1916 when he was wounded at Contalmaison, south of Pozieres, during the early battles of the big push on the Somme.

Returning to the Western Front in October, he remained until wounded again in January 1917. After recovering in England he went back to the trenches, for the third time, in October 1917 as a lieutenant, having received his second 'pip' on 1 July, and was given command of a company of the 3rd East Lancs as an acting captain.

During the battles of December 1917, his portion of the line was continually obliterated by intense enemy shelling, leaving men and equipment completely buried. Swift personally helped dig out his buried soldiers after which he reorganised the line and established new posts, all the while openly exposed to heavy enemy fire. For this 'conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty' he was awarded the Military Cross.[3]

The following month, he showed great initiative and determination in leading his company

through a successful relief despite an incessant barrage of shells. For this display of gallantry and dedication he received a Bar to his Military Cross.[4] Swift's ability had also been recognised in December 1917 when he was recommended for a commission as a Lieutenant in the Regular Army. This was approved shortly after and he was appointed as an acting major on the staff of the 3rd East Lancs on 19 January 1918.

March 1918 saw Ludendorff's last-ditch effort to seize German victory on the Somme with the launching of the most intense barrage of the war. This was followed by massed attacks by elite storm-troops hoping to break through to Amiens and thus separate the British and French Armies. While the British Third and Fifth Armies generally made a poor showing, some regiments particularly distinguished themselves. On Wednesday 27 March, Swift was responsible for leading the 3rd Battalion, depleted by casualties, in a successful counter-attack against the storm-troops. For his gallantry and courage in this attack, in which he set 'a splendid example' until he was severely wounded, Swift was decorated with the Distinguished Service Order.[5] The following day he died from his wounds in a casualty clearing station while awaiting evacuation.

Although mortally wounded, he had commanded the battalion with drive, enthusiasm and force of character, his keen spirit prompting Sir Douglas Haig to mention him in his despatches of 3 November 1918.[6] His was certainly a notable achievement—a 22 year-old Australian-born lieutenant serving in the British Army and commanding a battalion in war—recognised by award of the rare combination of decorations, the DSO, MC and Bar.

In total, some 9 000 DSOs, 37 000 MCs and 3 000 first bars to the MC were awarded during the 1914-18 war, of which Australians serving in Australian units gained 619 DSOs, 2 366 MCs and 170 first bars to the MC.[7] The combination of DSO, MC and Bar was earned by only six Australians. Although Australian-born, Neville Cropley Swift was serving with British forces when his continual and repeated acts of gallantry were performed, so his decorations are not counted in the Australian tally.

This remarkable trio earned by a South Australian reflects Swift's personal courage and casts great credit on Australia, further enhancing the legend of the Australian fighting soldier.

This 'brave life given for others' is commemorated by the South Australian War Memorial 1914-18 on North Terrace in Adelaide, in which the names of the 39 South Australians who died while serving with British Forces are listed. In addition, Neville Cropley Swift, together with his brother Sir Brian, is listed amoung the 1800 names of old scholars and Masters of St. Peter's College who volunteered for war service in the 1914-18 war, inscribed in gold on the Honour Roll in the College's Memorial Hall.

* * * *

Citations

Military Cross

Lt (A/Capt) N. C. Swift, East Lancashire Reg't (Special Reserve).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. During intense enemy shelling, which continually obliterated the parts of the line held by his men, burying the garrisons, he helped under heavy fire to dig out and rescue the buried men. He reorganised the line and established new posts, constantly exposing himself to heavy fire.

London Gazette, 4 February 1918.

Bar to Military Cross

Lt (A/Capt) N. C. Swift MC, East Lancashire Reg't (Special Reserve).

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He showed the greatest initiative and determination in leading his company during a relief through a heavy enemy barrage, and carried out the relief successfully.

London Gazette, 18 July 1918.

Distinguished Service Order

Lt (A/Major) N. C. Swift MC*, East Lancashire Reg't.

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in leading his battalion in a counter attack, which was completely successful. He continued to set a splendid example until severely wounded.

London Gazette, 26 July 1918.

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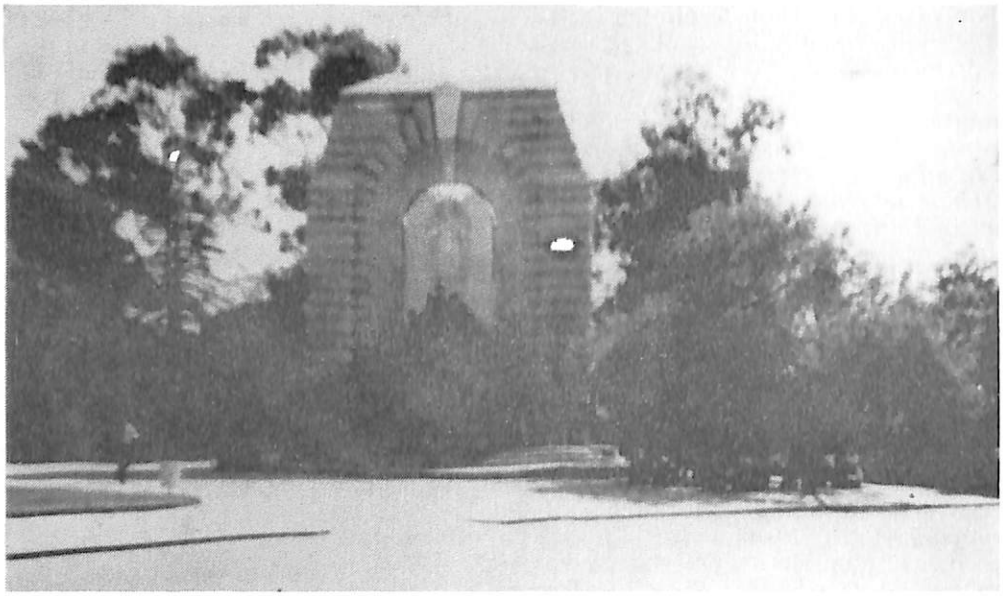
1. *The SA Government Gazette*, 25 January 1894, p.219.
2. *The Distinguished Service Order 1886-1923*, J. B. Hayward & Sons.
3. *London Gazette*, 4 February 1918.
4. *London Gazette*, 18 July 1918.
5. *London Gazette*, 26 July 1918.
6. *London Gazette*, 28 December 1918.
7. R. D. Williams, *Medals to Australia*, Adelaide 1983.

Acknowledgements

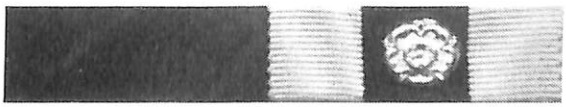
I would like to thank the following people who assisted with research: Annette Chalmers, Librarian of St. Peter's College, C. K. Dennis of the South Australian Reference Library and Mr Greg Moody.



The South Australian War Memorial 1914-18. Swift is listed under the heading 'South Australians who enlisted with or were transferred to British forces'. (Greg Moody)

South Australians who enlisted with or were transferred to British forces, 1914-1919.

Bayly, C.	King's Regiment Liverpool
Benson, J. H. G.	Transport Service
Bragg, R. C.	Royal Artillery
Chapman, C. G.	Royal Engineers
Collins, F. W.	First Life Guards
Creswell, R. H. (OWE Serbia)	Imperial Camel Corps
Cudmore, M. M. MM	Royal Artillery
Davey, R. A.	Royal Navy
Forsaith, H. J.	Royal Flying Corps
Gilbert, J.	Manchester Regiment
Gilbert, J. D.	Royal Flying Corps
Giles, R. O'H.	King Edward's Horse
Gill, E. W.	Royal Artillery
Gosse, W. H. MC	Royal Artillery
Hardy, G. B.	Royal Flying Corps
Harvey, G. A.	RAMC
Hodge, R. N. G.	Royal Navy
Holthouse, A. R.	Royal Flying Corps
Hornabrook, L. C.	Leicestershire Regiment
Hughes, A.	Cheshire Regiment
Hughes, J. MC	Warwickshire Regiment
Jury, G. R.	Royal Artillery
Knox, A. W. C.	Royal Irish Fusiliers
Lawson, F. H.	Royal Navy
Lucas, R. B.	RAMC
Marten, H. H.	Manchester Regiment
Medland, E. H.	Transport Service
Morey, A. W. MC	Royal Flying Corps
Murray, K. H.	Seaforth Highlanders
Paterson, J. K.	Royal Navy
Reid, R. H.	Royal Artillery
Sadlier, J. R.	King Edward's Horse
Sigel, H. O.	King's Royal Rifle Corps
Sinclair, R.	Royal Navy
Stewart, G. P. DCM	Dragoon Guards
Swift, N. C. DSO, MC and Bar	East Lancashire Regiment
Symons, R.	Royal Navy
Woollacott, R. J.	Coldstream Guards
Wright, A. O'H.	Royal Irish Fusiliers



Ribbons of the DSO and MC with MC Bar rosette.

Peter Stanley

The Soldiers on the Hill: the defence of Whyalla, 1939-45

Part 4: 1942 *'If the Japs come'*

AS the Japanese advanced into south-east Asia Jack Edwards, the editor of the *Whyalla News*, warned that

> Whyalla is one of the vital links in the chain of making munitions and it is not so far inland that attack can be ruled out.[1]

Mr Edwards' point was rich in irony for those recalling that until prevented by the Lyons government three-quarters of Whyalla's iron ore shipments before 1938 had gone to Japan. During the uncertain year of 1942 it seemed that Whyalla might receive some of its exports back—as bombs.[2]

Six days after the outbreak of war with Japan Whyalla's first air raid practice began with a series of blasts on the BHP fire whistle. The protection of civilians from the effects of air attack was the responsibility of bodies working under state and local governments, but in the absence of a local council Whyalla's civil defence had been co-ordinated since 1939 by a group of residents called the Civil Defence Committee, part of South Australia's Civil Defence Force.[3] The Civil Defence Force, however, was universally, if ungrammatically, known from the initials of its main responsibility (Air Raid Precautions) as 'the ARP'.

Interest in the organisation was at first low. The fall of France in May 1940 brought a 'fluttering of interest', but for many Australians—those without friends or relatives overseas—the war was far away. An ARP pamphlet warned in 1941 that 'war is like a bushfire—a sudden change of the wind and the house...is suddenly threatened'. In December 1941 the wind changed and 'the ARP' briefly entered the lives of the people of Whyalla.[4]

The town was divided into six ARP districts, each under an area warden, with three 'casualty clearing stations', and a headquarters in what had been Jim Prindiville's betting shop. In August 1941 most of the Civil Defence Force's 165 volunteers had been boy scouts or members of the Red Cross' Voluntary Service Detachments, but a number of street wardens were enrolled rapidly after December. Air raid wardens were instructed in their duties by training pamphlets based on pre-war British civil defence manuals. Equipped—eventually—with steel helmets, whistles and arm bands they were to report bomb damage and deal with its effects. Wardens had no police powers but relied on the co-operation of their neighbours, especially when obliged to 'call the attention of the occupier to any unobscured light'. Their training was necessarily theoretical and often appeared not to have been modified by actual experience of air raids; they were urged, for example, to avoid looking up at bombers because 'to stare at low flying aircraft is fatal'. While those who framed or followed this advice presumably took it seriously those whose lights remained unobscured were evidently less worried about the danger.[5]

Preparations against raids began, including the construction of air raid shelters. A large public shelter was constructed by the company opposite the post office, while slit trenches for the primary school were sited in the school reserve. The school's head teacher, R.S. Michelmore, recorded that during air raid drills the schoolgirls showed understandable 'signs of timidity'. As a pupil later recalled that the trenches were a haven for red-back spiders, their fears may not have solely concerned Japanese bombs, though at least one girl continued to have nightmares about attack for years after. Some residents dug private shelters, though the more canny made them useful as cellars or service pits for cars, perhaps to disguise their purpose from scornful neighbours.[6] Preparations intensified after the bombing of Darwin and the arrival of Captain Moorfoot's anti-aircraft battery. A Mr Goodfellow built a wall of sandbags in front of his shop's plate glass windows and a jarrah shelter at its rear. These measures were reported under the headline 'If the Japs come'.[7]

The digging of air raid shelters was entirely voluntary. Reports of their construction tend to stand out even if relatively few people felt the need for them, partly perhaps because they confirm that 'the Australian people' were concerned about attack. But many more did not dig them—Mr R.E. Fairley's brother dug a shelter in his backyard but 'my father made him fill it in before someone fell in and broke their neck; I don't think he thought the Japanese would get as far as Whyalla'. The effectiveness of compulsory lighting restrictions, however, depended on the residents' co-operation and, as with participation in voluntary activities, involved a degree of inconvenience. How well they were maintained therefore reflects whether residents were apprehensive or sceptical of attack. A black-out was imposed shortly after 8 December, though within a month a less restrictive 'brown-out' was considered sufficient. Lighting controls soon affected the town's social life: the Ozone open-air cinema was concealed with canvas screens, forcing those who had preferred to watch from the street to pay for their entertainment.[8]

But even after two months many bulbs were still unobscured and some people claimed not to know that it was an offence to show a light. In March 1942 the Civil Defence Committee appealed to BHP to consider disconnecting electricity to offenders against lighting restrictions. This threat—which could not have been made or enforced in a town not run as an arm of the company—apparently improved Whyalla's brown-out. Residents pointed out, not unreasonably, that it was ridiculous to police minor infringements by householders when BHP's works could not be hidden. 'What was a sixty watt headlight in a car', asked a man on the company's staff, 'when they were tipping...slag...that you could see from Port Pirie?' The four-hourly tapping of the blast furnace, the glow of which was visible far out into the gulf, produced a justifiable scepticism about the value of partially enforcing the brown-out. Trials by the Department of Home Security and BHP in 1941 had already established that the furnace could not be closed down quickly without damaging it. That the expedient could not therefore be attempted during ARP trials was not disclosed, and the residents' belief in the futility of their efforts went unchecked. Bothering with air raid precautions under such circumstances could understandably be regarded as a waste of time.[9]

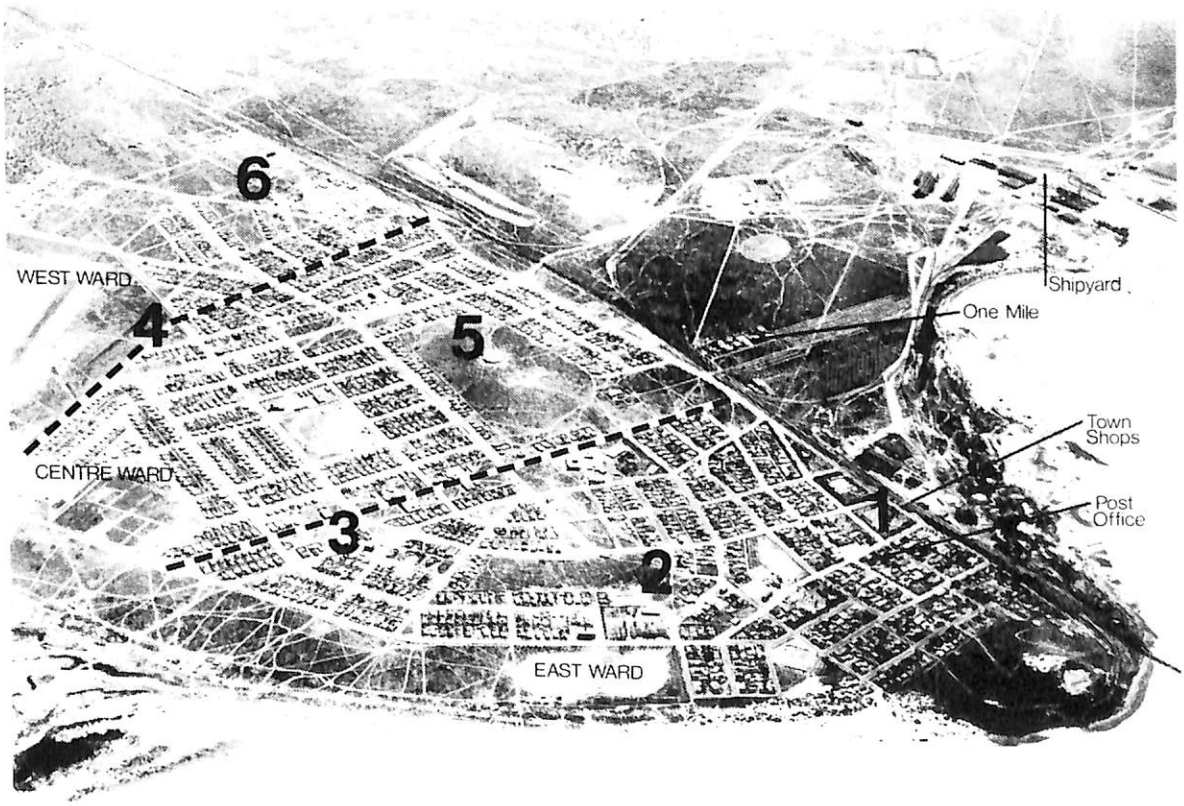
Whether or not the blast furnaces's loom reminded Whyalla's residents of their vulnerability, their reaction to the series of ARP trials beginning in January 1942 suggests that, perhaps unlike the authorities and the residents of other Australian towns, many considered air raids to be remote possibilities. Six exercises were held up to July 1942. Their usual pattern was for ARP, fire and casualty services to simulate air raid 'incidents' while aircraft of the Spencer's Gulf Aero Club flew overhead to lend authenticity to the trial and observe its effectiveness. The first practice, on 10 January, disclosed many faults, not the least being that the lights of the ARP headquarters were visible from the air. During later trials the wardens became more proficient, though problems remained. The brown-out and the unmade roads in the town's west often confused rescue parties, many of whom lived in

An advertisement of the kind which appeared in the Adelaide ***Advertiser*** *early in 1942 advising South Australians of the procedures they should follow in the event of air raids.*

the old town. On one occasion wardens lost while looking for a 'casualty' found only a note reading 'Bled to death—got tired—gone home'. Though at first poorly supplied—before December 1941 for lack of money and after for shortage of materials—Whyalla's ARP gradually acquired the equipment and expertise to meet attack from the air.[10]

But if the wardens' efficiency improved many of those whom they were to protect remained unappreciative and unco-operative. During the first trial 'youths' were observed striking matches and flashing torches in the main street. A later daylight exercise confirmed that there was 'a tendency to take air raid precautions lightly'. Although expected to take cover people 'came out on their verandahs to see what was going on'. Tennis players remained on the courts and spectators gathered to good-humouredly wave farewell to 'casualties' being evacuated. Aero club pilots reported that 'they would not have had any difficulty in machine-gunning hundreds'. During further trials in April 'hundreds walked about as if they were not interested' while the Civil Defence Committee expressed 'much concern' at the apathetic response to a practice in July. Whyalla may have been unusual in not taking trials seriously. Practices in Dubbo (New South Wales) in February and March apparently 'secured the co-operation of all townspeople'. In the event they were unnecessary, being founded on an exaggerated but nonetheless justifiable belief that air raids were likely. Such trials were held in towns all over Australia, but if they can be regarded as a measure of the prevalence of concern about raids Whyalla's reluctance to participate fully indicates an attitude of either unusual fortitude or, more probably (given the town's relatively poor performance in aspects of the civilian war effort), one of exceptional apathy.[11]

Confronted with trying to protect a sceptical population, the Civil Defence Force in Whyalla enjoyed a relatively brief period of effectiveness. Even as its equipment improved it encountered difficulties in attracting and retaining volunteers. Whyalla's force grew rapidly to some 300 members by July 1942. Of this number (not all of whom, however were wardens) no more than sixty appear to have attended training sessions regularly and



An aerial photograph of Whyalla showing its 1945 local government areas and its six air raid precautions districts. Hummock Hill, the site of Captain Moorfoot's 26th Heavy Anti-Aircraft Battery, is located at the bottom right hand corner of the photograph.

as early as April disappointment was expressed at poor attendances at trials. A year later ARP members clearly realised that Whyalla was unlikely to be attacked. At the last major exercise held before Curtin acknowledged that the danger of invasion was past only a third of the casualty and transport sections, sixty per cent of wardens' runners, and even headquarters staff and half of the previously enthusiastic women of the Red Cross turned out. Only in the fire service (most of whom worked together at BHP) and in the demolition and rescue squad (which had a more interesting job) did attendances approach full strength. With the easing of lighting restrictions in mid-1943 the ARP organisation, while nominally remaining until 1945, faded after an active existence of less than two years.[12]

Among the residents as a whole expectation of attack diminished even more rapidly. Only two months after BHP's threat to disconnect those contravening lighting restrictions, and as the battle of the Coral Sea was being fought, a noticeable slackening of Whyalla's brown-out was again detected. Cautious official admissions—by practice or pronouncement—that the danger of raids was passing were long anticipated by the public. The air raid shelters gradually fell into disuse, or simply fell in, and Mr Goodfellow's sandbags, rather than protecting his shareholders' property, became a challenge to local children who climbed the wall with a running jump. If Curtin and his government felt that the people of Australia 'had to be aroused to their peril and alarmed into action' they evidently did not succeed in doing so in Whyalla. Even as Australia's leaders warned that air raids were likely a large number of the people in one of the country's most important industrial towns demonstrated that they lacked a sense of urgency about the dangers which their government insisted that they faced.[13]

Notes

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2. *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, Volume 155, 19 May 1938, pp 1268-69.
3. 'Report on the Civil Defence Force', *South Australian Parliamentary Papers*, 1942, No. 14, p3.
4. 'Report on the Civil Defence Force', p3; *Home Protection Against Air Raids*, Adelaide, 1941.
5. *Whyalla News*, 2 January 1942; 8 August 1941; 27 March 1942; *The Duties of Air Raid Wardens*, Adelaide, 1941, p2; *Wardens' Questionnaire*, Adelaide [1942?], question 74.
6. *Whyalla News*, 2 January 1942; 20 March 1942; 27 February 1942; *Advertiser*, 15 January 1942; Whyalla Higher Primary School Journal, 10 February 1942 (Whyalla Town Primary School); letter, Dr Peter Jeffrey to Peter Stanley, 28 January 1981; Mrs Dorothy Kaerley, questionnaire.
7. *Whyalla News*, 2 April 1942.
8. Mr R.E. Fairley, questionnaire; *Whyalla News*, 13 March 1942.
9. *Whyalla News*, 6 February 1942, 6 March 1942; interview with Mr Lloyd Penglase; Australian Archives, Department of Home Security, 41/166/40, 'Restricted lighting—Glare from Coke & Blast Furnaces—Port Kembla and Newcastle ovens'.
10. *Whyalla News*, 16 January 1942, interview with Mr Barry Mebberson.
11. *Whyalla News*, 24 April 1942, 24 July 1942; Michael McKernan, *All in!: Australia during the Second World War*, 1983, p117; Peter Stanley, 'Don't let Whyalla down', chapter 2.
12. *Whyalla News*, 24 July 1942, 6 February 1942, 24 April 1942, 11 June 1943.
13. *Whyalla News*, 8 May 1942, 24 July 1942, Paul Hasluck, *The Government and the People, 1943-1945*, Canberra, 1970, p220.

George Ward

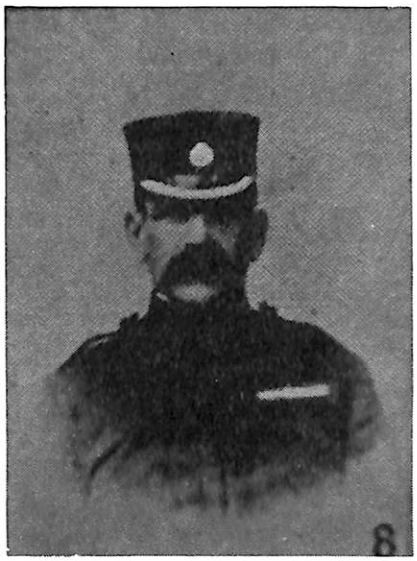
Forty years an Infanteer

FREDERICK Pontifex Liggings (later Liggins) was born in Sydney, England on 27 December 1843. As a teenager he worked as a porter and at the age of 18 joined the British Army. On 11 April 1861 he enlisted in the 58th Regiment of Foot and was to stay with it for the next 19 years.

During his years with the regiment he saw service in India in 1872-73 and the Zulu campaign of 1879 at which time he held the rank of sergeant. He participated in the fighting at Iteleza and the Battle of Ulundi in July. In November of the same year he was included in a large force that attacked the stronghold of the Bapedi (Basuto) Chief Sukukuni in the Northern Transvaal, and was there for the defeat and the capture of the Chief on 2 December.

In June 1880 he took his discharge by transfer. According to the quarterly muster returns this took place at sea after leaving the Transvaal. He arrived in Australia in or about 1881 and married Mary Elizabeth Phillips in Sydney in 1882. She was to bear him three daughters, Blanche, Ida and Maude.

In 1884 Fred Liggins was serving as a private in the NSW Militia Infantry. With the death of General Gordon in the Sudan and the decision that NSW would send a contingent, Private Liggins immediately volunteered. There appears to have been some delay in him being accepted, as he wasn't taken onto unit strength until 23 February, that is, about five days after enlistments commenced. At the time of joining he was promoted to Colour Sergeant (No. 486) A Company. He gave his age as 42 years and 2 months, was 5ft 8½ in. tall and occupation as Professional Soldier. After the Contingent's return and disbandment Sergeant Liggins continued his service with the infantry. He was appointed to Warrant Officer on the NSW Volunteers Permanent Staff on 25 January 1887. Later the same year he was again promoted, this time to the rank of First Lieutenant, on 27 October, in the Ashfield Infantry (reserves). Then in 1896 he accepted the position of WO1, NSW Army School of Instruction, Infantry Section.



Warrant Officer F.P. Liggins. (photo George Ward courtesy Max Chamberlain)

With the outbreak of war in South Africa in 1899, Fred was off again to the front. This time as Sergeant Major (No. 1) with the NSW Infantry. The unit left Sydney in November 1899 and served mainly on outpost duty, etc. until 1 February 1900. They were then converted to a mounted unit becoming E Squadron NSW Mounted Rifles. At the heavy fighting at the Battle of Diamond Hill, the Mounted Rifles were forced to charge uphill on foot with fixed bayonets to dislodge the Boers. They achieved victory but at a cost, and amongst the casualties was Sergeant Major Liggins. He had been shot, the bullet entering one shoulder and traversing his body, going through to the other shoulder, missing all vital parts. Invalided home on board the *Medic*, he arrived back in Sydney

on 13 September, 1900 and is listed as being back on strength at Victoria Barracks, Sydney the following day. He was mentioned in 'Lord Roberts' Dispatches' 19 April 1901. Awarded a pension by the NSW Government on 31 January 1904, up until then he had lived at 42 Woodstock Street, Waverley, Sydney. It is possible that after that date he was admitted to a nursing home or similar institution for old soldiers.

His Egypt Medal was purchased at an antique/bric-a-brac shop in Sydney a few years ago and I can't help wondering whether in fact his three daughters were given a silver medal each. (South Africa Medal Bar 1879—Egypt Medal—Queen's South Africa). If any member can supply additional information about Liggins, I'd be more than grateful.

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3. S. Brogden, *The Sudan Contingent*, Melbourne 1943.
4. Australian War Memorial. Soudan Contingent Records.
5. *The Story of South Africa*, Sydney.
6. NSW Military Forces GO No. 129.
7. Victorian Archives, Brighton. Pay returns E Squadron, NSW Mounted Rifles.
8. *Yearbook of Australia*, 1888.

Notes on contributors

Major General R.N.L. Hopkins, CBE, RL has a strong interest in military history and is vice-Patron of the MHSA. He has contributed to a number of historical journals and his *History of the Australian Armoured Corps 1927-1972* was published by the Australian War Memorial in 1978.

Although she trained as a kindergarten teacher, Wendy Fisher has been interested in Asian history since school days, an interest she further developed during a posting to Bangkok with her former husband, the late Wing Commander R.S. Fisher, RAAF. In 1984 she graduated BA(Hons) in Asian History at Monash University. Her article in this issue is a brief outline of her thesis.

Jonathan Ford, Dip Teach (Primary), BA, MA (Qual) is currently researching the role of the Dutch armed forces in the South-West Pacific Area from March, 1942 to August, 1945 for the degree of Master of Arts. He is a welfare officer for the University of Queensland and the editor of *The Queensland Wargamer*. His special interests are in the early months of the Pacific War and the Royal Australian Navy.

Clem Sargent is Federal Secretary of the MHSA and has just returned from an extended tour of the United Kingdom and Europe, including the Iberian Peninsula. His particular interest is the Peninsular war.

Matthew Higgins has a BA (Hons) degree and a Diploma of Education from Macquarie University. He works as a research officer in the Australian War Memorial's Historical Research Section and has written articles on Australian military history, biography, New South Wales goldmining history and civil aviation history.

John S. Fenby joined the regular army in the artillery in 1961 and saw active service in Malaysia, Borneo and Vietnam. He retired in 1981 with the rank of Warrant Officer Class II. His interest in 9.2-inch guns began on an Open Day at the School of Artillery when he 'volunteered' to be a guide through the fortifications. This is his second article on North Head and he is continuing his research.

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.

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.

George Ward has been a member of the MHSA for eight years and is serving his fourth term as President of the Victorian Branch. His main interests are the soldiers and units who served in Victoria between 1803 and 1901 and he is currently working on a book covering that period. His collecting is based around that area, specializing in medals, paperwork and research on individual military personnel.

Review article

Michael Barthorp: *War on the Nile: Britain, Egypt and the Sudan 1882-1898*, Blandford Press, Poole, Dorset, UK, 1984. 190 pages; 160 illustrations and six maps, select bibliography and index; $21.95 but available for members of the Doubleday Military Book Club for $16.45.

Michael Barthorp is the author of many books including those dealing with the first Maori War, the Zulu War, the North-West Frontier, British cavalry uniforms and British infantry uniforms. His book *War on the Nile* immediately attracts attention as the dust jacket depicts action battle scenes in colour. The appetite for close reading is whetted further by the prologue which provides an interesting backdrop in its description of Nelson's victory over the French at the Battle of the Nile and Abercrombie's defeat of the French at Aboukir Bay and at Alexandria. These British successes denied Napoleon the use of Egypt as a springboard to invade India.

In Part I (The Cleansing of Egypt) Barthorp reminds us that from the early 16th Century Egypt had been a province of the Ottoman Empire but that Turkish authority had been only nominal. He describes events leading into the mid-19th Century and tells of the overland route between Alexandria and Suez, established by the East India Company, which reduced the travelling time between London and Bombay from over 90 days to 30 days. He mentions the railway constructed along the route and the eventual construction of the Suez Canal which was opened in 1869. By 1875 80% of the shipping using the canal was British.

By this time the self-indulgent Khedive of Egypt, Ismail Pasha, was unable to pay even the interest on his enormous debts and decided to sell his shares in the Suez Canal Company, thus giving Britain a controlling position in the company's affairs. Even the £4,000,000 paid by Britain provided Ismail only temporary relief. Britain and France then appointed Controllers-General to administer Egypt's financial affairs. When Ismail Pasha reacted against this arrangement the two powers persuaded Turkey to depose him in favour of his son Tewfik Pasha.

Meanwhile, in the Egyptian Army a serious revolt took place. Eventually Colonel Ahmed Arabi Bey seized power and the Khedive became a virtual prisoner in his own palace. In May 1882 Britain and France despatched a joint naval squadron to Alexandria to preserve their interest in Egypt. Arabi then began strengthening the forts of Alexandria. On 10 July Admiral Sir Philip Beauchamp Seymour demanded the surrender of the forts. With no response from Arabi he began bombarding them on the morning of 11 July. Meanwhile the French ships had sailed for Port Said during the night.

To safeguard British interests and the Suez Canal, which was on the most direct maritime route to India and the Australian colonies, Prime Minister Gladstone prepared to land troops in Egypt. In telling of the preparations for military intervention Barthorp describes the state of the British Army from the 1860s, the Cardwell reforms and the opposition to these by the Commander-in-Chief, the Duke of Cambridge—cousin to Queen Victoria. He then describes how the Canal was secured and how the Egyptians suffered their main defeat at the Battle of Tel-el-Kebir.

In Part II Barthorp deals with the revolt led by Mohammed Ahmed (Mahomet Achmet) who had proclaimed himself the *Mahdi* (the awaited one or messiah). By October 1882 he had 40,000 men under arms. Following the massacre of thousands of Egyptian troops the British Government, after much delay, decided to send Major General Charles ('Chinese') Gordon to Egypt to arrange the evacuation of Egyptian garrisons and civilians from the Soudan.

He also describes the dispatch of a force to the Eastern Soudan under Major General Sir Gerald Graham to deal with Osman Digna who had revolted in support of the Mahdi. He portrays the situation at the Battle of Tamai on 13 March 1884 when a square comprising the Black Watch, the York and Lancaster Regiment and a Naval Brigade was broken by the enemy.

Barthorp does not mention that Graham had ordered the Black Watch to move out of the square to counter-attack the Dervishes and that, as a result, the enemy moved around their flanks to cause

havoc in the square. Only by the timely support of the second brigade square, under Redvers Buller, was the situation rectified.

Gordon had eventually arrived in Khartoum on 18 February and by mid-March had evacuated some 2,000 civilians and sick soldiers but by this time his communications with Cairo were cut off by the Mahdieh. Queen Victoria was most concerned for Gordon's safety and had written to Gladstone: 'You are bound to try to save him'. After much procrastination Parliament finally agreed to despatch an expeditionary force to relieve Gordon and his troops. General Sir Garnet Wolseley, who had commanded the British troops in Egypt during the Arabi uprising, was to be the commander.

Barthorp describes the operations of the Desert Column and the River Column and how, after all their efforts to reach Gordon, he and his garrison in Khartoum were massacred on 26 January 1885—just over one hundred years ago. He mentions the death of Lieutenant Colonel R. Coveny of the Black Watch in the Battle of Kirbekan. Perhaps Barthorp did not know that Coveny was a member of a well known Sydney family. He had purchased his commission in that regiment after being educated in England.

After the fall of Khartoum a force was despatched to Suakin to deal with Osman Digna. Command of the Suakin Field Force was given to Lieutenant General Sir Gerald Graham. Barthorp mentions that a New South Wales Contingent joined this force soon after its concentration in the Suakin area. A Russian threat had developed in Afghanistan and it was one of the factors which influenced Britain to withdraw from the Soudan, except for garrison troops. Thus, the New South Wales troops saw little action.

In Part III Barthorp tells of the appointment of Major General H.H. Kitchener as the Sirdar of the Egyptian Army and how he re-organised and upgraded this army. When he brought the province of Dongola under military control Britain decided to extend his operations to eventually bring the whole of the Soudan under control. He describes the advance on Omdurman and Khartoum in 1898 and his portrayal of the charge of the 21st Lancers in the Battle of Omdurman reminds us of the charge of the Light Brigade in the Crimean War.

Barthorp may not have known that in the charge the left wing was commanded by Major Henry Finn who went on to command the Queensland Military Forces and then the New South Wales Military Forces. Before retiring he was Inspector-General of the Commonwealth Military Forces. The newspaper correspondent Winston Churchill was attached to Finn's squadron in the 21st Lancers. He was very critical of the desecration of the Mahdi's tomb in Omdurman, carried out on Kitchener's express orders. Kitchener also ordered the decapitation of the Mahdi's corpse as a reprisal for the decapitation of Gordon's body in 1885. Barthorp does not mention this act either.

Although it is not mentioned in this book Churchill also blamed Kitchener for the slaughter of Dervish wounded after the Battle of Omdurman. Kitchener again betrayed these traits in the South African War when he so readily confirmed the death sentences of Morant and Handcock and when the farmhouses of Boer families were burned down and the homeless families were placed in concentration camps without adequate sanitary facilities, as a result of which thousands of women and children died of disease. In Nylstroom, in the Transvaal, today there are over 560 graves of women and children who died in the concentration camp there.

War on the Nile is a very interesting book—a popular history which is easy to read and will appeal particularly to general readers of British origin, as well as military historians. It is well illustrated and has several pictures relating to the New South Wales Military Contingent. It is a pity that some of the black and white copies of paintings are not colour copies of the originals.

The maps are clear but one good fold-out map of the theatre of operations would have added much to the value of the book.

Barthorp gives some of the political background but does not provide enough of the comments of Queen Victoria who expressed her views very forcibly to her ministers and to others. As well, a more liberal sprinkling of comments of the rank and file would have given the book more appeal.

An appendix lists the battle honours awarded but does not include *Suakin 1885* which the King awarded to some Australian battalions several years after federation.

Barthorp's *War on the Nile*, Inglis's *The Rehearsal*, the Military Historical Society of Australia's *But little glory* and the forthcoming *Soldiers of the Queen*, which is being published by the New South Wales Military Historical Society and The Royal New South Wales Regiment, provide a diverse collection of 1984/1985 publications dealing with war in the Soudan.

Ralph Sutton

Book reviews

Michael Barthorp: *British Cavalry Uniforms since 1660.* Blandford Press, Poole, Dorset, UK, 1984, 192 pages, illustrated, appendix, index. Hardcover $21.95.

This book traces the development of clothing, equipment and weapons of the cavalry of the British Regular Army from the Restoration to the present day. The uniforms covered are full dress, undress, service and combat clothing including the different styles worn in temperate and tropical climates. The author has naturally omitted the reserve and yeomanry units as well as guidons and standards which are subjects within themselves.

Each chapter deals with a century which in turn is divided into sections. The first part of the chapter gives a general description of the major dress changes and a brief consideration of the organisational developments for the following century. The succeeding sections are sub-divided into various types of cavalry, ie: Household, Horse, Dragoons and later, Hussars and Lancers. In order that the subject may be related to its correct context, the text begins with a chronology of campaigns fought by regiments as Horsed Cavalry followed by an introduction summarising the subject until 1660.

Although this book deals with the subject in a broad way, it is amazing to find such detail covering the numerous individual changes during a period of over 300 years. Research for this book would have taken many years even with the assistance of earlier works and the institutions acknowledged. Available information covering the first 100 years from 1660 is very sketchy and the considerable licence used by regimental colonels would have compounded the author's problems. It was not until the reign of George II that the colonels' powers were checked (1742) and standard clothing regulations were introduced, endorsed by royal approval. The task would only have become easier after the beginning of the 19th century when numerous prints and drawings were produced and the invention of photography put an end to the interpretation of written patterns.

The text in parts is very difficult to follow, especially if the book is read from beginning to end, but is excellent as a source of quick reference to individual or period information. The descriptions of the uniforms are very good and complemented by a large number of contemporary paintings, water colours, prints and photographs in black and white. The thirty-two colour plates, drawn by Pierre Turner, are of high quality and show a considerable amount of detail without the usual artistic licence. There are a few mistakes, of which the majority are confined to grey areas always under dispute, and minor details to weapons and equipment are also open for discussion. Overall the book is good value, highly recommended and is of equal standard to, if not better than, his earlier work on British Infantry Uniforms since 1660.

R.C.H. Courtney

Michael Bowers: *North American Fighting Uniforms—An Illustrated History since 1756.* Blandford Press, Poole, Dorset, UK, 1985. 126 pp, illus, index. Price on jacket $US14.95.

Although under a new title, the information in this book has previously been published under ten separate titles by such well known authors as John and Andrew Mollo, known for their works on the Seven Years war, the American Revolution and World War Two, and Philip Haythornthwaite for his informative work on the Civil War. In all this book covers the period from 1756 to the present day.

For those who have either a general or specific interest in North American uniforms, the collating of this material under one title provides a quick and readily accessible reference source.

Containing 120 colour plates by such artists as Malcolm McGregor (known for his clever technique in the colouring of photographs in previous Blandford publications) this work clearly demonstrates the influences created by the demands of conflict on the development of the military uniform, from the evolution of Washington's 'buckskinned' militia of the 1750s, through to the rapid development and adaption of more conventional dress brought about by the Civil War, to both World Wars, and finally into the present modern sophistication created by today's demands for specialisation.

Laid out in chronological order and cleanly presented this recent addition to the Blandford series of publications provides a useful source of knowledge for historian and military modeller alike.

Peter Aitken

Hugh V. Clarke: *Last Stop Nagasaki!*, George Allen and Unwin Australia Pty Ltd, Sydney, 1984. 135 pp, illus, maps, no index. HC $14.95.

When 'Fat Boy', the second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on 9 August 1945, 24 Australian POWs were in a camp less than two kilometres from the epicentre and survived the blast.

This book tells the human story of Bombardier Clarke and fellow Australians who were transported to Japan from the dreaded Burma-Siam railway, Singapore, Java and Timor. With humour and sadness, it records the suffering and struggle to survive during the months leading to the birth of the nuclear age and eye-witness accounts of the blast and the after-effects of the bomb.

The transfer of the prisoners in September 1944 from the tropical areas of Asia to the coldest winter in Japan for 70 years caused the death of many of the already weakened men. Much of the book deals with the various tasks assigned to prisoners in the shipbuilding yards and how the men set about a careful program of sabotage and go-slow tactics under the vigilant eyes of such unpredictable characters as 'Ducksarse'. Safety measures were non-existent and many serious injuries and deaths were brought about by inadequate and worn equipment.

American, British and Dutch prisoners occupied the same camp and readers may be surprised to learn that the Australians were not so badly treated as other nationalities. The Americans seemed to bear the brunt of the Japanese ill-treatment and this increased as the war progressed. While being shipped from the Philippines a number of American prisoners had been battened down for the full trip and not fed. It was said that only about twenty survived by drinking the blood of their dead comrades.

Times were hard in Japan and the civilian workers fared little better than the prisoners:

> One day while working in the foundry, a woman carrying scrap iron to the furnace collapsed and in 30 minutes gave birth to a child. The guard cut the cord with his bayonet, and the baby was washed in cold water, wrapped, and put in a basket near the furnace we were loading. Two hours after the birth, the woman was forced to commence work. This nearly caused a riot with the Australians.

Clarke notes the shipyards' practice of measuring the size of rivets, drill-holes, etc. in feet and inches whereas all linear and vertical measurements were in the metric system. He concluded this reflected the British naval influence and that of the Germans in the Army. Another example of the inconsistency of the Japanese was the apparent concern they showed for the health of the prisoners. To prevent the prisoners from getting colds and pneumonia, each morning and evening, in the freezing cold, they had to strip off and rub their bodies vigorously with a hard brush for ten to fifteen minutes. Clarke said the brush was like one he had used at home on his dog. The order for this procedure said that catching a cold was an offence and would be punished! Nevertheless, many prisoners died of pneumonia from the extreme conditions in the work areas and little medication was provided.

With the benefit of present knowledge of the effects of radiation, I cringed when I read that the day after the blast some prisoners 'had their first taste of meat for a couple of years. With no food around they ate some horse meat which had been cooked with the blast of the bomb...it was the best meal they'd had for years.'

The end of the war 'came like a pricked bladder...We didn't even cheer.' Flying home, the author recalls:

> Coming in low over what the pilot said was Nagasaki I stared down in horror. The entire city once surrounded by beautiful green hills had gone...I could not imagine what evil holocaust could have wrought such a catastrophe...after hearing much more about the bomb and about the way the war was heading when it was dropped, I was convinced that no prisoner of war in Japan would have remained alive much longer without it.

Like many Australians, Hugh Clarke arrived home to find 'all manner of unpleasant surprises behind all those lost years'. Returning to Nagasaki in 1983, he met former guards and victims of the bomb. His sympathetic attitude towards former foes is to be commended but may not be shared by all of his fellow ex-POWs.

I enjoyed the book and recommend it as a factual account of the beginning of the nuclear age.

Mick Erwin

Lloyd Edmonds, Amirah Inglis (ed): *Letters from Spain*, George Allen and Unwin Australia Pty Ltd, North Sydney, 1985. 200 pp, illus, map. HC $19.95, PB $9.95.

In researching her forthcoming book on Australian participation in the Spanish civil war Amirah Inglis came upon a series of letters written by Lloyd Edmonds, a young Australian who fought for the Spanish government in its war against the rebel generals and their fascist and Nazi allies. She has put the letters together in an easily readable and understandable form.

Edmonds was a school teacher in Victoria closely associated with the socialist movement and son of F.J. Edmonds, printer and co-founder of the Ruskin Press (named for the English social reformer) and himself a trade unionist and socialist. An introductory chapter traces this background and the labour and communist movements of the period. This part of the book was of particular interest to this reviewer who observed the radical left scene, from its fringes, in the late thirties and early forties. But that is not a necessary qualification to appreciate this book.

In 1936 Edmonds left Australia to study in England (and where else but the London School of Economics?) but it is not made clear how much study he actually did. Most of the 64 letters were written to his father, over half of them covering the period of his journey to England and the eight months he spent in England before going to Spain to serve in the International Brigades. An explanatory introduction puts each letter into context. Much of his time in England was spent working in a variety of jobs giving him the opportunity of observing the social and political scene including the activity of the fascists and the (surprising, to me) strength of the anti-semitic movement. It is likely that these influenced his decision to go to Spain, something not clearly explained in his letters.

Although, at 30, hardly a starry-eyed youth Edmonds' background and his progression through radical socialist and anti-fascist to the international brigades was a logical sequence if hardly typical of his colleagues. The book indicates that only some 50 Australians, including several women, mostly nurses, served in Spain. Europe was then a rather remote scene, some weeks away by sea, and although the journey to England could be accomplished by air in one week, a serious obstacle to such travel, for young people at least, was the cost—a year's wages for a tradesman or the price of a Ford V8.

Edmonds served in Spain as a brigade and artillery truck driver. The work was arduous, uncomfortable and often dangerous but the value of this part of the book is reduced not only by his apprehension in writing of severe censorship but by the actual deletions made by the censor. Censorship restrictions generally are reflected in the high confidence with which Edmonds and his Republican colleagues anticipated a favourable outcome of the war for their side; this during periods when the war was going strongly against them towards its ending with a victory for Franco's Nationalists and their fascist allies. The book is more a political and sociological work than military although one should never avoid a multi-disciplinary approach to military history.

An afterword outlines the Spanish government's decision to withdraw foreign volunteers and the return of the Australians to their homeland via England. Pleas for their return at public expense were at first denied by the Australian government on a report by the Department of External Affairs (now Foreign Affairs) to the effect that they had no official advice of Australians going to fight in Spain and by implication, as I read it, that they did not exist and the question of repatriation could not arise! Support by S.M. Bruce, Maurice Blackburn and Billy Hughes (there's a mixed lot for you) and others resulted in the non-interventionist Lyons government agreeing to advance repatriation expenses on repayment. Twelve years later Edmonds was visited by a bailiff with a bill for £60 which he agreed to pay off at ten shillings a week.

This is an interesting book, promoting the leftist view of the conflict in Spain but showing also, by their non-intervention, the widespread aversion in the non-fascist West to popular front governments.

Alan Fraser

Martin Blumenson: *Mark Clark*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1985. 306pp, chronology, index. Our copy from Australian and New Zealand Book Company Ltd. HC $19.95.

The biography of four star General Mark Wayne Clark, United States Army, is a strange book, both from a biographical and military-historical point of view. If the reader wants to know what made Clark tick, the author does not provide an answer. If one wants to study the campaigns in Italy 1943-45—Cassino and Anzio are the significant ones—and the role Clark played in these campaigns, the student will find the book an unsatisfactory source.

The historian of post world-war power politics is not likely to get much joy from the discussion of Clark's influence as the American High Commissioner of Austria and as the man who brought the Korean war to a close. The picture of Clark that emerges from Blumenson's book is that of a regular US Army officer, very conscious of not having commanded infantry soldiers at sub-unit and unit level in a combat situation. He is shown to be a very ambitious man with undoubted and almost unparalleled organisational (managerial) ability often displayed to great advantage in the right quarters and always conscious not only of the political implications of his actions but also with an unerring sense of what is politically expedient and required at any given time.

There has never been any question of his personal courage; he was often seen visiting troops in the firing line. He must have been—his death occurred last year—also quite a devious person. What he said, face to face, to General Sir Harold Alexander, and what he confided to his diary, often bore little relation to each other. From a military-historical point of view this reviewer can think of more useful titles. John Ellis, *Cassino: the hollow victory* and Mark Wayne Clark, *From the Danube to the Yalu* fall into this category.

Yet the book by Blumenson does fulfil a useful purpose, that is, as an introduction to the study of the Mediterranean campaigns from 1943 to the end of the European war. However, the student must appreciate the American and, in particular, Clark's prejudices against anything to do with the British, Brazilians, French, Indians, New Zealanders and Poles. The entries in his diaries—as quoted by the author—illustrate his views on co-operating, for instance, with General Sir Richard Creery who had succeeded Sir Oliver Leese in the command of the British Eighth Army (p230).

There can be little doubt that Clark and Alexander did not work well together and on several occasions Clark flagrantly ignored what Alexander wanted done. The fault was in large measure due to Alexander's gentlemanly attitude: he rarely if ever issued an order. Perhaps the most salient point of divergence between these two totally unlike persons was the war aim in 1943–44: Alexander wanted the German forces south of Rome destroyed, Clark wanted to be the first into Rome at the head of his Fifth Army. The heavy casualties at Anzio and to an even greater extent at Cassino were the results. In the event it was the Polish Corps that stormed the abbey, after several attempts by the Americans, British, New Zealanders, Poles and Indians. Sadly, one thing that was not realised at the time, the destruction of the abbey and the town, largely due to the demands of Freyberg (New Zealand), actually enabled the German defence 'to hang on' as long as they did. One thing Blumenson brings out very clearly is the need for concise and unambiguous orders and planning, particularly at the highest level, when a conglomerate of national forces operate under a unified command (pp 170/1). Alexander seems to have failed to do just that, at Anzio, for instance. Similarly, he was unable to secure the Royal Navy's fullest co-operation in supplying the beachhead (p190).

The book lacks maps and has no footnotes to back up statements and quotations. For corroboration one has to consult other works.

In view of the comments made here, the price of the book must be considered somewhat high.

H.J. Zwillenberg

Mohamed Heikal: *Autumn of Fury*, Andre Deutsch, London, 1983. 290pp, illus, index. HC $29.95.

This is an interesting work by a highly regarded writer on Arab affairs. Heikal, former editor of the Cairo Daily *Al Aram*, was a close confidante and former minister to Sadat. After 1973 Heikal opposed Sadat's policies and a rift grew between them. From the vantage point of his knowledge of Egyptian political life Heikal attempts to explain the events which led to Sadat's assassination on 6 October 1981.

The Weekend Australian of May 1983 mentions that 'while Sadat was admired in the West for his policy of peace with Israel...he became more distant from his people'. Furthermore, Heikal feels that Sadat was more a political superstar than a political leader—at home more in the chic salons of Paris and Washington.

From an introduction such as this the reader can expect a critical survey by Heikal; and he will not be disappointed. Although Heikal has some compassion for his subject he feels that, through his background and complex yet sensitive nature, Sadat escaped a capacity to recognise and act against those forces which moved against him. Comparisons with Nasser are inevitable. (To balance the topic one might also turn to Raymond Carroll's *Anwar Sadat*).

While the book does not pretend to be a comprehensive biography, it does explain those factors that led to Sadat's rise to power. Some of the better features are the attempts to explain Sadat's early life which was marked by humble origins and hardship. Heikal suggests that Sadat's own story (*In Search of Identity*) tried to gloss over various incidents and re-emphasise others. Significantly, much attention is given to social and economic determinants which changed the face of Egypt. Religious and cultural influences are also explained in the degree to which they fashioned events. Heikal asks why Sadat (has become) 'almost completely forgotten'.

No doubt Heikal's own arrest coloured his perception of his president. Heikal accuses his late president of 'sacrificing long-term strategic assets for short-term tactical manoeuvres'. Furthermore, Sadat is alleged 'never to have showed any knowledge or understanding of Egypt's place in history and geography, and so misjudged these social and economic—and even the cultural—conditions in his own country'. Rather than become the Bismarck of a united Arab world Heikal argues that Sadat's actions contributed to a balkanized Arab world which lost Egypt any claim to its moral leadership.

Although Heikal argues that Sadat 'divided Egypt against itself' this charge may be difficult to sustain. All the competing forces (which Heikal so eloquently explains) could hardly be checked by one man. It was obvious though that Sadat's attempts to bring Egypt into an increasingly secularised world created some opposition among his countrymen. As a developing country Egypt was no less immune to the experiences suffered by other countries in similar circumstances. In the West it was felt that Sadat had some charisma. The peace initiatives with Israel were a bold move which earned him stature from one part of the world and vilification from another. Notwithstanding the outcome of the 1973 war, Sadat deserved considerable credit for his effort to bring some form of peace to the region.

All in all, *Autumn of Fury* is a brave and perceptive book about the life and times of Sadat. Written by an Arab it can hardly be labelled 'anti-Arab'. Indeed, the writer attempts to assess Sadat's achievements and failures through Arab eyes and interpret his influence and impact so that the Western reader might make up his own mind.

Mike Fogarty

George Forty: *A Photo History of Tanks in two World Wars*, Blandford Press, Poole, Dorset, UK, 1984. HC $19.95.

The link between the Blandford Press, publishers of this most interesting book, and the British centre of tank training at Bovington, Dorset, is that they lie within 15 km of each other. The author, George Forty, is a retired Royal Tank Corps officer who is currently Director of the RTC Museum at Bovington. He is certainly to be congratulated for the variety and excellence of his tank photographs, the interesting text and skilful presentation. The book is 'not a dictionary of tanks or an encyclopaedia' to quote the author who rather cleverly calls it a photographic evocation of tank design over its first thirty years.

No-one encountering the first few photographs in the book could fail to accept his description: a British heavy tank Mark IV of the First World War stands in a rubble-strewn French town beside the premises of the local undertaker; next, the Pershings of the United States 2nd Armoured Division are shown speeding through shell-torn Magdeburg in Central Germany late in World War Two; and the third is an evocative picture of a stretcher party on a Normandy beach sheltering in the lee of a Churchill AVRE of the 79th Armoured Division. Most of us will prove unable to put the book aside until the remaining 497 photographs have been studied. Their quality and interest does not wane. Each picture seems to have its own interest apart from the particular type of AFV displayed. One may show Russian infantry crowded on top of their impressive T.34 tanks as they move to an attack on German positions in the Ukraine; another an anti-mine roller fitting to a Crusader. The prize, for me, went to a splendid picture of Messrs William Foster's workshop in Lincoln which made the first experimental armoured fighting vehicles and, for reasons of secrecy, passed them off as 'Water carriers for Mesopotamia'.

The research on which this book has been based appears to be faultless. It was astonishing to find, for example, all three models of the Australian Cruiser accurately logged and pictured. A Matilda tank-dozer portrays one aspect of the work of the RAAC in New Guinea jungles.

The book is authoritative, attractively bound and modestly priced. It would provide an ideal reference book for all military libraries as well as the numberless enthusiasts who specialise in tanks.

Ronald Hopkins

The Military Historical Society of Australia

President's Report for the year ended 30 June 1985

At this time last year, our outgoing Federal President (and now Vice-President) Hans Zwillenberg, reported a year of steady progress for the Society with active, paid membership of about 370. Hans called for an effort to increase that number during 1984-85. While I regret that we cannot report any dramatic increase — and I again urge upon members the need for the Society to grow — it is pleasing to be able to say that we have maintained our strength and that 1984-85 has been a year of increased general public interest in Australian military history, as evidenced by such events as: the very successful opening of the Gallipoli gallery at the Australian War Memorial in the presence of about 240 surviving Gallipoli veterans in August 1984; an attendance of about 270 at the Memorial's Fifth Annual History Conference in February 1985, with once again an increase in presentations by and of particular interests to members of the Society; and the marked increase in Australian publications on military history, as witnessed by the book review pages of *Sabretache* during the year.

The Society can, I believe, look with some pride on two projects which it undertook to commemorate the centenary in March of the departure of the Sudan contingent. The publication of *But little glory,* edited by Peter Stanley; and the commissioning and production of a commemorative figurine of an infantry private of the NSW contingent. As our Treasurer's report will show, both projects involved the Society in unusually large expenditures (which, of course — and with your support — we hope to see recovered in future years), but our ability to launch these important initiatives shows in itself a healthy confidence in the achievements of the Society's aims.

This must be the first Annual General Meeting of the Society for many years at which we miss the presence of our indefatigable Federal Secretary Clem Sargent who, with Betty, is on an overseas tour which takes in, of course, the Iberian Peninsula. Lieutenant Colonel Rick Haines has kindly 'volunteered' to act as Federal Secretary in his absence. In thanking Rick for his assistance, I should also record your President's thanks to Federal Council and particularly the Executive Committee for a year of great effort and consistent teamwork in meeting the regular management demands of the Society as well as those of several major projects. I should also like to record the Society's thanks and (as incoming President in July 1984) my own in particular to our Patron, Admiral Sir Anthony Synnot for his support and encouragement.

Federal Council has given some consideration to 1988 bicentennial activities for the Society and hopes to report on some proposals through *Sabretache* early in the coming year.

In closing this brief report, may I return to the theme of membership and ask State Branches and all members as individuals to address themselves in 1985-86 to ways and means to increase it. The interest is there in the community — let's capitalise on it!

Tan Roberts
Federal President

The Military Historical Society of Australia

Federal Council Income and Expenditure for the year ended 30 June 1985

Income		$	Expenditure		$
Operating Account					
Balance brought forward		3 893.33	Publication of *Sabretache*		6 775.51
Subscriptions Received		7 247.21	Postage		594.58
1984/85	7 120.41		Sudan Figurine		5 925.00
In advance	320.00		Sudan Book		2 496.81
			Postage and Packing		100.00
	7 440.41		Federal Council Expenses		780.96
Less Capitation	193.20		Stationery	608.84	
			Rental P.O. Box	21.00	
Advertising		420.00	Address List	98.22	
Donations		30.00	Sundries	52.90	
Sales of Publications		114.05			
Bank Interest		124.27			
Sudan Figurine		2 555.00	Balance carried forward		2 196.30
Sudan Book		1 345.50			
Postage and Packing		103.80			
Transfer from Investment Account		3 000.00			
Sundry Income		34.00			
		18 869.16			18 869.16
Investment Account					
Balance brought forward		4 938.28	Transfer to Operating Account		3 000.00
Interest received		322.16	Cost of transfer		0.60
			Balance carried forward		2 259.84
		5 260.44			5 260.44

Society notes

Election of Office Bearers for 1985-86

The results of elections held at Federal Council and Branch Annual General Meetings were as follows:—

Federal Council
President: Brigadier A.R. Roberts
Vice President: Major H.J. Zwillenberg, ED (RL)
Secretary: Lieutenant Colonel T.C. Sargent (RL)
Treasurer: Mr N. Foldi

ACT Branch
President: Lieutenant Colonel M.P. Casey (RL)
Secretary: To be appointed
Branch Councillor: Mr R. Courtney

Victorian Branch
President: Mr G.F. Ward
Treasurer: Mr G.F. Wilkie
Secretary: Lieutenant Colonel Neil Smith, AM
Editor *Dispatches*: Mr R. Kenner
Committee: Mr R.M. Dalton, Mr George Hellyer, Mr Ray Kenner

Geelong Branch
President: Mr Bevan Fenner
Vice President: Mr John Maljers
Past President: Mr Pat O'Rourke
Secretary: Captain Ray Agombar
Treasurer: Captain Jim Titchmarsh (RL)
Committee: Major I. Barnes, RFD, ED, O St J, (RL), Lieutenant John Meehan (RL), Mr Andrew Browne

Queensland Branch
President: Don Wright
Vice President: Gary Cole
Secretary: Syd Wigzell
Treasurer: John Irwin
Federal Councillor: Don Wright
Committee: John Duncan, Greg McGuire, Bernie Ellis, R. (Bob) Henderson

Scottish infantry

Member D.W. Pedler of Keswick, SA, has very kindly responded to our request for information on the photograph on page 15 of the April/June 1985 issue. He writes: The unit depicted is the South Australian Scottish Infantry. This can be shown by the brooch, buckles and sporran. The date would appear to be later than 1.5.06 when A.D. Sutherland was promoted to Lieutenant. His appointment as 2nd Lieutenant is dated 16.4.1904 but my copy of the photograph clearly shows two pips. Sutherland is the officer on the left (no moustache). The Captain, centre, is T.H. Smeaton appointed 29.8.03 and the other officer is *probably* Lieutenant Stewart.

History of Chaplaincy

MHSA member and former Chaplain to the Forces the Reverend Arthur Bottrell, ED, L Th, Dip RE of 6 Grantley Avenue, Daw Park, SA 5041 has very kindly offered reseachers access to his 200,000-word manuscript *With the Sword* (inclusive of the *History of Chaplaincy in the Australian Military Forces* and *A Prologue of Prominent Eras in Australia's Formative Years*) which is on permanent loan to the Royal Australian Army Chaplains Department, Canberra.

The manuscript and photographs may be studied by interested persons within the confines of Headquarters, RAAChD. Quotations may be utilised from the manuscript with acknowledgement made of the source of the data. Any one of the innumerable photos within the manuscript shall not be removed or used in any other manner. Copyright and All Rights Reserved are held by the author.

Navy Anniversary

The attention of members is invited to Mike Fogarty's editorial note on page 2 about the 75th anniversary of the RAN and RANR to be celebrated next year. *Sabretache* will devote part of its July/September 1986 issue to articles on Australian naval history.

Contributions dealing with naval history, biography, medals, collecting or displaying naval militaria or naval historical sources are welcome. Please contact Mike, *vide* page 2, or the editor, Alan Fraser, PO Box 85, Deakin, ACT, 2600, if further details are required. Contributions should be submitted by March 1986.

General Hopkins

In a recent letter to Mike Fogarty, our vice-Patron, Major General Ronald Hopkins, had this to say:

Warmest greetings to all at *Sabretache*. The April/June issue shows it remains easily the best military journal in Australia. I greatly enjoyed reading about the 4th Australian Light Horse Regiment. The author's dogged research is remarkable and his patience has provided a most interesting article. When it came to planning the 1st Australian Armoured Division in 1940-41, I based the organisation and numbering, etc. on the ALH in Palestine having in mind, however, that already there were four CMF armoured units. Later, the 4th made a fuss at being excluded and persuaded authorities after I had moved to Army Headquarters that an AIF 4th Armoured Brigade should be raised to control operations in New Guinea and the Islands.

Society notes

Directory of Members

It has been the Society's practice to publish periodically in *Sabretache* a directory of members and their addresses and interests. The last such list appeared in the January/March 1984 issue. The membership has changed since then, some people have moved and, indeed, some have varied their interests.

It is proposed to publish a fresh list in the January/March 1986 issue. To meet this timing, we will be compiling the directory from details of members who are financial as at mid-October 1985.

The directory enables members with similar interests to make contact by correspondence, hence it is important to have these interests correctly coded in accordance with the key shown below. Any changes from previously notified interests should be advised to the Federal Secretary as soon as possible.

Code Key

Military History MH

MH	01	General
	10	Australian—General
	11	British Regiments in Australia and New Zealand
	12	Australian Forces—pre Federation
	13	Australian Army—post Federation
	14	RAN
	15	RAAF
	20	British, Empire and Commonwealth—pre 1900
	21	British, Empire and Commonwealth—post 1900
	30	South African War
	40	WWI
	50	WWII
	60	Post WWII
	70	Other (specify)

Badges and Insignia B

B	01	General
	10	Australian
	11	RAN
	12	Australian Army
	13	RAAF
	20	British and Commonwealth
	70	Other (specify)

Orders, Decorations and Medals OM

OM	01	General
	10	Australian
	20	British and Commonwealth
	70	Other (specify)

Arms and Ammunition AA

AA	01	General
	10	Australian
	20	British and Commonwealth
	30	Antique
	70	Other (specify)

Uniforms and Equipment UE

UE	01	General
	10	Australian
	20	British and Commonwealth
	70	Other (specify)

Prints, Books and Memorabilia PBM

PBM

Models F

F

Members' wants

Wanted by T.S. Turner, PO Box 29, Kingscote, SA, 5223:—

1914-18 War medals to AIF members

Trio

	Sgt	R. Standley Haines	23 Bn

Victory

766	Pte	J.H. Charlton	27 Bn
3260	Pte	W.J. Sutcliff	8 LHR

BWM

	Lieut	L. Fryberg	
49	Dvr	J.R. Freak	9 LHR

BWM and Victory

2580	Pte	F. Bray	17 Bn
321	Pte	T. Davis	3 Bn

John Pryor of 21 Crawford Street, Tamworth, 2340 has the 1914-15 Star and Victory Medal of Pte J.H. Cowell, 7th Bn, AIF and wishes to trace the BWM awarded to this soldier.

Jim Nuttall, PO Box 1013, Innisfail, Qld 4860 (tel. 070-611031) is willing to buy or exchange the following to fill gaps in his collection:

WW1 War Medal, 17507 Cpl E.C. Cocks, Cavalry Sig Sqn, AIF
1914-15 Star, 416 J. McEwin, 11 Bn, AIF
Victory Medal, 3604 Pte J. McNamara, 51 Bn, AIF
Victory Medal, 3893 Pte W.J. McKay, 51 Bn, AIF
KIA Plaque, 4931 W. Williams
Defence Medal, 39080, E.C. Spry

We erred

Captions under illustrations of a leather bandolier and 'the exercise of a caliver' were transposed on pages 19 and 20 in the April/June 1985 issue. Apologies to John Gorman and our readers.

Notes and queries

Naval brigades in South Africa

John Price's paper on naval brigades in the South African war, delivered to the joint meeting of the Naval Historical Society and Military Historical Society of Australia in Canberra on 12 February (printed in *Sabretache* of April/June 1985), has, as often happens, resulted in us paying more attention to the military use of naval forces. The following quotation comes from S. Monick's article. 'Positive and Negative: The Awards of the First South African War of Independence 1880-1881', in the *Military History Journal* (South Africa), volume 5, number 5, June 1982. It provides an interesting insight into Britain's employment of naval brigades in South Africa, Egypt and the Sudan between 1879 to 1900:

> this extensive use of floating mobile reserves is symptomatic of a profound weakness within British strategic thought in the 19th Century. The Royal Marines were never expanded sufficiently to form an elite expeditionary force, to cope with the recurrent crises within the Empire necessitating the despatch of a few Battalions to distant theatres of war.

More on the naval brigades

John Price's article on the naval brigades also drew comment from Stephen Ellis and Ian Haidon of Canberra:

> John Price made an error in identifying HMS *Monarch* as a Super Dreadnought. This class of ship was not built until at least 1909, when the first of the class, the *Orion*, was laid down in Portsmouth Dockyard.
>
> The *Monarch* of South African war service was in fact a turret battleship laid down in Chatham Dockyard in 1866. She had a full spread of sail as well as steam power when launched, but the rig had been removed by the time she served in South Africa. At 15 knots the fastest battleship of her day, the *Monarch* served as guardship at Simonstown until 1905, being paid off in 1906.
>
> These details about the various *Monarchs* can be readily found in Tony Gibbons' *Complete Encyclopedia of Battleships and Battlecruisers* (London, 1983).

We are obliged to readers Ellis and Haidon for pointing out this error.

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 responsibie 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

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