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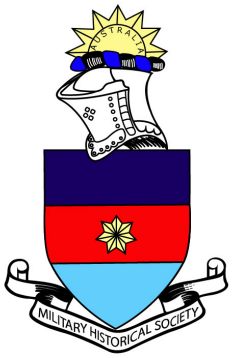

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Military Historical Society of Australia
PO Box 5030, Garran, ACT 2605.
email: webmaster@mhsa.org.au

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SABRETACHE

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Telephone (062) 82 004 3261

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

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SABRETACHE

Defence heritage Some 200 Defence-occupied buildings have so far been classified by the Australian Heritage Commission and placed on the National Estate Register. A further 100 buildings have been classified by the National Trust. Twenty areas have also been listed by the Australian Heritage Commission for significant environmental aspects and for the protection of aboriginal sites. A number of training areas contain many aboriginal art works and steps are taken to ensure that these are respected and properly protected.

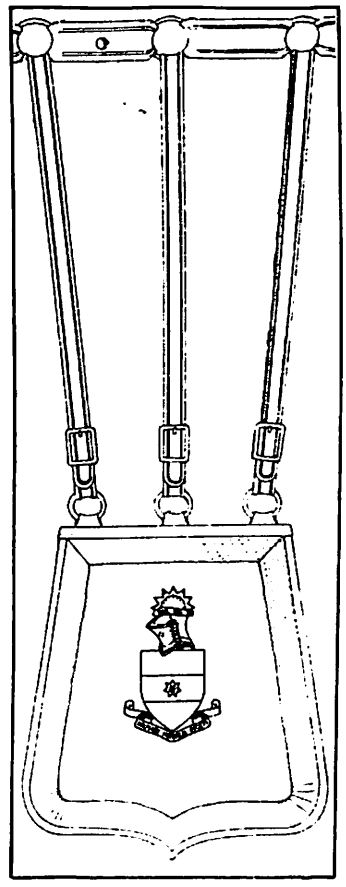
Military occupancy is the reason that some of the nation's best-preserved landscape areas and some of its historic buildings have been shielded from exploitation and so remain in the condition they are today. Examples are Sydney's North and South Heads and Melbourne's Port Phillip Heads — Point Nepean and Queenscliff.

To explain its contribution to the environment, the Defence Department plans to produce a 224 page hardcover book for sale during the 1988 bicentennial year. Titled simply *Australian Defence Heritage* the book will cover about 60 subjects relating to the three services in all States and will be liberally illustrated with historic photographs, original water-color paintings and black and white sketches.

British regiments A special service will be held at The Garrison Church, Argyle Place, Sydney on Sunday, 3 August at 10.30am to commemorate the contribution of British regiments in the early days of the colony.

All interested persons are invited to attend, including descendants of soldiers of these regiments and recent ex-servicemen of the regiments and their families who have settled in Australia. Further details may be obtained from Rev. B. Seers (02) 27 2664.

War dead honour A garden of remembrance to cost over $1 million is to be built in Adelaide to commemorate Australia's war dead and disabled. The garden is to be constructed at the Centennial Park Cemetery in suburban Pasadena and should be completed by August.



Commandos 1940-46 From July 1986 to April 1987 the National Army Museum in London will commemorate the 40th anniversary of the disbandment of the Army Commandos with a major exhibition.

Formed in 1940 the Army Commandos comprised picked volunteers. Trained at the Commando depot at Achnacarry they became the spearhead of the Army's seaborne invasions and in five years of war won 38 battle honours and six Victoria Crosses. Exhibits will illustrate commando training, tactics and organisation and their raids and campaigns undertaken in Scandinavia, North West Europe, Africa, the Mediterranean and the Far East, including the Vaagso raid and a D-Day landing in an LCA.

Joynt VC Australia's last surviving Victoria Cross winner of the 1914-18 war, Lieutenant Colonel William Donovan Joynt, 97, died in Melbourne on 5 May 1986. Joynt, then a lieutenant, earned his VC leading successful attacks on Plateau Wood, near Chuignes, France, on 23 August 1918.

Journal of the Australian War Memorial The April 1986 Journal (No. 8) is a 'special air issue'. It includes some memories and reflections on his service in Bomber Command by Don Charlwood, notes on training RAAF personnel in Britain for operations with the RAF in the 1939-45 war (Steve Dyer), an examination of the problems of recognition of aeroplanes in the 1914-18 war, written around the shooting down of a French fighter pilot by an officer of the Australian Flying Corps (Alan Fraser), the air war in northern Australia 1942-44 (Mark Clayton) and part 1 of an examination of the circumstances surrounding the death of Manfred von Richthofen (Dennis Newton). Michael Piggott, Curator of Written Records, has provided a summary of the War Memorial's holdings of aerial warfare material including official records, private records and manuscripts.

Coastal defences The seminar on 'Victorian Coastal Fortification's at the War Memorial's 1986 history conference in Melbourne has resulted in the formation of the Australian Coastal Defence Study Group. Its purpose, for which it is seeking support, is to further authoritative research into the history of Australian coastal defences, both naval and military, between the time of their inception and 1946.

Further information may be obtained from the Secretary, Michael Kitson, 2 Chatham Road, Canterbury, Vic. 3126.

Publication in this issue of the article by the late Brigadier W.J. Urquhart, enrolled as No. 1 Staff Cadet at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, is a reminder that the 75th anniversary of the opening of the RMC in 1911 will be celebrated at the College over the weekend of the 18/19 October 1986.

The 75th Anniversary Committee, RMC Duntroon, ACT 2600, extends an invitation to all former cadets, graduates and military and academic staff and their spouses to join in the celebrations. Those wishing to attend should contact the Committee at the above address.

W. J. Urquhart

A Lyric for the Swordsmen

An Australian adventure in Palestine

Lo, mine eye hath seen all this,
mine ear hath heard and understood it.

Job 13.1

Introduction

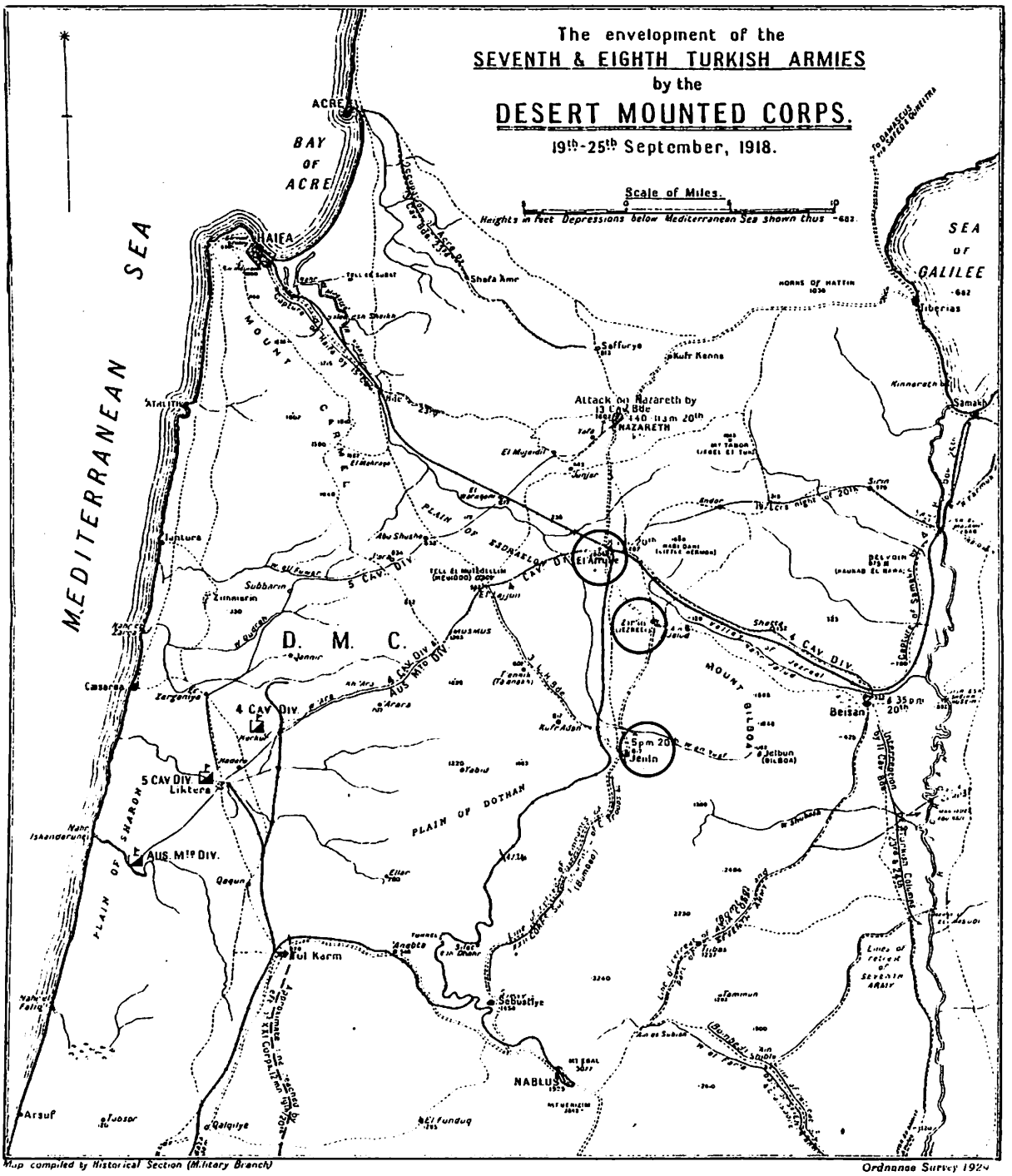
The author of 'A Lyric for the Swordsmen, Brigadier W.J. Urquhart, served in Gallipoli and was in most of the major actions of the 1914-18 war campaigns in Palestine, Syria and Trans Jordan. In the final offensive, known officially as the 'Battle of Megiddo' (the Biblical Armageddon), Urquhart was Brigade Major of the Third Light Horse Brigade of the Australian Mounted Division, and in that capacity was at all the actions of the Brigade leading to and including the capture of Damascus. One of these actions is the one referred to in the story that took him by Jezreel for the capture of Jenin. Urquhart was present at the final action of the campaign which was the charge of the 9th Light Horse Regiment at Khan Ayash against a column of Turkish infantry who were trying to escape to the north following the capture of Damascus. This was one of the last cavalry charges of history.

THE Iskanderoon River with its sweet flowing water had been a pleasant halting place that afternoon for the veteran 3rd Australian Light Horse Brigade. It was September 1918; the final offensive was in full swing and the cavalry were moving through a gap blasted in the Turkish seaward flank to cut off the retreat of their shaken army. It was to be the end of a long epoch. The ancient kingdoms of israel and Judah had been destroyed by Shalmaneser of Assyria and Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon some 2600 years before. The Ottoman Turks, last of a succession of conquerors, had ruled there since Selim the Grim had defeated the Arabs in 1516. Now the clock was to be set back. The last heritage of the Commander of the Faithful was to be wrested from him and Israel restored to the ancient land of their fathers.

As darkness fell the trumpeters sounded 'Boot and Saddle' and the advance northward was resumed. It was to be a night march of 24 miles, across the Plain of Sharon and through the Musmus pass in the Samarian mountains to the Plain of Esdraelon. The Brigade staff officer rode forward to confer with the vanguard commander, to ensure he had the right compass bearing and star to march on and that patrols would move well ahead to locate the entrance of the pass in good time. It was a starry night with a cool Mediterranean breeze. No enemy were encountered save a few small groups of demoralized stragglers, who were disarmed and directed to move southward. Towards dawn the long column of horsemen and guns debouched on to the plain and halted for rest and water at some wells east of Megiddo.

As the sun got higher a great stillness hung over the plain and some banks of mist to the south east partly obscured the valley of Jezreel and distant Mount Gilboa. Thoughts naturally turned to the dramatic events that had taken place here circa 900 BC, which are recorded in the Hebrew scriptures, notably in Chapter 9 of the Second Book of Kings. Thoughts of Elijah, greatest of the Hebrew prophets, and his feud with the apostate King Ahab and his pagan Tyrian queen, Jezebel; of the furious chariot drive of Jehu to Jezreel, where, after sending an arrow through the heart of Jehoram on the field of Naboth, he was met at the palace by Jezebel, sitting at a high window, her face painted in a vain effort to seduce him; of his order to the eunuchs, 'Throw her down!' and how then, in fulfilment of Elijah's prophecy of divine retribution, her body was trampled by the chariot horses and eaten by dogs, her blood spattered on the palace wall.

The plain of Esdraelon is triangular in shape, about eleven miles wide at the northern end and thirteen miles long, running to an apex at the southern end where the main road from the south runs through a pass into the plain at the village of Jenin (ancient Engannin). A large part of the Turkish army, demoralized but unbroken, was retreating from the south along this road towards Jenin, unaware that cavalry divisions had already cut off their retreat. By the eastern foothills bordering the plain the Arab village of Zirin is situated.



The above map shows Desert Mounted Corps positions during the final offensive in this area known officially as the 'Battle of Megiddo' which enveloped the Turkish seventh and eight armies. Overall there were four cavalry divisions in this final campaign in Palestine, Syria and Trans Jordan. The Australian Mounted Division, who were armed with rifles, had been issued with and trained in the use of the sword just for this operation.

Urquhart's brigade was at Megiddo and moved to a position south of Affule where he received the order from Australian Mounted Division Headquarters to move on Jenin. From a position south of Affule the brigade moved down the Affule-Jenin track east of the railway with its battery of Royal Horse Artillery on the left flank. In the late afternoon they passed the site of the renowned Biblical city of Jezreel which gave rise to Urquhart's account.

Affule, Zirin (Jezreel) and Jenin are circled on the map.

Staff Cadet W.J. Urquhart, taken at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, in 1912. (RMC Archives, Plate 787). Note the 'Rising Sun' cap badge. The College badge did not come into use until 1913.

This is the undoubted site of ancient Jezreel, royal residence of the Omri dynasty of Israel.

Late that day orders were received for the brigade to move with all speed down the plain to Jenin to meet the retreating Turks at the pass and capture them or hold the pass until the British infantry advancing in pursuit from the south caught up. The 10th Regiment was sent off at once as advanced guard and brigade headquarters and the 8th and 9th followed soon after. The regiments advanced in 'Column of Troops'. Each troop of about 36 men was in line, the 12 troops of each regiment one behind the other at a distance equal to their frontage. This formation would enable a threat from either flank to be met in a matter of seconds by the regiment forming a line to face it on the order 'Troops—Right or left wheel into Line'. The Royal Horse battery was moving about 300 yards away on the left flank. The pace was a steady trot. Darkness was approaching and some mist was rising. As the main column moved on through the failing light the broken mud walls and stone huts of Zirin loomed not far off on the left front. The village seemed deserted but for the excited barking of dogs, no doubt disturbed by the passing of the

mass of horsemen, yet of sinister reminiscence. On part of the mud wall appeared flickering reddish reflections, probably from tribal camp fires in the hollows. A group of bedouin shepherds headed by a patriarchal figure with staff, white beard and camel hair cloak, stood silently by a rough sheep-fold, gravely watching the column pass. One of their number on a grey horse had wheeled and galloped off toward Zirin.

Now considerable machine gun fire could be heard ahead from the direction of Jenin. Probably some enemy elements had got through the pass and were being attacked by our advanced guard. The pace was increased to arrive more quickly to support them. In the lead, Waridah and Ayesha, Australian half-blood bay mares with some Arab strain, set a steady canter on tight reins. The twelve six-horse teams of the Royal Horse battery were keeping up well, the plain being smooth and gravelly. It would probably be a set piece action, guns and machine guns giving covering fire from the front if the light permitted, squadrons round one or both flanks, and this time no choice for the enemy but death or surrender as the line of blue sword-blades approached.

In the ranks, after three years of hard marching and fighting in the desert, rider and horse were closely linked and mutually responsive. As the pace increased and sounds of the fight near Jenin drew close, nostrils dilated, necks stretched, ears turned forward, while beneath the emu plumes sun-burnt profiles grew harder and right hands wandered toward sword hilts. How true is the theophonic description of the war horse in the 39th Chapter of Job:

He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength;
he goeth on to meet the armed men.
He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted;
neither turneth he back from the sword.
...
He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha;
and he smelleth the battle afar off,
the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

Among the riders, minds seemed very active, working almost in schizophrenic compartments, one concerned with the urgent practical realities of the situation, the other dwelling almost sub-consciously on the ancient associations and events of the locality. So that in the gathering darkness as the site of ancient Jezreel was passed, the pounding of thousands of hooves and the rumble of the guns seemed to be orchestrating an ancient command, the words of which became clearer and clearer in rhythm with the hoof-beats. 'Throw her down! Throw her down! Throw her down!'

Squadrons of light horse assembled at Gaza in Palestine, 1918. (AWM B 1628)

These delusions, if such they were, lasted but a minute or two and soon all visions of Jehu, Jezebel and Jezreel were dispelled by arrival at Jenin. The position was taken, the field cleared, some 5,000 captives rounded up, looting by bands of marauders stopped, horses fed and watered, guards and picquets posted, and a modicum of rest obtained in preparation for the march northward through Nazareth to the Sea of Galilee next day.

* * * *

A short time afterwards, at Damascus, with the war practically over, a group of young cavalrymen, mostly convalescing from wounds or malaria, would meet at a hostelry just off the Street called Straight, where the tawny Syrian wine was a good vintage. A captain of the 2nd Lancers, recovering from a flesh wound in the sword arm, had with him a copy of Thomas Hardy's *The Dynasts*. This led to talk in which he mentioned that he came from Dorchester, and his family were well acquainted with the poet who lived close to them. Thomas Hardy has a high place in English literature and has even been ranked with Shakespeare and Milton. In comparing notes of recent events, the evocations experienced during the advance down the Esdraelon plain were light-heartedly described. The Captain of Lancers however, appeared very interested. He even made the fantastic speculation that there had been a two-way reflected vision or time distortion across 2800 years, of two epochal events, due somehow to their nature, their relationship and their occurrence in the same area; for example, did not Elijah's death vision of 'the war chariots of Israel and the horsemen' typify the guns and horsemen galloping past Jezreel at twilight, to what was practically the final action for the liberation of Israel? He took notes and declared he would describe the events in his next letter home and suggest it be conveyed to the poet who might like the idea as a theme.

A few days later the Brigade marched north and west through the Lebanon to Tripoli and the matter was given no further thought, amid preparations for return to Australia. However it may have been, it was then that the following 'hoof-beat' lyric by Thomas Hardy was published:

Jezreel

Did they catch as it were in a vision, at shut of the day,
When their cavalry smote through the ancient Eadraelon plain
And they crossed where the Tishbite stood forth in his enemy's way,
His gaunt mournful shade as he bade the King hasten amain.

On war men at this end of time — even on Englishmen's eyes
Who slew with their arms of new might in that long ago place,
Flashed he who drove furiously? Ah! did the phantom arise,
Of that queen, of that proud Tyrian woman who painted her face?

Faintly marked they the words 'Throw her down!' rise from night eerily,
Spectre spots of the blood of her body on some rotten wall?
And the thin note of pity that came: 'A King's daughter is she',
As they passed where she trodden was once by the charger's footfall.

Could such be the haunting of men of today, at the cease
Of pursuit, at the dusk hour, ere slumber their senses could seal?
Enghosted seers, kings, — one on horseback who asked 'Is it peace?'
Yea, strange things and spectral may men have beheld in Jezreel.

This article was kindly made available to *Sabretache* by the late Brigadier Urquhart's granddaughter, Miss Carol Urquhart-Fisher, of Dallas, Texas.

Arthur Kennedy

Early history of anti-aircraft units in Australia

ANTI-AIRCRAFT units were operating in the British army during the 1914-18 war but the Australian army had not thought it necessary to form any.

Australia, however, did experience what was possibly a visit from a German reconnaissance plane in May 1918. The following is an extract from the book *Garrison Gunners* printed in 1929:

> In May 1918 an aeroplane was sighted flying high over Sydney Harbour one morning. Battery Commanders were to be informed beforehand if any Defence Department planes were to fly over forts and this had not been announced. Meantime in the absence of A.A. guns or light automatics the battery details turned out in rifle squads at different concealed advantage points with the object of firing a volley should the pilot fly near enough to the fort to be identified as hostile.
>
> It was never cleared up where the plane came from and it was thought it may have come from the raider 'Wolf'.

No authority is quoted for the above incident but it is possible that there was some truth in it.

Another item in the same book that shows that the Australian authorites had thought about AA defence, at least for Sydney, is a quote from the *Westminster Gazette* recalling that Australia had asked the Imperial authories for AA guns especially for the defence of Sydney. This had obviously been refused.

Under Compulsory Training

Nothing further appears to have happened until 1926 when Captain Gordon Isaacs, who was serving with the Sydney University Scouts, a unit within the framework of the compulsory training scheme then in force, was approached and asked to command an anti-aircraft battery to be formed also under that scheme. He consented and on 7 August 1926 his appointment as Officer Commanding No. 1 Anti-Aircraft Battery was announced and on Saturday, 28 August 1926, the battery paraded for the first time at 2.30 pm at the Artillery Barracks at George's Heights, Mosman, NSW.

The complement of the battery was as follows:

Captain G. Isaacs
1 sergeant transferred from 7 AFA Brigade
1 bombardier transferred from 7 AFA Brigade
1 corporal transferred from Sydney University Scouts
5 privates tranferred from Sydney University Scouts
25 privates take on strength from Area 18(a) HQ
1 warrant officer (AIC) was posted to assist Captain Isaacs (I have not been able to confirm this as no mention of him appears in Routine Orders, but Captain Isaacs assured me that this posting did take place).

In the first Routine Order dated 28 August 1926 one sergeant and seven privates were detailed to attend a course of instruction at George's Heights commencing at 8 pm on Friday 4 September 1926. During the remainder of the year more personnel were posted to the battery and by the end of the year apart from Captain Isaacs it had a strength of 58 all ranks. So, whilst the battery had no guns, it had actually come into existence and training had commenced.

According to the Inspector-General's report to Parliament for the year 1927 a camp was held during that year and in the absence of guns the programme consisted of training in AA defence on Lewis guns. So in actual fact the lowly Lewis gun was the first AA weapon used by the Australian army and right up to the outbreak of the 1939-45 war Citizen Force batteries all had an establishment that allowed for a troop of Lewis gunners for use against low flying attacks.

For the year 1927/28 the organisation of 1 AA Battery was:

A Battery HQ — An Instrument Operators Section — Signallers Section — a 3" gun Section — a Lewis gun Section.

The unit establishment of specialists was as follows:

10 Instrument Operators — 4 Gun Layers — 5 Signallers.

Qualified specialists were to receive extra pay of two pounds per annum. Sergeant A. R. Gaffey was appointed Battery Sergeant Major and in August 1927 a second officer, Lieutenant B. C. Briant, was appointed.

Members of the unit were among troops who lined the procession route on the day, 26 March 1927, that the Duke and Duchess of York landed in Sydney.

The army had on order from England four 3-inch

20-hundredweight mobile guns and these appear to have arrived in the latter half of 1927; two of them went to the battery, the other two to the AA cadre that formed part of 1 Heavy Brigade.

As far as can be ascertained, when the guns arrived from England they were accompanied by a Barr & Stroud Height & Rangefinder (UB2) and a Height Fuze Indicator. The vehicles supplied to tow the guns were 'Hathi' tractors; these were quite large vehicles and were also used for towing the guns of the Medium (Field) Regiment.

Now that the battery was equipped, gun and instrument training went ahead and in March 1928 a week's camp was held at Middle Head. In June of that year the location of the battery was changed to the drill hall in Cross Street, Mosman.

There were two other happenings of significance in the latter half of 1928. First, Sergeant I. A. Spain was promoted lieutenant. He had been posted to the battery as a private in August 1926 and risen through the ranks to become the first officer commissioned with an anti-aircraft background. The second was in November/December. The first course in anti-aircraft gunnery was held at the School of Artillery at South head, Sydney, and two were selected from the battery to attend; they were Sergeants F. T. Bradley and R. I. Henry; both qualified.

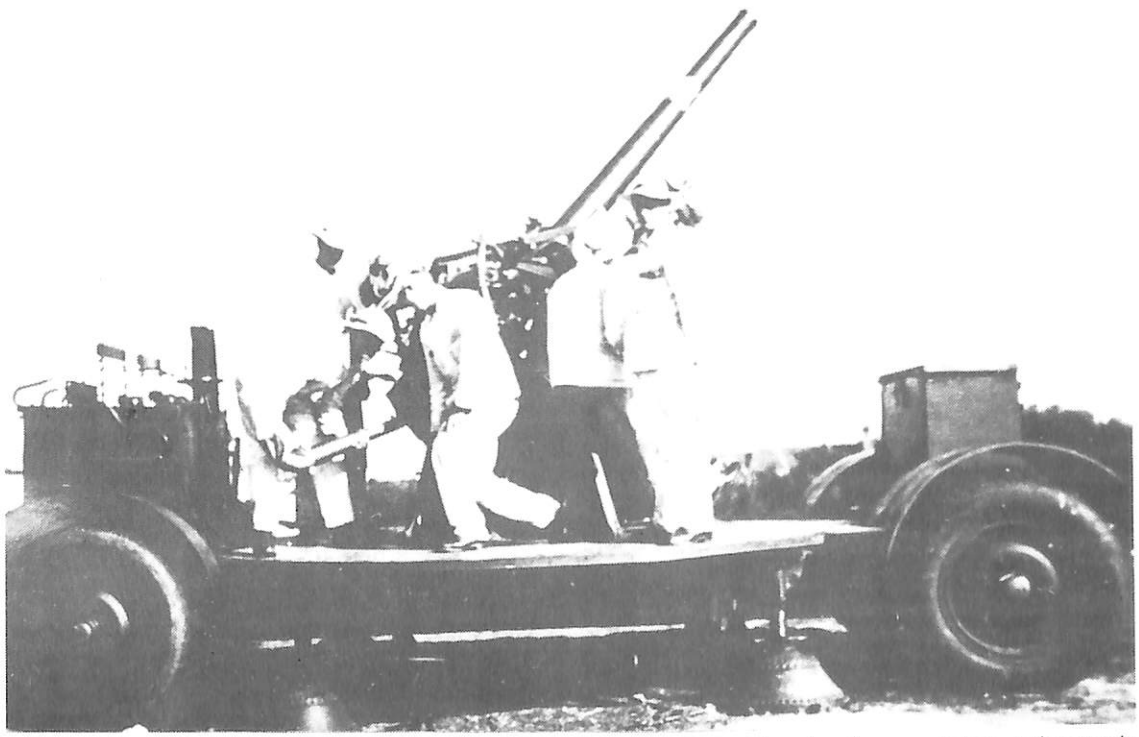
Also in September of that year the battery took part in the annual eight-day camp of the 8th Infantry Brigade at Liverpool, NSW. There is a very good report of this in the Sydney Morning Herald for 19 September giving such details as the fact that the guns cost 12,000 pounds each and could fire a 16-lb shell at a rate of 30 to 40 per minute to a height of 21,000 to 26,000 feet. They also pointed out that at this stage the battery had not actually fired the guns, only carried out drill using dummy rounds.

It is possible that a 'shoot' was carried out during the training year 1928/29 as 1 AA Battery was allotted 20 Star Shell for firing practice in that year.

Other occurrances during 1928 were the posting to the battery of another officer, Lieutenant D. E. Macinnes, several promotions as a result of examinations, appointment of a BQMS, Sergeant C. H. Fleming, and posting in of further personnel.

So the battery entered the year 1929 in a fairly happy position; they had most of their equipment, a nearly full complement of officers, NCOs and men and possibly, if they had not already had a practice 'shoot', they would be having one very shortly.

Around about this time two other pieces of equipment were received — a No. 5 Height Finder, which was a long-base instrument and was being



Drill on a 3" 20-cwt anti-aircraft gun. Photographs are from the author, who advises that they were taken on the parade ground of the old Georges Heights barracks about 1935. All of the people are members of the Permanent Army. The white clothing was the 'fatigue uniform' in those days.

superseded by the UB2, and a Vickers Predictor. The predictor was of recent vintage, the British Army only being issued with them in 1928.

In October 1929 the axe fell; the government of the day announced the suspension of compulsory training from 1 November 1929 and all personnel were transferred to the 'non-effective list'.

The Citizen Military Forces

However, on the brighter side, in December 1929, the Citizen Military Forces were reorganised on a voluntary basis and personnel were called upon to enlist in the various units. No. 1 AA Bty. was one of these units, the establishment to be 8 officers, 136 NCOs and gunners and 28 senior cadets. The unit was to be under the command of Major G. Isaacs and Captain K. K. Chalmers, Staff Corps, was appointed to carry out the duties of Instructor and Adjutant/QM.

The following Compulsory Training personnel volunteered:

Sergeant	4	Bombardiers	3
Lance Sergeants	4	Gunners	43
Senior Cadets	10		

In 1930 a Scale of Equipment for an AA Battery was published, the essential part of it being:

> The battery to consist of BHQ — 2 sections each of 2 x 3" 20-cwt Mobile guns and 1 section of Lewis guns.
>
> The main equipment per section:
>
> 2 x 3" 20-cwt Mobile guns
> 1 only No. 5 Height Finder Mk. I
> 1 only H. & R.F. No. 2 Mk. 2
> 1 only Predictor 3" 20-cwt H.A. Mk. II
> 1 only Telescope Indentification A.A.
> 2 only Lorries Tractor 'Hathi' Pattern (to be drawn as required)

When the battery was reformed under the voluntary enlistment scheme it appears that the following permanent army personnel were attached to the unit, apart from Captain K. D. Chalmers: WO II J. A. Berney AIC, Sergeant A. O. McVicar RAA and Lance Sergeant E. C. Gibbs RAA. Sergeant R. A. Dickson was promoted WO II and appointed BSM and Sergeant W. L. Simpson was appointed BQMS.

A 10-day course was held at South Head from 18 to 27 April 1930; Major G. Isaacs and 1 officer and 10 ORs plus 2 cadets attended. One other person who attended the course was Captain A. M. R. Gibson of the Reserve of Officers. Gunners to attend the course included F. F. Mooy, who was subsequently involved with the battery right up to the outbreak of the 1939-45 war, when he was sent to Darwin in September 1939 to command 2 AA Cadre as a lieutenant and went on to become Lieutenant Colonel before the end of the war.

During 1930 and the first half of 1931 Routine Orders for the battery show continued enlistments and promotions and the holding of specialist examinations. All this points to continued growth of the unit and a high degree of training.

A 10-day camp was held at South Head from 29 January to 7 February 1931, attended by 5 officers, 46 NCOs and gunners and 10 senior cadets. Eleven permanent army personnel were attached for the camp.

During the course of this camp target practice was carried out, with live ammunition being used by both the Lewis gunners and the 3" gunners aimed at a target towed by a 'Wapiti' aircraft of the RAAF. This practice was noted in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 7 February 1931 which reported it under the headline 'Strange Target — Aeroplane tows a Balloon — Modern Warfare' and then went on to give a graphic account of firing the guns using star shells.

In August 1931 Major Isaacs decided to relinquish command of the Battery to his old friend and neighbour Captain A. R. M. Gibson. Major Isaacs transferred to the Reserve of Officers on 7 August 1931 and Captain Gibson took over command on that date. The story as told to me by Major Isaacs was that Captain Gibson was his neighbour and a gunner officer of the reserve and he used to take him along on parade nights in his car and eventually so captured his interest in AA gunnery that when he decided to hand over the reins Captain Gibson readily agreed to take over the unit.

Thus ended an era where an officer with little knowledge of artillery (he was a Duntroon graduate) and no knowledge of the then new art of anti-aircraft gunnery formed the first AA unit in the Australian army, saw it through a few difficult years under a Compulsory Training Scheme and then established it as a very efficient unit under the Voluntary Training Scheme. Quite a few who started their training under Major Isaacs went on to command their own units in the 1939-45 war.

During the next eighteen months the unit went about the ordinary activities of training and camps and also participated in several rifle competitions performing well and winning some of them. On 16 March 1933 Captain Gibson was promoted Major.

During the next few years, apart from regular training, the battery participated in the following events:

> Personnel took part in a 'Lining of the streets of Sydney' in connection with the arrival of the Duke of Gloucester on 22 November 1934.
>
> On Anzac Day 1935 the battery provided a demonstration at a Tattoo held at the Royal Agricultural Society Showground.

On 6 May 1935 the battery took part in a Royal Review for the Silver Jubilee; one section paraded mounted on guns, the remainder of the battery dismounted.

During this period air co-operation was provided by RAAF 'Walrus' flying boats — top speed 110 mph — towing drogue targets. Later, 'Wapiti' general purpose aircraft and Hawker 'Demon' fighters were used; the latter had a top speed of 200 mph. These were often flown by Citizen Air Force pilots anxious to build up the hours they had to fly each year and provided good practice for gun layers and instrument operators.

As from 1 July 1935 the unit came under the command of No. 1 Heavy Brigade RAA, a Permanent Army unit, and the establishment was increased to 8 Officers, 32 WO/NCOs and 104 gunners, plus 28 senior cadets.

The expansion of the Permanent Army and the Citizen Forces was started at about this time and on 5 August 1937 the formation of No. 2 AA Battery was announced, to be commanded by Captain J. C. Bootle, MC. Captain Bootle had transferred from 5 Heavy Brigade, a CMF coast artillery unit, the previous October.

Another appointment of note at this time was made on 1 October 1937. Major P. L. Moore, Staff Corps, took over the duties of Instructor, 1 and 2 Batteries, and Captain K. D. Chalmers was transferred to 1 Heavy Brigade. Captain Chalmers was one officer who would be sorely missed as he had been in AA almost since its inception and had guided the organisation and training of the CMF units since 1930. He had attended the first AA course conducted at the School of Artillery in 1928.

A few years previous to this the decision to manufacture in Australia the 3" 20-cwt gun on a mobile platform had been made and the old guns were withdrawn. Round about 1938 the new Australian guns were issued to the two batteries. They were much more modern, had 'loose' liners and were equipped with electrical connections which allowed for continuous transmission of data from the instruments (Case 111). Also the new Vickers Predictor Mk. IV and UB7 Height and Rangefinders were issued.

After the 'Munich Crisis' in September 1938 the following changes took place:

No. 1 AA Brigade was formed as of 1 January 1939, Lieutenant Colonel Gibson to command. Captain B. Mander-Jones took over command of No. 1 AA Battery.

No. 3 AA Battery was formed as of 14 February 1939, Captain J. Manning to command. Major P.L. Moore was transferred to 7 MD and Major E.N. Neylan, MC, Staff Corps, took over the appointment of Instructor to No. 1 AA Brigade.

Operating a No. 1 (Vickers) Predictor.

As a result of these changes a vigorous recruiting campaign took place and the three batteries were very soon at full strength. The Brigade went into its annual camp on 15 April 1939.

With the outbreak of war on 3 September 1939 the brigade was called into 30 days compulsory camp as follows:

18.10.39-16.11.39	1 Bty. 5 Sec. 3 Bty.	George's Heights, Mosman
	3 Sec. 3 Bty. 1 Sub. Sec.	Fort Wallace, Newcastle
17.11.39-16.12.39	2 Bty.	George's Heights, Mosman
	Remainder 3 Bty. 1 Sub. Sec.	Fort Wallace, Newcastle

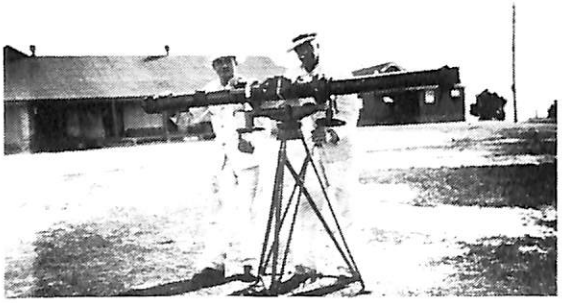
During the lifetime of these units never at any time did they have any difficulty in keeping up to strength and quite often had a waiting list.

A little information regarding their uniform:

The jacket was blue with a red collar edged with yellow with yellow knots on the cuffs —four pockets, brass buttons — brass RAA titles on shoulder — bursting bomb on collar — NCOs stripes in gold on right arm — specialist badges in brass worn on left arm at cuff — white lanyard — trousers blue with red stripe — riding breeches (for field service) khaki — felt hat with Artillery (gun) badge, blue puggaree with red centrefold — bandolier leather waist belt — black leggings (with riding breeches) — black boots — blue cap with red band, same badge as hat — colour patch on each sleeve — greatcoat.

The only other State to have a CMF AA Battery prior to the 1939-45 war was Victoria and as a result of the expansion in the services following the 'Munich Crisis' a decision was made to form an anti-aircraft battery in Melbourne. The formation of No. 4 AA Battery was announced on 1 November 1938, the unit to be formed from personnel of 23/21 Infantry

Battalion, with Captain A.P. Shrimpton as OC. The unit was established in a new drill hall in Myers Street, Geelong, and was issued with new guns from the Ordnance Factory. Lieutenant R. Rushton, Staff Corps, was posted from 2 Heavy Brigade, Queenscliff, to be instructor and Lieutenant E.M. Kent, AIC, was transferred from the School of Artillery to be QM. Lieutenant Kent was also given the task of training personnel of the new battery; he had been an instructor in AA at the School. With the outbreak of the 1939-45 war the unit was called up on a full-time basis and moved to a site in Rosamond Road, Maribyrnong.



Operating a Height and Range Finder (U.B.2).

Permanent Army

Contrary to the usual practice, an AA unit was not formed in the Regular Army until after the formation of the volunteer unit.

There is some doubt as to when an AA cadre came into existence but it appears that it was formed as part of 1 Heavy Brigade in the latter half of 1927. The establishment for this was 1 officer, 1 sergeant, 1 bombardier, 1 lance bombardier and 8 gunners, a total of 1 officer and 11 other ranks.

While the records for these years seem to have disappeared, I can quote the following items that I have been able to track down at this date (1 September 1984) as being my authority for stating that a cadre was formed in the latter half of 1927.

1. The Inspector-General's Report to Parliament for the year 1927 in which he states that an AA unit was formed in the Regular Army.

2. I interviewed a Mr Les Wilson of Dee Why, NSW, who told me that in 1927 he was a sergeant in 1 Heavy Brigade at George's Heights and in the latter half of 1927 was told to report to Cross Street drill hall, along with Lieutenant K. Chalmers, to learn as much as they could about the 3" AA guns there. He stated they had no manuals or drill books. With the assistance of Sergeant 'Snowy' Bourke, an ordnance artificer, they stripped down various parts of the gun, taking photographs as they went along. He said they also worked out some gun drill but I think they may have had gun drill books. Further to this, he said they were then given 12 ORs, Permanent Army, and taught them all they could. This figure of 12 is very significant as the establishment was increased to 12 in 1929 and at the time I spoke to Mr Wilson I had not been able to turn up a reference to an establishment for an AA cadre. I found these later in Australian Army Orders.

Although there is some doubt about it, I am pretty sure it was established in 1927; however in 1928 the first anti-aircraft course at the School of Artillery was approved to be held from 19 November to 8 December. A Military Board memorandum of 2 October 1928 set out the numbers of personnel, by rank and formation, to attend the course, listed under NCOs, RAA, 14. A side note remarked that 12 of these were to be from the AA cadre. In the subsequent nominal roll of those to attend the course, apart from 2 NCOs who were from Newcastle (I have been able to verify this by talking to one of them), the remainder of the personnel tally by ranks with the 1929 Establishment, i.e. 1 officer, 1 sergeant, 1 lance sergeant, 1 bombardier, 1 lance bombardier and 8 gunners, I deduce from this that these people were the original AA cadre.

The first mention I can find of an officer being appointed to the AA cadre is in AAO 107/1929 when Lieutenant K.D. Chalmers was taken on strength of 1 Heavy Brigade (regimental duties) and allotted for duty with AA Cadre 1 March 1929. As of 1 December 1929 Captain K.D. Chalmers was appointed OC AA Cadre and as Instructor to 1 AA Battery.

The equipment issued to the AA cadre was similar to that issued to 1 AA Battery, the main difference being they did not have Lewis guns.

At this time one other Permanent Army appointment to 1 AA Battery surfaces — WO II J.A. Berney of the AIC. How long he had been with them I have not been able to ascertain but he is listed as having attended the first AA course in 1928 as a lance sergeant (he was WO II on the second course). Captain Chalmers also attended the first and second courses.

Another Permanent Army appointment to 1 AA Battery was WO II E.T. Lergessner, AIC, effected by the end of 1930. He attended the first course as a bombardier and the second course as a lance sergeant.

The cadre slipped into a non-effective role for the next few years as the Army was contracting rather than expanding owing to the Depression. From information gathered from 1 AA Battery Routine Orders the cadre did supply instructional

personnel for camps and bivouacs over the years until late in 1935 a new establishment for 1 AA Cadre was published: 1 major, 3 sergeants, 4 bombardiers, 3 lance bombardiers and 26 gunners, a total of 1 officer and 36 ORs. This apparently was proceeded with and early in 1936 an establishment for 2 AA Cadre, Darwin, was published as follows: 1 officer, 1 WO II, 3 sergeants, 4 bombardiers, 4 lance bombardiers and 31 gunners. This establishment was much larger than any previously announced and included among its NCOs a signals bombardier, which was not allowed for in any subsequent cadre establishments.

The writer joined 1 Heavy Brigade in May 1938 and memory tells me that both these cadres at that date were not up to full strength.

As of 30 September 1937 Captain K.D. Chalmers returned to 1 Heavy Brigade for duty and Major P.L. Moore took up the appointment of OC AA Cadre and Instructor 1 AA Battery.

With the advent of the 'Munich Crisis' in September 1938 it was decided to bring both cadres up to full strength. The writer was one of the personnel transferred and an intensive training programme was instituted. No. 2 AA Cadre was put on standby for Darwin but did not go.

About this time the old guns which had been imported from England about 10 years previously were returned to store and new and more modern 3" 20-cwt mobile guns were issued; these came from Maribyrnong. More modern and up-to-date instruments were also received. With the advent of 1939 the establishment of No. 3 AA Cadre was announced, to consist of 1 WO II, 4 sergeants, 5 bombardiers, 2 lance bombardiers and 22 gunners. Recruits were enlisted for the specific purpose of filling its ranks.

Major P.L. Moore relinquished his command and Major E.M. Neylan, MC took over. In February 'P' AA Battery was formed.

For the next few months training proceeded apace as the threat of war in Europe loomed. On 25 August 1939 history was made when 2 AA Cadre consisting of 1 WO II and 43 ORs were flown to Darwin to take over the AA defences of that area. Unfortunately their equipment was not the best. It consisted of 4 x 3" 20-cwt mobile guns — the original equipment imported from England in 1927 — and the instruments that came out with these guns. They also had 2 x 3" 20-cwt guns mounted in fixed positions at Elliot Point in a dual AA anti-motor torpedo boat role with no instruments. These guns were of the latest design and Australian made.

Other States

Victoria. On 1 November 1938 the formation of No. 4 AA Cadre as part of 2 Heavy Brigade was announced with an establishment of 1 WO II, 5 sergeants, 4 bombardiers, 3 lance bombardiers and 23 gunners, with Lieutenant R.V. Rushton, Staff Corps, to command. The NCOs for this unit had previously attended courses in AA at the School of Artillery in Sydney.

Western Australia. The formation of No. 5 AA Cadre as part of 3 Heavy Brigade was announced on 1 January 1939, Lieutenant C.E. Long, Staff Corps, to command. The NCOs for this unit had also previously attended courses at the School of Artillery. Both these units were issued with 3" 20-cwt mobile guns — Australian made — and modern instruments.

School of Artillery

The School of Artillery first became involved with AA artillery when in 1927 Lieutenant J. Hendry (AIC) was sent to England for two years to undertake various artillery courses, one of which was in AA gunnery.

The School conducted its first course in AA gunnery in November/December 1928 and during this course the 3" guns were fired, at South Head, for the first time as Tom Lergessner told me (he attended the course) 'we loaded the gun and as we did not know what to expect we tied a long lanyard to the firing handle and all retired behind cover while it was fired'.

Subsequent courses, up to the end of the 1939, were held as follows:

No. 2 Course, April 1930
No. 3 Course, February/March 1937
No. 4 Course, April/May 1938
No. 5 Course, September/October 1939

Both Permanent Army and CMF personnel attended.

From these small beginnings grew the thousands of men and women who served in AA units in the Australian army throughout the 1939-45 war. In 1939 the total number of personnel trained in AA gunnery in the Australian army, both Permanent and CMF, would have only been in the vicinity of one thousand.

* * * *

It may be noted that August 1986 will mark the 60th anniversary of the parading of the first battery of anti-aircraft in the Australian army.

Julieanne Richards

The Tasmanian reaction to the first phase of the Boer war — an introduction

COLONIAL reactions to Imperial events reveal much, not only about the colony, but also about the Empire to which it belongs and the powers that created and maintained it. An examination, therefore, of the Tasmanian reaction to the first phase of the Anglo-Boer war is of value.

Study of the period chosen, October 1899 — December 1900 inclusive, reveals the immediately pre-war attitude and the response upon the declaration of war. It also shows reactions before Tasmanians saw service and whilst they were on service, together with reactions to the British victories and defeats (or 'reversals' as the 'media' would have it)[1] which occurred in the first phase of the war. The nature of the conflict changed considerably, too, towards the end of 1900, with the implementation of Kitchener's hard line tactics. Attitudes, both of those who served and the civilian population, changed as a result. Finally, the period ends with the federation of the Australian colonies, with a resultant change in response, and, arguably, thought. Thus, the examination not only illuminates basic attitudes to Empire, Britain and racial matters, but also the prevalence and expression thereof. Through contemporary documents it is possible to glimpse the atmosphere that war inspired, the motivations for support and condemnation and the evolution of all these things.

The fundamental question to consider is what Empire meant to Tasmanians on the whole. To many it was something gained and held by right. This conviction of right was fuelled by the belief in British superiority; racially, morally, culturally and spiritually. Any threat to Empire was seen as an attack on these values, and an affront to the pride of being a member of such a magnificent entity. Such thoughts were strong in Tasmania, and were continually espoused in the main papers.[2] Newspapers can't exist if they don't sell. Physical expressions of what Empire meant still abound in parks, as buildings and so on. They are not merely monuments to Queen Victoria or whatever, but monuments to their own magnificence.

So, the war was seen as 'a matter of righteousness'.[3] This notion was generally upheld by the churches, especially the Anglican Church, which preached the justice of England's cause.[4] The poetry produced locally often reflected such points. For example (from 'Tasmania's Gift')[5]

> There is Royal blood in our veins...
> ...we know a righteous cause is Hers,
> And none shall say her nay!
> ...the ties of race and blood hold fast
> ...with Thee — with Thee alway!

Concepts of racial, moral and physical superiority are readily apparent even in these few lines. The preservation and affirmation of racial superiority provided, in images of its absence, a powerful threat for continued imperial assertion. If the Boers were allowed to have their way, it was frequently suggested, the Anglo-Saxon race would soon be totally overrun by inferior types. The 'Boers are only children compared to the whites'[6] one article stated, and another

> ...the Boer has degenerated, and to a much greater extent than can easily be imagined.[7]

This provides some idea of the extent to which racial delineation was carried out and used. An interesting and revealing comparison on this point can be made from comments by Tasmanians who served in the war. One wrote home

> ...I was surprised to see that some of the blacks in their native state are rather good looking, and some even with very pleasing features. Those half civilised blacks in charge of the bullock wagons are anything but pleasing, and generally have a low and cunning appearance...[8]

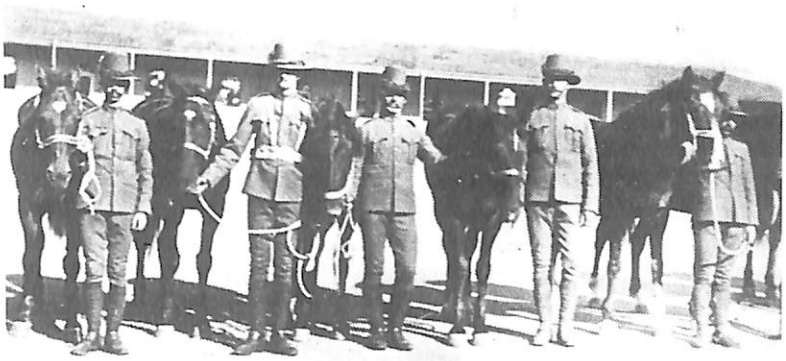
Whilst not only revealing the racial prejudices of the day, it also illuminates the attitudes held by some regarding the Boer when compared with:

> They (the Boers) are without doubt the lowest looking cast of men I ever saw, with very few exceptions, and by all accounts they are even more ignorant than they look.[9]

The Boer was continually played down in the media as being 'frenzied (and) semi-savage';[10] ignorant; for example

> President Kruger...declared they had nothing to fear, since the Lord was the arbiter, and would render the British bullets harmless.[11]

The Boer was inept and guilty 'of treachery and covetousness in attacking the British'[12]. The war was approached, then, with much the same attitude



Group at Anglesea Barracks, Hobart, prior to departure. (30/5659)
All photographs courtesy Archives, State Library of Tasmania.

of affronted dignity, self righteousness and parental weariness with which the Empire has faced other attempts on its power.

> Boer agents have been inciting their kinfolk to rise against the British and drive them into the sea or make slaves of them...and, sad to say, their weak headed brethren believe them...Do you not think it is time for the lion to show his teeth?[13]

This sense of superiority was misleading in perceiving the realities of war. The continued denigration of Boer ability, numbers and organisation painted a false picture. As the war progressed it became obvious that the Boers were not to be walked over — quite an upset to the image of Empire.

> Launceston was in a state of intense excitement yesterday when the news was posted...that 1500 British troops and 42 officers had capitulated to the Boer force operating against Ladysmith. To most people the reverse seemed incomprehensible.[14]

Attitudes were altered, though not changed completely. It is interesting to see how this was expressed on the home front. For example, stories of Boer 'treachery' and 'inhumanity' increased, and particular British leaders were singled out for criticism (for example, General Buller).[15] If one or few could be blamed, then the main body remained innocent.

The most obvious change perhaps can be seen in the writings of the troops. In the early stages such comments as

> I reckon by the time you get this (letter) I will be at the front enjoying myself.[16]

were common. However, the Boer, it soon had to be admitted, did not provide easy victories, and war was not a simple, glorious adventure. One Tasmanian wrote

> (The Boer)...seems a long way too cunning for the generals who are after him...With all the excitement I don't find, to use a colonialism, soldiering is the game it is cracked up to be.[17]

The home conceptions of the Boers were carried with them to the front, and required hard lessons to change.

> (A description of Boer prisoners) The one on horseback was a middle aged man, the others were strapping young fellows. The idea prevalent among some of our fellows that (sic) Boers never was misproven by these men I think.[18]

One of the greatest causes of disenchantment, it would seem, was the new type of war that Kitchener's 'scorched earth' policy heralded.

> ...we were to burn and destroy all farms if the Boers did not give up their arms. So we spent one Sunday burning and looting houses and destroying all we could. This is the hard part of war and the sooner it is over now the better... For my part and talking for most of our boys, I think we are all ready for home again, especially now this burning and looting is started.[19]

Another wrote

> ...and I can't help thinking of my sisters, and wondering how they would like to be in the place of these people...[20]

Why did they enlist? The history of the third contingent (Tasmanian Imperial Bushmen), puts it down to 'patriotic ardour for the Empire's cause'.[21] Whilst this was no doubt a considerable part of it, in many cases, one could suggest, it was subordinate and a convenient and honourable camouflage. In the diary of Harry Betts, detailed as it is, one finds

no reference to Empire, Queen or the like. Rather, what emerges is a naive excitement, as he recounts a dream he had of a glorious homecoming[22] or writes, for example

> ...but to our joy we had to go forward right to the front where I believe we are to take part in an engagement.[23]

or describes in great detail the first battlefield he sees.[24] The desire for adventure, it becomes clear, was a principal motive. This is substantiated elsewhere, for instance, in the poem 'Tasmania's Gift',

> Once again the ancient spirit stirs;
> Once again the lust for battle spurs;[25]

The desire for the thrill of battle is an old as man himself. More vividly, this is portrayed in the writings of the men.

> I would not be back in Tasmania for anything.[26]

and

> Hurrah! Off to the front in the morning![27]

are representative of many.

For a better understanding, one must look at the men themselves. Unfortunately, the letters reproduced in the papers only touch part of a minority. The first contingent (Tasmanian Mounted Rifles), comprised mainly (see table 1), either Tasmanian or British born men. In contrast the third contingent, whilst containing proportionately fewer Tasmanian born, contained more Australian born. From this it could be suggested that initially the war appealed to loyalty to the 'old country' and to Tasmania's honour — thus holding less attraction to those with smaller connections with the colony. On the other hand, as the war progressed and reports came in of *colonial*[29] valour, and the sense of intercolonial rivalry declined with the near approach of Federation, the issue was seen in a less parochial light.

Colonial rivalry, especially initially, was quite important, even in the decision to send troops. This is clear in the House of Assembly debate on the matter.

> Tasmania could not afford to stand out. He (Dr Crowther)...suggested that they should...see what the other colonies were really going to do.[30]

and the Premier said

> ...if this vote were not passed Tasmania, to a moral certainty, would be the only Australian colony to stand out.[31]

Table 1

Places of birth, 1st and 3rd Tasmanian Contingents[28]

Place of birth	*1st Contingent*		*3rd Contingent*		*Sub Total %*	
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*1st*	*3rd*
Tasmania	59	73.1	79	64.8		
New South Wales	1	1.3	7	5.7		
Victoria	3	3.7	17	13.9		
South Australia	1	1.3	1	0.8		
Queensland			1	0.8	80	86.1
England	10	12.5	8	6.6		
Scotland	1	1.3	1	0.8		
Wales	3	3.7	2	1.6	17.5	9.0
Ireland	1	1.3	2	1.6		
India	1	1.3				
USA			3	2.4		
South America			1	0.8	2.5	4.9
Total	**80**		**122**			

NB. Percentages taken to one decimal place only.

10 members 3rd Contingent place of birth not specified — these not considered for the purposes of this comparison.

1st Contingent embarked	27 October 1899
Draft to 1st Contingent embarked	18 January 1900
2nd Contingent embarked	5 March 1900
3rd Contingent embarked	26 April 1900

The soldiers also hinted at this. For example

> ...there are generally two or three of them (N.S.W. men) in the guard-house...none of the Tasmanians have been in (on that voyage)...We are much better disciplined than the N.S.W. men.[32]

and

> ...the Tassies knock spots off the South Australians as far as dress and looks go.[33]

Details regarding prior employment of the third contingent (see table 2), reveal that a large proportion were unskilled manual workers, the bottom of the socio-economic scale. It might be suggested from this that the relatively good pay and enhanced job prospects upon return may have at least been an added attraction for some to enlist

Table 2

Prior employment, 3rd Contingent[34]

Category	*Officers*	*ORs*	*Total*	*%*
Professional	2	3	5	4.5
Farmers	1	26	27	24.3
Skilled manual		17	17	15.3
Unskilled manual		47	47	42.3
White collar	6	7	13	11.7
Gentleman		2	2	1.8
Total	**9**	**102**	**111**	

The average age of the third contingent was 23.[35] They were young, and with youth comes idealism and desire for adventure. Their age would also mean that many were at their most impressionable when the Empire was at its most glorious and when Australia first became involved (ie, in the Sudan in 1885). This connection with childhood impressions is visible in the following comment:

> ...they must be going to turn us into horse marines or something of the sort. I have read about horse marines in fairy books, but never thought I would one day see such things but be one myself.[36]

One must not overlook the desire for recognition as a motivating force. It is exhibited on two levels. Tasmania earnestly desired to prove itself to the world. The term 'baptism of fire'[37] was used long before Gallipoli. Perhaps the most important proof sought was that of equality with the 'Mother Country'. There were also tentative moves to use it to establish some form of national identity.

> Rechristened with your blood
> Our isle is born...[38]

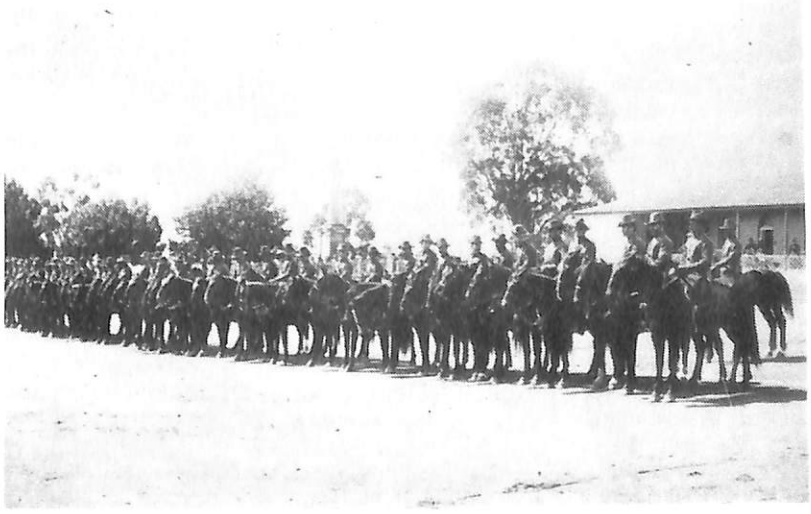
Unfortunately, this was often confused with, or lost in ardour for, 'Crown and Empire' (as the Launceston Boer war memorial put it). This confusion of ideas is evident in, for instance, another poetic extract,

> She needs no help, but seeing us keen
> to prove our love complete...
> ...tell
> What men in our isle are made!
> Prove to the world we have kept the strain
> Of the old true blood.[39]

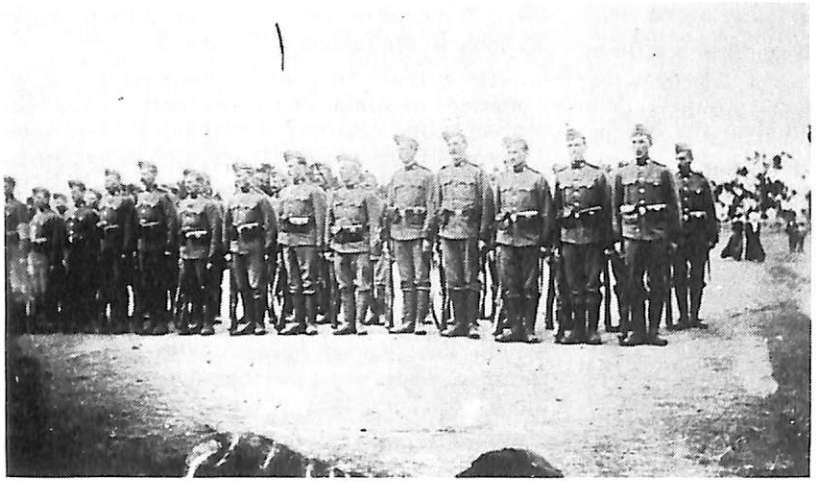
and

> ...Britannia's legions arise
> ...Strike for your young nationhood
> prove by obedience and valour
> How ye are sons of the blood.[40]

It is also shown generally in the use of such words as patriotism, by definition referring to one's own country, but more often directed toward Britain.



Second Contingent (Tasmanian bushmen) on parade. (30/5652)



Troops on parade at Anglesea Barracks, Hobart, prior to departure. (30/5655)

One fellow wrote of how he was 'anxious to be up and doing something for the honour of Tasmania'.[41] This may also be cited as an example suggestive of the individual's desire for recognition, to appear brave, patriotic and hardy to those at home. One hinted at this when he wrote home

> I hope we see a bit of fire before we return . . . medals are thought nothing of without a clasp.[42]

Their letters, therefore, may not always be an accurate indication of how they felt, honesty being betrayed in an effort, perhaps, to convince themselves and the folks at home. It is obvious from some letters published that although they were written home, they were designed for publication. Letters were regularly included in papers and copies sent to South Africa. The letters then can only give a limited view.

> I have come to the conclusion that I did not know what life was before now. I have seen more than is possible to describe on paper.[43]
>
> A fellow can't put it all in a letter.[44]

It might also be suggested that the intense desire in some quarters to prove the strength of the bonds of Empire and maintain the Anglo-Saxon race was a reaction against the stigma of convictism and isolation. It has been suggested[45] that with the popularity of Social Darwinist ideas, these factors (more marked in Tasmania), coupled with the new environment, made Australians very eager to prove themselves at least equal. Tasmanians were aware of their origins, though shy of them. Talk is made of 'the pure Saxon *and* Gaelic elements'[46] (emphasis mine), and one soldier quietly noted, 'All the English troops nicknamed us the bushrangers'.[47]

The troops weren't the only ones who found the prospect of war exciting. It was a change of pace and topic for much of the population, the prospect of being involved in something larger than colony or continent being a new experience. The departure of troops from Scottsdale was described by a local as

> one of the most exciting scenes — if not the most exciting — that ever took place at our station.[48]

If some of the troops tired of the war as it turned a year old and grew increasingly 'ungentlemanly', the interest of some on the home front abated also. Coverage in the papers declined, editorials became less frequent, and subscription to the ludicrously numerous funds dropped off.[49] In some cases, rather than being tired of the war itself, it was boredom with the trappings of it and an inability to maintain enthusiasm or interest. In one letter to the editor, a writer, signing himself as 'Tired 'un', wrote about

> . . . that awful nightmare 'Soldiers of the Queen'. The craze for this is getting quite beyond the bounds of reason and good taste.[50]

Critical letters were never signed in full, not out of modesty, but more likely for fear of being labelled 'pro-Boer', 'traitor' and so on. The situation is simply put in the following editorial extract,

> . . . at present there is but one question at issue . . . and that is — 'We are at war: which side are you on?'[51]

Anti-war equalled pro-Boer. There is evidence to suggest that people of both sentiments were not rare. It is, however, difficult to determine the strength and prevalence of such opinions because of the media bias and the attitude of the supportive population. Incidents such as the following were not isolated:

> . . . the effigy of an alleged pro Boer was burnt at Ulverstone on Thursday evening. The figure was riddled with shot and the proceedings were decidedly animated.[52]

Sections of the Catholic Church were opposed to it,[53] so too, were parts of the Labour movement[54], indicating working class dissatisfaction with Im-

perial priorities, (especially it would seem, considering a combination of both points, in those of Irish extraction). Reception to such opinions was not generous. The headline

A LECTURER THROWN OFF THE PLATFORM
HIS CHAIRMAN KNOCKED DOWN
A SCENE OF WILD DISORDER[55]

illustrates one such example. Public expression of anti-war sentiments was also inhibited by the newspapers. One letter, for example, expressed a lack of confidence in the rectitude of the British actions and subsequent Tasmanian involvement; seeing it as motivated by British economic interests. The writer also condemned placing Tasmanian lives in jeopardy and the ill-afforded expenditure. Inserted after the letter was a scathing note by the editor, declaring the former to be waste of space and 'sordid poltroonery and gross distortion of fact'.[56] Suppression by threats seems to have been largely successful.

The papers now appear grossly jingoistic, and some stories are, it would seem, of dubious truth or 'modified' to some extent. For example

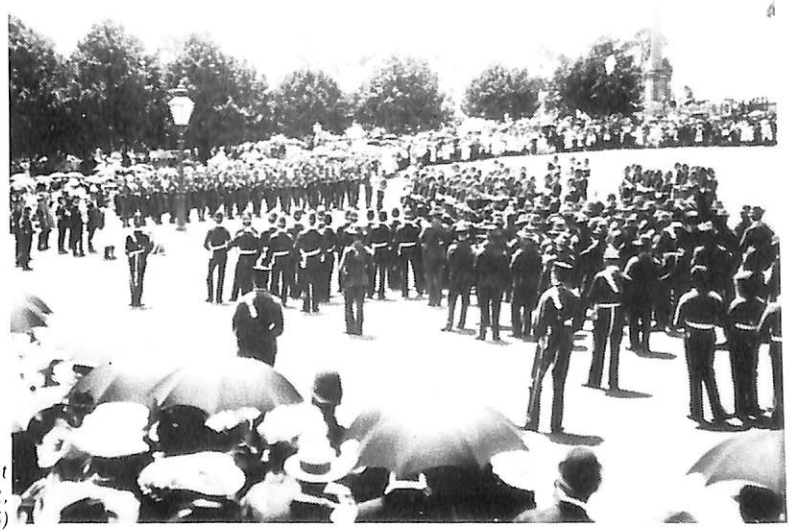
> The Boers...strike women and children, and even sieze babies from the mother's arms in order to provoke the fathers to retaliate and give them a pretext for slaughter.[57]

The language used is generally as emotive as possible. 'But here as elsewhere', Harry Betts wrote in his diary, 'believe nothing except what you see'.[58] However, no doubt only selected material was released to the papers. There are many stories of the ilk of 'Boers spit(ting) in the faces of the ladies',[59] but there is no mention, for instance, of the incident recounted in Harry Betts' diary of a West Australian being 'brought up before his captain for decapitating a dead Boer', scalping the head and washing it out 'with the contents of his water bottle'.[60]

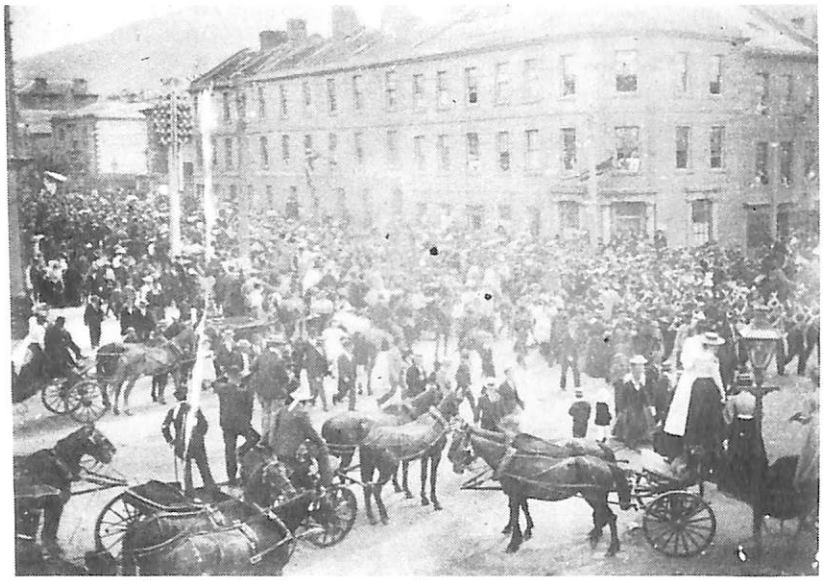
There was opposition in the House of Assembly to the dispatch of the first contingent, not because of qualms about the war, but the economic and practical use of it.[61] It was not good for business or position to go against the tide.

One can see, even from this brief examination, that the Tasmanian reaction was a complex one, dependent not only on concepts of Empire and war, but also of self. Casualties were relatively light and thus a large majority of the population remained untouched by the realities of war, but it did leave a legacy. Some shared Trooper Whitmore's reaction. The war, he wrote, 'set a fellow thinking seriously'.[62] On the whole, however, it did not seem to set the general population thinking seriously about it. Continuously toward the end of the period one finds in the media stories of peace preparations around Tasmania alongside articles about continued fighting in South Africa. People grew bored with the new experience.

However useful a study of the period may be as an introduction to the topic of Tasmania and the Boer war, it is a little limited in its timespan to provide a complete picture of the Tasmanian response.



Troops on parade at Anglesea Barracks, Hobart, prior to departure. (30/5655)



Troops parade through Hobart prior to departure, 1899. (30/5674)

An example of a response with longer term implications is the direction for study of the war in government schools distributed by the Minister of Education at the end of October 1899:

> I will be glad if all teachers will during the next few days make special reference in school to the departure of the Tasmanian contingent, in association with the Australian contingents, of troops for service in the Transvaal.
>
> It will be well to direct the pupils' attention to—
>
> 1. The federal character of the event, Tasmania and Australia being united as one people, and all together associated with the mother country, thus displaying the grand unity of the British Empire.
>
> 2. The fact that Tasmanian troops are now for the first time taking part with the sister colonies in war.
>
> 3. The reasons why England is now at war with the Boers.
>
> 4. The hope that the war will result in securing for all European peoples within the Transvaal such political and civic privileges as the Boers themselves are allowed in the British colonies in South Africa.
>
> 5. The evidence the movement has given of the unswerving and enthusiastic loyalty of the people of Tasmania and her sister colonies to the great Empire to which we belong, and to the throne and person of our Most Gracious Sovereign the Queen.

It is a matter for speculation as to what extent the public and government response to the war moulded the impressionable minds of a generation of school children, a generation which had grown to enlistment age by 1914-18.

Notes:

1. *The Examiner*. 2.10.1899-30.12.1900, Launceston, 1899-1900, *passim*.
2. *The Examiner & The Mercury*. The latter being very similar in Editorial outlook regarding the war.
3. Mr Thomas Pullen at a meeting at Sheffield, *Examiner*, Jan. 5, p.6.
4. *Examiner*, Oct. 30, 1899, p.6.
5. 'Tasmania's Gift', by W.H. Dawson, *Examiner*, Oct. 25, 1899, p.6.
6. *Examiner*, Nov. 30, 1899, p.7.
7. *Examiner*, Oct. 23, 1899, p.6.
8. Trooper John Douglas Royle, T.B. Contingent, May 25, 1900, *Examiner*, July 16, p.5.

9. Corporal Herbert R. Reynolds, T.I.B. Contingent, *Examiner*, Oct. 18, p.5.
10. *Examiner*,Oct. 9, 1899, p.5.
11. *Examiner*, Oct. 6, 1899, p.1.
12. Editorial, *Examiner*, Nov. 1, 1899, p.4.
13. *Examiner*, Nov. 2, 1899, p.6.
14. *Examiner*, Nov. 2, 1899, p.6.
15. Editorial, *Examiner*, Feb. 2, p.4.
16. Private F. Best, T.B. Contingent, *Examiner*, March 20, p.6.
17. Trooper John Whitmore, *Examiner*, Oct. 10, 1900, p.6.
18. Corporal Henry Alwright Betts, Diary 29.10.1899-12.2.1900, unpublished, Tuesday, Dec. 12.
19. Cpl H.R. Reynolds, Elands River, Sept. 29. *Examiner*, Nov. 9, 1900, p.5.
20. Trooper A.F. Lichtfield, T.I.B., Elands River, Sept. 27, *Examiner*, Nov. 14, 1900, pp.5-6.
21. Lewis R.C. & Morton, F., *On the Veldt*, (Hobart, 1902), p.1.
22. Cpl H.A. Betts, Diary, Nov. 8. A dream that proved ironic. Harry Betts was killed whilst on patrol on the night of June 20, 1900, near Donkerhoek, aged 22.
23. *Ibid.*, Dec. 3.
24. *Ibid.*, Dec. 9.
25. *Examiner*, Oct. 25, p.6.
26. Unidentified, *Examiner*, Jan. 12, p.6.
27. Private B. Lynch, Enslin, Nov. 3, 1899, *Examiner*, Jan. 12, p.6.
28. *Examiner*, Nov. 8, 1899, p.6; and *The Mercury*, April, 1900.
29. *Examiner, passim.*
30. Dr Crowther, *Examiner*, Oct. 11, 1899, p.5.
31. The Premier, *Ibid.*
32. Trooper Ronald McInnes, March 16, *Examiner*, May 15, 1900, p.6.
33. Unidentified, *Examiner*, May 18, 1900, p.6.
34. *Mercury*, April.
35. *Examiner*, April 24, p.6.
36. Cpl H.R. Reynolds, *Examiner*, July 12, p.6.
37. For example, *Examiner*, Feb. 13, p.5.
38. From 'The Honoured Dead', W.H. Dawson, *Examiner*, Oct. 26, 1900, p.6.
39. *Examiner*, Oct. 25, 1899, p.6.
40. From 'Sons of the Blood', author not identified, *Examiner*, Oct. 27, 1899, p.6.
41. Corporal Smallhorn, T.B., *Examiner*, July 12, p.6.
42. J.C. Page, Enslin, 17 Dec. 1899, *Examiner*, Jan. 29, p.6.
43. A.D. Holmwood, T.M.R., Orange River, Dec. 4, 1899, *Examiner*, Jan. 12, p.6.
44. Lieutenant R. Perkins, T.I.B., Bethlehem, July 10, *Examiner*, Sept. 4, p.6.
45. R. White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity 1688-1890*, (Sydney, 1981), *passim.*
46. Letters to the Editor, *Examiner*, Oct. 18, 1899, p.3.
47. Tpr J. Whitmore, *Examiner*, Oct. 10, p.6.
48. *Examiner*, Oct. 21, 1899, p.10.
49. During this period the *Examiner* alone managed: The Children's Patriotic Fund, Bushman's Corps Fund, Tasmanian Contingent Fund, Tommy Atkins Fund and Imperial Patriotic Fund.
50. Letters to the Editor, *Examiner*, June 21, p.3.
51. Editorial, *Examiner*, Jan. 18, p.5.
52. *Examiner*, Feb. 3, p.10.
53. *Examiner*, 1899.
54. For example, *Examiner*, Jan. 20, p.11.
55. *Ibid.*
56. Letters to the Editor, *Examiner*, Oct. 18, p.3.
57. *Examiner*, Oct. 9, p.5.
58. Cpl H.A. Betts, Diary, Dec. 10.
59. *Examiner*, Oct. 10, 1899, p.3.
60. Cpl H.A. Betts, Diary, Jan. 18.
61. *Examiner*, Oct. 11, 1899, p.5.
62. *Examiner*, Oct. 10, 1900, p.6.
63. *Examiner*, Oct. 30, 1899, p.6.

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Wendy Fisher

Brothels and the military

ONE of Britain's great military leaders — the Duke of Wellington — wrote 'Our army is composed on the scum of the earth'.[1] Many, if not most, of the rank and file members were ignorant, idle and drunken and very few ever joined for patriotic reasons. It was a self perpetuating circle which continually strengthened the bias against the armed forces — this type of recruit required severe discipline which in turn deterred any but the desperate types who were prepared to sacrifice their personal freedom for food, shelter, clothes, severe discipline and possible violent and painful death. Actually army discipline was almost humane when compared to that of the navy — but even so, it depended entirely upon the character of the commanding officer.

In 1793 every type of device was used to raise the strength of the army — the use of contractors, attempted conscription of the unemployed, the promise of liquor and the offer of a bounty. The bounty offered was £22.17.6 for life or £18.12.6 for a limited term with seven shillings a week pay — less four shillings for food, less 1/6d for the upkeep of equipment, less a charge for washing shirts, etc. leaving about 1/-d per week at the most for the soldier.[2] If he did manage to survive until the age of about 40, he could be pensioned off with a daily pittance and some tobacco.[3]

Marriage was almost as rare as a good meal. Six men out of a company of one hundred were permitted to marry — their wives forced to share the barrack-room accommodation. For that privilege the women were expected to do all the officers' and mens' washing. Even in 1858, out of 251 barracks in the UK only 20 contained separate accommodation for married soldiers.[4] The other 94 men of a 100-man company were to be discouraged from marriage and were forced to turn to the prostitutes who inhabited the garrison and dockyard towns.

The British army was in fact a bachelor army. With such stringent regulations in force it can be argued — and was! — that the Government condoned and encouraged prostitution for both economic and logistical reasons. A bachelor army was cheaper to maintain in barrack-style quarters, and with no legal dependants to worry about, it was far more mobile.

Prostitution was not an offence but there were laws which controlled it to some degree — such as laws which covered 'riotous indecency' or 'aggravated solicitation'. The age of consent in 1850 was still 12 years of age and in an era of economic depression, prostitution was one area where many women saw a chance of earning some money to improve their lot in life. A book published in 1857 showed what is still true today — that prostitution is primarily a transitional state and that prostitutes were not always the lowest repugnant type of women as they were depicted.[5]

The aftermath of the Crimean war brought home the true state of the British army and navy — highlighted by its ineffectiveness caused by the ravages of venereal disease 'when about one fifth of the effective force of this country is yearly in hospital with venereal disease for a period of 22 days'. Ironically, in 1859 most regiments had abandoned the compulsory VD examination of soldiers as it was said to be distasteful for the MOs!

At this time — the mid-19th century — Great Britain saw herself as the self appointed leader of the world — morally, spiritually, and economically. So while missionaries tore around the world attempting to convert the heathen, there were many folk at home attempting to make amends in Great Britain...starting with the prostitutes. The British parliament passed 'The Contagious Diseases Act of 1864'. The CD Acts were to control the prostitutes, who consorted with soldiers and sailors, to be enforced by the police who could supervise compulsory medical treatment — thus preserving the health of the armed forces.

The Act was initially confined to the eleven garrison and sea-port towns of Aldershot, Woolwich, Chatham, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Sheerness, Col-

chester, Shorncliffe, the Curragh, Cork and Queenstown, and encompassed a five-mile radius around each town. While this legislation appeared to relate only to the armed forces, in fact it really dispersed the problem further afield causing the prostitutes to flee outside the five-mile limit. A number of surgeons and a special force of police recruited from London — so as to be seen as impartial — were to operate in the towns. On suspicion of being a prostitute with VD, a member of the police force could bring the woman before a magistrate who was empowered to order a medical examination and if necessary, compulsory detention in the Lock Ward of a military hospital. It is interesting to note here that while London is not on the list — not being a garrison town — it is estimated that there were up to 80,000 prostitutes in London in the 1850s. In 1865 the estimated number of prostitutes in the eleven garison towns was said to be only 7339, of whom 929 were said to be diseased.[6]

In 1866 another Act introduced periodical examinations for one year and detention for up to six months. Prostitutes examined and declared free of disease were issued with a certificate which they then viewed as a licence to allow them to trade as 'Queen's Women'. Another Act in 1869 withdrew this clause and extended the detention period to nine months and added Canterbury, Dover, Maidstone, Gravesend, Winchester, Southampton and Windsor to the list of the towns — still no London![7]

These Acts had far reaching repercussions in that they aroused a great public moral debate which raged for some 17 years. While there was a good deal of support for these reforms in the garrison towns and within the armed forces, there were many who fought long and hard for the Acts to be repealed. Much of the outcry against them was not on behalf of the prostitutes but from the point of view that they were giving the British government centralising and despotic powers which were viewed as an affront to British liberty and freedom. The churches opposed the Acts as they saw them as condoning prostitution by the Crown. The Acts also instigated the founding of the women's movement by such women as Josephine Butler and Florence Nightingale. Women's groups were formed such as the 'Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act' which fought for their repeal on grounds of discrimination against women. The fact that London, with its great numbers of prostitutes and mistresses, was never controlled by the Acts was seen as a social discrimination also. The Acts were finally repealed in 1883.

However there seems to be great difficulty in assessing the actual benefit of the Acts, due in no small part to the manipulation of statistics by the

Australian troops in the Cairo brothel district known as the 'Wazza'. The scene shows damage in Esbekiah Street caused in the riots in 1915. (AWM C 183)

supporters of both sides of the argument. While the VD ratio did steadily diminish so did the incidence of TB and this was largely due to the overall improvement in the health of the armed forces, the improvement in their living conditions, revised moral standards and the use of prophylaxis. What the Acts did do was to instigate schemes to improve conditions of service for enlisted men — fulfilling Florence Nightingale's wishes. At last the armed forces and its members were being seen as civilized personnel rather than society's cast-offs.

Meanwhile, in India, the British army took matters into its own hands and devised a system for 'furnishing the sensual indulgences of the British soldier'.[8] Within fourteen days of arriving in India a regiment of about 1,000 men would be supplied with an opium smoking hut and about 12-15 women who lived in appointed houses called chaklas within the Regimental Bazaar. The women were under the supervision of a Malaldarni — Madam — and after weekly examinations in the Lock Hospital were licenced to serve 'British Only'. The chaklas were a permanent part of the regiment and travelled in carts along with the regiment whenever it moved from one area to another. In this way the authorities hoped to both limit the spread of VD and control the increase of numbers of Anglo-Indian Children.

This system of Lock Hospitals functioned throughout India until a circular — meant only for military perusal — was published in the British press in 1886. It read: 'In Regimental Bazaars it is necessary to have sufficient numbers of women. It is important that care should be taken to have them attractive. They should be provided with proper housing and proper food'.[9] This article created a tremendous outbursts of pious indignation in England following so soon after the repeal of the CD Acts. The women's movement flew to the defence of their poor Anglo-Indian sisters and even Queen Victoria was mortified. The circular was withdrawn and the Lock Hospital system officially disbanded although in actual fact it remained a part of the British Indian Army Bazaars until independence. Two British women scurried out to India to report on the state of affairs and admitted in their report that although 'this Vice — VD — probably will never be exterminated, the vice of fornication by consenting its proposal to be State Managed shall not go unpunished by the wrath of a Just God!'[10] Although the British Committee for the Abolition of State Regulated Vice and the two English women failed in their attempt to do away with the army system, the emphasis on control of VD was directed towards preventative measures.

In 1904 the British published a report 'Treatment of VD and Scabies in the Army'.[11] This was only one of many such reports being published annually. The Russians in 1898 published 'The Congress for the Prevention of Syphilis in Russia' and in 1899 'The First International Congress for the Prevention of VD' was held in Brussels. The British report set out to prove that women were responsible for most of the VD in the army. However the report came to the conclusion that isolating women alone was not the answer — both sexes must be isolated to contain the infection. The fact that an effective treatment for VD was not available until 1909 may have had a little to do with the persistence as a problem.

Then came the Great War. As early as 16 November 1914 it was asked in the House of Commons if the Government would consider passing a measure 'to arrest women of notorious bad character who were infesting the neighbourhoods of military camps in the UK to the detriment of the morals and health of the troops'. On 11 February 1916 the government ordered a Royal Commission on Venereal Disease. On 12 February 1917 it was reported to the House that there were some 40,000 prostitutes of alien birth in London! On 1 March 1917 the National Council for the Prevention of VD was established to give lectures to the troops in their barracks and camps. On 23 April 1917 the House was asked if it would take action against the large numbers of undesirable females in the towns in France where British troops were stationed. It was answered that 'camp followers' could be dealt with under the Army Act, Sections 176[10] and 184[11]. On 5 November 1917 special hospitals for treating VD were set up to facilitate a speedy return to duties.

Meanwhile the Australian Imperial Force was dealing with VD in its own way. Early in May 1915 about 261 men of the 1st Australian Division had been returned to Australia on the troopship *Ceramic* and by June 1916 some 1358 cases had been returned to the Australian VD hospital at Langwarrin in Victoria. To combat the problem, lectures were given, pay to infected men was stopped and spending money was reduced to 2/- a day.[12] This system worked fairly well and it was adopted by the British army some two years later.

While the army may have wished to close the brothels for medical reasons they were to prove invaluable for their role in espionage. Dutch born Margaret Gertrude Macleod, better known as Mata Hari, was perhaps the most famous of all the women spies.

One of the most unpleasant and certainly one of the least known aspects of the Great War was the mutiny at Etaples. In an indirect way the brothels were at the heart of its cause. Abused during the rigorous daily efforts in 'The Bull Ring' while on their way to the front, the men were allowed very little freedom, even when not on duty. To make matters worse the two brothels which operated in

Etaples were for the use of officers and instructors only. The CO — to make certain the other ranks were not exposed to the risk of infection — locked the men up in a series of infantry base depots behind the town and turned his attention to the establishment of a special VD hospital for officers, so setting the scene for a mutiny among the Gordon Highlanders on 9 September 1917.[13]

So while brothels may be a subject that tends to be ignored by many in the context of military history, they have certainly played a major role one way or another and continue to do so. The reforms which were instigated as a direct result of the VD problem led to medical research for cures of all contagious diseases, an improvement in overall living conditions for the armed services and a general awareness of the importance of personal hygiene. While it seems neither the British armed forces nor the Australian forces went as far as the French army in employing prostitutes to work as '"Medical Aids" by day and "Soldiers' Comforts" by night', brothels and prostitutes still play a role in the scheme of planning a modern army.

Notes

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Editor's note:

For this article, the author took up a suggestion made at the Anzac Day 1985 meeting of the Victorian Branch of the MHSA that she consider writing something on the subject. She has asked us to state that here studies on it are complete and she is not prepared to enter into any correspondence on the topic.

Michael Downey

The medal for the Best Shot Of The Victorian Military Forces

THIS short article is an attempt to place on record some details about an unpublished variation of the Victoria Local Forces Long and Efficient Service Medal.

It was first drawn to my attemtion by Mr Reg Williams of Regal Coins, Melbourne who had purchased an un-named specimen from a family in Victoria.

The obverse uses the second motto die of the V.L.F. medal 'Pro Deo Et Patria Victoria' but the reverse is a new die. The original wording 'For Long and Efficient Service' on the reverse is altered to 'BEST SHOT OF VICT. MILITARY FORCES' with space left below this lettering for a date or dates to be hand engraved. I have now obtained details of two named medals. The first resides in the Eureka Military Museum at Ballarat. It has the date 1894 engraved on the reverse and the recipient's name impressed in the usual small serif capitals common to all the V.L.F. medals:

EDWIN C. JEWELL, LANCE CORPORAL, "F" COY. VICT. RANGERS

It is suspended from a plain blue watered ribbon. The second named medal is engraved 1893-94 on the reverse and is named to:

ZEBINA LANE, SERGT. "B" COY. VICT. RANGERS.

There was no ribbon with this medal.

Lane was born in Canada in 1829 and came to Australia in 1853 seeking gold at Bendigo. He discovered the rich Lane's Reef at Wedderburn and at St. Arnaud in 1887 revived a run-down mine and became a prominent member of the community.

The *Australasian* of 21 July 1900 notes that he was 'one of the best rifle shots in the Colony and is a Sergeant of the B half company of Rangers'. It carried a photograph of him. Lane was 64 years old when he won his shooting medal. He died at Caulfield, Melbourne, in 1906.

I would be grateful if any Victorian members of the Society could locate any further references in the press or Army Orders regarding the award of this shooting medal.

Neither Lane nor Jewell received the Victorian Long & Efficient Service Medal or the Colonial Auxiliary Long Service Medal and it is interesting to note that both served in the Victorian Rangers.

It should be noted that no V.L.F. Medals were awarded between May 1890 and August 1897. The motto on the obverse was changed in 1893. Reg Williams notes in his book that the second die was charged out by the makers, Thomas Stokes, in April 1894 and the first 'Pro Deo' medal charged out the same day. As the first recorded issue of the *revised* V.L.F. medal was not until August 1897 one can conjecture that the Best Shot medal might be that first one struck in 1894.

With the popularity of rifle shooting in Victoria in the late 1800s it is quite possible that the award of the medal to the Best Shot of the Forces could be confused with the myriad of unofficial medals made for and awarded by the many rifle clubs.

However, the use of the official dies and naming gives credibility to this medal as an award approved by the Executive Council and the military authorities.

I am grateful to Ted Millett, George Ward, Reg Williams and Ian Wilkie for their assistance in providing information for this article.

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Obverse

Reverse

Peter Stanley

The Soldiers on the Hill: the defence of Whyalla, 1939-1945

Part 6: 'The Home Guard has to be taken very seriously now'

DESPITE the establishment of a regular anti-aircraft battery, Whyalla's part-time land, air and sea units continued to assume a minor role in the town's defence. In November 1941 Whyalla's Volunteer Defence Corps company numbered sixty members. By 1 May 1942, the Whyalla and Iron Knob units together numbered 310 men. This dramatic increase in strength was the result of the threat Whyalla appeared to be under. As Jack Edwards put it in the first issue of the *Whyalla News* following the declaration of war with Japan: 'The Home Guard has to be taken very seriously now'.[1]

Edwards saw a real use for the Home Guard, as the Volunteer Defence Corps was sometimes called, in the defence of Whyalla.

> If enemy troops landed from warships or aircraft with the intention of cutting the railway to Iron Knob or destroying the blast furnace, the power house or the shipyard, it would fall to the lot of the Home Guard to stop them.[2]

At this time Whyalla's VDC company was the only military unit in the area, and its members were conscious that they were responsible for one of the vital points in Australia's industrial system. The company seemed to have regarded the prospect of action with earnest anticipation. The state commander inspected it in June 1942 and reported that

> The discipline and morale of the Corps became even higher as the Jap threat became darker.[3]

It was no longer mostly composed of ex-soldiers from the previous war. Many younger men, unable to join the forces because their jobs at BHP were vital to the war effort, joined up in order to help 'do their bit'. But the spirit of the old diggers lingered on in the unit. Lloyd Penglase, a young engineering trainee, recalled that

> You could always tell the VDC by the way they creased their hats ... they had definite ideas about the sort of crease that a VDC bloke had to have in their hat. None of this curling around the back like the AIF were doing, and so we all finished up looking like world war one blokes with a straight dint in our hats.[4]

Although its members were keen, the Volunteer Defence Corps was at first not well equipped. Many of Whyalla's rifle shooters had handed their sporting rifles to the army for the duration of the war. In return they received some very poor arms, and for some time even these were without ammunition. Even so, the keen amateur soldiers polished these rifles 'till you could comb your hair in them!'[5]

In February the commander of the Whyalla unit, Captain Charles Anderson, a veteran of the first world war and president of the Whyalla RSL, returned from Adelaide promising an early issue of machine-guns, mortars and uniforms. The uniforms arrived, and one solitary Tommy-gun, but the great event of the winter of 1942 was the donation by Blacks' Shoes of a kettle drum to the Whyalla Company. For most of 1942 the Whyalla volunteers, like most of the home guard in Australia, remained under-equipped. There was more than a little truth in the cartoon by the South Australian 'Threebee' showing a VDC guard holding a broom stick challenging a stranger with: 'Halt ... or I'll fill you full of white ants'.[6]

Despite its lack of equipment the corps was enthusiastic. Many of its members studied guerilla tactics and the Whyalla unit was instructed in the methods of harassing an enemy force attempting to occupy Australia. Many Australians were inspired by examples of Russian and Yugoslav partisans fighting the Germans in Europe. Their example was thought by others to be suspect because of their 'communist' motives, although, despite the appearance of unofficial forces in the eastern states, it is doubtful whether any of Whyalla's patriots wished to form a 'people's army' to fight the invading Japanese.[7]

There was, however, a darker side to some of the Volunteer Defence Corps' activities. Like any small community, Whyalla had its factions, feuds and suspicions and a few men in the VDC seem to have used the privileges of uniform in a way which may have hurt some of their neighbours. A man called Jack Anderson appeared in the South Australian military intelligence summary late in 1942, accused of being a spy:

> The proprietor of the Hotel at Iron Knob is known as Jack Anderson. He holds himself out as being Norwegian but is strongly suspected of

being German. He is spending money freely. He is in a position to obtain valuable information of ship movements.[8]

This report may have been made in good faith, but it was hurtful and widely improbable. Jack Anderson was secretary of the Iron Knob Progress Association. He was described as the 'unofficial mayor' of Iron Knob 'whose only role [sic] of office was his love for his village'.[9] The report did not explain how Jack Anderson was able to report shipping movements from 50 kilometres inland.

In spite of such unpleasantness the Volunteer Defence Corps in Whyalla trained throughout 1942 in preparation for an invasion which they could not be sure would not come. The part-time soldiers had a place, though a minor one, in the military plan for the defence of the town. In September the VDC was ordered to 'co-operate with the Military Unit ... in a combined defence scheme for that town'.[10]

This co-operation, however, did not include taking over the guns on Hummock Hill. Brigadier Walters, the army's Director of Home Guard, inspected the company in August. The *Whyalla News* recorded that he 'threw out' the suggestion that the Volunteer Defence Corps could co-operate with the anti-aircraft battery. But Jock Edwards, the paper's editor, pointed out that

> The day may come when the soldiers on the hill may have to move off to a more active theatre of war.[11]

In the meantime Whyalla's VDC company continued to train to defeat a Japanese landing. The lack of equipment and absence of a clear role began to take their toll, and in October 1942 45 men were discharged for missing parades. Perhaps in response to this encroaching apathy, Captain Anderson organized a weekend 'school of instruction' at the end of that month. A hundred VDC members (the remainder were probably rostered for shift work at BHP) were taken by lorry to the Blast Furnace wharf and thence by motor launches (presumably of the Naval Auxiliary Patrol) across False Bay to Point Lowly. There the company marched three kilometres inland and camped. They were provided with what were described as 'iron rations' — which were in fact tinned corned beef, beetroot, tomatoes, pork and beans and cheese — and proceeded to train.

Lieutenant Williams, chief electrical engineer at BHP, conducted a night patrol exercise and when Captain Anderson arrived at midnight he was duly captured. Signaller Sergeant Zeven, a BHP carpenter, passed signals to 'the battery on the hill', and rose at six next morning to lead the company in physical training. Later that day Lieutenant Mara, who had attended a VDC guerilla warfare course in Melbourne, instructed in 'jungle type' attack and defence, and the men later erected obstacles on the beach. Captain Moorfoot visited the camp that afternoon, watching the men practise unarmed combat. The school was apparently regarded as a success, but it did not help the VDC to see how they were to co-operate with the battery in the town's defence, and the two units continued to train independently.[12]

* * * *

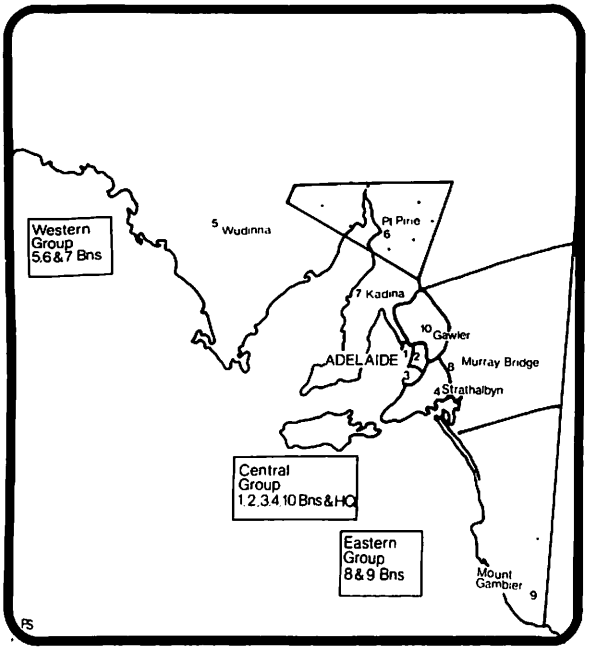
'Looking for enemy planes'

On 13 February 1942 Mr Michelmore, the head teacher of the Whyalla Higher Primary School, called for volunters to begin a branch of the Volunteer Air Observer Corps in Whyalla. The first air raid on Darwin occurred less than a week later, and within ten days some sixty people had enrolled.[13]

The Volunteer Observers attended a meeting in the school hall, where Captain Moorfoot addressed them on 'looking for enemy planes'. Mr Michelmore appealed to pigeon owners to join the observers. He explained that pigeons had keen hearing and

> by watching them owners might be able to help the observers in learning that a plane was in the neighbourhood.[14]

Perhaps Mr Michelmore's suggestion was taken up; on 16 April VAOC headquarters in Adelaide reported an 'unidentified aircraft (not actually seen or heard) over Whyalla'.[15]



South Australia, showing VDC battalion areas, 1942-45, and the grouping of battalions adopted in 1942.

Captain Moorfoot delivered another lecture in March explaining to the observers how they might recognize Australian aircraft. This was sensible, as it was more the only sort of aircraft the observers would see over Whyalla. By this time a sandbagged 'outlook' had been erected on some vacant ground in Brimage Street giving an excellent view eastwards over the gulf. Mr Russell Matthews, the group's organiser, was looking for women to serve in it from 8.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. each day. Vic Richardson, the great South Australian cricketer, who had joined the RAAF, visited the post at the end of March, finding it 'one of the most efficient he had seen', congratulating Mr Matthews and his volunteers on their enthusiasm.[16]

The VAOC appeared, even during the war, to be something of a waste of time and Whyalla's post, located only 500 metres from the battery (which also maintained a watch with better equipment) was especially redundant. But it did in fact occasionally perform valuable service, as in October 1943 when George Gage, a Whyalla man flying from Adelaide to Whyalla, did not arrive at the aerodrome when expected. The VAOC observers on his route were alerted. The Port Broughton station reported that the observers had seen him fly out across the gulf but the Whyalla station did not see him reach the western shore. It was assumed that he had run out of fuel because headwinds were stronger than he had anticipated and had crashed into the sea.[17]

A happier story was recorded in May 1945. Mr George Nicolson, a local pastoralist, was a VAOC observer at his station 'Tregelana'. He reported that he had seen an RAAF Avro Anson from the training station at Port Pirie circling with smoke trailing from an engine. The plane landed and Mr Nicolson found the crew and contacted the RAAF station at Port Pirie which sent another Anson to collect the airmen.[18] By this time, however, the VAOC organization itself was virtually moribund and in 1944 the observers' station in Brimage Street had been dismantled and installed as a stewards' box at a nearby oval.

* * * *

'Could see some gunfire here, Clayton'

A Naval Auxiliary Patrol detachment was formed in South Australia in September 1941. By November the organization was established in Whyalla,

Frank Norton's drawing of a Naval Auxiliary Patrol launch at Whyalla, probably near the Blast Furnace wharf, in May 1943 (Australian War Memorial).

with Reginald Kleeman, the Whyalla superintendent, as the officer in charge. Kleeman aimed to recruit ten crews of five to man the launches *Martindale*, a luxury cruiser requisitioned from a Sydney doctor, BHP's own boat the *Iron Bark* and another called *Dawn*.[19]

The patrol began to train in earnest with the declaration of war with Japan. By mid-March 1942 an energetic training programme was under way with mechanical instruction on Friday night, gun training on Sunday, signalling on Monday and first-aid on Tuesday. The shore-based training sometimes took place at the newly-established yacht club rooms at the shipyard basin, but it was mostly conducted in a shop in Horewood Street near the cheer-up hut. Volunteers served about one night each fortnight at sea.

Even after the arrival of the RAN guard ships the patrol provided day-to-day protection for the ore carriers sailing to and from Whyalla. In January 1942 the motor launch *Cygnus*, armed with a Vickers machine-gun and depth charge, was made available and with their respectably armed vessels the men of the auxiliary spent their nights patrolling False Bay on the alert for Japanese raiders. Especially after the Japanese miniature submarine attack on Sydney Harbour the patrols were conscious of the possibility of a raid on Whyalla. Submarines were much on the minds of the volunteers; as one member wrote: 'Many an unfortunate porpoise or dolphin made the fatal mistake of surfacing during the dim hours of the night . . .'.[20] Another NAP member, Jack Clayton, remembered an incident which occurred while on patrol out in the gulf:

> It was a very calm night quite a few miles out . . . it was a moonlit night and sure enough here was a miniature submarine coming towards us. You could even hear the lapping of the water on the hull. I was on the point of calling the skipper . . . it was very intense . . . it proved to be a 44 gallon drum.[21]

When not detecting imaginary submarine raids or evicting fishing parties from prohibited areas the patrol performed some useful duties. It co-operated with the anti-aircraft battery and the searchlight battery in training them to fire on targets at sea. This was hazardous on winter nights. the little auxiliary launches would be hidden from the searchlight beams by huge waves.

The patrol's launches also monitored merchant shipping movements in and out of the harbour. In this duty the part-time sailors were game. On one occasion a Greek freighter arrived near the ore jetty and was challenged to identify herself by the *Martindale*. The ship evidently did not understand the auxiliary's signals and the regular seaman in charge turned to his crewmen, ordering them to prepare for action. Jack Clayton, a young sign-writer, recalled the incident. The seaman said 'Stand by the Vickers gun . . . could see some gunfire here, Clayton'; the Greek ship was about 15,000 tons. Through the glasses Jack Clayton saw the crew rushing to find the correct signal flags, and the emergency passed.[22]

Like many of Whyalla's wartime voluntary organisations the Naval Auxiliary Patrol faded from public view when the crisis that had called it into being passed, and by late in 1944 it had become inactive. In June 1945 the *Martindale* became again a pleasure craft on Sydney Harbour, a role in which it continues to serve.

Though Whyalla's Home Guard, volunteer observers and naval auxiliaries had seen no action during the time of the greatest fear of invasion, the year 1943 would see the part-time soldiers, at least, begin to take a more active part in the town's defence.

Notes:

1. *Whyalla News*, 12 December 1941; 1 May 1942.
2. *Whyalla News*, 12 December 1941.
3. 1008/2/44, 'Brief History Volunteer Defence Corps, South Australia L of C Area, Location of Units', AWM 52 (AWM).
4. Interview, Mr Lloyd Penglase.
5. Interview, Mr Lloyd Penglase.
6. *On Guard with the Volunteer Defence Corps*, Canberra, 1944, p.155.
7. See Michael McKernan, *All In!*, Melbourne, 1984, pp.120-124.
8. War diary, VDC, South Australia, 35/1/8, November 1942 (AWM).
9. C. L. Murn, 'Salute to Steel' (unpublished manuscript) 1963, p.46.
10. 1008/2/45, 'Volunteer Defence Corps Inception', AWM 52 (AWM).
11. *Whyalla News*, 28 August 1942.
12. *Whyalla News*, 30 October 1942, 6 November 1942.
13. *Whyalla News*, 13 February 1942, 27 February 1942.
14. *Whyalla News*, 27 February 1942.
15. VAOC log, Adelaide, 16 March 1942, AWM 64 (AWM).
16. *Whyalla News*, 27 March 1942; interview with Mrs Sheila Baldwinson.
17. Memoir, Mr J. P. Kellow, pp.86-87.
18. *Whyalla News*, 4 May 1945.
19. *Advertiser*, 8 September 1941; *Whyalla News*, 7 November 1941.
20. Letter, Mr R. S. McDougall to author, 15 January 1981.
21. Interview, Mr Jack Clayton.
22. Interview, Mr Jack Clayton.

Martin Buckley

'Robbo' served his country well

ON a Sunday morning in August 1915, the village of Wyrallah, near Lismore, was the assembly point for people from all parts of the Richmond River district.

The Church of England and Methodist services for that day had been cancelled so that all could attend the Presbyterian memorial service for the late Lieutenant Harry Robson.

Memorial services such as this were common throughout Australia at this time of World War I, and mostly they were for young men, barely in their twenties, who had hardly had time to become as well known in the community as Harry Robson.

Harry was 48 when he died and had already fought in the Boer war with the NSW Lancers and again with the Mounted Rifles. He had been a respected farmer, a shire councillor and a committee member of the Show Society.

Perhaps this explains the great number attending his memorial service, including the Mayor and members of Lismore council, President and councillors of Gundurimba Shire, representatives of many community organisations and Major Taylor, with a detachment of Light Horsemen from Lismore and Casino Half Squadrons.

The Lismore Town Band had been transported by motor lorries to Wyrallah to lead a march from the hall to the church and to provide music for the service which, due to the numbers, was held outside.

Many local newspapers carried eulogistic reports of Lieutenant Robson, and the Sydney Morning Herald had a long article from its war correspondent, Oliver Hogue. The article was entitled 'Robbo'. Later it became the heading for a chapter in a book on the Dardanelles by Hogue.

He described Harry Robson as 'Kind of heart, genial of temper and always willing to help others ... He could get more work out of a team of horses than anyone I know. He could get a full measure of work from his men also. But he never overdrove man or beast, that's why we all liked him.'

Who then was this man, so well-liked and respected?

He was born Henry Robson, though always known as Harry, in July 1868, on the family farm at Tucki.

From his earliest days it was evident that he was a natural rider and had a special way with horses.

In 1888 he joined a detachment of E troop NSW Lancers formed at Coraki. He quickly became proficient in the military arts and being enthusiastic enough to travel to military tournaments wherever possible, he soon became a competitor of wide renown.

After 1890, he transferred to the Lismore Lancer troop, and in 1893 was promoted to corporal and also selected in a Lancer team of 17 men to represent the NSW Lancers at military tournaments in England.

This was the first appearance of the regiment in England and they made quite an impression.

Reporting on the procession preceding the opening of the Imperial Institute, the London *Daily Telegraph* said, 'It was upon the NSW Cavalry that the eye rested longest and most admiringly. These lithe and active fellows from the Antipodes in their brown uniforms, which are at once good-looking and serviceable, seemed in appearance at any rate the very ideal of what cavalry ought to be. They sat their horses with ease and grace and bore their lance aloft like some strange new order of knights come fresh from a youthful world.'

The lancers may have looked like cavalrymen in the procession but later results of tournaments in the British Isles proved their skill. The team won a number of prizes with Sergeant J.T. Daley, of the Alstonville detachment of the Lismore troop, gaining the most, while Corporal Robson gained a silver cup and gold medal at Islington and medals at other tournaments for minor placings.

Returning to Australia, Harry continued to work on the farm with Lancer activities still being his main outside interest. More and more his name appeared in the prize lists of tounaments as his skill increased with sword and lance.

By 1898 he had become Sergeant Major with increasing responsibility for men and horses. He appeared to have had a natural organising ability, for when the unit went to camp at Sydney it involved a three-day march to Tenterfield, nearly two days on a train and yet the Richmond River Squadrons were reported as marching into camp with horses looking in better condition than some of the local (city) units.

Sergeant Major Henry Robson

The men realised than most of this was due to the preparation and care taken by their senior NCO and a few weeks after their return presented him with an illuminated address in appreciation.

In the year 1899 it was decided to send a force of 105 Lancers to England for full-time training with regular cavalry units. Twenty-four men were chosen from the Richmond River district and as Staff Sergeant Major, Harry Robson had a big job ahead.

In England there were times when nearly half of the Australian contingent were down with measles or influenza and yet had to provide teams for tournaments, detachments to ride in processions and still keep up with regular cavalry training.

That they somehow managed is possibly due to the example set by their NCOs. During one contest at the Islington Tournament, Harry's arm was nearly broken by a heavy blow. The doctor recommended he retire but Harry continued with his arm bandaged heavily from wrist to elbow. According to him, the honour of the Richmond was at stake. He went on to win the event and received a standing ovation for several minutes from the huge crowd.

Harry won many trophies on this tour but he didn't take them home personally. When the Lancers had finished their six-month training period and were about to leave for Australia, the Boer war started. So 70 of them volunteered to disembark at Cape Town to go straight into action.

When they landed there was as yet only enough gear to equip 29 men and these, under Lieutenant

Osbourne and SSM Robson went straight into action and fought throughout most of the first year of the war.*

Letters from the troopers mention SSM Robson's bravery. On one occasion he rushed out under heavy fire and caught a horse carrying a sounded trooper. He helped the doctor bind up the wounds until a shell, landing nearby, blew them both off their feet. The doctor told him to get the man back. Robson got the man onto his horse and was about to gallop off when another shell burst nearby and blew his helmet in two, but he got the man away.

After a year the Lancers returned to New South Wales in time for Federation celebrations. Many went back to their civilian occupations but some were offered commissions in the new Commonwealth forces and Harry went back as transport officer for Colonel Cox. He earned great praise for the way he did this work and the Staff Officer of 2 Brigade stated that Robson was the best transport officer in the State.

When he returned to Australia, Harry continued farming and left his military interests to give time to civic duties such as becoming a shire councillor and member of the show committee.

After the outbreak of World War I, Colonel Cox was again forming a regiment and asked for Robson as transport officer. Although Harry could have been given a higher rank elsewhere, he preferred to stay with his old CO.

Second Lieutenant Henry Robson embarked for overseas with the 6th Light Horse Regiment (C Squadron) at Sydney on HMA Transport A29 *Suevic* on 21 December 1914.

At Ma'adi Camp in Egypt, he was again popular and respected by a new generation of younger horsemen. At 48, old enough to be their father, he could give them a good 'ticking off' when required, but also did everything he could for the material welfare of men and horses in his charge and still had time to lend a sympathetic ear to any of his boys who needed it.

At this time the first casualties from Gallipoli were arriving in Egypt and the Light Horsemen were shocked by what they saw and heard.

They knew that their infantry mates needed help and that reinforcements from England and Australia would take too long, so they volunteered to go even though they would have to leave their horses.

Their offer eventually was accepted, but a certain proportion of the regiments would remain to care for the horses and maintain the camps. This was one of the jobs that would fall to older officers such as Harry.

SSM Robson and SQMS Blow taken 'somewhere in Africa' during the Boer war.

Like most of the others, he was not happy to stay behind and was quite pleased when at the last moment the QM became sick, so Harry offered to take his place.

He was only on Gallipoli for a couple of months but looked after his men as well as he could in the circumstances.

On the morning of 24 July 1915, he was walking out of the HQ dugout when he was hit by a piece of shrapnel and died soon afterwards.

The chaplain of the 6th LH writing to Harry's wife said, 'Lt Robson's passing cast a gloom over the whole regiment and Colonel Cox was particularly "cut up" as Harry had been to England with him, to South Africa with him twice, and now here. We buried him on Shell Green at 11.00 that night in the presence of Brigadier General Ryrie, Colonel Cox, Colonel Harris and a large number of officers and men'.

So ended the life of a man of whom Oliver Hogue said, 'He was a man who was as straight as the lance he carried ... a North Coast Hero ... they'll put his name on Australia's Roll of Honour. In Lismore they'll say kind things of Lieutenant Harry Robson, but the Regiment will always remember him as Robbo.'

* * * *

We are indebted to the Editor of *The Northern Star*, Lismore for permission to reprint this article which appeared in their issue of 25 April 1985.

* A newspaper article of 1903 stated that Henry Robson's Boer war medal entitlements were as follows:

Queen's South Africa medal with bars for Diamond Hill, Johannesburg, Driefontein, Relief of Kimberley, Modder River and Belmont.

(The article states that only thirty Australians were present at the last two engagements mentioned, so very few (about six Australian troops) have more bars.)

King's South Africa medal with bars for 1901 and 1902.

The present whereabouts of the medals is unknown.

'Robbo's' grave on Gallipoli.

Geoff Waters

Death on the Rifle Range

AN attempt to solve the mystery of an unusual tombstone in the Echuca, Victoria cemetery was always frustrated by the scant information painted on the unusual cast-iron headstone.

It purports to mark the grave of one David Snell of the Echuca Rangers who was accidentally shot on the morning of 10 February 1893. But a search of the files of the *Riverine Herald* about that time yielded no further information, and no further research was possible as there was no equivalent entry in the Cemetery Record Book of that period.

The inscription in full read:

> Erected by the Officers, N.C. Officers, and Men of the E Company Victorian Rangers as a tribute of respect to the memory of No. 192 Private David Snell who was accidentally shot at the Rifle Ranges on the morning of February 10th, 1893.

The final paragraphs of an article on the Rangers in the February 1984 issue of the *Rich River Review* asked for any assistance in the matter of Private Snell's death, and this was forthcoming in a phone call from a reader.

She referred to the existence of a sworn statement from one of the witnesses to the accident now in the possession of the Echuca Historical Society.

This was copied and it was then noticed that the date of the statement and the tombstone inscription varied by a year. There had to be an error somewhere, and a check of the headstone still gave 1893 as the correct date. However, the files of the *Riverine Herald* confirmed that it occurred in 1892, and gave the whole tragic story in great detail.

By an extraordinary co-incidence a discussion in the Echuca Museum with Joan and Larry Mitchell produced a photograph of a military procession with a large body of men in uniform marching down a wide street, with arms reversed, escorting a horse-drawn hearse.

The details of the march to the cemetery and the huge crowds that followed the hearse to the graveside all tie in with the old photograph, and it is safe to presume that it is the particular funeral.

The full story of the tragedy can now be told.

The young Rangers were very eager to secure as much rifle practice as they could and they were permitted to use the Rifle Butts, immediately south of the Tehan House site, and parallel to the railway line, provided that there was an NCO in charge.

On this particular morning, a small party consisting of three sergeants, Haig, Hall and Jacoby, and two privates, Ponsford and Snell, arrived in a cart owned by Snell's father, about 5am. They set up the targets and used the positions for 200, 400 and 500 yards as required.

The system was that each man firing had his individual marker in the mantle below his target, and each single shot was indicated by the marker, and recorded by Private Ponsford who entered the score in a book.

The orderly rhythm was interrupted by the sight of a trolley on the railway line travelling towards Rochester, and Private Snell, in the No. 1 position, displayed a red flag to signal all firing to cease while the trolley was within range.

When they resumed, Sergeant Jacoby had some difficulty adjusting the sights on his rifle, and his fourth shot missed the target.

Private Ponsford gave him verbal instructions on altering the sight, and at this time Sergeant Jacoby's rifle fired before he was ready. Private Ponsford looked at the signal flag at the Butts and saw it was still flying, and indicated it was unsafe to fire. He did not see the deceased fall, but Jacoby and Haig ran to the targets, while he got the cart ready to take Snell to the doctor, but he was already dead, having been struck over the left eye.

The body was then taken to Snell's father's residence in Heygarth Street and dressed in his full army uniform by several of his friends in E Company. It was placed in a very elaborate coffin supplied by his employer, W.W. Moore, the Echuca builder and undertaker to whom he was apprenticed.

The following day an inquest was conducted, and a large number called. The coroner was critical of the manner in which the danger flags were exhibited and said that a coloured disc should be considered for the marker, as in windless conditions the little flag might not be easily visible to those on the firing position.

The coroner and jury viewed the body and a verdict of accidental death was recorded.

On Thursday 12 February Echuca witnessed one of the biggest funerals ever held, with shops closed to enable their employees to attend. The cortege left the Heygarth Street residence and was escorted by 80 members of the Rangers, including the band.

Full military ritual was observed with the troops slow marching with arms reversed, and the streets were packed with suitably attired mourners as the slow procession passed on its way to the cemetery. The graveside service was conducted by the Wesleyan minister and a firing party was placed to fire the three volleys over the grave. The casket was carried to the graveside by eight soldiers. It was draped with the Union Jack and carried a large floral cross made by Mrs Swannell, wife of the Company Commander.

The rusty and neglected tombstone marking Private Snell's grave in the Echuca Cemetery. The headstone and low fence are in cast iron, made by the Echuca Foundry. The painted inscription is inaccurate and now needs repainting.

An elaborate memorial, in cast iron, was later erected over the grave, paid for by the members of his old Company.

Colonel Otter, the Commanding Officer of the Victorian Rangers was unable to be present at the graveside as he had to catch the 4.30pm train to Melbourne to arrange for the discharge of the unfortunate Sergeant Jacoby from the regiment.

After 92 years the memorial is in good condition but needs some cleaning up and the inscription repainted (with the correct date this time). Perhaps it may be possible to interest the local members of the Army Reserve in this project.

Reading through the evidence it is easy to see how the accident could have happened. The luckless Sergeant Jacoby was having trouble adjusting his sights, and obviously did not look at the marker to see if the way was clear to fire.

The rifle was probably a Martini Henry, and a demonstration by a local gun collector showed how it could have been fired accidentally. At a later date, of course, there was telephone communication possible between the butts and the firing points, but in 1892 this modern facility did not exist.

It was pure accident, and one can only feel sympathy for Sergeant Jacoby, who was a serious minded and responsible young man who had studied and trained hard to get his three stripes.

What happened to him is not known, but living in Echuca after the accident would have been impossible.

* * * *

This article originally appeared in the March 1984 issue of the *Rich River Review*. We are indebted to the writer, Geoff Waters, who is also editor of the *Review*, for permission to reprint the article and to George Ward, President of the Victorian Branch of the MHSA, for arranging it.

Paul A. Rosenzweig

Furthest inland at Gallipoli

An achievement inspired by Captain M.J. Herbert.

UNTIL Bean's work was first published in 1934, it was popularly believed that the honour of penetrating furthest inland at Gallipoli belonged to Lieutenant N.M. Loutit and Private Fordham. Loutit was an original officer of the 10th Battalion and had been acting commander of G Company until Mena Camp when, due to the reorganisation of the battalion into four companies instead of eight, he became a platoon commander in Captain Herbert's D Company.

After the landing, he was sent forward by Captain Herbert with a party of 32 men to scout inland. He and Private Fordham left the party at a knoll and moved forward a further 400 metres to Scrubby Knoll, only to find Turks there in great numbers. Their fighting withdrawal depleted their numbers such that when they returned four days later the party comprised Loutit and ten men.

For his fine efforts at Gallipoli, Loutit was mentioned in Army Corps Routine Orders. This penetration, inspired by Captain Herbert, 'for many years was considered to be a record established that day by any member of the AIF'[1].

Bean however, remarked that 'Evidence has lately come to hand affording strong grounds for the belief that two scouts of the 10th Bn... reached and passed slightly beyond the crest at Scrubby Knoll before Loutit arrived there'[2]. These scouts, Private A.S. Blackburn and Lance Corporal P.deQ.Robin, were on one of the first boats to land, together with Captain Herbert. Upon his own initiative. Herbert sent the pair forward to scout inland. Blackburn later recalled that 'our instructions were in effect "go like hell for the Third Ridge"'[3].

They moved inland rapidly, circling the east side of Scrubby Knoll, reaching slightly beyond the crest of Third (Gun) Ridge at a plateau to the Knoll's north. They then moved southwards along the inland slope of the ridge and, on passing the Knoll, noticed a party of Turks forming up in a valley to the east. They withdrew over Third Ridge to a point southwest of Scrubby Knoll and here noticed Loutit's party of men to their rear. They then drew back to Johnston's Jolly, north of Lone Pine.

Blackburn, who won the VC as a lieutenant at Pozieres on 23 July 1916, and Robin, who was killed later on the 25th, the day of the landing, had reconnoitred a direct distance inland from Anzac beach of in excess of 3000 metres. They thus 'came nearer to the objective of the expedition than any other soldiers whose movements are known'[2].

* * * *

Mervyn James Herbert was born in Melbourne on 15 September 1887 to Ralph and Robina Herbert of Fitzroy. He spent his early years in New Zealand where it is believed his grandfather was killed and eaten by Maoris. After gaining a diploma in horticulture, he joined the Victorian Scottish Regiment in 1907 at the age of 20. He moved to South Australia in 1911, marrying Dorothy Royals on 26 August, and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the SA Scottish Infantry two days later. On 1 July 1912, under the Universal Training Scheme, he was appointed to the 78th Battalion (Adelaide Rifles). He achieved his Captaincy on 16 July 1914, having been Area Officer for Prospect since 16 April.

On 16 August 1914, Lieutenant Colonel S.P. Weir was instructed to raise the 10th Battalion AIF, and on the 19th Captain Herbert's appointment as officer commanding D Company was confirmed. After hard training at Morphettville, the battalion sailed from Outer Harbour at 4.30 pm on 20 October aboard HMAT *Ascanius*. The journey was not to prove uneventful.

Herbert was 'Captain of the Day' on 21 November[4] when, in the early hours of the morning, the *Ascanius* rammed her sister transport, the *Shropshire*, sending the troops scurrying to the decks with life-jackets donned. The eight-metre tear was above the waterline, so the impromptu morning parade was soon dismissed. Captain Herbert must have felt some trepidation on 2 December when, as 'Captain of the Day' again[5], he stood upon the deck of the *Ascanius* anchored in Port Said harbour, watching the seemingly vengeful *Shropshire* loom up before them. The fear of another 'bump' soon passed, the troops of the two transports vociferously exchanging sarcasm and jestful abuse.

The 10th Battalion trained at Mena in Egypt from 7 December and at Lemnos from 12 February 1915 until 24 April when the Royal Navy appeared, Captain Herbert taking his Company aboard the destroyer *Scourge* at 11 pm. These men of South Australia's first foot regiment were among the first to leap from the boats and half swim-half wade onto the 'unknown and necessarily unreconnoitred wilderness afterwards to be known as ANZAC'[6].

The 10th had scaled the heights and moved into the valley, and determined leadership was required to regain control and effectively reform the companies, Captain Herbert's 'Don' Company reforming in Shrapnel Gully itself. The battalion then made its way over Braund's Hill and up Bridges' Road, digging in at the head of the road, B Company on the right, A to the north, then C, and northernmost of all D Company with its left flank on Wire Gully.

The subsequent advances of the Turks saw the advanced troops withdrawing through the 10th Battalion's lines, leaving the battalion, particularly D Company, as the main front line facing the Turks in this region. The heavy fire left many dead and wounded, among them Captain Herbert who received gunshot wounds to the shoulder and left hand, later requiring the amputation of a finger. He was evacuated and entered the hospital at Alexandria on 29 April. He was listed in the second casualty list of the war, published in South Australia in *The Advertiser* on 3 May. A representative of the newspaper had called on Mrs Herbert the previous night, and reported that 'she had not been notified of the injury to her husband, and was almost prostrated on hearing the intelligence'[7].

Herbert was mentioned in Army Corps Routine Orders for 29 June 1915 for conspicuous gallantry[8], in which the Army Corps Commander cordially thanked those listed 'for the good work they have performed, which more than ever testifies to their devotion to duty toward King and Country'.

He was evacuated from Egypt to Australia on the *Ballarat*, arriving in Adelaide on 3 August 1915. He returned to Egypt as the ship's adjutant on HMAT *Morea*, arriving at Suez on 21 September where he was appointed Musketry Officer at the Anzac Depot of Zeitoun. He rejoined the 10th Battalion at Lemnos on 5 December and trained with them at Tel-el-Kebir, Gebel Habieta and Serapeum until 26 February 1916 when he was transferred to the 50th Battalion under a scheme designed to infuse the newly raised 4th Division with battle-hardened officers and soldiers.

He was promoted Major on 12 March and from 6 June saw active service with the 50th Battalion in France, including Fleurbaix, Pozieres and the Ypres Salient. He was wounded in action again at Mouquet Farm on 14-15 October and evacuated to England. Here he was seconded as officer commanding 13th Infantry Training Battalion on 28 October and on 7 February 1917 was accorded the honour of acting as escort to His Majesty King George V for the opening of Parliament. On 4 May 1917 he was appointed Permanent President of Courts-Martial, HQ AIF Depots in the UK, and on 25 February 1918 was seconded to the Overseas Training Brigade at Longbridge, Deverill. He returned to Australia in January 1919 as OC Troops aboard HMAT *Orsova*, terminating his services with the AIF on 26 April 1919.

His adventuresome spirit soon led him to a young settlement on the Murray River which, with his assistance and determination became the modern township of Moorook. His early efforts to increase the Agriculture Bureau's quota of Doradillo vines for the pioneer settlers earnt him wide respect and led to his election as foundation Chairman of Moorook Cooperators Limited on 8 June 1920, responsible for the production and sale of the district's fruit. Largely responsible for acquiring government assistance to build a crusher, he was later elected foundation manager of the newly established Moorook Distillery.

Reverse

Colonial Auxiliary Forces Long Service Medal (GVR) awarded to Captain (Honorary Major) M.J. Herbert on 25 September 1924. The medal is in the author's possession.

Mervyn James Herbert. Although this photograph predates his WWI service with 10th Battalion, it appeared in ***The Advertiser*** *of 3 May 1915 under the heading 'Australian heroes' following his listing in the second casualty list of the war.*

By 1930 he personally held some 200 acres (80 hectares), producing 'Sunsweet' oranges, and wines and spirits under the brand name 'Illalangi'. His castor oil extract had won top place in the Paris World Exhibition, while his brandy had won the top awards in the 1925 World Exhibition in London where it had been branded the best spirit in the world.[9]

In 1935 he transferred his entire holdings to the newly formed Moorook Distillery Limited for a sum of £5000 in the form of 5000 company shares, Major Herbert being named the foundation Managing Director. His perpetual lease was suddenly cancelled by the government on 16 February 1943 however, and the distillery had to be surrendered absolutely to the government.

The buildings and land were immediately handed to the Army who installed twelve German internees, under guard, to dismantle the distillery. The lime/mortar bricks and 10-metre beams were transported across the river to Loveday where Japanese prisoners-of-war reassembled them. The hall thus built from Major Herbert's distillery was used by the Australian Military Forces personnel stationed there, particularly the camp orchestra, until 1946 when it was sold to the Loveday Hall Committee[10].

It must have been disheartening to see the fruits of his 24 years' labour being dismantled under the auspices of the modern counterpart of the Army he had served to faithfully three decades ago. He would have been consoled to some degree however, with the subsequent use of his land and vineyards. After several subdivisions and leases, much of the gently sloping hillside was purchased in 1959 by Andrea Lubiana. With three generations of Italian wine-making behind him, Lubiana progressed to a record 1 million litres in 1975. The modern winery now produces 40 varieties of wines, spirits and ports, and in recent wine shows has won 74 medals, from vines descended from Major Herbert's original stock.

* * * *

Mervyn James Herbert was an adventurer and pioneer. His early writings on machine-gun tactics and gun emplacements and his commentary on the Gallipoli landings by 10th Battalion (published in *The Advertiser*), demonstrated his intelligence and aptitude for military strategy, while his initiative at the Dardenelles landing was responsible for the two furthest penetrations inland by the allied forces.

As he had led his D Company ashore at Anzac, so he led the pioneer settlers of Moorook in the formation of a thriving Riverland industry, founding Moorook Cooperators, Moorook Distillery and Moorook Distillery Limited. As his good friend Cedric Steed, who still possesses a fruity 'Illalangi' port (a gift from Herbert on New Years Day 1931), was to say of him, 'he was a good man and a good blocker...he was a very good man. Major Herbert was a very well known and popular figure in Moorook. He had a good military mind and conducted his business on a sound military basis'.

In reward for his fine services and gallantry at Gallipoli, Herbert was mentioned in Army Corps Routine Orders, and was later appointed an Honorary Major in the Australian Military Forces on 3 March 1916. While serving in England he received the rare privilege of acting as the King's escort, certainly a memorable appointment. He received his 1914-15 Star and British War Medal in 1920 and 1921, but did not receive his Victory Medal until 1927. In 1924 he received the Colonial Auxiliary Forces Medal for long service, which included 3 years non-commissioned service[11]. The following year however, he reputedly received the Volunteer Decoration[12]. Although this award had ceased in 1908, he was mentioned in a notice recording his mother's death in March 1931 with the post-nominals 'VD'. It is believed that he in fact received the Colonial Auxiliary Forces Decoration, of which only 884 of the George V issue were awarded to Australians[13].

He returned to Adelaide to live until his death in 1964, the wine-making tradition being carried on by his son Roderick Mervyn (Tony) Herbert who, after graduating from Roseworthy Agricultural College on 4 March 1949 with Second Class Honours, was employed by McWilliams Wines as their Technical Manager from 1949 to 1968, and by Wynn's Winery as Technical Director from 1968 to 1975[14].

Notes

1. Lock (1936) p.197.
2. Bean (1942) I. xii.
3. Wigmore (1963) p.59.
4. Battalion Order 97, 21 Nov 1914; in Lock (1936) p.307.
5. Battalion Order 107, 1 Dec 1914; in Lock (1936) p.308.
6. General Sir Ian Hamilton, CinC MEF; in Lock (1936) p.4.
7. *The Advertiser*, Monday May 3rd 1915, p.7.
8. Also Military Order No. 570 of 1915.
9. Wachtel (1982) p.92.
10. Wachtel (1982) p.92-93.
11. *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No. 67 of 25 Sep 1924; Also Military Order No. 413 of 1924.
12. Army Order 530 of 7 Nov 1925 p.694.
13. Williams (1981) p.37.
14. Mr. M.H. Babidge, General Manager, Allied Vintners Pty Ltd, Pers.Comm. 19 Apr 1984.

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Christopher Fagg

William Borland, AM

ON the afternoon of Friday, 3 April 1891, at Middle Head, Sydney, New South Wales, during a public military exhibition staged at the conclusion of a week's Militia training camp, the premature explosion of a mine ended in terrible calamity, killing two officers, two men and wounding eight others.

This tragedy also saw personal bravery of the highest degree, which culminated on 18 November 1892 with the award of the Albert Medal (AM) Sea, Second Class, to Sapper William Borland of the Submarine Mining Corps of NSW. This was Australia's second award of the Albert Medal and the first award of the decoration for bravery under the saving life at sea division of the decoration.

Sapper Borland was a serving member of the Militia (partly paid) which formed part of the Submarine Mining Corps. The Corps had been undergoing a week's military training in camp at Middle Head Barracks between 30 March and 3 April 1891.

Friday, 3 April 1891, the final day of the week's camp, was set aside for a public military exhibition. During the morning there was to be a mock battle and in the afternoon a parade and march past of all troops ending with a demonstration out in the harbour off Cobblers Beach of the detonation of two submarine mines of 100-lb each of gun-cotton.

About 3.30 in the afternoon, a cutter with a detachment of Submarine Corps personnel under

the command of Lieutenant Hammond, and including Sapper Borland, set out for Cobblers Beach to lay and detonate the two mines. The first mine was a single package, the second comprised two 50-lb packs.

The detachment consisted of the following fourteen personnel, twelve of whom became casualties, as indicated:

Lieutenant Hammond, OIC	killed
" Belford	killed
Corporal J.A. McKee, RE	killed
Bugler Bennet	killed
Sapper P. Brentnall	severely injured
" G. Wailees	injured
" J.A. Adams	severely injured
" W. Borland	severely injured
" G. Blakeman	injured
" W. Tulley	injured
" J. King	severely injured
" J.M. Bowmaker	injured
" J. Grant	
" S. Boiln	

When the cutter was approximately 300 metres out in the harbour, the first mine was laid in the sea and marked with a buoy. The cutter then continued on for another 100 metres paying out the detonation lines, while the other mines were still on board. Suddenly there was a violent explosion as the mines on the cutter detonated, ripping out its stern, blowing four men to pieces and injuring eight others as shown in the above list. Sapper Borland received severe head and body injuries.

The cutter began to sink and in an attempt to lighten the wrecked vessel and prevent it from sinking, Borland with others unhesitatingly jumped into the sea. Borland went to the aid of an injured comrade, Sapper Brentnall, who was semi-conscious and supported him within the wreck of the cutter, hanging onto the gunwhale to prevent him from slipping under the water and drowning. Sapper Adams, who was also injured, jumped into the sea as well, but when he was some distance from the wreck found he was unable to swim. Upon hearing his cry for help, Borland, despite his own wounds, immediately went to his aid and succeeded in supporting him until a rescue vessel arrived. By this action Borland certainly saved Adams from drowning.

All survivors were eventually rescued by other boats.From the official inquiry into the disaster, it appears that after being laid, the first mine would not detonate when attempts were made to fire it. Whilst endeavouring to find the problem and rectify it, the lines to the other mines still in the cutter were accidentally connected up and fired, causing them to explode.

Borland's citation is contained in the London Gazette dated 18 November 1892:

> On the 3rd April 1891, a boat containing twelve men and two officers was engaged in submarine operations, about half a mile from the shore at Middle Head, Sydney, NSW. By the accidental explosion of a 100-lb gun-cotton mine, the after part of the boat was blown to pieces and the two officers and two of the men were instantly killed, while the others were all more or less severely injured.
>
> Sapper William Borland, finding the boat sinking, jumped overboard in order to lighten her, and, whilst holding on to the gunwhale, supported Sapper Brentnall who was semi-conscious. Another of the crew, named Adams, in the excitement of the moment jumped overboard, but when some yards away called out for help, as he was unable to swim. Borland at once swam to his assistance and supported him until a boat arrived from the shore some considerable time after.

Sapper Borland remained with No. 1 Submarine Mining Company, Corps of Australian Engineers, completing 20 years' service, and rose to the rank of corporal. He was awarded the Colonial Auxiliary Forces Long Service Medal in 1906.

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Book Reviews

R. & H. Walker, *Curtin's Cowboys: Australia's secret bush commandos,* Allen & Unwin Australia, North Sydney, 1986. pp192, illus, maps, bibliography, index. $19.95 HB.

The 2nd/1st North Australia Observer Unit was raised in mid-1942 by Major Bill Stanner (later the famous Australian anthropologist) 'to watch for and report to HQ NT Force ... any landings of the enemy' and to 'report on any subsequent enemy movement including movement of his aircraft'. The NAOU became known as the AIF's 'phantom force', patrolling the north and north-west of our continent at a time when our security was most vulnerable.

Curtin's Cowboys is a unique account of hardship and privations faced by a small group of soldiers who fought a very different kind of war to their compatriots on active service in the islands to the north. The simple logistics of 466 men scattered across more than one eighth of the area of Australia, with over 1500 horses, 5 coastal boats and 60 radios, operating in patrols of two to four men, made the 'nackeroos' necessarily self-sufficient, in terms of spare parts and supplies and simple survival — there was no chance of resupply or evacuation.

Richard and Helen Walker's anecdotal history of Australia's secret bush commandos is based upon extensive correspondence, transcripts of interviews, diaries and photographs, lending credibility to an otherwise incredible tale. Had it been published as a formal, text-book history, the story of Stanner's NAOU could well have been dismissed as exaggerated, bordering on fiction. But with the blend of history and personal recollections, one cannot help but hold these soldiers in awe, and it becomes strikingly apparent that this is one of those epics of our past which has been overlooked and nearly forgotten.

There are numerous instances of personal bravery and dedication, at a time when self-discipline was a pre-requisite for survival. The very nature of their independence made their tale adventurous, and their practicality saw 'spit and polish' and stuffy tradition sacrificed, with the result that the NAOU became known as 'the most notoriously undisciplined unit in the Australian Army'. Had the Japanese invaded however, only their unique self-sufficiency would have saved them from the executioner's sword.

As a unit history the book lacks those details one might expect to find, such as a nominal roll, lists of wounded, etc, but the detailed index more than compensates for this. There are ample photographs, some retouched to add clarity, each with a detailed legend, and occasional maps for those not familiar with the remote localities mentioned in the text. *Curtin's Cowboys* makes compelling reading, not just for the military historian but for anyone with an interest in the defence of Australia. Sadly, many of the lessons learnt in 1942-45 have been forgotten and are only just being relearnt by the NAOU's modern counterpart, the North West Mobile Force.

Paul Rosenzweig

Michael Burns, *Spitfire! Spitfire!,* Blandford Press, Poole, Dorset, UK, pp64, illus, index. PB £3.95.

This is one of a number of books published recently commemorating the 50th aniversary of the first flight of the Supermarine Spitfire on 6 March 1936.

Conception and development of the Spitfire are well covered and brief outlines are provided of its service in all the theatres of the 1939-45 war, including Australia. It was surprising to read that the Red Army Air Force was a major user of the Spitfire, over 1300, or some 8 per cent of wartime production, being allocated to Russia. The type's post-war service in the RAF and foreign air forces is also covered.

Over 22,000 Spitfires and Seafires (the naval version) were built and some 200 survive, of which about 40 are flying, one (a Mark VIII) in Australia.

This is a very worthwhile potted history of what must be the best-known fighter aircraft ever built.

Alan Fraser

Bob Nichols, *Bluejackets and Boxers,* Allen and Unwin Australia, North Sydney 1986. pp164, index, illus, bibliography, 8 appendices, maps. $19.95 HB.

This is an account of Australia's first official military foray into Asia — participation by the New South Wales, Victorian and South Australian colonial naval forces in the quelling of the Boxer uprising in northern China in 1900, serving as part of the British contingent to the international relief force.

The book describes the Australians' entry into China as rather belated; their degree of individual military expertise and preparedness as questionable; their equipment either obsolete or inadequate; their military standing in action untested by combat; and members being utilised primarily in the mundane role of international policeman or guard. Yet despite these disadvantages, the Australians performed admirably under trying and frustrating conditions, gaining high praise from their various international commanders.

The adoption of a 'popular approach' to the writing style of narrative rather than the traditional 'academic approach' has worked well and the book is easy and entertaining to read. This should give it an appeal to a wider readership.

The narrative is well balanced, descriptive and set out in chronological order of composition and occurrence. The many illustrations are placed so the reader may easily identify them with the description in the narrative.

Extensive use of appendices (there are eight of them) for the provision of detailed specialist information, such as nominal rolls and statistics is good and enables the reader who wishes to gain in-depth knowledge to do so while others may read on without interruption to the narrative's natural flow.

On the negative side, the author's interpretation of the historical responsibility for the creation of the Chinese demand for opium is open to question and the absence of a nominal roll of members of the New South Wales contingent is noticeable. The layout of the contents page is unusual and detracts from the visual aesthetics and order of the book, but that is really only a minor point.

Overall, it is well recommended for inclusion in readers' personal libraries. When compared with other works of a similar nature and content, the price is very reasonable.

C. M. Fagg

Michael McKernan (ed), *Padre: Australian chaplains in Gallipoli and France,* Allen and Unwin Australia, North Sydney, 1986. pp190, illus, index. $19.95 HB.

In assuming the role of an amanuensis/editor in a purely literary project and by extensive and intensive research on data still extant in written and oral traditions of some chaplains who served in the Australian Imperial Force in the 1914-18 war, Dr Michael McKernan has published a book the like of which has not been seen before. Only one book on the experiences enjoyed and endured by a chaplain himself in WWI has come my way. In publishing material relevant to their duties chaplains themselves, like war historians, have been reticent.

Many chaplains who served at every level of Army postings will find no fresh items of interest in McKernan's recital. He has set out to inform those readers to whom a chaplain's role is unknown. He has no intention to prove or disprove any one phase of chaplaincy. Selecting extracts of what eighteen padres, out of 400 such men, said and did, he has let them tell their own story. Chaplains were 'outsiders' and granted officer rank by courtesy of the Military Board, yet they confronted officers commanding with various problems so that, in many instances, the unique personage of the padre was permitted to go his own sweet way — with satisfactory results. There were no Schools of Instruction for chaplains; and the priest/minister/pastor went from his pulpit to the army posting and too often with what the Army alone supplied.

Michael McKernan cannot write as a participant in the affairs chaplain — enmeshed in the physical, mental, emotional, moral and spiritual ramifications of total man in front lines and base camps. For any author, whatever his or her erudition and experience, to attempt an analysis of a padre and his multiple works would be akin to a layman applying himself to neuro-surgery. McKernan makes no such attempt.

As a chaplain in the second AIF and CMF for twenty years this reviewer is acutely aware of the many facetted duties, responsibilities, privileges and mistakes of a chaplain. He has learnt, as so many medical officers are still learning, that Man is not just a body requiring treatment. Man is body, mind and soul and one part cannot be separated from the others.

When soldiers see the padre they are reminded that they are not simply numbered bodies. Here is one who cares about them as an individual, with loved ones. 'Here's the bloody old Pard'; a heartwarming greeting, far more welcome than 'How are you, Sir?' Every padre can tell of spontaneous conversations on religion that have been more frank and penetrating than such organised discussions in a church group. Battle action makes for self-discovery and a startling awareness of the eternal verities. 'No doubt, Pard, there's Somebody up top'.

Some readers might think that in style the contents of the book do not flow. The only thing that flows in war is blood. The Padre must meet each circumstance as it arises in his ken. The day's duties are not relayed in Routine Orders. To dress a wound or hear a confession could be the order of the day. While the book's editor has related the operations of each chaplain as distinctly personal and individualistic, the same operations are conjunctive in the field.

Maybe the flow of the anecdotes would have been acceptably apparent had he selected two chaplains of opposing ideologies, say, the chaplain who was spiritually orientated exclusively and one whose sense of duty had no limits.

We are deeply indebted to Dr McKernan for his splendid editorship of the chaplains' stories.

Arthur Bottrell

Roll call! A guide to genealogical sources in the Australian War Memorial, AWM, Canberra 1986, pp151. $7.95 PB.

This is the latest of the War Memorial's guides to archival material, directed to the requirements of genealogical researchers but with much information of value to the general military historian.

The book contains sixteen sections of general description of sources, comprising the eleven wars in which Australia has been officially involved, plus sections on British forces in Australia 1788-1913, colonial forces 1788-1901, the inter-war period 1919-39, conflicts involving non-official Australian participation and United Nations peace-keeping and observer forces. Each section commences with a brief outline history of the conflict or period which, amplified by material in the Memorial's research centre, provides the context within which the subject being researched may be placed.

Holdings on some of these sections are very meagre but advice is offered on where else to look, listing other institutions and authorities in Australia, Great Britain and New Zealand, although not, of course, giving any great detail of their holdings.

An outline is given of the AWM's collections of official, printed and private records, special collections, audio-visual, photographic and military technology and heraldry sources and their relevance to genealogical research.

An interesting and practical feature is inclusion of a number of case studies, complementing the general description of sources.

There is much else of interest. Not every military history researcher will have seen an army staff list or a war diary or an embarkation roll or a recommendation for an award; examples are given as part of the case studies.

Altogether this is a most valuable and thoughtfully prepared book, a credit to the seven AWM staff members who compiled it (including MHSA members Bronwyn Self and Peter Stanley), and excellent value at $7.95.

Alan Fraser

Leonard Willis, *None had lances: the story of the 24th Lancers*, 24th Lancers Old Comrades Association, 77 Old Coulsdon Road, Old Coulsdon, Surrey, England. pp245, illus, maps, index, sources, glossary. £14.95 HB.

This is a straight-forward history of a regiment, newly created in the 1939-45 war, which served for only nine weeks in action and was then disbanded after serving for nearly four years.

It tells of the unit's formation from drafts of the 9th and 17/21 Lancers and civilians straight from the street. Officers come and go and the regiment continually trains, moving hither and yon all over England. Tank types also come and go — starting with a Vickers Mk II(!) and three Matildas. It received Valentines and Crusaders, tanks well named but in every other respect unsatisfactory. In the Crusaders ... 'Tappets required adjustment every 100 miles ... tracks had to be tightened daily ... clutch adjustments ... otherwise it became impossible to change gear ... water pumps would block and sieze the engine ...' They must have been brutes. Then a changeover to US Sherman IIIs and Vs — 75-mm and later 17-pr guns — in time for Normandy.

One feels for the regiment for there must have been gross mismanagement in the War Office which had a highly trained unit still training after three years and eight months of war. There were many examples of such misuse of trained soldiers during World War II. Finally the regiment sailed for France and for its nine weeks of glory.

The author gives a general picture of the first, confused, days in France and then allows the troop leaders, the doctor and the padre (who won an MC!) to tell the story as they saw it. It is effective, one gets to know many of the officers and men of the regiment; the smoke and the confusion. The reader participates.

Lieutenant Leather, in a damaged Sherman, drives past a Panther and is not noticed. Hordes of Panzer Grenadiers appear, suddenly — and then disappear. Tanks fire at point blank range — and miss. Everyone is confused from lack of sleep; the simplest orders are misunderstood. The colonel breaks a finger in his turret; he is evacuated to England, taken to hospital, escapes and is able to hitch-hike back into action. Lieutenant Leather does the same thing and is listed as a deserter! One wonders how the paperwork people, at Army Records, sorted it all out.

We get little of the tactical scene; rather we get the viewpoint of a number of people. This gives a very true picture of events.

Montgomery's idea of attracting the German armour to Caen seems to have worked. The two British Corps attracted the 1st, 2nd, 9th, 10th and 12th SS Panzer Divisions plus the 21st Panzer (Afrika Korps). It seems strange that almost always German tanks were met alone and tank vs tank encounters occurred all the time.

The 75-mm guns of the Shermans seemed to give a varied performance, although no one complained of them. 'We fired at 25 yards ... bounced away in a shower of sparks ...' and yet 'Lieutenant Williams got a Panther at 2000 yards, side on ...' One troop in each squadron had the great 17-pr guns mounted on their Shermans and they appeared to be the equal of the famed 88-mm guns of the Tiger and the long 75-mm guns of the Panther. There are no reports of tanks breaking down; the Sherman was very reliable.

Operation 'Goodwood' is glossed over, as it always is in British reports. Mention is made of British losses (400 tanks) but the 24th did not take part in this action. The common figure given by survivors of 'Goodwood' is 500 British tanks lost for a German loss of 20 Tigers and Panthers. The British 7th, 11th and Guards Armoured Divisions were involved.

British armour in France was planned to include 6 armoured divisions and 8 independent armoured brigades, a huge force. It seems that although tank losses could be replaced (3 days for Goodwood), crew losses could not; and so brigade after brigade was broken up, regiments disbanding one after another.

And so died the 24th Lancers, after just nine weeks in action and three years and eight months of training in England. Ten officers and 80 men died either in the short nine weeks or later in other actions. It seemed a dreadful waste of a highly trained regiment.

Finally, the book traces the careers of some of the officers and men. Saddest is that of Otto Thwaites, MC and Bar, serving with the Trucial Oman Levies in 1953 who, in some dispute, shot him dead.

This is a book for the historian who is looking for the flavour of Normandy, rather than for the actual tactical facts. Further information could perhaps be obtained from Major Dick Radcliffe, 'An Australian who ... is developing a hobby farm on the south coast of NSW ...' Would you believe, a 40-acre-blocker!

John Gorman

Jack Champ and Colin Burgess, *The Diggers of Colditz*, George Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1985. pp. 222, illus., map, index. HB $17.95.

Lieutenant Jack Champ, liaison officer to the 2/6 Battalion, on the staff of Brigadier Stan Savige, was evacuated from Greece in April 1941 before his battalion had the chance to fire more than a few rearguard shots at the advancing Germans. Told to make his way to Crete, where the Royal Navy would arrange evacuation, Champ hired a Greek fishing boat to take him and a handful of companions as far as the island of Milos.

HMSs Hotspur and Havock had lifted 700 British and other troops from Milos on 30 April. Champ missed these boats and his arrival on Milos coincided with the appearance of two German gunboats. He was brusquely advised on 9 May 1941 that for him the war was over. He was to spend the rest of the war in German prison camps, ending with a two year stay in Colditz, the castle prison about which 70 books have already been written.

He was sent to Colditz because of his escaping talents from prisons at Warburg (over the wire) and Eichstatt (out via tunnel). Colditz, thought by the Germans to be escape-proof, had more guards than prisoners.

It is not widely known that Australians were held there. Courtesy the British-arranged disaster in Greece and the air war over Europe, in which very many Australians were engaged, 10 Australian officers and five other ranks were at Colditz during Champ's stay. Only the most seasoned escapologists went to Colditz.

Champ records that 300 Colditz prisoners were caught in attempts to escape from the castle, 130 got clear and 30 completed their journey home (14 French, nine British, six Dutch and one Pole). I assume he includes Australians under 'British' as he also notes that one Australian, John Rawson, managed to get out — by impersonating an officer who was being transferred to another camp. But after being 'dobbed in' by the Senior British Officer in the other camp, he was returned to Colditz.

After the war, Champ put together a rough manuscript of his days in Warburg, Eichstatt and Colditz but did nothing about publishing until 'a comparative youngster' Colin Burgess met him in 1981. They decided to add reminiscences from other Colditz alumni and, with the help of Pat Reid, author of the almost classic studies of the Saxony prison he helped made known world-wide, collaborated on this book.

The adventures it records form a fascinating contrast with Australian POW sagas (*Behind Bamboo*, *Naked Island* etc.) that came from our Asian war. Those who were prisoners of the Germans had a relatively easy time; the worst punishments handed out at Colditz appear to have been days or weeks in solitary confinement.

They had regular Red Cross parcels (perhaps because they were officers?) and were often able to thumb their noses at guards. Indeed the behaviour of British officers at Colditz reminds one of the old-style British public school, replete with 'jolly japes' of *Boys Own Paper* vintage. Half the Australians lost in the Japanese war were those killed or who died of neglect in prison camps.

I won't spoil the pleasure of future readers by outlining the ingenious escape attempts from Colditz or the other camps detailed in this book. The story is well told; in fact the gravest sin I could find in the 222 pages was the use of the expresssion 'No worries' (p.132) which I believe became current only in the 1960s.

I would have liked a map, in addition to the prison-made one on page 139 that showed Colditz in relation to Germany's borders.

The Diggers of Colditz is a worthy addition to the small Australian library that began in 1947 with the now out-of-print *Stalag Scrapbook* by Ian Sabey, and added to last year by Barney Roberts' *A Kind of Cattle* and Ian Ramsay's *A Digger in Hitler's Prison Camps*.

Bruce Muirden

Major new exhibitions at War Memorial

FROM 30 May 1986, two major new exhibitions at the Australian War Memorial opened to the public.

The latest permanent gallery — *Soldiers of the Queen* — traces the development of the military forces of colonial Australia from settlement to Federation. Its displays of relics, art and documents tell the story of Australian participation in conflicts such as the Anglo-Maori wars of the 1860s, the war in the Sudan in 1885 and the Boxer rebellion of 1900.

Items on display include colourful colonial uniforms such as a 'Garibaldi' jacket — the oldest uniform in the Memorial's collection — worn by a captain of the Victorian Cavalry in the 1860s, elaborate headgear including a plumed hat worn by an officer of the 1st Australian Horse in 1898, ship models (including HMCS *Protector*) and period weapons, as well as heraldry and medals such as the Egyptian Khedive's Star awarded for service in the Sudan.

These period pieces provide background to the history of the British regiments which, from 1790 to 1870, guarded the convict settlements, pursued bushrangers, suppressed aboriginal resistance to white settlement and put down rebellions such as those at Castle Hill and Eureka. The Gallery also puts into perspective the development of Australia's own military forces from fledgling volunteer corps to the six small armies which, on Federation, became Australia's army. Also displayed are works by major Australian artists of the time, such as Tom Roberts, Arthur Collingridge, Livingston Hopkins and Percy Spence.

The other exhibition is *Streeton in France 1918* — open for a limited period only. This includes 58 of Arthur Streeton's watercolours and drawings, as well as important new acquisitions and paintings not previously exhibited, from the period when Streeton was an official war artist. Works from this relatively unknown but highly significant stage in the artist's life provide a contrast with Streeton's more familiar gentle Australian landscapes.

Recently returned to Australia from Europe, *Streeton in France 1918* was the Memorial's first international touring exhibition, and formed part of the Australian cultural relations programme jointly organised and financed by the Memorial and the Department of Foreign Affairs. The exhibition opened in Paris and was also shown in Amiens, Compiegne, Ypres and London.

Military Historical Society of Australia

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Military Historical Society of Australia will be held at 7.30 p.m. on Monday, 14 July at the Returned Services League National Headquarters, Constitution Avenue, Campbell, A.C.T. All members are urged to attend.

T. C. Sargent
Secretary

Society Notes

Sudan figurine and book

The opening of the War Memorial's new gallery *Soldiers of the Queen*, noted elsewhere in this issue, is a reminder that the Society's figurine of an infantry private of the New South Wales contingent to the Sudan campaign of 1885 is still available. Nine centimetres high and finely sculptured in pewter, in either bright or antique finish, it is priced at $35 plus $2.50 for packing and postage, from the Treasurer of the MHSA, Neville Foldi, PO Box 30, Garran ACT 2605.

The figurine is illustrated here actual size. The front of the base carries the badge of the NSW Force.

Also still available are copies of the Society's commemorative book, *But little glory: the New South Wales Contingent to the Sudan, 1885*, priced at $5 to members and $7.50 to others, post free. This is also available from the Treasurer.

Duntroon

MHSA member Chris Coulthard-Clark's *Duntroon: The Royal Military College of Australia, 1911-1986* was launched by His Excellency the Governor-General (Sir Ninian Stephen) at a reception held at the RMC on 27 June 1986. Seventy five years before, to the day, the College was opened by the then Governor-General, Lord Dudley.

The book, of 366 pages, illustrated, with ten appendices including a cadet roll, is published by Allen & Unwin Australia at $29.95 in hardcover and will be reviewed in the next issue.

Naval Auxiliary Patrol

In the last (January/March 1986) issue we published a request from Peter Thomas of Darwin for advice of the meaning of 'N.A P' impressed on an Australian Service Medal 1939-45, 'F.B. HALE N.A P'. Barry Videon and Mike Fogarty both provided advice on this. Barry had this to say:

> . . .the letters 'NAP' stand for the Naval Auxiliary Patrol, a type of nautical civil defence or small boat coastguard that was formed in WW2, initially (at least) in Sydney — I don't know if elsewhere. There was a cap badge of a large wreath with nautical crown, in the centre an anchor with the letters NAP beneath. I had one of these with pierced background, backed with black cloth — (another) has one with solid background.
>
> I was not aware they got the ASM, but as they do appear to have done so, I would NOT think they would have qualified for anything else. Mr Hale may have been engaged in the celebrated enemy action on the Harbour?

Obituary

We regret to advise the sudden death of Mr J.W.V. Grainger on Friday, 27 June 1986. Jim Grainger was a long-standing, although not widely known, member of the Victorian Branch. An outline of his career will appear in the next issue.

Galloping Guns

MHSA member Lindsay Cox has published *The Galloping Guns*, the history of the Nordenfeldt Battery and its successor, the Victorian Horse Artillery, raised and financed in the late 1800s by Sir William Clarke of Rupertswood, Victoria and Mr Andrew Chirnside of Werribee Park.

The book has 208 pages hard bound and contains over 400 line drawings, four colour plates and some 60 previously unpublished photographs. It is priced at $30, plus postage of $3.30 and is available from the author at 4 Balmoral Avenue, Pascoe Vale South, 3044.

Society Notes

Subscriptions

The attention of members is drawn to the enclosed notice about 1986-87 subscriptions. Please do not overlook the fact that the annual subscription is now $26.

Members would no doubt agree that the best means of keeping the subscription stable is by a significant increase in membership and are urged to make every effort to recruit new members.

Gallipoli 70 years on

John Price, a former secretary of the Victorian Branch, visited Gallipoli in 1985, on the 70th anniversary of the landing, and in April of this year addressed the members of the Branch on the Dardanelles campaign and his experiences during the visit. He will be making a similar presentation to the Albury/Wodonga Branch on 23 September.

As he will be in Adelaide from 24 to 28 August attending the 1986 History Conference at Adelaide University there is an opportunity for our South Australian Branch members to learn more about this important campaign and the present state of the ground over which it was fought.

Members' wants

Craig Stephenson, 2 School Drive, Banksia Park, 5091 is attempting to regain the service medals awarded to both his maternal and paternal grandfathers:

1020 Pte Charles Logan, Highland Light Infantry—
1914-15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal.

(No. unknown) Sgt Harry Stephenson, Essex Regiment—
India General Service (1895) 3 bars (bars unknown)
Queen's South Africa 2 bars (bars unknown but in India he served at Khyber Pass, Afrida Hills, Lunda Kotal (?).

When Harry Stephenson died, his medals were sold, in the early 30s.

* * * *

Ian Townsley of 24 Parnoolar Crescent, Ferny Hills, Brisbane 4055, Tel. (07) 351 2707, seeks information on the whereabouts of the British War Medal and Victory Medal awarded to 10912 Sapper Andrew Townsley.

* * * *

Rod Wilson of 8 McGrath Street, Caulfield South 3162, Tel. (03) 528 6848, wishes to acquire WWI Turkish items of uniform (tunic, hat, belt, etc.) and equipment (pouches, bayonet, etc.) also a WWI German tunic and Australian battalion colour patches and German colour boards.

Letter to the Editor

The Editor,

Since publication of 'Some other soldiers of the New South Wales Corps, Sabretache' Vol. XXVII No. 1, I have found further reference to Sergeant Charles Whelan of the 102nd and 48th regiments. In 'The Men of the New South Wales Corps: a Comparison?' *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* Vol. 62, Pt. 4, March 1977, R. H. Montague noted:

> There is evidence also that the ex-convicts were among the best men. A relatively high proportion of those who fall into this category achieved non-commissioned rank. Prominent among these was Charles Whalan, who was the sergeant in charge of the Governor's Bodyguard. Whalan was a young apprentice surveyor when he was convicted of poaching trout. He arrived in Sydney in 1791 serving a seven-year sentence, enlisted in the Corps two years later, and within a few years was given grants of land and appointed to the newly formed Governor's Bodyguard. After serving a succession of Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, he became Macquarie's confidential orderly sergeant and a close friend of the vice-regal family (Reference Mitchell Library MSS 6/1 Whalan Family Papers).

M. H. Ellis, in *Lachlan Macquarie, His Life, Adventures and Times*, quoted from the *Governor's Journal* for 12 February 1822, the day Macquarie and his family sailed for England:

> Our good affectionate Sergeant Whalan and his two sons, James and Charley, remained with us on board till the last moment and after I had delivered him his letters we took an affectionate leave of them, all of us being deeply affected and poor Lachlan particularly so, suffering great distress at leaving (most likely for ever) his dear good Sergeant and his favourite young friend, Charley.

In correspondence, Mr Montague has also pointed out that Cpl Thomas Tollis (died 25 June 1821) was the corporal of the Bodyguard.

T. C. Sargent

Correction

MHSA member Frank Thornborough has pointed out that captions to the illustrations of Sydney and Augustus Darling in John Tamplin's article in the January/March 1986 issue (page 19) have been reversed.

We are grateful to Captain Thornborough for his advice and extend apologies to John Tamplin and our readers.

Notes on contributors

Brigadier Walter James (Dick) Urquhart, was the first cadet entered at the Royal Military College, Duntroon in 1911 and was specially graduated for active service in 1914. He served at Gallipoli and in Palestine, Trans Jordan and Syria with the Light Horse and was Brigade Major of the Third Light Horse Brigade of the Anzac Mounted Division in the final actions leading to the capture of Damascus.

Brigadier Urquhart continued to serve in the regular army and in the 1939-45 war held a number of important posts. He retired in November 1946 and died in November 1985.

Arthur Kennedy joined the permanent army in May 1938, enlisting in No. 1 Heavy Brigade, RAA. After the Munich crisis in 1938, he was posted to No. 1 Anti-Aircraft Cadre and in August 1939 was sent to Darwin with No. 2 AA Cadre, serving there for three years, the last six months on active service during the Japanese raids. He was discharged in February 1953, having served nearly fifteen years, most of it with various AA units.

He is currently a committee member of the RAA Historical Society and is engaged in researching the history of anti-aircraft artillery.

Julieanne Richards is in her third year of a BA, majoring in history, at the University of Tasmania. She has previously contributed material to *Sabretache*. Her article in this issue was originally written as a paper for the university's History Department subject 'Imperialism and Revolution since 1774'.

Wendy Fisher has an honours degree in Asian History from Monash University and has a particular interest in Australian involvement with China. As an escort for tours of China with a leading travel agency she has been able to further old friendships there and conduct some research. At present she is concentrating on Australian military personnel in China including members of the Eighth Division and Australians who served with other national units.

Michael Downey has collected and researched campain medals to Australians for over 20 years and is a foundation member of the NSW Military Historical Society. He joined the MHSA in 1974 and has contributed a number of articles to *Sabretache*.

Peter Stanley is well known for his contributions to Australian military historical literature including *Sabretache*, of which he was formerly editor. With Doctor Michael McKernan, he recently published *Anzac Day: 70 years on*, a photographic record of how Anzac Day 1985 was celebrated. His latest work is *A guide to the Australian War Memorial.*

Martin Buckley is a retired teacher, interested in the history of Scottish and cavalry volunteer units of northern NSW. He is author of *The Scottish Rifles in Northern N.S.W.* and is currently preparing a centenary book for 'A' Coy (Scottish) and Pipes and Drums of 17th Battalion RNSWR, lineal descendants of the NSW Scottish Rifles and the 30th Battalion.

Godfrey (Geoff) Waters served as an intelligence officer in the CMF and AIF in the 1939-45 war. First commissioned 'in the field' by Major General Stan Savige in March 1942, he served as IO on Headquarters, 3rd Australian Division in the Salamaua campaign in 1943. His military career brought him postings at every level of the army from a battalion through to GHQ. He now lives in retirement in the old riverboat town of Echuca, in northern Victoria and is the founder and editor of the *Rich River Review*, a monthly magazine of local historical interest.

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

Christopher Fagg has been a medals and research enthusiast for some years. He is a former member of the New Zealand army (1/1RNZIR) and in 1971, after moving to Australia to join the Northern Territory Police, was commissioned into the CMF, serving in NT Command in 121 LAA Bty and as Provost Marshal, at the time the only active CMF PM in Australia. Whilst in Darwin, he was Director of the NT Artillery Association Military Museum. He now lives in Tasmania and is reading for a diploma in history.

THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

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

ORGANISATION

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

SABRETACHE

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

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

ADVERTISING

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

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

Advertising material must reach the Secretary by the following dates:

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

QUERIES

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

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

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

THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

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