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Sabretache



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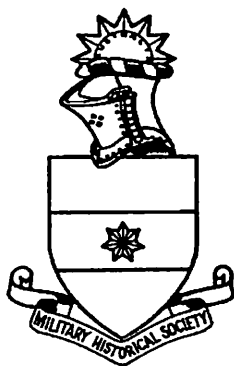
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Contributions in the form of articles, notes, queries or letters are always welcome. Authors of major articles are invited to submit a brief biographical note, and, where possible, submit the text of the article on floppy disk as well as hard copy. See the last page for further guidelines.

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**The Journal and
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(founded 1957)**

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SABRETACHE

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. The annual subscription to the Society is \$30. A membership application is on the back page.

Organisation

The Federal Council of Australia 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 appear below.

MHSA Constitution and Rules

The constitution of the Society adopted 1 August 1993 appears in *Sabretache* January-March 1993. The Society's rules adopted on 14 April 1997 appear in *Sabretache* April-June 1997.

Sabretache

The Federal Council is responsible for the publication of the Society Journal, *Sabretache*, which is mailed to each member of the Society quarterly.

Members' notices

Society members may place, at no cost, one notice of approximately 40 words in the 'Members' notices' section of the Journal each financial year.

Queries

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

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A matter of honour, a matter of order

Paul A Rosenzweig¹

Within the foyer area of the Northern Territory Library in Darwin, inside Australia's newest Parliament House, there is on display a striking group of medals. It is not just the unusual quantity, nor the notable service and significant Top End connection that makes this group particularly noteworthy, but rather the manner in which the medals are displayed. They again raise, to the interested observer, that vexing issue of foreign awards, particularly foreign Orders.

Group Captain Charles Eaton² was a veteran of the Great War (from the British Army to the RFC and then RAF), and on one occasion was shot down, captured and escaped back to England. That service in itself could have been enough to make his life 'notable'. But then, he served with distinction in the RAAF from 1925 until 1946. As a Flight Lieutenant, he led the search party in Central Australia which found the wreck of The Kookaburra—for which he received the Air Force Cross in 1931. As a Squadron Leader, he commanded No. 12 Squadron at the civil aerodrome in Darwin, and he led the RAAF contingent of strike-breakers at the Darwin wharf in 1940.

Widely and popularly known as 'Moth' Eaton, he had been a member of the inspection party in 1938 which had selected the site for a proposed RAAF Base in Darwin, separate from the civil terminal at Parap³, and then came back to Darwin as the first Station Commander (1940-41), for which he was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE). During the war, he commanded 79 Wing at Batchelor in the Northern Territory and 72 Wing out of Merauke in Dutch New Guinea in 1943, and was later Acting Consul-General in Batavia (Jakarta).

In recognition of Eaton's military and consular service in the Netherlands East Indies, in 1946 the Netherlands Government appointed him to the Order of Orange-Nassau. Worn correctly, Eaton's group comprises the OBE, AFC and then his campaign medals from both World Wars, and finally, the Order of Orange-Nassau. This Dutch Order is worn after all other medals simply because it is a foreign Order, despite its high status when conferred upon Dutch officers. Why should the insignia of this order be relegated to this inferior position simply because it was a foreign government which bestowed the honour?

Orders

Within Australia, Orders may now be divided into four categories:

1. Order of Australia: in general, worn foremost above all others.
2. Imperial Orders: relegated to 'second place' after the Order of Australia, but awards since 1989 are considered 'foreign' awards.

¹ Aide to the Administrator of the Northern Territory (1991-97) and, as an Army Reservist, Officer Commanding Defence Force Careers Reference Centre, Darwin. This paper is based upon addresses by the author to the Order of Australia Association (NT) Queen's Birthday Dinner June 1996, and to the Officers Formal Dinner of St John Ambulance Australia (NT), 13 December 1997.

² Group Captain Charles Eaton OBE AFC (1895-1979) served with the British Army (1914-17), Royal Flying Corps, later RAF (1917-19; was shot down, captured and escaped back to England), and RAAF (1925-46).

³ This runway today exists as Ross Smith Avenue.

3. The Order of St John: given recognition in the Australian Honours System, but acknowledged as a 'Private' Order.
4. Foreign Orders: worn after all others, together with all foreign decorations and medals, in order of date of acceptance.

Order of Australia

The Order of Australia is today the prime method for honouring service by Australians.⁴ It is noteworthy in the fact that it outranks its Imperial equivalents by two levels: the insignia of Member of the Order of Australia outranks the insignia of both a Member and Companion (or Commander) of an Imperial Order. A Companion of the Order of Australia is the highest award possible today, and outranks Imperial knighthoods.⁵

Imperial Honours

Imperial Honours include a variety of Orders, previously available to recognise a wide variety of endeavour. Jack Haydon MBE and Jim Bell MBE⁶ were among the last Territorians to receive an Imperial Honour—in the 1983 New Years Honours List. Not only are these Imperial honours no longer conferred, they are now well and truly downgraded, through a false inflation of the grades of the Order of Australia.

The Order of St John

The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem has a long and intriguing history dating back to an 11th century hospice for sick and weary Christian pilgrims visiting the holy places of Palestine. Following the growth of the First Aid movement in the third quarter of the 19th century, in 1882 the Prince of Wales obtained a grant of land from the Sultan of Turkey in order to build a hospital in Jerusalem, in the tradition of the original Knights Hospitaller. The British Order was given a Royal Charter by Queen Victoria in 1888, thereby acquiring legal independent status. Since that date, the Sovereign has been the Sovereign Head of the Order.⁷ There are now autonomous Pories around the world, with St John Councils in 37 nations, and an international membership in excess of 200,000 including adult and cadet members. In addition, the Order's Standard has flown in Jerusalem for over 100 years.

Appointments within the Order of St John are conferred by Her Majesty The Queen as Sovereign of the Order. Directions regarding the insignia are detailed in the Regulations of the Grand Priory, and particularly in Appendix III of those Regulations.⁸ In Australia, these appointments are made on the recommendation of the Governor-General of Australia (who is Prior of the Order in Australia). While he was Prime Minister of Australia, Bob Hawke decreed:

⁴ Established by Letters Patent dated 14 February 1975.

⁵ In the Australian Order of Precedence, the Australian Order outranks its Imperial equivalent by two levels: the insignia of Member of the Order of Australia outranks the insignia of both a Member and Companion (or Commander) of an Imperial Order. A Companion of the Order of Australia outranks Imperial knight-hoods ('The Australian Order of Precedence of Honours and Awards'. *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No. S17, 15 January 1993).

⁶ Also Officer of the Order of St John (OStJ).

⁷ Royal Charter dated 14 May 1888; Statutes of the Grand Priory of the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, Part 2, paragraph 5.

⁸ The St John (Grand Priory) Regulations, 1985.

The Order of St John is a private organisation ... Its awards are not formally part of Australia's official system of honours and awards. However, because of its long history, respected standing in the Australian community and the fact that the Order's Sovereign Head is The Queen, it is listed in the Australian Order of Precedence of Honours and Awards.⁹

So, in Australia, the Order of St John is considered to be a 'Private Order'. Accordingly, in the Australian Order of Precedence, all levels of the Order of St John rank together immediately after the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM). Post-nominals are only used in association with matters directly relating to the Order of St John, the St John Ambulance Brigade, or St John Ambulance Australia. In this way, the Order has been recognised as an established honour but has been given a status midway between Australian and foreign awards.

Foreign Orders

An amazing number of Orders have existed, with exotic titles including Order of the Bearslayer (Latin America), Order of African Redemption (Liberia) and Order of the Two Niles (Sudan). Since the Sudan War in the 1880s, foreign governments have given medals and awards to Australians to recognise their bravery or service. One of the more unusual among these was the Military Order of the Dragon, awarded by China for distinguished service in the Boxer Rebellion in 1900 to members of contingents from the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, but the insignia had to be individually purchased by the person concerned. Particularly during World War 1, a number of foreign honours were conferred, including the Order of the Crown (Belgium), Order of the Nile (Egypt), Legion D'Honneur (France), Order of El Nahda (Hedjaz), Order of St Anne (Russia), and the Order of the White Eagle (Serbia).¹⁰ Generally, up to the time of World War 2, awards such as these were accepted and worn without question, Australians following the British practice of wearing them after all other Commonwealth awards.

Many foreign Orders have also been conferred upon Honorary Consuls and Service officers, as well as politicians. Some notable Australian recipients from recent times include:¹¹

Sir Robert Menzies:

Chief Commander (1st Class) of the Legion of Merit (USA), 1950.

The Honourable Sir Charles Court AK KCMG OBE

Order of the Sacred Treasure, 1st Class (Japan).¹²

Commendatore (Commander) of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic.¹³

Sir Ernest 'Weary' Dunlop AC CMG OBE

Prathamabhorn (Knight Grand Cross) of the Most Noble Order of the Crown of Thailand.¹⁴

⁹ The Honourable R L Hawke, 16 August 1989.

¹⁰ See Williams, R D, *Medals to Australia*. 3rd Edition, Pocket Book Publications, 1990, pp. 73-96; and *Army Honours & Awards*, J B Hayward & Son, London, pp. 554-635.

¹¹ Some provided by Ms Anna Topic, Secretariat, Awards & National Symbols Branch, 5 June 1996.

¹² In recognition of his meritorious services in the furtherance of economic and cultural relations and friendship between Japan and Australia (1983).

¹³ In appreciation of his role in promoting trade between Italy and Australia and for his personal research into the history of the Italian presence in WA, cultural initiatives, and facilitating the integration of Italians in the social fabric of Australia (1991).

¹⁴ For his service towards the development of surgery in Thailand (1993).

General Peter Gratton AC OBE

Bintang Yudha Dharma Utama (Indonesia).¹⁵

The Honourable Bob Hawke AC

Knight Grand Cordon (Special Class) of the Most Exalted Order of the White Elephant (Thailand).¹⁶

The explorer Ernest Giles was probably the first person to receive a foreign honour for services performed within the Northern Territory—he was appointed a Knight of the Crown of Italy in recognition of his service in Central Australia from 1872 to 1876 during which he twice traversed Australia from east to west, named many prominent Centralian features, and published three books on his explorations.¹⁷

Some of the more notable recipients of foreign orders and decorations, with a Northern Territory connection, include:

Harold 'Tiger' Brennan AO

Medal of Freedom (USA), c.1945.¹⁸ Brennan was a gold miner at Tennant Creek from 1935, and served as an engineer during World War 2, rising from the rank of Sapper to Major. He was subsequently a Member of the Northern Territory Legislative Council (1955-72) and a colourful and flamboyant Mayor of Darwin (1972-77), notably at the time of Cyclone Tracy.

Sir Horace Clement Hugh Robertson KBE DSO

Order of Military Merit (South Korea), 1952. Awarded for gallant and distinguished service during operations by the United Nations in Korea. Robertson had previously commanded the 7th Military District (Northern Territory) from March to November 1939, and the new Robertson Barracks in Darwin today honours his memory.

Father Frank Flynn AC

Cross of Honour Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice (Vatican), 1990.¹⁹ This award is a sign of the Pontiff's recognition of distinguished service to the Church and to the Papacy; it was conferred in the name of Pope John Paul II by Bishop Ted Collins MSC DD during a Mass at St John's College Chapel in Darwin on 30 October 1990.²⁰

Sergeant Jim Bowditch DCM

Bronze Star (USA), 1995.²¹ Belatedly awarded for service in Borneo in 1945. Bowditch was a commando in Z-Special Unit of the Services Reconnaissance Department, and

¹⁵ In appreciation of his extensive efforts to promote the bilateral relationship between Indonesia and Australia, especially in the field of military relations (1994).

¹⁶ For lasting contributions to the promotion of close ties of friendship and cooperation between Thailand and Australia (1989).

¹⁷ Carment, D, Maynard, R and A Powell, eds, *Northern Territory Dictionary of Biography*. Volume 1: To 1945. NTU Press, Darwin, 1990, pp. 114-116.

¹⁸ Rosenzweig, P A, *For Service. Awards of the Order of Australia for Service to the Northern Territory, 1975-1995*. Historical Society of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 1995, pp. 41-42.

¹⁹ Allen, D M, *Frank Flynn MSC. A Remarkable Territorian*. Chevalier Press, NSW, 1994; Rosenzweig, P A, *For Service. Awards of the Order of Australia for Service to the Northern Territory, 1975-1995*. Historical Society of the Northern Territory, Darwin, 1995, pp. 143-146.

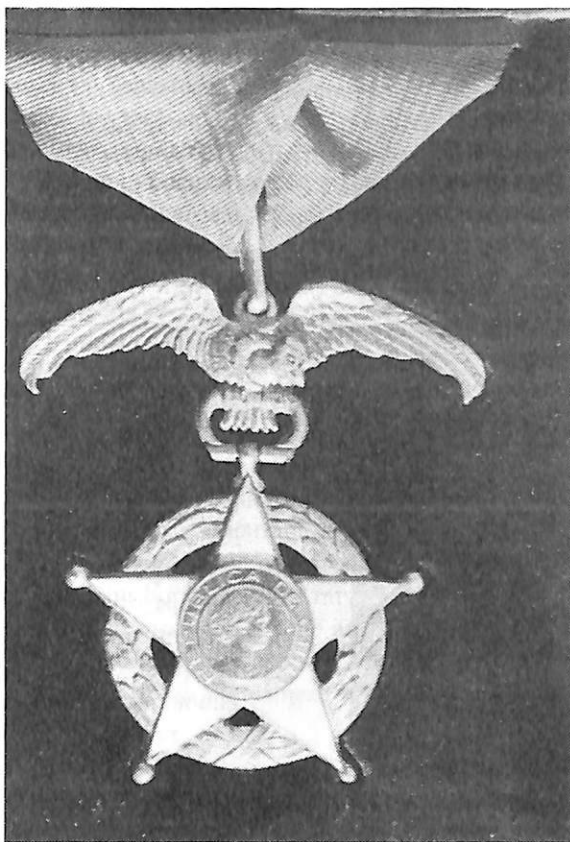
²⁰ This Cross has been awarded four times to Territorians—William Pott, the Choirleader in St Mary's Cathedral in Darwin, was the first recipient, and on 31 August 1996 the Cross was presented to Elizabeth Kelantumama and Beatrice Kerinaiaua from Nguui, Bathurst Island.

²¹ *Northern Territory News*, 23 September 1995, p. 6; 27 September 1995, p. 15.

participated in three covert incursions into Japanese-held Borneo, assisting American commandos in destroying Japanese ammunition dumps. He was Editor of the Northern Territory News for 17 years until his retirement in 1974. He was presented with the medal by the US Defence Attache in Canberra Colonel Stephen Barneyback at Larrakeyah Barracks in Darwin on 26 September 1995.

Wing Commander Bruce Mouatt AM

Distinguished Flying Cross (USA), 1996²²: Belatedly awarded for service in Vietnam in 1971, as a fighter pilot based at Da Nang and Chu Lai. An officer in the RAAF since 1966, Mouatt had commanded the RAAF's first squadron of F/A-18 Hornet aircraft, and was then director of the F/A-18 Project at RAAF Base Tindal in the Northern Territory. He was presented with the medal by the Commander of the US 7th Fleet Admiral Archie Clemins onboard USS Blue Ridge in Darwin Harbour on 1 March 1996.



Commander of the Order of Merit (Al Merito) of the Republic of Chile. Neck insignia of the Order of Merit awarded to Mr Cecil Woods Le Plastrier (1878-1952). This Order was established in 1906 by President Riesco for award to foreigners for service to the Chilean Republic. Le Plastrier was a Senior Partner of Phillips, Ormonde, Le Plastrier & Kelson, a Melbourne firm of Patent Attorneys, and for several years he was Consul for Chile.

From World War 2 until 1989, Australians were required to comply with Imperial regulations regarding foreign awards. There were basically two provisions based on the nature of a person's employment:

For persons in the service of the Crown, it is clearly directed that no person may accept and wear the insignia of an honour or award without Her Majesty's permission.

For those persons not in the service of the Crown, it is the Queen's wish that Her Majesty's subjects should not accept and wear the insignia of any Order or decoration without Her Majesty's permission.²³

A number of awards were made to Australians during or after the Vietnam war, which raised the whole issue of acceptance and wearing. In the past, regulatory provisions regarding awards had been the prerogative of the British Government, but

²² *Sunday Territorian*, 3 March 1996, p. 11.

²³ British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, April 1969.

Britain did not initiate any such regulations during this conflict. And neither did the Australian Government reach any agreement with Britain on the matter.²⁴ In 1974, the issue of foreign awards was discussed in an MHSa publication, in which the author began his introduction with the words, Awards have been a controversial point since athletes at Mount Olympus vied for laurels.²⁵ Barnes went on to report that no-one understood the difficulties relating to awards better than Lieutenant Colonel Ted Serong, who was awarded the DSO for his services as the first Commanding Officer of the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam from July 1962 to December 1964.²⁶ In a chapter on 'Australia in Vietnam' in a book published in 1972, Serong described how local ARVN (Army of the Republic of Viet Nam) commanders had the authority to award field decorations:

It was not uncommon for a team member to be summoned to a ceremonial parade, and there to find himself decorated.²⁷



Brigadier Ted Serong DSO OBE. Foreign honours and medals worn below his official group, including: Legion of Merit (USA); Officer (5th Class) of the National Order of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam); Cross of Gallantry with bronze palm (South Vietnam); and Armed Forces Honour Medal (South Vietnam).

The Australian Government's policy was 'non-acceptance', because we were 'not at war'. The Vietnamese could not understand this policy so insisted on presenting the awards anyway. In an attempt to keep both Saigon and Canberra happy, Serong instituted his own policy whereby an award could be 'received' but not 'accepted'—it could not be worn in uniform and would not appear on a soldier's Record of Service or discharge certificate. Perhaps the best demonstration of the confusion involved was after the famous action in the Long Tan rubber plantation in 1966. The South Vietnamese Government wished to honour the Australians, but the Australian survivors were not allowed to receive Vietnamese decorations for

²⁴ See McNeill, I, *The Team. Australian Army Advisers in Vietnam, 1962-72*. University of Queensland Press, 1984, p. 509.

²⁵ Barnes, I L, *Australian Gallant and Distinguished Service, Vietnam 1962-73*. The Military Historical Society of Australia, 1974, p. 2.

²⁶ See McNeill, I, *The Team. Australian Army Advisers in Vietnam, 1962-72*. University of Queensland Press, 1984.

²⁷ Serong, Brigadier F R, 'Australia in Vietnam'; In Grenville, K, *The Saving of South Vietnam*. Alpha Books, Sydney, 1972, p. 217.

gallantry. Author Lex McAulay noted:

This was embarrassing both to the Vietnamese and to the Australians, and a compromise was reached. The Australians paraded and were presented with dolls in Vietnamese national dress, and also cigarette-cases and lighters.²⁸

Because of the confusion which arose, many Australians received awards without them being referred through Australian authorities, so there is now no record of these awards. Worse, there were undoubtedly many distinguished acts performed without reward because US and ARVN officials no longer bothered to process nominations.

One particular crisis point in this issue, Barnes reported, had occurred following the death in action of Sergeant Kevin Conway at Nam Dong in July 1964. This Special Forces outpost had been abandoned by its defenders following an attack by an NVA battalion, and the post was held against repeated attacks overnight by the small Special Forces team, which included Conway, and a platoon of Nung mercenaries. This was the first such attack on an outpost by an enemy force of this size, and it was the first occasion on which an isolated post had been held against a night assault.²⁹ As Commanding Officer, Serong recognised that 'Conway died in most heroic circumstances', and nominated him for a Victoria Cross, while the local ARVN commander placed on his coffin the insignia of the National Order of the Republic of Vietnam (5th Class) as well as the Cross of Gallantry. In the ensuing debate, Conway was denied the VC because we were 'not at war', and his Vietnamese awards were not officially recognised, so a deserving Australian hero went ignored. This incident, Serong noted, helped destroy the fictitious idea that the Australians were not involved in combat operations, and thereafter a small proportion of Commonwealth awards were permitted for members of the Training Team.

American veteran Colonel David Hackworth has said that professional soldiers use each other's display of ribbons as a visual display of their record of service.³⁰ Many Australians did not serve in conventional Australian units and their bravery was witnessed only by South Vietnamese or American officers. These acts of gallantry were not reported through conventional Australian military channels so they went unrewarded, and the soldier's 'CV' was incomplete. People like Warrant Officer 'Grub' McGrath, for a long time an instructor with NORFORCE in Darwin and a few years ago appointed to the rank of Captain in recognition of his valuable contribution to the Army, came back from several tours of duty in South Vietnam wearing just two medals the same as everybody else. Without a little research, no-one would ever know of the bravery in action which earned him an American Bronze Star for Valour and an individual award of the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry.

Ted Serong himself, suffered the same fate, and today wears his 'official' group of medals headed by his DSO and OBE, but with a further four arranged loosely beneath the group. The grateful South Vietnamese Government appointed Serong an Officer (5th Class) of their highest honour, the National Order of the Republic of Vietnam, which was awarded to just 18 Australians.³¹ He also received the their Cross of Gallantry and Armed Forces Honour Medal,

²⁸ McAulay, L, *The Battle of Long Tan*. Century Hutchinson Australia Pty Ltd, Melbourne, 1986, p. 144.

²⁹ Serong, Brigadier F R, 'Australia in Vietnam'; In Grenville, K, *The Saving of South Vietnam*. Alpha Books, Sydney, 1972, p. 217.

³⁰ Hackworth, Colonel D H, 'Why Medals Matter', *The Bulletin with Newsweek*, 116 no. 6022, 28 May 1996, p. 64.

³¹ Barnes, I L, *Australian Gallant and Distinguished Service, Vietnam 1962-73*. The Military Historical Society of Australia. 1974, p. 84; Williams, R D, *Medals to Australia*. 3rd Edition, Pocket Book Publications, 1990, p. 88.

while the American Legion of Merit presented to Serong was one of just seven awarded to Australians.³²

This policy on receiving foreign awards was changed in 1989.³³ To confer an honour on an Australian, the foreign Government (of a country with which Australia maintains diplomatic relations) must first request to do so, through diplomatic or official channels. The acceptance and wearing is therefore subject to the prior approval of the Governor-General.

Twenty years after the event however, given all that has happened in the lives of some of these veterans, finding the appropriate award certificate or other piece of official documentation is not an easy matter. There is no timeline however, no sunset clause, so application may still be made. The committee established to inquire into defence and defence related awards considered the difficulty with the fact that the foreign government is required to initiate the procedure. The Committee recommended that these provisions of the Guidelines be waived under certain circumstances, for example, when a formerly allied government no longer exists.

It is interesting to note that not all foreign awards are automatically approved. Australian Defence Force personnel involved in the recent Gulf War, for example, were not allowed to receive the Saudi Arabian 'Liberation of Kuwait' Medal.

Ranking

In general, the insignia of Orders are worn before all other awards, excepting the Victoria Cross and George Cross. In the case of the higher classes, which are mostly neck decorations, a foreign order may rarely be worn, especially if the recipient holds an Australian neck decoration (AO or AC). When miniatures are worn however, the insignia of all Orders and medals are worn, in the correct sequence. Current regulations stipulate that foreign awards are worn after all other Australian and Imperial awards.³⁴

British awards are no longer available to Australians, and any awards that are made by the British government since February 1989 are now regarded as foreign awards.³⁵ On 18 January 1989, on the advice of the Prime Minister of Australia, the Queen approved guidelines concerning the acceptance and wearing of foreign honours and awards by Australians.³⁶

Thus, the holder of a foreign nation's highest Order wears the insignia of that honour after our own long service medal or independence medals. Worse still, when there are a number of foreign awards made by different countries, they are worn in order of the date of authorisation of their acceptance. If a visiting Indonesian official saw one of his country's high orders such as *Bintang Jasa* being worn at the end of a row, after long service or shooting medals, he would undoubtedly feel somewhat slighted—a high decoration relegated to the end simply because it

³² Serong was a Brigadier at the time of this award. American policy dictated that awards of the Legion of Merit to ranks below Brigadier were downgraded to the Bronze Star, hence the relatively low number of awards (Barnes, I L, *Australian Gallant and Distinguished Service, Vietnam 1962-73*. The Military Historical Society of Australia, 1974, p. 83; Williams, R D, *Medals to Australia*. 3rd Edition, Pocket Book Publications, 1990, p. 89).

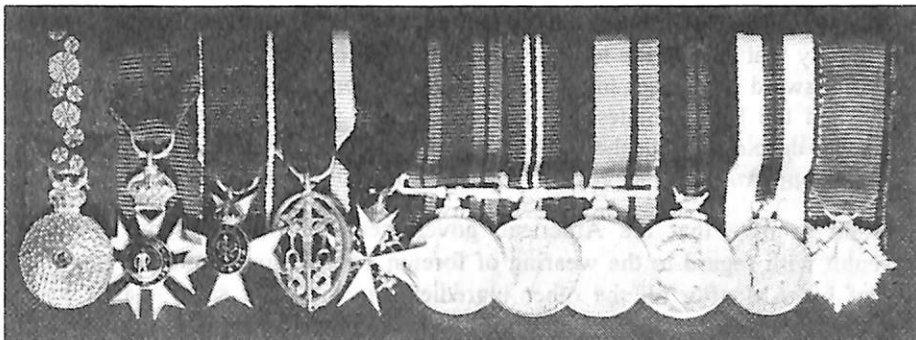
³³ *Guidelines concerning the acceptance and wearing of foreign honours or awards by Australians*. *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No. S48, 8 February 1989.

³⁴ *The Australian Order of Precedence of Honours and Awards*. *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No. S17, 15 January 1993.

³⁵ *A Matter of Honour*. The Report of the Review of Australian Honours and Awards. AGPS, Canberra, 1995, p.25; Appendix 9.

³⁶ 'Guidelines concerning the acceptance and wearing of foreign honours or awards by Australians'. *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No. S48, 8 February 1989. See also *A Matter of Honour. The Report of the Review of Australian Honours and Awards*. AGPS, Canberra, 1995, Appendix 10.

came from a foreign government. Why should this lower the status of the Order, or denigrate the service of the recipient?



The miniature medals of Sir Zelman Cowen, former Governor-General of Australia (1977-82), including: Knight of the Order of Australia (AK), 1977; Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St Michael & St George (GCMG), 1977; Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order (GCVO), 1980; Knight Bachelor, 1976; Knight of Grace of the Order of St John (KStJ), 1977; and Knight Grand Cross of the Order of Merit (Republic of Italy), 1990

Another way to express this is to consider honorary appointments in the Order of Australia made to foreign dignitaries and Service commanders. The Constitution of the Order of Australia made provision for Honorary Appointments to the Order to be made to distinguished persons who are not Australian citizens³⁷ (just as the Order of St John has provision for Associate appointments to be made to non-Christians). To June 1996, 111 such appointments have been made:³⁸

AC	AO	AM	OAM	Total
23	37	19	32	111

Some recipients of these honorary appointments have been Mother Teresa (AC, 1982) for service to humanity at large, Clive Lloyd (AO, 1985), for service to the sport of cricket, and the Burmese Opposition Leader Suu Kyi, who was appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia in recognition of her leadership and great personal struggle to bring democracy to Burma.³⁹

Surprisingly perhaps, there has so far only been one honorary appointment in the Military Division of the Order of Australia. On 25 February 1994, Admiral David E Jeremiah, Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff—the second highest ranking US military officer—was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in the Military Division. Senator Robert Ray described the Admiral as a pre-eminent naval commander and statesman. Commissioned in the US Navy in 1956, he commanded Task Force 60 and directed the capture of the Egyptian airliner carrying the hijackers of the Achille Lauro, and he directed freedom of navigation actions in the Gulf of Sidra in which two Libyan warships were sunk. He served as Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet, and was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in March 1990. His American awards include Distinguished Service Medal (four awards), Legion of Merit (twice), Meritorious Service Medal (twice) and Achievement Medal with 'V' for Valour. He was awarded the Presidential Citizens Medal by George Bush for his significant

³⁷ *Consolidated Constitution of the Order of Australia*, as at 1 February 1989, paragraphs 11(2) and 20(2).

³⁸ Ms Amanda O'Rourke, Director, Honours Secretariat, Government House Canberra, pers comm, 30 May 1996.

³⁹ *The Australian*, 24 May 1996.

contributions during the Persian Gulf crisis and the liberation of Kuwait. In his citation for the Order of Australia, Senator Ray said:

Admiral Jeremiah has contributed greatly to the fundamental values of peace, freedom and human dignity that sustain the longstanding friendship between Australia and the United States. This award recognises his involvement in the promotion of closer links between Australia and the United States of America, and the special relationship that Admiral Jeremiah has developed with the Australian Defence Force. It is a mark of the esteem in which he is held.⁴⁰

It is important to note that the American government follows the same protocol as the Commonwealth with regard to the wearing of foreign awards, so Admiral Jeremiah will wear the ribbon of his AM after all the other ingredients in his 'fruit salad'—after his National Defence Medal for being 'on duty', and after his other campaign medals and the several other foreign awards he holds.

Summary

Whenever a Dutch Ambassador or other official from the Netherlands visits the Top End, it must surely be embarrassing for them to see one of the Netherlands' highest Orders displayed at the end of Charles Eaton's group of medals. Similarly, if Admiral Jeremiah were to visit Australia in uniform, many would undoubtedly be embarrassed to see our (only) national honour 'tacked on' at the end, after all other service and 'attendance' awards.

What this means, in summary, is that service deemed to be especially meritorious should be properly recognised as such. The fact that it has been recognised by a foreign government does not make the service any less distinguished. We can be thankful that, in those heady days approaching the republican debate, the Order of St John was not itself seen as a foreign Order, with a 'foreigner' as the Sovereign of the Order, and relegated to last place after service medals.

It is suggested that the three types of awards should be considered as separate and discreet entities—Orders, decorations and service medals. Within each of these categories, insignia could be worn according to established protocols, but with a new proviso: foreign awards are given a status after their Australian equivalents, in the same way that the status of the Order of St John is today recognised. Foreign orders (all grades) should rank immediately after the Order of St John in the Order of Precedence. In Charles Eaton's example, the insignia of the Order of Orange-Nassau would be worn immediately after his OBE and AFC, but before his war service medals.

In this day of increased international co-operation, recognition of service should be based purely on merit. A high honour should be worn in an appropriate way to recognise that merit, irrespective of the nation which bestows it. An honour is an honour, no matter which government chooses to award the medal. The worth of an honour should be based upon the merit of its citation, and not just the nationality of the person who wrote that citation.

⁴⁰ See *Sabretache*, XXXV (1), January/March 1994.

Trench mortars in the AIF, 1916-1918

Neville Foldi

The Great War saw the refinement of many old weapons and the employment of trench mortars is an illustration of that process. Despite advances in armaments over the last eighty years the mortar has remained a simple and effective weapon.

Background

By the end of 1914 the initial war of movement in France and Flanders had become static trench fighting and frontline soldiers on both sides were asking for a light gun which could deliver a bomb into enemy trenches.

The German army was first with a small mortar consisting of a steel tube on a light metal frame. This was the original *Minenwerfer*.¹ Technocrats soon took over and developed this handy gun into a more complicated device, better described as a small howitzer.²

On the British side the first response is said to have been the use of the 'Cohorn' mortar. This brass gun is reputed to have helped in the defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1746!³ During 1915 various strange devices were submitted by would be inventors, most of which defy description and were certainly not practical for battlefield use.

Meanwhile, on Gallipoli, Australians were using a small number of two types of mortar. The first, known as the 'Garland', fired a jam tin bomb from a steel tube by the explosion of a bag of black powder.⁴ The other was obtained from Japan, having been used in the 1905 war against Russia and was the more sophisticated of the two.⁵ Later that year Sergeant P F Ryan (later Captain) of 6th Light Horse was commanding a 'Catapult Battery' of six large wooden cross-bows throwing small bombs by rubber slings.⁶

Another of the 1915 inventions that progressed to operational use was the 'West Spring Gun'.⁷ This was a steel arm holding at its outer end a grenade or bomb which was thrown by a bank of springs. It brings to mind the ancient Roman *Ballista*. With a range of about 220m this weapon was quite large and would have required a very big pit in the front line. It was probably replaced during the winter of 1915-1916 by the rifle grenade.

By the end of 1915 the British authorities had settled on a range of mortars designated heavy, medium and light. These were then adopted by the AIF.

¹ *The Guns 1914-18*, Ian V Hogg, Pan/Ballantine, London, 1971, p. 72.

² *Ibid*, p73; *The Big Guns-Artillery 1914-1918*, BPC Publishing, London, 1973, pp. 37 and 47.

³ *The Big Guns*, *Ibid*, p. 37.

⁴ An example is displayed at the Australian War Memorial Canberra (AWM) and another is held by the Royal Australian Infantry Corps (RAIC) Museum, Singleton, NSW. A photograph is in the *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-18* (Official History), Vol II, p. 50 (AWM C2686).

⁵ An example is displayed at the AWM.

⁶ *Grenades and Their Uses*, Lt-Col R Law, issued by instruction of the Chief of the General Staff Australia, undated, pp. 63-64 and Plate XXI. An example is held at the RAIC Museum.

⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 64-65 and Plate XXII. An example is displayed at the RAIC Museum.

Equipment

The heavy mortar had a bore of 9.45 inches (240mm) and fired a 152 pound (69kg) projectile.⁸ For reasons not too difficult to guess this bomb was soon known as the 'Flying Pig'. The Pig produced a crater 8m wide and 3.5m deep at a maximum range of about 1050m. The overall arrangement was a trough shaped frame which pivoted on a steel base which was mounted on a platform of wooden beams. The barrel was clamped to the frame, which also had mechanisms for aiming.

The initial medium mortar had a bore of 2 inches (50mm) and fired a spherical bomb of cast iron weighing some 60 pounds (27kg). A wooden shaft was fitted to the bomb before firing and this, rather than the bomb itself, fitted down the barrel. The bomb was soon called a 'Plum Pudding'.⁹

An improved type of medium mortar, known as the 'Newton', was introduced late in 1917. It had a bore of 6 inches (150mm) and fired a bomb of 47 pounds (21Kg) to a maximum range of about 1300m.¹⁰ It was essentially a steel barrel fitted into a cast steel base which was then mounted on a heavy wooden platform. Three guy ropes and turnbuckles supported the barrel and were used for elevation and traverse. A more sophisticated system came later.

But the ultimate trench mortar became available by late 1915. Mr (later Sir) Wilfred Stokes submitted a design for a smooth bore muzzle loading gun of 3 inches (75mm) calibre and weighing just 36 pounds (14kg). The barrel fitted into a metal base and was held at the desired elevation by a light bipod. Further development strengthened the bipod and added optical sights, although these increased the weight to 40 pounds (166.5kg). A later bizarre configuration was fitted with a special sight for use in an anti-aircraft role.¹¹

Formation of batteries

Trench Mortar Batteries were formed in the AIF during the first half of 1916. Each of the five Divisions was allocated:

- one Battery of four heavy mortars, designated V (Division number) A;
- three Batteries each of four medium mortars, designated X, Y or Z (Division number) A; and
- three Batteries of light (Stokes) mortars, designated by the number of the Brigade to which they were allotted.

Heavy and Medium Batteries were Artillery units generally manned by transfers from other Divisional Artillery units. Light Batteries were Infantry, in the main served by transfers from the Brigade to which they were attached.¹² There were some reinforcements for Medium and Light Batteries sent from Australia.

⁸ *Guns of the Regiment*, S N Gower, AWM, 1981, pp. 52 and 182. A photograph is in the Official History Vol XII, No 217 (AWM EZ149).

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 59. A 'Plum Pudding' is displayed at the AWM.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 59. A well restored example, together with a bomb, is displayed at the RAIC Museum and another at the Royal Australian Artillery Museum at Manly, NSW. Also, see the Official History Vol VI, pp. 37 and 289 (photograph AWM E2429).

¹¹ *The Guns 1914-18*, *ibid*, pp. 75-76 and the Official History Vol XII, No. 505 (AWM E 2627).

¹² *The Story of the Fifth Australian Division*, A D Ellis, Hodder and Stoughton, 1920, pp. 72-73 and the Official History Vol III, p. 90.

During the Northern winter of 1917-1918 Heavy and Medium Batteries were reorganised and reallocated. Heavy mortars were concentrated into a Corps Battery of six guns as part of the Corps Heavy Artillery. Medium Batteries were reduced to two per Division, each of six mortars. These Batteries were numbered 1 to 10.¹³

Battery establishments

Pending location of official establishments for the three types of Batteries I have made the following assumptions, based on photographs in the Official History and other sources:

- a heavy mortar team was probably five soldiers so that, allowing for a command and administrative component, a Battery of four teams could have comprised about twenty five all ranks and the later Corps Battery of six guns about thirty five;
- a 2 inch Medium Battery in 1916 is reported to have had a strength of three officers and twenty three other ranks;¹⁴
- in late 1917 a 'Newton' Battery, each of six mortars, may have comprised about thirty five all ranks; and
- a Light Battery is reported to have had four officers and forty six other ranks.¹⁵

Employment

There is little doubt that each type of mortar was effective and the men who served them were among the finest of the AIF, but there were some initial problems. A history of the Fifth Division records the first action of 15 Light Battery. To preserve secrecy mortar teams were instructed to fire ten bombs from the frontline and to then return to the support line with all possible haste. Those who had to remain in the frontline endured the enemy retaliation. When the mortar teams next appeared they were dubbed 'the shoot and scatter mob', 'the imshi artillery' and 'the crab drawers'.¹⁶ These opinions were soon revised and the value of the Stokes gun recognised.

On the other hand, because of their relative lack of mobility, Heavy and Medium teams probably had to bear the brunt of enemy responses to their activities.

In 1918 soldiers on both sides left their trenches. First the Germans in their March attacks and then the riposte by the Allies. Static warfare gave way to the tactics of fire and movement. Such operations probably meant a reduced role for Heavy and Medium Batteries but the Stokes Gun would have been most effective, because of its low weight and mobility.

Conclusion

The full story of the bravery and dedication of those who served in trench mortar teams is yet to be told.

Finally I would like to record my thanks to both the Royal Australian Infantry Corps Museum and the Royal Australian Artillery Museum for their assistance.

¹³ *The Story of the Fifth Australian Division*, *ibid*, p. 73 and the Official History p. 37n.

¹⁴ *The Story of the Fifth Australian Division*, *ibid*, p. 73.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 73.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 80.

The death of Manfred von Richthofen: Who fired the fatal shot?

Dr M Geoffrey Miller

It is now eighty years since Baron Manfred von Richthofen, Germany's greatest First World War fighter pilot, was shot down and killed over the Australian lines in the Western Front in France on 21 April 1918.

Captain Brown, a Canadian pilot in the Royal Flying Corps, flying a Sopwith Camel single seat fighter, was known to have attacked von Richthofen and he was officially credited with shooting him down, eventually receiving a bar to his DSC for the feat. Brown's claim to have shot down von Richthofen was immediately contested by the Australians because von Richthofen had flown at a very low height directly over their lines and had been fired on by Australian anti-aircraft machine gunners, as well as by many Australian soldiers.

The controversy as to who was responsible for shooting down von Richthofen has continued over the years. C E W Bean, the author of the Official History of Australia in the War of 1914 to 1918, carried out considerable research into the death and devoted an Appendix, in Volume V of the Official History, published in 1935, to describe the circumstances in detail.¹ Bean was of the opinion that Sergeant Popkin, an Australian Vickers machine gunner, was responsible for shooting down von Richthofen and that Captain Brown had not fired the fatal shot.

There have been many books and articles published since then on the subject of who was responsible for shooting down von Richthofen. Most authors agree that it was an Australian, but disagree as to his identity, however Markham,² as late as 1993, did not consider that any Australian was responsible and wrote an article re-attributing the death of von Richthofen to Captain Brown.

This present paper will refer in particular to two books. Dale Titler³ published a book agreeing that Australian machine gunners were responsible but considered that Gunner Robert Buie, firing a Lewis gun, shot down the German triplane. Carisella and Ryan⁴ disagreed with Titler, and supported Bean's opinion that it was Sergeant Popkin who was responsible.

Although the various authors have drawn different conclusions about who was responsible for Richthofen's death, it is apparent that all previous accounts of the postmortem examinations made on Manfred von Richthofen have been taken from Bean's account in Volume V of his Official History. It must be emphasised that Bean did not quote the reports in their entirety but left out some of the original text of the reports. The original complete reports are in the Richthofen section of the Bean Papers (the Bean Papers) held in the research section of the Australian War Memorial (AWM) in Canberra⁵ and a consideration of these throws important

¹ C E W Bean, *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914 - 1918*, Angus & Robertson, Vol. V. 1935, Appendix No. 4, 'The death of Richthofen'.

² Philip Markham, 'The Events of 21 April, 1918', *Over the Front*; Vol. 8, Number 2, 1993, pp. 123 - 137.

³ Dale M. Titler, *The Day the Red Baron Died*, Ian Allan, London, 1973.

⁴ P J Carisella and James W Ryan, *Who Killed the Red Baron*, Paperback Edition, Avon Books, New York, 1979; originally published by Daedalus Publishing Company, 1969.

⁵ Australian War Memorial Archives; AWM 38 30RL, 606 Item 270 (1). Richthofen Papers.

new light on the controversy. There is also an unpublished letter from Popkin to Bean in the papers, clarifying an original newspaper report about Popkin that has been used by Titler and Carisella and Ryan in their books and by Markham in his article.

Using these primary sources in the Australian War Memorial, wherever possible, a critical analysis of the post mortem examination and a reconstruction of the probable events of 21 April 1918 has been made.

The post mortem examination

The details of the postmortem examinations of von Richthofen's body are more than a little confused. Referring to the contradictory medical examinations made on the body of von Richthofen, Newton,⁶ in 1986, wrote:

The different conclusions reached in the two medical reports were to start a controversy which, to date, has never been unquestionably resolved. Who fired the fatal shot? Did it come from the air or the ground?

However a careful assessment of the documents in the Bean Papers seems to clarify the confusion. It is accepted that Manfred von Richthofen was flying an all red Fokker triplane when he crashed in the Somme Valley near Corbie on the 21 April 1918. His body was taken to a hangar belonging to the No. 3 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps at Poulainville, where an examination of the body was held. The body was washed by an orderly and the first superficial postmortem examination was made by a panel of doctors. According to Bean,⁷ the panel consisted of Colonel T Sinclair, consulting surgeon to the Fourth army, Captain G C Graham, RAMC and Lieutenant G E Downs, RAMC, attached to the Air Force. Newton, however, refers to the presence also of Colonel J A Dixon, consulting physician to the British Fourth Army.

Colonel Sinclair's report is in the Richthofen file of the Bean papers at the AWM and is as follows:

Copy extract from A.H.File No. 21/13/506

In the Field 22nd April 1918

We have made a surface examination of Captain Baron von Richthofen and find that there are only the entrance and exit wounds of one rifle bullet on the trunk. The entrance wound is on the right side about the level of the ninth-rib, which is fractured, just in front of the posterior axillary line. The bullet appears to have passed obliquely backwards through the chest striking the spinal column, from which it glanced in a forward direction and issued on the left side of the chest, at a level about two inches higher than its entrance on the right and about in the anterior axillary line.

There was also a compound fracture of the lower jaw on the left side, apparently not caused by a missile - and also some minor bruises of the head and face.

The body was not opened—these facts were ascertained by probing from the surface wounds.

(Sgd) Thomas Sinclair, Colonel AMS, Consulting surgeon IV Army, BEF

⁶ Dennis Newton, 'The Spectre of the Red Baron, Part 2', *Journal of the Australian War Memorial*; No. 9, 1986, p. 47.
⁷ Bean, *ibid*: p. 699.

According to Sinclair, therefore, assuming that von Richthofen was sitting straight in his cockpit and the aeroplane was in level flight, the bullet must have struck him from the right side, was fired from an angle that was slightly in front of the body and was fired from below.

Captain Graham and Lieutenant Downs submitted a separate report on von Richthofen's death, a copy of this was also in the Bean papers at the AWM:

Copy extract from AH File No. 21/13/506

We examined the body of Captain Baron von Richthofen on the evening of the 21st instant. We found that he had one entrance and one exit wound caused by the same bullet.

The entrance wound was situated on the right side of the chest in the posterior folf (sic) of the armpit; the exit wound was situated at a slightly higher level near the front of the chest, the point of exit being about half inch below the right (sic) nipple and about three-quarter of an inch external to it. From the nature of the exit wound we think that the bullet passed straight through the chest from right to left, and also slightly forward. Had the bullet been deflected from the spine the exit wound would have been much larger.

The gun firing this bullet must have been situated in the same plane as the long axis of the German machine and fired from the right and slightly behind the right of Captain von Richthofen.

We are agreed that the situation of the entrance and exit wounds are such that they could have not have been caused by fire from the ground.

Sgd G. C. Graham, Capt. RAMC, MO i/c 22nd Wing RAF.

Sngd G. E. Downs, Lieut. RAMC, In the Field, 22/4/18

Graham and Downs referred to the exit wound being on the right side; Bean made a note that this is likely to be in error. If the exit wound was on the right side, it is unlikely that such a wound would have been mortal and it is generally accepted that Graham and Downs had made a mistake.

However there still remains the last paragraph of their report attributing the fatal bullet to a shot from the air, not the ground. If, as they considered, the bullet had not been deflected by the vertebral column, then the track of the bullet must have been laterally from below and behind the midline. However the only way that their statement that: 'The gun firing this bullet must have been situated in the same plane as the long axis of the German machine' could be correct would be if von Richthofen had been twisting his trunk almost 90 degrees to the right and looking sideways or backwards when he was struck.

According to Newton, a Medical Board consisting of Colonel Barber, Major C L Chapman, Australian Medical Corps, Major D Blake and Captain E G Knox of No 3 Squadron, AFC, examined the body a second time. This must be the inquiry under the presidency of the Director-General of the Australian Army and Air Force Medical Services (Colonel Barber) referred to by Titler but Titler's account is at variance with that of Newton when he stated that Colonel Nixon, Colonel Sinclair and Major C L Chapman were the medical officers present.

There is no record of any report made by this Medical Board in the Bean Papers. However, in 1935, Colonel Barber wrote to Bean and this letter is now quoted in its entirety, apparently for the first time. The underlining is original:

Oct 23 1935

My dear Bean,

With reference to your letter of October 14th. asking for information.

I was inspecting this Air Force Unit and found the medical orderly washing Richthofen's body so I made an examination. There were only two bullet wounds, one of entry, one of exit of a bullet that had evidently passed through the chest and the heart. There was no wound of the head but there was considerable bruising over the right jaw which may have been fractured. The orderly told me that the consulting surgeon of the Army had made a post-mortem in the morning and I asked how he did it as there was no evidence. The orderly told me that the cons. surgeon used a bit of fencing wire which he had pushed along the track of the wound through over the heart. I used the same bit of wire for the same purpose so you see the medical examination was not a thorough one and not a post mortem exam in the ordinary sense of the term. The bullet hole in the side of the plane coincided with the wound through the chest and I am sure he was shot from below while banking.

I sent a full report to General Birdwood at Australian Corps and I have often wondered what became of it.

With kind regards,

Yrs sincerely

George W Barber

Colonel Barber enclosed a diagram of the bullet wounds on the body with his letter. In this he clearly showed the entrance wound in the left posterior axillary line at about the level of the ninth rib, and drew a cross over the right chest, internal to the nipple on the AP view. Under the diagram he wrote:

Richthofen approximate sites of exit and entry of bullet. I forget now which was which but think the site of entry was the one in the back. G. W. B.

This diagram, however, is at slight variance with the other medical reports, quoted above, as both agree that the exit wound is external to the nipple.

Barber's letter clarifies the probe used by Sinclair; a surgical probe is a rigid piece of metal with a smooth rounded bulbous tip that is designed to avoid making false passages in the tissues. A 'piece of fence wire' is flexible and has a cut end, this would certainly not have been rounded and would have been prone to catch in the tissues, particularly the light air filled tissues of the lung. Barber's letter, therefore, casts profound doubt on the accuracy of Sinclair's report. It would have been possible to have used such a probe to examine the exit wound and determine that the bullet track involved the heart, but it would have been quite impossible to determine the track of the bullet to the vertebral column by using such a probe from the entrance wound.

Other difficulties in Sinclair's report that the bullet was deflected by the vertebral column have been carefully addressed by O'Dwyer in 1969.⁸ O'Dwyer sought medical opinions on the extreme difficulty in probing lung tissue. The elastic lungs would collapse as soon as air enters the pleural cavity (the space between the lungs and the chest wall), and it would be impossible for a probe to detect any perforation of the lungs made by a bullet.

From a consideration of the above, one is drawn to the conclusion that the fatal bullet must have passed directly through the chest from its entry wound at the posterior axillary line (the back of

⁸ William J O'Dwyer, 'Post-Mortem: Richthofen', *Cross & Cockade Journal*; Vol 10, No. 4, Winter 1969, p. 289.

the armpit) at the level of the 9th rib (that is at about five inches below the lower level of the outstretched arm). As there is no real evidence that the bullet hit the vertebrae the most probable trajectory of the bullet would have to be along a line joining the entrance and exit wounds. Such a line indicates that the bullet was fired from the side, behind and below the pilot's body, notwithstanding his position in the cockpit.

As the exit wound was about three-quarters of an inch external to the left nipple this means that the bullet would have passed through the heart and would have been rapidly fatal. Von Richthofen would have lost consciousness within 20 to 30 seconds, and certainly could have not continued to fly his aeroplane and fire on Lt May for over a minute.⁹

It is possible to correlate the medical evidence with that of the eye witnesses of the last flight. Fortunately, as the events took place at low altitude, directly over the Australian lines, the chase and crash were witnessed by many eye witnesses.

Eye witness reports of 21 April 1918

Bean's quoted reports are taken from official documents available in the Bean Papers or are from correspondence with the protagonists. Titler accepted many of Bean's quotations but also corresponded directly with Gunner Buie and Carisella and Ryan also corresponded directly with many of their witnesses.

There are several unpublished, or only partly published documents, in the Bean Papers, these have either been omitted or only partly quoted in Volume V of the Official History, and the originals of these documents cast new light of the events of that day. From the Bean Papers, and the Carisella accounts, it is now possible to advance the following description of what actually happened.

There is no doubt that von Richthofen followed a Sopwith Camel, flown by a relatively novice Canadian pilot, Lt Wilfred May, down from a dogfight that occurred when two British photographic reconnaissance R.E. 8 aircraft were attacked by von Richthofen's Jasta west of Hamel. Carisella and Ryan describe the attack in detail quoting from a letter to the authors from Lieutenant Banks,¹⁰ the observer and gunner aboard the second R. E. 8. The presence of the German triplanes was seen by a formation of eight Sopwith Camels, led by Captain A Roy Brown, DSC, a Canadian flying with the newly formed Royal Air Force.

Lieutenant May, who had been told by Brown that he should observe any action, but should run for home if attacked, was seen by von Richthofen and pursued. According to his instructions May dived away and flew low over the Australian lines, flying down the valley of the Somme, closely pursued by Richthofen. Captain Brown saw the chase and dived from behind on von Richthofen's triplane at about 11 AM.

Brown's combat report, written after his return to Bertangles airfield, is partly quoted in Bean but fully quoted in Carisella and Ryan.¹¹ According to them, Brown wrote:

⁹ It is worth mentioning that, even though there is no evidence that the bullet was deflected by the vertebral column as stated by Dr Sinclair, if that event had happened the bullet would still have passed through the heart or great vessels and consciousness would still have been lost in 20 to 30 seconds. The difference between the opinions on the bullet's track relates to the angle that the bullet made to the axis of the body, rather than the severity of the wound.

¹⁰ Carisella & Ryan, *ibid*; p. 77.

¹¹ Carisella & Ryan, *ibid*. pp. 122 and 123.

At 10:35 A. M. I observed two Albatross burst into flames and crash. Dived on large formation of fifteen to twenty Albatross scouts D V's and Fokker triplanes, two of which got on my tail and I came out. Went back again and dived on pure red triplane which was firing on Lt May. I got a long burst into him and he went down vertical and was observed to crash by Lieutenant Mellersh and Lieutenant May. I fired on two more but did not get them.

Carisella refers to a five part article entitled 'My Fight with Richthofen' which was published in the late 1920s and attributed to Brown. Brown was quoted as having said:

I was in a perfect position above and behind. ... neither plane, (Richthofen or May) was aware of me ... I had dived until the red snout of my Camel pointed fair at his tail. My thumbs pressed the triggers. Bullets ripped into his elevator and tail planes. The flaming tracers showed me where they hit. A little short! Gently I pulled back on the stick. The nose of the Camel rose ever so slightly. Easy now, easy. The stream of bullets tore along the body of the all-red tripe. Its occupant fumed and looked back. I had a flash of his eyes behind the goggles. Then he crumpled—sagged in the cockpit ... Richthofen was dead. The triplane staggered, wobbled, stalled, flung over on its nose and went down. The reserve trenches of the Australian infantry was (sic) not more than 200 feet below. It was a quick descent. May saw it. I saw it as I swung over. And Mellersh saw it.

Carisella and Ryan are disparaging about this article and stated that Brown was not the author. In fact they stated that it was: 'Dramatic copy but obviously so much humbug. Brown was not a professional writer; the above report is written in the colourful slick manner of the hackwriter of the period.'

There is a reference in the Bean Papers to this article. Bean wrote to Brown in Canada on 14 October 1935 drawing attention to Richthofen flying for a considerable distance and still firing at May, 'according to an article in a newspaper, the Chicago *Sunday Tribune* of 22 April 1928.'

Brown replied in a letter of 7 November 1935 that he had never read the account and wrote: 'It is impossible for me to state how accurate the article had been' and referred Bean to the Official History of the RAF.

Although Bean had researched, and corresponded, widely in preparing his appendix on Richthofen, there is very little supportive evidence for Brown's report in the Bean Papers. Indeed there is only one witness who suggests that Captain Brown shot down the red Fokker triplane, and even this is an indirect statement. Second Lieutenant Mellor, RFC was quoted in the Melbourne *Herald* newspaper of 26 February 1930 and the clipping is in the Bean papers:

Captain Brown seeing May's predicament, followed the red Fokker and closing up to a range of about 100 yards, fired a long burst from both guns. I could see his tracer hitting the cockpit of the Fokker. The German machine zoomed, banked steeply and obviously crippled glided down to land between the Allied and German lines. He landed under control so the machine was not damaged.... The Australian Lewis gunners certainly hit the machine but their bullets hit about two inches behind the pilot's seat.

The only reference to 2nd Lt Mellor in the voluminous literature on the death of von Richthofen is a footnote to Bean's Official History.¹² Bean wrote:

A Lieutenant Mellor wrote to the Melbourne Herald on 26th. February 1930, giving as an officer of No. 200 Squadron a similar account. Efforts to confirm his account by reference

¹² Bean, *ibid*; p. 694.

to the Squadron's records in London have, however proved fruitless despite a search kindly made by the authorities there.

Lieutenant Mellersh, who was flying with Brown, was a witness to the crash of the triplane but he did not see Brown engage the Fokker. His account, printed in *Titler*, describes Mellersh as having engine problems and:

I was forced to spindive to the ground and return to our lines at about 50 feet. Whilst so returning a bright red triplane crashed quite close to me and in looking up I saw Captain Brown's machine.

Despite Brown's statement that the triplane crashed after he had fired on it, von Richthofen did continue to follow May down the Somme valley at a low altitude. He appeared to be completely absorbed in his chase and, as he came within range, he came under fire from Australian anti-aircraft machine guns. In particular there was a Vickers heavy machine gun, under the command of Sergeant Cedric Popkin, which was situated about 1000 yards west of the village of Vaux on the northern bank of the Somme River, and the 53rd and 54th Batteries of Lewis guns, on anti-aircraft pole mountings, on the eastern slope of a shallow hill about 1000 yards east of Bonnay.

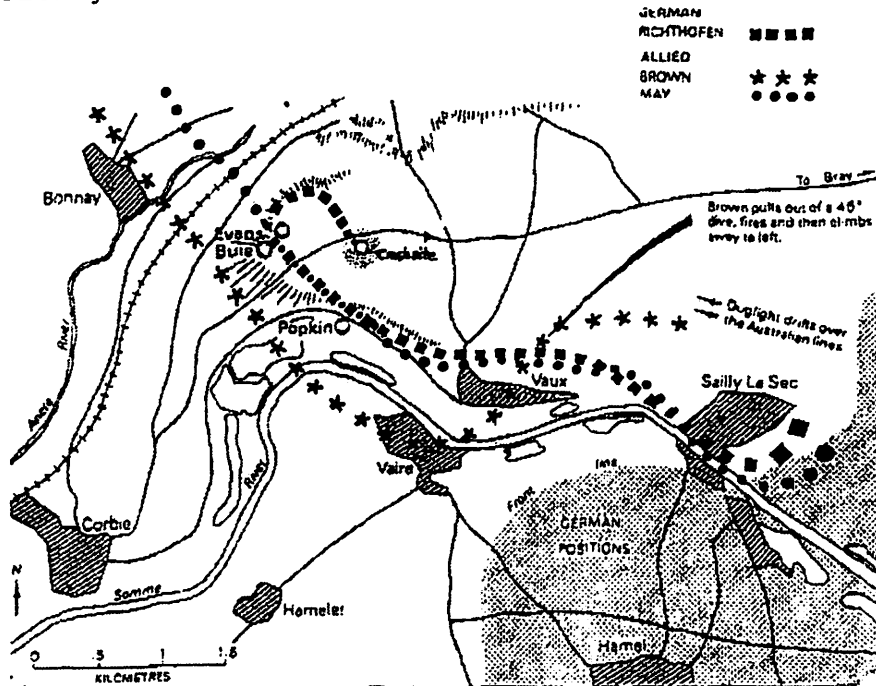


Diagram of flight paths and gun positions of Buie, Evans and Popkin. (From the Journal of the Australian War memorial, used with permission.)

As he came to the hill, Lieutenant May, hugging the ground contours, rose to clear the rise and flew on in a straight line after passing it. The red triplane, still following May, also rose to clear the hill but then came under Lewis gun fire from the 53rd and 54th Batteries. It then performed an Immelman turn to return back to the German lines. This aspect of the fight was observed by Gunner George Ridgway, from Lang Lang in Victoria, who was on top of the Heilly brick stack near the Bray-Corbie road and who had an excellent view. Part of Ridgway's statement is in

Bean,¹³ the full statement, taken by the Lang Lang correspondent of the Melbourne Herald, after being rejected by his newspaper editor, was sent to Bean. It is available in the Bean Papers. The full text is as follows:

He states that he was about 200 feet from the ground. The first plane passed to the right and rapidly began to climb. As soon as it was out of danger the machine gunners opened out on the German. Von Richthofen, he claims, came within 200 feet of the ground and to save himself he swerved to the left and immediately banked at an angle of 75 degrees. He was sitting upright in the cabin and could be seen plainly at the controls. All this occurred within 100 yards of the Heilly chimney stack.

The first plane having reached a safe altitude, the German plane provided an excellent target for the machine guns who were in a circle around him at Vaux-sur-Somme, Bonney (sic) and Corbee (sic) and thousands of rounds were fired at him, to use Gunner Ridgway's words, 'A rain of death bespattered him.'

The plane seeking frantically to escape only rose about 500 feet when it turned over to its left, and crashed to the ground. Gunner Ridgway, who still retains the number plate of the machine was one of the first at the scene. On the number plate are the words: 'Militar Fluzzeug (sic) Fokker DR. 1525/17'.¹⁴ He is emphatic that the Baron was alive when he banked after the other planes had gone. The nearest plane to him was at least half a mile away. He states that there was plenty of evidence to show that Captain Brown did not get him and hopes that the official War History will be amended even at this late date.

A W Madge, Lang Lang correspondent.

However, although an indirect quotation, Ridgway's reported statement is confirmed by Lieutenant G M Travers MC who wrote a report that is partly quoted in Bean¹⁵ and is continued in the Bean Papers. Travers was observing near 11th Brigade HQ when he heard planes approaching from the direction of 26 central, and heard a Vickers gun firing from the ground. He wrote:

23 April 1918.

The first plane that came into view was one of our own, and less than 20 paces behind him was an enemy plane painted red. The red plane was overhauling our plane fast and both were flying so low that they almost crashed into trees at the top of the hill. Almost directly over the spot where I was lying the enemy plane swerved to the right so suddenly that it seemed almost to turn over. Our plane went straight on, from that moment the enemy plane was quite out of control and did a wild circle and dashed towards J.19.b.34 where it crashed. I went over with other officers and had a look at the plane and also the driver, who was dead, a machine gun bullet had passed from the left side of his face and near bottom of jaw and came out just behind the right eye¹⁶ ...The Vickers gun mentioned was the only gun firing at the time the driver first lost control of his machine. I made enquiries and found the gun was handled by No. 424 Sergt. Cedric Basset Popkin, 24 Australian Machine Gun Company.

G. M. Travers Lieut, 'A' Company 52nd Bat AEF

¹³ Bean, *ibid*; p. 694

¹⁴ There was a hand written notation in the margin: 'Note to Dr Bean that this was the number of the plane Richthofen was flying when he brought down his 79th and 80th victories.'

¹⁵ Bean, *ibid*; p. 696.

¹⁶ This statement about von Richthofen's head wound was not confirmed by any of the doctors who examined the body. The postmortem injuries to von Richthofen's face, caused by the gun sights, may have been mistakenly attributed by Travers to a gunshot wound.

Popkin wrote a letter to Bean¹⁹ on the 16 October 1935:

The planes would be travelling in a North East direction straight towards my gun position. I opened fire immediately the British plane left my gun sights and followed the fritz around. He would be perhaps 100 to 120 yards in front of me when I opened fire and about 200 to 400 feet in the air. He would be below the top of the ridge which is about 500 to 600 feet high. I opened fire the second time at the peak of his turn marked X. I dont think that I was firing so long the second time as the first. I would be firing at him the second time while he was travelling the line between the two crosses.²⁰

I would be firing about half to three-quarters a minute each time.

I reached the plane just when they were about to place a guard on it.

A chap named Marshall my No. 3 on the gun at the time who was afterwards killed got a bullet off Richthofen's body which had just penetrated his clothes and half sticking in his skin right on his belt line.

Yours faithfully

C B Popkin

From Popkin's letter it is apparent that Popkin missed when he first opened fire. The German triplane was heading towards him when this happened. He then fired for the second time and was firing as the pilot of the triplane was going away from him whilst banking. This is quite consistent with Popkin firing a bullet that entered von Richthofen's body at the ninth rib in the posterior axillary line. The angle of Popkin's fire was quite consistent with the trajectory of the bullet that killed von Richthofen, that is to say it was in a line from behind the midline of the pilot's trunk and from below.

Further confirmation of Popkin's letter is available from a letter from Popkin's commanding officer, Captain F R Watts, in the Bean Papers:

19 11 29.

Sergeant Popkin allowed the British plane to pass and then fired at Richthofen who made a right swing and then came back to the gun and this time at a lower height when Popkin fired about 200 rounds at him and Richthofen swung round to the right and just managed to clear the ridge and crashed. I can assure you that there was no-one else had a chance to bring him down because there was no other guns close enough except mine.

Gunner Buie's claim

Dale Titler wrote his book to support the claim of Gunner Buie that it was he who shot down Richthofen with his Lewis gun as the triplane approached the eastern slope of the shallow hill about 1000 yards east of Bonnay. Titler has quoted a statement attributed to Buie²¹ as follows:

¹⁹ Bean Papers.

²⁰ The reference to the X and the two crosses applies to a sketch map that Popkin attached to his letter. Unfortunately it was not possible to reproduce this sketch as photostat reproductions were not permitted by the Australian War Memorial Archives section; however the sketch indicated that Popkin opened fire as Richthofen was flying away from him at the beginning of Richthofen's turn and continued firing as von Richthofen continued to turn and came towards Popkin. He then stopped firing and the triplane then crashed.

²¹ Titler, *ibid*; pp. 229-230.

We were free to fire at any time without command, but as the planes neared us barely 50 feet off the brow of the ridge I was prevented from firing immediately as the two machines were almost in line, with Lt. May's plane blocking my line of fire.

Major Beavis and Lieutenant Doyle were on my right and left respectively, near Evan's gun position, about 30 yards away. Lieutenant Ellis, on slightly lower ground at my centre, observed the oncoming planes from the flank and shouted, 'Fire on that plane, Buie!' But I still could not, owing to Lieutenant. May's position.

I was swivelling my gun to follow the red machine, and Snowy Evans, manning the other gun on the opposite flank, got first clearance. He opened up at a range of slightly more than 300 yards. The triplane flew steadily on, still firing short bursts at the Camel it was now barely 20 yards behind and 10 feet above May. Very close indeed. I was at the ready with my finger on the trigger, waiting the clearance.

It came.

I can still remember seeing Richthofen clearly. His helmet covered most of his head and face and he was hunched in the cockpit aiming over his guns at the lead plane. It seemed that with every burst he leaned forward in the cockpit as though concentrating very intently on his fire. Certainly he was not aware of his dangerous position or of the close range of our guns. His position was much as a strafing attack would appear, and had he not been so intent upon shooting down Lieutenant May, he could easily have manoeuvred his machine and fired upon us, had he been so inclined. Richthofen and his men frequently strafed our trenches to the east.

At 200 yards, with my peep sight directly on Richthofen's body I began firing with steady bursts. His plane was bearing frontal and just a little to the right of me and after 20 rounds I knew that the bullets were striking the right side and front of the machine, for I clearly saw fragments flying.

Still Richthofen came on firing at Lieutenant May with both guns blazing. Then just before my last shots finished at a range of 40 yards Richthofen's guns stopped abruptly. The thought flashed through my mind — I've hit him! — and immediately I noticed a sharp change in engine sound²² as the red triplane passed over our gun position at less than 50 feet and still a little to my right. It slackened speed considerably and the propeller slowed down although the machine still appeared to be under control. Then it veered a bit to the right and then back to the left and lost height gradually coming down near an abandoned brick kiln 400 yards away on the Bray-Corbie road.

I looked to my gun. It was empty. I had fired a full pannier ...

Buie also commented on the bullet wounds sustained by Richthofen:

A guard was placed over the body and after awhile it was brought to our position. Major Beavis claimed the body for the 53rd and it was placed on a nearby stretcher. There I saw it. In the crash Richthofen's face was thrown against the gun butts and suffered minor injuries. Blood had come from his mouth which indicated at first glance that a fatal bullet had pierced a lung.

According to the popular version, death came from a single bullet which had entered his back and passed forward through the chest.

This was not true.

²² The change in sound of the triplane's engine may have been a Doppler effect causing a change in pitch as the aeroplane passed over.

Richthofen was struck in the left breast, abdomen and right knee.²³ I examined these wounds as his body lay on the stretcher. His fur-lined boots were missing, as were his helmet and goggles and other personal effects, these having been taken before his body arrived at the battery. He was wearing silk pajamas under his flying clothes.

The wounds were all frontal. Their entrances were small and clean and the exit points were slightly larger and irregular in the back. Later, Colonel Barber of the Australian Corps and Colonel Sinclair of the Fourth Army, both medical officers, made separate examinations of the body and their reports agreed that the chest wound was definitely caused by ground fire.²⁴

Interestingly there is also a very similar statement, also said to be told to Titler by Buie, published in a magazine in 1959.²⁵ However this differs from the statement published in Titler's book in minor, but appreciable, detail although it was stated by Titler, in both publications, that this was Buie's story, as told to him. The variation in the text of the two versions suggests that Buie's story was not published verbatim but was, at least, edited by Titler.

Conclusions

Who shot Baron Manfred von Richthofen? There can only be four possible answers:

1. Richthofen was shot by Captain Brown.

The postmortem examinations revealed entrance and exit wounds from a bullet which must have entered the body from the right, from the side, from behind and from below the body as it was sitting in the cockpit. Such a track means that the bullet would have passed through Richthofen's heart. Although Captain Brown did approach from Richthofen's right, it is difficult to see how, firing as he did from above, he could have inflicted such a wound unless Richthofen was steeply banking his triplane at the time that he was shot. For what it is worth, the newspaper article in the Chicago 'Sunday Tribune', attributed to Captain Brown, did not mention such a bank. In this article Brown referred to Richthofen looking back at him when Brown fired at him and a steep bank therefore seems most unlikely.

Be that as it may, there is ample evidence from eye witnesses that Richthofen continued to pursue Lieutenant May along the Somme valley for about a minute, firing his gun and concentrating on his target. This would have been impossible if Richthofen had been shot through the heart by Brown.

2. He was shot by Gunner Robert Buie

Again the track of the bullet makes it very unlikely that Buie could have shot Richthofen. From the statement attributed to Buie by Titler, Buie was firing when the triplane: 'was bearing frontal and just a little to the right of me' and he could not have inflicted the wound that entered the body from behind. Buie stated: 'Still Richthofen came on firing at Lieutenant May with both guns blazing. Then just before my last shots finished at a range of 40 yards Richthofen's guns stopped abruptly...' Therefore at no time did Buie fire at Richthofen from behind.

3. He was shot by Sergeant Popkin.

Bean and Carisella both came to this conclusion and this is supported by abundant eye witness evidence and by the track of the bullet.

²³ This was not confirmed by the postmortem medical examinations.

²⁴ Only Dr Barber made such a statement.

²⁵ Robert Buie, as told to Dale Titler, 'I Killed Richthofen!', *The Cavalier Magazine*; December 1959.

Popkin first fired when Richthofen was approaching him from the Somme valley but he failed to stop Richthofen. After coming under fire from Buie and Gunner Evans, at the Lewis gun emplacement, the German aeroplane turned away from the gunfire and it was then, when the triplane was flying away from Popkin, that he opened fire with his Vickers gun for the second time.²⁶ Popkin continued to fire while the triplane completed the turn, and actually flew towards the Vickers gun, but there is no doubt that Popkin could have inflicted a bullet wound that entered Richthofen from below, from the side and slightly behind, just as was found at the postmortem examination. Neither Captain Brown nor Gunner Buie could have inflicted such a wound and it is therefore more probable than not that it was indeed Popkin who fired the fatal shot.

I say 'more probable than not' because it is impossible to exclude the fourth possibility.

4. Richthofen was shot by an unknown Australian soldier who fired his rifle at the triplane as it flew over him and who scored a lucky hit.

This can never be disproved as the .303 rifle bullet was used by the Lee-Enfield Service rifle as well as the Lewis gun and the Vickers machine gun.

All that we can be sure of is that the entry and exit wounds on von Richthofen's body meant that the bullet passed through the heart, or great vessels, and he could not have remained conscious for more than about thirty seconds after being hit. The fatal bullet had therefore to have been fired at von Richthofen at the end of the pursuit and this is likely to have been at the time when the triplane was observed to turn away from the hill where the Lewis gun batteries were situated.

Summary

The Official post mortem examination report is, in all probability, flawed and it is most likely that the bullet track was along a line joining the entrance and exit wounds. In other words the bullet came from behind, below and lateral to von Richthofen. There is little doubt that the bullet penetrated his heart and was fatal. Neither Captain Brown nor Gunner Buie could have inflicted such a wound.

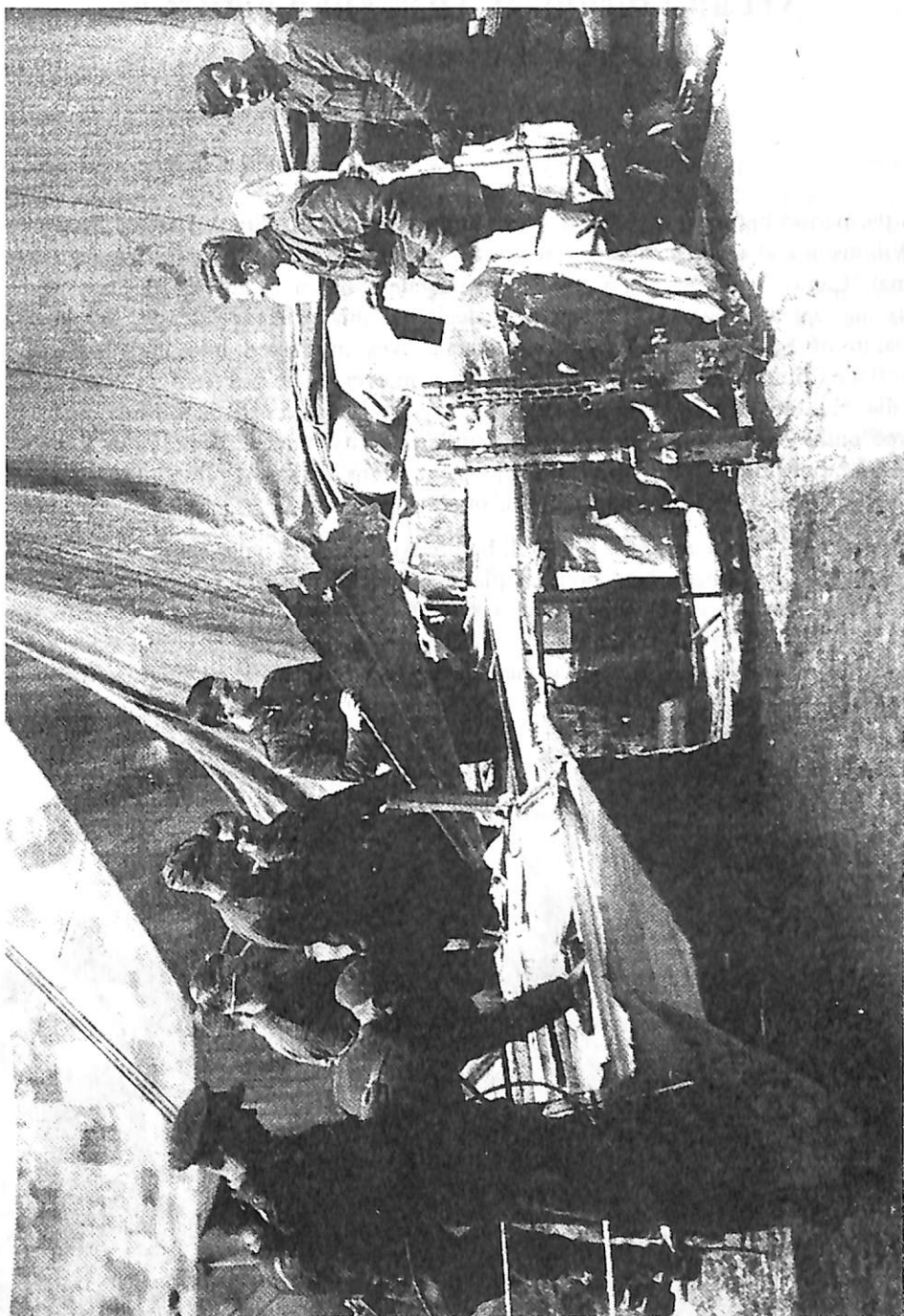
The only known gunner that could have done so was Sergeant Popkin when he opened fire for the second time when Richthofen was turning away from him. Richthofen then lost control of his aeroplane and crashed, he was dead when his aeroplane hit the ground.

From the evidence of the postmortem examination and from eyewitnesses it was therefore most probably Sergeant Popkin who fired the fatal shot, although a lucky shot from an unknown soldier firing his rifle can not be excluded.

Acknowledgements

I must thank all those who gave me advice and support in writing this article, and in particular I must make special mention of Mr Bill Bacon Jr of Canyon, Texas, USA, who not only gave invaluable advice but also made available photostats of many of the articles referred to in the text and even sent me his copy of Carisella & Ryan. I also thank the Australian War Memorial for permission to publish the original documents in the Bean Papers and the staff of the research section of the Australian War Memorial who were so helpful in making these available to me on the one day that I could be there.

²⁶ Popkin's letter to Bean in the Bean Papers.



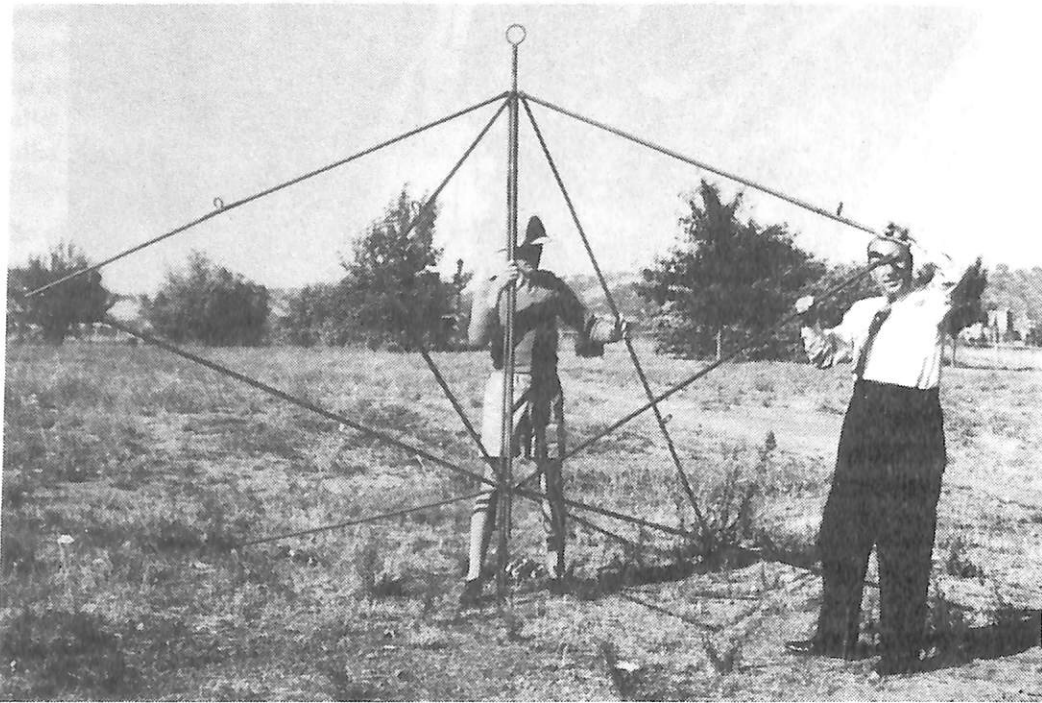
Officers and men of No. 3 Squadron, AFC, inspect the wreckage of von Richthofen's triplane at Poulainville on 22 April 1918. (AWM K50, used with permission.)

Art and disguise: Australian artists and the Camouflage Unit

Michael Bogle¹

In the period before the 1939-45 War, Sydney Ure Smith, Frank Hinder, Professor Leslie Wilkinson and other notable figures in the Sydney art and architecture scene convened an informal 'Camouflage Study Group' to investigate the camouflage of military and civilian objects and installations. When war was declared, this group of artists, led by Professor W J Dakin of Sydney University, found themselves impressed into the 'Defence Central Camouflage Committee'. This group, with offices in every state and territory, included many of Australia's best-known artists and designers. Very few attained official military status. The unit survived until 1945 when an anonymous Home Security bureaucrat noted in the margins of their final report that 'such hybrid [artists] organisations are undesirable'. This article outlines some of the theories and innovations of this organisation.

Commonwealth documents show that well before Australia officially entered the 1939-45 War, the Australian government and civilian planners were preparing for conflict. The need to disguise Australian strategic sites such as factories, oil supplies, harbour fortifications and military installations from airborne and naval enemies had been recognised for some time. Although the Australian defence forces had their own conventional techniques for camouflage,



The 'Hinder Spider' for erecting camouflage cloth. 1939-45. Australian Archives. CP 1905 / 13.

¹ Michael Bogle is a design historian and curator of the Hyde Park Barracks Museum, Sydney. His book *Design in Australia 1880-1970* was published by Craftsman House in 1998.

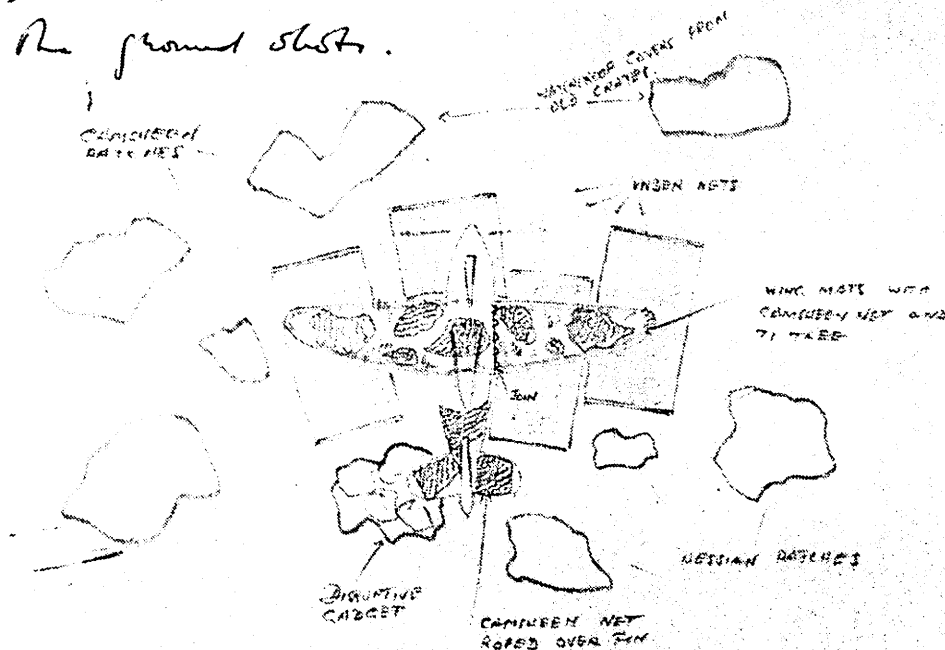
a resourceful civilian group in Sydney had begun exploring new techniques of concealment independent of government support. This civilian initiated program seems without precedent in the 1939-45 war.

The Sydney Camouflage Study Group

The study group included the artist and publisher Sydney Ure Smith, Sydney University Professor of Architecture Leslie Wilkinson, the sculptor Frank Hinder, R Emerson Curtis, the designer Russell Roberts, Douglas Annand, P Dodd (unidentified), Colonel D A Whiteheat, Captain B F Hussey and Captain H F de la Rue and the Sydney University zoology professor W J Dakin.² Once war was declared in 1939, this amateur association was used by Commonwealth as the nucleus for a Camouflage Committee formed within the Ministry of Home Security.

As the Commonwealth department history explains, 'In 1939 the existence of a group of camouflage enthusiasts working in New South Wales in a civilian capacity under the chairmanship of Professor W J Dakin, DSc, FRZS was brought under the notice of the Department of the Army.'³ A booklet, *The Art of Camouflage*, had also been prepared by Professor Dakin's Sydney Camouflage Group but it was not officially published until 1941.⁴ A second edition of this book appeared in the following year.

I have marked the details on the backs of the ground sheets.



Sketch by photographer Max Dupain. 1940. Australian Archives. CP 1905 / 13

- 2 Mellor, D P, *The Official History of the 1939-45 War. The Role of Science and Industry*. Australian War Memorial, 1958, p. 532.
- 3 Australian Archives. CP 951/1. Attachment 2. Departmental History, Department of Home Security. Chronological Statement of Developments in Camouflage Organisation.
- 4 *The Art of Camouflage*. Compiled and edited by Professor W J Dakin, DSc, FZS, Chairman of the Group. Sydney Australasian Medical Publishing Company, Limited, 1941. (Published with the approval of the Department of Defence Co-ordination, Commonwealth of Australia.)

The Central Camouflage Committee

In 8 November 1940, the Prime Minister called a joint meeting of the military and the civilian group with the aim of establishing a camouflage organisation. In April, 1941, the government acted. The 'Defence Central Camouflage Committee' (DCCC) was formed and 'empowered' to form state committees to prepare camouflage schemes. A camoufleur was to be engaged and an camouflage experiment station established at Middle Head, Sydney [Georges Head was the site]. The Ministry of Home Security oversaw these DCCC activities after April 1941. Professor W.J. Dakin was appointed as full-time Technical Director of Camouflage, a section within the Ministry.⁵

Professor Dakin's initial motivation in forming a civilian camouflage group remains unknown. A prominent zoologist with academic training at the Universities of Liverpool and Kiel, Germany and as the foundation professor of biology at the University of Western Australia (1913) and Challis professor at Sydney University (1928), Dakin was conversant in the camouflage theories of the animal kingdom. Dakin's expertise was in the field of marine biology where camouflage is an integral part of the marine environment. His works include *Elements of General Zoology* (1st edition 1927), *Plankton of the Australian Coastal Waters* (1940) and *Australian Seashores* (1952).



Template for development of camouflage pattern and colour. Australian Archives. CP 1907.

Nationwide Committees

Initially, Professor Dakin formed camouflage committees in each state under the direction of selected museum directors, designers, artists, architects and scientists. These committees were eventually replaced with Directorates and by June 1942, there appear to be 101 camouflage officers and eight deputy directors [correspondence in other files suggest inconsistent figures]. The ecumenical camouflage committees initially recommended by Professor Dakin for the capital cities are interesting reading:

In Brisbane, R.A. McInnes, city planner, R. Cummings, architecture lecturer, Brisbane University;

⁵ Australian Archives. CP 951/1. Departmental History, Department of Home Security. War Cabinet Agendum 126 /1941.

In Sydney, John D. Moore, architect [and painter], Prof. Leslie Wilkinson, Dean, School of Architecture, Sydney University;

In Melbourne, Daryl Lindsay, keeper of prints, National Gallery of Victoria, V.E. Greenhalgh, [sculptor and head of art at Melbourne Technical College];

In Adelaide, Louis McCubbin, Director of National Gallery, Kenneth Milne [no profession given];

In Perth, Professor A.D. Ross, Department of Physics, University of Perth;

In Darwin, an active duty army officer and [?] Burent, architect;

In Port Moresby, an active duty army officer and [?] Maloney, architect;

In Tasmania, Dr. Joseph Pearson, Director of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery.⁶

After the state and territory committees were formed, further recruitment took place in Sydney to assist Professor Dakin. Lieutenant (and sculptor) Frank Hinder, Douglas Annand and the photographer Max Dupain, played major roles in the Camouflage Unit's research. Hinder and Annand had been members of Dakin's earlier study group. By June 1942, there were 101 camouflage officers and eight deputy directors. [Dakin's correspondence in other files gives variable numbers.]

Well-known designers and artists also appearing in the Ministry of Home Security camouflage listings include:

William Bustard, Queensland stained glass designer; Charles Oliver, Victorian sculptor;

Charles H. Lancaster, Queensland painter;

George Bell, painter and teacher (responsible for vehicle camouflage);

J T N Rowell, painter and teacher at the Melbourne Technical College;

Other designers and artists were also involved in camouflage operations or training while on active service. This includes James Cant and Charles Bush serving in the Australian Army; Roy Dalgarno in the Royal Australian Air Force and others. In the Civil Construction Corps, Joshua Smith and William Dobell covered aircraft hangars in camouflage livery and painted paved airstrips with rows of cabbage.⁷

Some Principles of Camouflage

In Dakin's handbooks on camouflage, he outlines four principles of concealment in nature.⁸ Quite self-consciously, Dakin boasts that the study of camouflage in nature was pioneered by zoologists and that their discoveries form the basis for the camouflage practices of the Great War of 1914-18. For Dakin, the role of the artist, although he recruited heavily amongst them, was confined to the colour specification of hue, value and intensity and conceptual drawing. His own work employed the scientific method: observation, hypothesis, test, assessment, conclusion.

⁶ Australian Archives. A5954, item 396/2 (June 1941).

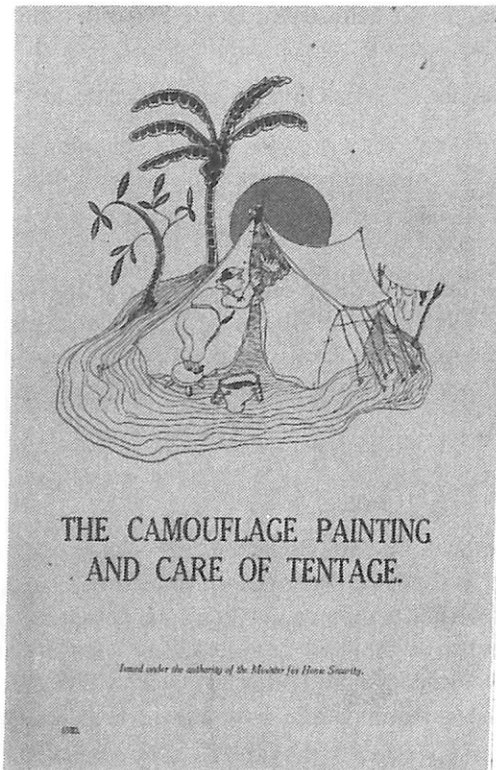
⁷ Dobell's painting 'Erecting Camouflage, Menangal' represents some of their activities.

⁸ Dakin, W J, *The Art of Camouflage*. first edition. Australasian Medical Publishing Company Limited. Sydney. 1941; and *The Art of Camouflage*. second edition. Australasian Medical Publishing Company Limited. Sydney. 1942.

Dakin's principles of camouflage were:

1. the use of realistic colour and texture to render the object selected for concealment indistinguishable from its background. (now described as cryptic coloration by contemporary zoologists);
2. the application of counter-shading or obliterative shading to give the concealed object the direct opposite hue, value or intensity from what one would expect. That is, a raised area or highly polished surface where one would expect a highlight should be painted in a dark colour matching the background.
3. Disruptive coloration is Dakin's third category. For designers, this is one of the most exciting areas of experimental camouflage. It is a randomised pattern of colour that disrupts the formal shape of the object to be concealed.
4. Finally, Dakin introduces the study and practice of the concealment of shadows as an object-defining and concealing effect of natural light.

Dakin and his group of artists, photographers and architects spent some time developing experiments to explore and verify their hypotheses on camouflage. A number of photographs of their research projects survive in the Australian Archives and show considerable ingenuity in developing strategies for camouflage methods.



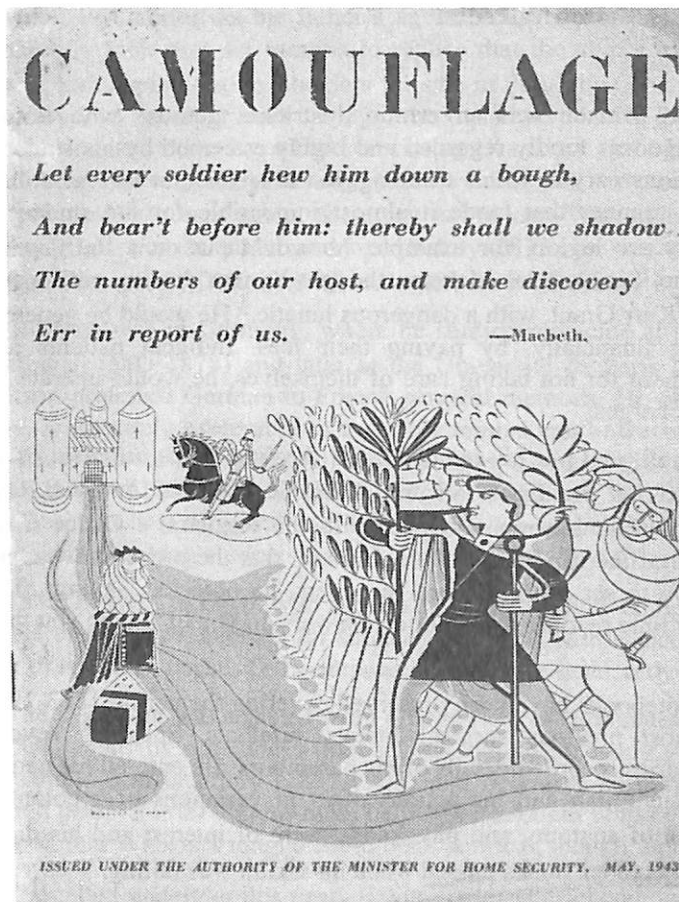
E.C.T. (Unidentified Designer) Cover. The Camouflage Painting and Care of Tentage. 1939-45. Technical Director of Camouflage. Department of Home Security.

Innovations

While Dakin's artists seem to have been restricted to visual assessment, landscape description, invention and textural studies, a number of technical innovations were developed by the camouflage group during the war. The sculptor Frank Hinder (1906-1993) designed the 'spider', a collapsible wire rod construction to support camouflage material for concealing machine gun emplacements; the Women's Defence League, coordinated by Kay McDowell, a Camouflage Unit member, initiated a volunteer net-making program; the Unit pioneered an inexpensive slit cloth for large-camouflage installations. An extensive research program was undertaken to formulate camouflage paints and Max Dupain and others investigated the elements of successful camouflage with vast numbers of photographs.⁹ Booklets such as *The Camouflage Painting*

⁹ Mellor, D P op. cit., pp. 537-539.

and Care of Tentage (undated), Camouflage (1943), Aerodrome Camouflage (undated), Camouflage of the Individual (1944) were also published and distributed to the defence forces and state committees. There are perhaps the most creatively designed and illustrated camouflage manuals ever produced for the military forces.



Douglas Annand. Cover. Camouflage. Minister for Home Security. 1943.

The War is Over

In June, 1945, the work of the Camouflage Section was considered complete and the camouflage activities in the northern areas were closed and all officers released in this area. In September 1945, all camouflage officers were dismissed and the Technical Director was retained by the Ministry for Home Security to provide a history of camouflage activities in Australia. In Dakin's notes in the archives files, he notes that this was an one-half time appointment. This document does not appear in the Canberra or Sydney files (the Melbourne Archives have not been explored) and perhaps Dakin never completed the work. He retired from his Sydney University professorship in 1948. Dakin died at Turrumurra in 1950.

The conclusions that accompany the final departmental report for this unit hint at unrecorded operational difficulties during the war. 'Primarily, the difficulties [with this unit] were brought about by the disabilities under which the Camouflage Section had to work in conjunction with the Armed Services. They proved that hybrid organisations are undesirable.' and a pencilled addendum by the Department Secretary says: '..and emphasised the necessity for the camouflage units to form an integral part of the establishment of each of the armed services.'¹⁰

¹⁰ Australian Archives CP 951/1 Department of Home Security. (Departmental History prepared after the war) Attachment 2/ Chronological Statement of Major Developments in Camouflage Organisation.

‘Wattie’: Emeritus Professor Archibald Watson, 1849-1940

Don W Pedlar

Emeritus Professor Archibald Watson was an erratic, histrionic genius¹ who flouted convention in many ways. He was fondly regarded and highly esteemed by his students, who either ‘learned or left’. Opinions vary as to his teaching, but it seems that he was able to present most subject matter in a manner that made it almost impossible for the student to forget.² Stories of his eccentricity are legion, for example, he would put on a ‘turn’ when meeting someone for the first time. Sir Douglas Mawson thought he was dealing with a foul mouthed country butcher, and Sir Kerr Grant, with a dangerous lunatic.³ He would be generous to students who were struggling financially, by paying their fees. Indigent patients also benefited: after sternly lecturing them for not taking care of themselves, he would operate for nothing and cover all the hospital charges.

Watson would not suffer fools at all, and put his reputation on the line in his criticism of Dr Leith Napier.⁴ He was dismissed by the Board of the Adelaide Hospital but was later reinstated.⁵ He once sent a set of final examination papers to the Registrar’s Office in an unsealed envelope by hand of one of the candidates. On being told that the procedure was not acceptable and that he would have to set another batch of papers, he objected, saying, ‘You don’t think that I waste my bloody time reading their bloody answers do you? I’ll give you their results now, if you’ll take them.’

Most of his accounts and signed notebooks have been preserved covering the period 1883-1937 and are probably Australia’s most precious surgical literary artefacts. Speaking several languages fluently, his personal diaries recorded details of his paramours. He entered his names in Greek, his sexual experiences in Fijian and his actions often in variations of a coloured Maltese cross.⁶ The smallest detail of anatomy and physiology were of interest and his diary contains a piece of toenail and also bladder stones passed when his health was failing.⁷

Archibald Watson was born on 27 July 1849 at Tarcutta, NSW, the eldest son of Sydney Grandison Watson and his wife Isabella, nee Robinson.⁸ His father was a former Royal Navy Officer whose pastoral pursuits were to earn him the title, ‘King of the Upper Murray’.⁹ His quarterdeck ways and discipline were said to have strongly influenced young Archibald. Stories concerning the boy’s education vary from being sent to Scotland to study and returning

¹ *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Vol. 12, 1891-1939, Smy - Z, p. 395.

² V A Edgeloe, *Servants of Distinction*, 1993, The University of Adelaide Foundation, p. 35.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Professor Watson, *Mrs L’s Case*, 1896. W L Thomas and Co, and associated papers (Mortlock Library of South Australia and the Barr Smith Library, University of Adelaide).

⁵ *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, p. 395.

⁶ *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, p. 395.

⁷ Dr Earle Hackett, in ABC broadcast ‘Personalities remembered’, 21 November 1971. Quoted in *The University of Adelaide 1874-1974* by Duncan and Leonard.

⁸ *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, p. 394.

⁹ *Observer*, 20 January 1900, p. 13.

eighteen months later,¹⁰ to studying at the National School, Sydney.¹¹ What is generally agreed on is that he was at Scotch College, Melbourne, from 1861 to 1867. He was a fine student, excelling in Scripture and also a champion light weight boxer.

The next stage of his career has several variations as to its origin. He is said to have travelled to Levuka, Fiji, acting as his father's agent.¹² He became a cook's helper on the brig *Carl*. It apparently took him six months to realise that the ship's true occupation was 'blackbirding', that is, kidnapping native islanders for sale in Peru, the Guianas or Queensland.¹³ The ship was notorious, as on a previous voyage, the owner, Dr James Patrick Murray, Captain Armstrong and others are said to have fired on rioting 'Kanakas' through holes in a bulkhead. At the later trial, Murray escaped by turning Queen's evidence. Armstrong and the ship's mate, Dowden, were hanged.¹⁴ Once again, the story is unclear. Watson is said to have been charged with piracy. Bail was arranged and on 16 July 1872, he was discharged from bail on his own recognisance of \$1,000, after which he left for Melbourne.¹⁵

In 1873 he was in Germany, where he studied medicine at the Georg-August Universität von Göttingen (MD 1878) and later at the Université de Paris (MD 1880), both with honours.¹⁶ Watson preferred German to French surgical methods. He once remarked that a scar, however ugly, is infinitely preferable to a marble tombstone, however elegant. In England he obtained the Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries, London, (1880) and became a Member (1882) and a Fellow (1884) of the Royal College of Surgeons. While assistant demonstrator of anatomy at Charing Cross Hospital Medical School he studied surgery under Joseph Lister, and his success in coaching students gained him the name, 'good business Watson'.

In 1883, he went to Egypt with Professor Cantlie to study cholera during the outbreak of that year. While there, he volunteered for service as surgeon with Hicks Pasha's force. Owing to Watson's lack of Arabic, a friend, Dr Leslie, was appointed in stead, only to die, sword in hand, at El Teb.

In 1885, Watson was selected from a large field of candidates as Elder Professor of Anatomy at the University of Adelaide, a post he was to hold for many years. Other posts included lecturer in pathological anatomy (1887-1903) and operative surgery (1887-1919). It was during the period prior to 1900 that his main battles were fought with medical authorities. Students were to remark that Watson's tongue could be as surgical, though not always as aseptic, as his scalpel.

He travelled widely at this time. Having devised a scheme to exterminate Australia's rabbits,¹⁷ he went to Germany to purchase rabbits suffering from *Sarcoptes caniculi*. The animals died of sunstroke on their way to Australia.

Under a sketch of the Professor, the *Observer* stated that, 'Professor Watson has obtained leave of absence from the Adelaide University to proceed to South Africa.'¹⁸ The following is an abbreviated extract of an account of his service in South Africa that appeared in the *Observer*:

¹⁰ *Advertiser*, 31 July 1940. This could explain the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entry, p. 395, which states that he crossed the equator at the age of 10.

¹¹ *Observer*, 15 February 1896, p. 16, also *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, p. 395.

¹² *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, p. 395. Another story has it that his headmaster wanted him to go into church but on Watson's deciding that schooling had little to offer, he 'cleared out'.

¹³ Duncan and Leonard, *The University of Adelaide 1874-1974*, Rigby, 1973, p. 35.

¹⁴ *Advertiser*, 26 April 1947.

¹⁵ *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, p. 395. Other sources say that he jumped ship in Cairns or made for Europe.

¹⁶ *Advertiser*, 26 April 1947, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, p. 395.

¹⁷ Duncan and Leonard, p. 35. Watson represented South Australia in Sydney during a conference on the rabbit question.

¹⁸ 20 January 1900, p. 13.

Professor Watson, who went to South Africa as a service officer in January 1900, returned to Adelaide by the Melbourne Express on Sunday morning [9 June 1900]. The Professor has travelled through Natal, the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, and has gained much valuable experience. The following extracts were furnished on Sunday evening—

‘When the news was received of the reverses which had been inflicted during the early stages of the war, I, like all other British subjects desired to do all that was in my power to assist the mother country. I accordingly communicated with Gen. Gordon and offered to go to South Africa and serve in any military capacity. Gen. Gordon pointed out, however, that I might be able to render much more valuable aid to the Empire if I placed my surgical skill and experience at the disposal of the Principal Medical Officer in Natal. I found no difficulty in obtaining credentials from Lord Tennyson and the Chief Justice, to Sir Alfred Milner and to Sir Hely Hutchinson, Governor of Natal. I reached Durban in February, 1900. I was furnished with a free pass on all railways of Natal. The Governor of Natal afterwards placed me in communication with Gen. Wolfe Murray, officer in charge of the lines of communications. I was introduced to Gen. Gallwey, Principal Medical Officer of Natal who requested me to proceed to Maritzburg. I did so and worked in that centre as a volunteer civil surgeon for a month. During that time I had plenty of work to occupy me, as we had to deal with the wounded from Spion Kop and other severe battles. My work was so favourably regarded by the authorities that when Sir W MacCormac left Natal I was appointed to succeed him as consulting surgeon. I worked in that capacity with the late Sir W Stokes until the time of his death, after which Sir Thomas Fitzgerald was sent around from the Cape. The latter did not, however, remain long at Maritzburg and after Mr Frederick Treves left, I had to carry on the work alone. I continued to act as consulting surgeon until December and during that time I was called upon to perform or assist with many exceedingly delicate operations, some of which were important from a scientific point of view. After 11 months’ hard work my health gave way and I had to go into the higher veldt to recuperate. I was subsequently engaged for a short period in the Charlestown Hospital, near Majuba Hill, which was the most remote military camp from the Natal base of operations. The hospital was under the management of Col Daly RAMC. I thoroughly explored Majuba Hill and the surrounding country.’

The services which Professor Watson rendered as consulting and operating surgeon in Natal were much appreciated by the Imperial officers.¹⁹

After leaving Natal, Watson visited Johannesburg, where the Governor of the forts arranged for him to inspect several of the principal mines. He admired the miners for their stand against the Boers when attempts were made to destroy the mines. The New South Wales nursing staff attended to many of the wounded from that stand. Another impressive feature of Johannesburg was the large quantity of Australian trees.

At Pretoria, the Professor met Dr Turner, Health Officer for Transvaal, and Professor Simpson, a plague expert. They afforded him facilities for studying leprosy at the leper station, and horse sickness at the camp. Regarding horse sickness, Watson conjectured that the disease would eventually be traced to an insect of some kind that lived, or laid its eggs, in the grass and which was destroyed by frost. If the theory was correct, he said, there was a grave danger that the disease could be introduced into Australia by means of grass seeds or grain unless strict precautionary measures were taken. Other diseases investigated were plague and enteric fever.

¹⁹ *Observer*, 15 June 1901, p. 42.

During his travels, Watson met many South Australians of all ranks, many of whom had secured good positions, chief of whom was Dr Allan Campbell, one of the most successful civil surgeons and at the time, Surgeon Captain with Steinacker's Horse. The Professor also mentioned Major 'Karri' Davis, a Major Reade and the nurses from South Australia as worthy of special commendation. The same could be said of the Royal Army Medical Corps and the civil surgeons who went to the front from every part of the British Empire. As a result of his experiences, several interesting articles were contributed to medical journals.²⁰

His registration with the South Australian Medical Board is dated 12 April 1906, 21 years after his arrival in Adelaide. The diploma presented was the Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries.²¹ On 2 July 1906, he was appointed Honorary Major, Australian Army Medical Corps Reserve, 4th Military District.

With the outbreak of the First World War, the irrepressible Professor Watson set off once again for war.²² At the age of 65, he embarked for the Middle East with the 1st Australian Stationary Hospital from Melbourne on the transport A55 *Kyarra*, 5 December 1914.²³ Thrown together in military service under wartime conditions, ill feelings festered among the staff. Watson seems to have kept clear of controversy, but was aware of the atmosphere.²⁴ In Egypt he held the position of consulting surgeon and pathologist, serving for about 17 months before his return to Australia in March 1916. Many men wounded on Gallipoli had occasion to bless him for his work, particularly in cases of head wounds.²⁵ He embarked at Suez on the *Karoda* on 20 January 1916. His appointment was terminated in Adelaide on 7 March 1916. Watson's medal entitlements at the end of the War were: Queen's South Africa Medal, bar Natal, and the World War I trio.

Having survived another war with all its dire possibilities, Watson's sardonic humour was unchanged as can be seen from the following story told by Dr Earle Hackett. Parents continued to entertain doubts about young ladies studying medicine, and the attitude of some of the University lecturers was distinctly discouraging.

A pupil of his was one of Adelaide's first women medical graduates. She told me that when at the beginning of the First World War she wanted to do medicine, her father wouldn't let her because the colourful Professor Watson used language that was unsuited to the ears of a young girl; and so she did Geology. Then Watson went off to Egypt in 1915 [sic] and her father allowed her to enter the Medical School but in a year Wattie returned. He briskly told her the Anatomy room was really no place for a woman. Then he did one of his half funny, half cruel things. He lined up her fellow students. She was a pretty girl and shy. 'Look at these men', he said. 'Just choose any one of them and I'll see he passes top in every exam I mark. That'll make him a famous surgeon. You marry him, you'll be all right and you won't need to do Medicine.' She reddened and ran off for the cloak room and refused to come out for hours. When she did, at the end of the day, the janitor was there with a box of chocolates, 'Professor's compliments, Miss, and he apologises'.

²⁰ Articles included, *British Medical Journal*, 'Colonial civil surgeons with the Forces in South Africa', 30 March 1901, p. 808; 'No. 6 General Medical Hospital Johannesburg', 20 April 1901; *Intercolonial Medical Journal*, 'Remarks on gunshot injuries of blood vessels and physical defects of soldiers as seen in South Africa', 1901.

²¹ J Estcourt Hughes, *A history of the Royal Adelaide Hospital*, 2nd edition, 1982, p. 176.

²² Duncan and Leonard, p. 67.

²³ Lt Col Neil C Smith AM, *Mostly unsung military history research and publications*.

²⁴ Ian Bassett and Bryan Egan, 'Doctors and nurses at war', *Journal of the Australian War Memorial*, No. 22, April 1993.

²⁵ *Adelaide University Magazine*, 1920, pp. 39-40. Also A G Butler, *Official History of the Australian Army Medical Services*, Vol. 1, p. 46.

Watson retired in 1919 and was accorded the honour of Emeritus Professor in 1920. In 1923, he was engaged on several coastal vessels.²⁶ On land, his favourite form of transport was a series of motorcycles. His appetite for travel at this time took him to the lesser known parts of the world by whatever means came to hand: windjammer, cargo boat, even primitive aircraft. Places visited ranged from Iceland, the Amazon valley (five times), the coastal regions of other South American countries, and the Falkland Islands.²⁷

In the early 1930s, he visited Adelaide to renew friendships and acquaintances of his teaching years, and to allow W B McInnes to execute a portrait of him commissioned by his former students for presentation to the University on the occasion of the Medical School's jubilee in 1935. The funds raised in excess of the costs associated with the portrait supports the Archibald Watson Memorial Prize, which includes a small reproduction of the portrait.

Fishing was among his activities and, as with other pursuits, in this he was both keen and knowledgeable. His last years were spent on Thursday Island, where he lived in a hotel. He engaged in anthropological study among the native tribes and collected marine specimens for the British Museum. He also studied geology. With such a vast field of endeavour, it is useless to speculate on what his reflections may have been. An anecdote may suffice to demonstrate his desire to advance scientific learning. Once, for investigation, he wanted the skeleton of a man who had died from an obscure disease. He and another Adelaide doctor went to the undertaker's rooms and carefully dissected the bones from the body. To preserve the semblance of physical form, he replaced the bones with whatever he could find on the premises, including broomsticks and spade handles. The chest, however, was a problem. Watson solved this by taking the undertaker's umbrella and bending the steel ribs to the form of the dead man's chest. Unfortunately, the body was cremated and the other doctor was sent for by a very troubled Professor to corroborate to the crematorium attendants his assertion that in the particular disease the human ribs looked like umbrella ribs.²⁸

Watson died on Thursday Island on 30 July 1940, aged 91, and was buried with Anglican rites. His estate was in the order of £20,000. Among the interesting bequests, were £1,000 for distribution among the subscribers to the fund for his portrait and £75 to two members of the staff of the Museum on condition that they burned all the notebooks and letters that Watson had stored in the basement of the Museum.²⁹ Dr Hackett remarked, 'He lived close to life and brushed aside irrelevancies. He was a kind of Shakesperian character who happened to live here at the turn of the century, to enjoy women, adventure, and the sea, who possessed as much exact knowledge of the structure of the human body as anyone in the world at the time, and who happened to be Elder Professor of Anatomy in the University of Adelaide. Personally, I rejoice that all this was so.'³⁰

In my copy of *Mrs L's Case* by Watson, is inscribed a more succinct, but possibly as generous tribute, 'Good old Watty'.

²⁶ *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, p. 395.

²⁷ Edgeloe, p. 36.

²⁸ *News*, 31 July 1940, p. 5. Another similar story concerns the removal of a head from the Adelaide Hospital morgue. Watson's confession and the subsequent public uproar led to a hurried amendment of the Anatomy Act. His exploits, though 'terrible', were accepted with morbid humour. No official action was ever taken. (Duncan and Leonard)

²⁹ Edgeloe, p. 36.

³⁰ Hackett, op cit.

Acknowledgements

Mr Michael Treloar for 'introducing' me to Watson; the University of Adelaide, Kylie Percival, archivist; the Barr-Smith Library, John Percival, curator; the Mortlock Library; Lt Col Neil Smith AM; Mr David Vivian; members of the Military Historical Society of Australia, SA Branch; Advertiser Newspapers Ltd for permission to quote and especially Mr Andrew Hall for his assistance; Jonathon Collins (UK) for assistance with Watson's QSA entitlement.

Sources not otherwise mentioned

Surgeon General Sir W D Wilson KCMG, 'Report on the medical arrangements in the South African War', HMSO, 1904; *Quiz* Newspapers; Officers List of the Australian Military Forces, 1 August 1914.



Professor Archibald Watson. Photograph owned by the author, signed and dated 1905.

Book review

Nick and Carol Carter, *The Distinguished Flying Cross and how it was won 1918-1995*, two volumes, casebound, approximately 2,000 pages, £140 plus postage (to Australia) £18 (standard) or £36 (airmail) Payment may be made by sterling cheque, sterling bank draft or Visa/Mastercard to Savannah Publications 90 Dartmouth Road London SE23 3HZ

Just published in the UK is this complete listing of all awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross to 1995. It is an alphabetical listing of some 22,000 or so British and the Commonwealth awards including the 2500 awards to the Australian Flying Corps and the Royal Australian Air Force. Each entry includes, name, rank and *London Gazette* date and page number. Service number and squadron number is included where gazetted and the citations published in the *London Gazette* appear in full.

The format is easy to read. I immediately checked for the names of 11 DFC recipients whose gazette details I had been seeking for quite some time and found all the details. In addition, a substantial section lists by country the many foreign nationals who received Honorary Awards of the DFC together with some of their citations. This information did not generally appear in the *London Gazette*. An Appendix catalogues those who received multiple awards of three or more DFC/DFM combinations.

Just over 200 copies of this work have been published. As someone who uses the *London Gazette* extensively I am delighted at the publication despite the price. I suggest members recommend the work to their favourite library.—Anthony Staunton

Obituary

Richard Charles Haines

19 February 1943 – 2 January 1998

Federal Council was sad to note the recent death, aged 54, of Lt Col Richard Haines (ret'd). A long time member of the Society, Lt Col Richard Haines served in Vietnam with HQ Australia Force Vietnam in 1968 and with the 8th Battalion Royal Australian Regiment in 1970. He acted as Federal Secretary of the Society for a brief period in 1985. He is survived by his wife Dorothy and their children.

Members' Notices

Medal to Captain Balfour-Ogilvy

The following medal is wanted to complete a group:

- British War medal to 'Capt W M Balfour-Ogilvy' or 'Capt W M B-Ogilvy'.

Don W Pedlar,
24 Richmond Rd, Keswick, SA, 5035

Anzac officer deaths

Wanted—contact names addresses or telephone numbers from anyone who can assist with information regarding Anzac officers who died as a result of service on Gallipoli during WWI.

This information is required to assist with the compilation of a biographical register of 360 Australian and 120 New Zealand officers.

John Meyers
PO Box 618
Bribie Island Qld 4507
07 3408 8100 (H)
07 3408 8195 (F)

Society Notes

Family subscriptions

The ACT Branch suggested that there should be a category of 'family membership' within the Society. Federal Council has considered the matter and found that it is not possible to introduce a new category of membership without amending the Society's Constitution. However, Council agrees that a concessional subscription is appropriate and has decided that:

The subscription for two members of the same family resident at the same address who both wish to be members of the Society but to receive only one copy of *Sabretache* will be \$35 (118th Federal Council, minute 9.2). This concession will take effect from 1 July 1998. Both persons covered by a family subscription will be Ordinary or Corresponding members of the Society in accordance with the Constitution.

Application For Membership forms on the last page of *Sabretache* and renewal notices sent to members will be amended shortly to include family subscriptions.

Members who wish to avail themselves of the concession for the 1988-1999 subscription year should take the following action:

Branch Members: Advise Branch Secretary/Treasurer when paying subscription that you request a FAMILY SUBSCRIPTION and provide details of both members, together with the name and address of the member to whom the single copy of *Sabretache* is to be forwarded.

Corresponding Members: Advise Federal Secretary by letter as above when forwarding subscription.

The Military Historical Society of Australia

Federal Council

Notice of 1998 Annual General Meeting

Monday 24 August 1998

at RSL Club Civic ACT

at 7.30 PM

Agenda

- 1 Confirmation of the Minutes of 1997 Annual General Meeting
- 2 Election of three Federal Councillors.*
- 3 Receive and consider the audited Statement of Accounts.
- 4 Appoint the Society Auditor.

* In accordance with section 5(a) of the MHSA Constitution (1993), Tan Roberts, Clem Sargent and Anthony Staunton will retire at this AGM, but are eligible for re-election. Clem Sargent is not offering for re-election. Nominations of the other two retiring Councillors or other members of the Society who consent to nomination may be made to the Federal Secretary before or at the AGM in accordance with Rule 16 of the Society Rules. Barry Clissold, Neville Foldi and Richard Murison continue as Federal Councillors until the 1999 AGM. In accordance with section 6(b) of the MHSA Constitution, Federal office bearers will be elected by and from the six Federal Councillors at the meeting of Federal Council next following the AGM.

Around the Water Cart

by 'Joe Furphy'

- Apparently it is documented 'somewhere' that wrecks of the German Fleet scuttled at Scapa Flow at the end of World War One is the only source of steel that is free of radioactive contamination and is consequently highly prized for the manufacture of specialized scientific instruments etc. Is this factual? What salvage has been done? Where can more information be found? Information to Margaret Neate c/- South Australian Branch (SA Branch minutes Aug 97).
- John Alexander of the New South Wales Military Historical Society is photographing war memorials in New South Wales and has spoken to his Society on those at Obley (30km SW of Wellington), Edgeroi (12km from Narrabri), Tambar Springs (60km south of Gunnedah), Breeza (near Werris Creek) and Louthier (on the Jenolan Caves-Oberon road) (*Despatch*, Journal of the NSW MHA, March-April 1998).
- The Army Museum Bandiana Victoria was originally opened as the Ordnance Corps Museum in 1976 and was reopened in 1997 as the Army Museum Bandiana incorporating the collections of Ordnance, RAEME, Transport, Catering, Medical and Chaplaincy Corps. It also houses special collections maintained by AWAS, Army Apprentices, 2/23rd Battalion and Vietnam Veterans. It is open to the public and is well worth a visit. (*Albury-Wodonga Branch Newsletter*, March 1998)
- On 28 January 1998 a memorial to the Marines of the First Fleet was dedicated at Holy Trinity Church (The Garrison Church) at The Rocks, Sydney having been funded by the Royal Marines Association in Australia. The plaque, high on the north wall of the church, was unveiled by Mrs. Cecily Neilsen, a direct descendant of Private William Tunks, a marine of the First Fleet. (*Royal United Service Institution (Queensland) Bulletin*, March 1998.)
- The Society is receiving complimentary copies of the magazine *International Arms and Militaria Collector*. Issue No 12 of February 1998 contains such articles as 'Australian Corps of Signals Colour Patches to 1945' by our member (and *Sabretache* editorial board member) Paul Skrebels; 'A Compendium of Bayonet References in Books, Collectors' Guides and Military Manuals' by Roger Evans; and part two of a series of articles on 'Pattern 1908 Web Equipment Infantry' by Carl T. Woods. Subscription for one year is \$A27.50. Enquiries to Arms & Militaria Press P.O. Box 80 Labrador Queensland 4215 or telephone 07 5594 7911 or fax 07 5594 7951. Incidentally, the book review pages in the magazine are done by our Queensland Branch secretary, Syd Wigzell. (Issue No 12)
- Those interested in Scottish military history, Scottish regiments and their dress may care to look at the Scottish Military Historical Society's internet web site at <http://subnet.virtual-pc.com/~mcr546467/homepage.htm>. We receive their Journal *Dispatch*, which is issued three times a year.
- It is well known that all VCs are made from the cascabels (the knob on the end of the barrel used for securing ropes to control recoil) of two bronze cannon captured from the Russians during the Crimean War. It has always been assumed that both guns were of Russian origin. However, it is now certain from new metallurgical research that one and probably both were originally Chinese possibly dating from the 17th century or earlier. *Vetaffairs*, a newspaper for the Veteran Community issued by the Department of Veterans Affairs, Volume 14 No 1 March 1998)

- The Army History Unit (AHU) is located at Campbell Park Offices in Canberra with a role to 'protect Army's heritage and promote Army's history'. A small unit headed by Mr Roger Lee, it consists of a Museums Section which has responsibility for all Army Museums and their staffs; a History Section staffed by civilian and Army Reserve researchers and a small administrative section. The title 'Army History Unit' was chosen in order to forge a link with Captain Treloar's Historical Records Section of World War One (ACT Branch Newsletter, February 1998).
- The Office of Australian War Graves has produced a new pocket-sized guide to Australian memorials on the Western Front in France and Belgium. Australians are buried in 596 cemeteries in France and 163 in Belgium. The guide is divided into four sections: Campaigns and Battles, Memorials and Cemeteries and a short section on England to record Australian troops' associations there. The guide includes clear maps with explanatory legends and is available from of charge from the Office of Australian War Graves, PO Box 21, Woden ACT 2606. The Office also has available for sale overprinted Michelin maps showing the location of Commonwealth cemeteries in France and Belgium. (*Vetaffairs* newspaper, March 1998)
- Major General Sir Ivan Dougherty, GOC 7th Aust Div and the last surviving World War 2 Australian Divisional Commander died recently in Sydney. Major General Dougherty commenced his military career in the pre-war militia, originally in Sydney University Regiment and 33rd Battalion, which he commanded on the outbreak of war. Transferring to the AIF he served in the Middle East with 2/2 Bn, transferred to command 2/4 Bn, earned a DSO, and led his battalion through the Greece and Crete campaigns. He commanded 21 Brigade during the Buna-Gona campaign and into Borneo, earning a second DSO along the way. At the end of the war he commanded 7 Div and after the war was the founding director of the NSW Civil Defence and Emergency Services, for service to which he was knighted. (ACT Branch Newsletter and Don Wright, Queensland Branch).
- What is an 'air ace'? According to Dennis Newton in his recent book *Australian Air Aces*, it was generally understood that an air ace was an airman who had shot down five or more opponents. But, he says, *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* explains that the French term applied to an airman who had shot down ten enemy planes and was imported into its English equivalent 'ace'. According to Newton, five became the standard after the entry of the Americans into World War One (Book reviewed in *Despatch*, Journal of the NSW Military Historical Society, November-December 1997).
- Some special books of possible interest to collectors:
 - *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918*; 12 volumes in very good condition, uniform bindings, all dated 1941-42: \$750.
 - As above, 12 volumes various editions, some variation in binding colour, condition mainly good: \$650.
 - *Head Dress Badges of the British Army - Volume 1* (up to the end of the Great War). Arthur L. Kipling and Hugh L. King. 479 pages, approx. 1900 illustrations, v. good condition, hard cover: \$155.
 - *Medal Yearbook 1998*, Mackay. J (Ed); Token. 1998; 336 pp; illustrated, card cover. New \$40.
 - *For Distinguished Conduct and Meritorious Service*. Roll of all Australians awarded the DC from 1899 to 1920. Barton L.L.; Published by NSW MHS Ryde 1984. New \$12. All

the above from K.R.White Books, PO Box 1767 Tuggeranong ACT 2901, telephone 02-62926600 (Catalogue No 84, February 1.9.98 received).

- A Sydney-based company, The Light Horseman, founded by Major Greg McCauley, is marketing a range of Australian-oriented wargaming figures from World War 1 to Vietnam in 25mm and 20mm. Write to the company at POI Box 107 Macarthur Square MS 2560. (ACT Branch Newsletter March 1998).
- The *Sydney Morning Herald* ran a series from 3 May to 21 December 1915 entitled 'Heroes of the Dardanelles' and consisting of over 1600 photographs of those who were killed, wounded, missing or decorated during the early months of the Gallipoli campaign. Tzompantli Publications of GPO Box 975 Sydney 2001 has published the first of a two-part series which indexes these photographs alphabetically and by place of origin showing rank, place of origin, reason for inclusion (death, missing, etc), date of appearance and page reference to the SM. it consists of one spiral bound volume of 100 leaves and costs \$10 Plus postage of \$5.50 inside MS and \$6.50 outside MS within AUSTRALIA. A sample alphabetical entry is:
 - Abbott J E; Private; NSW North Sydney; Missing; SMH 24 September 1915, page 5.A sample geographic entry is:
 - NSW; Gundagai; Sullivan; Bob; Private; Killed in Action; 10 September 1915; SMH 10 September 1915, page 3.
- During World War 1, six soldiers of the Australian Imperial Force were awarded the Military Cross, the Distinguished Conduct Medal and the Military Medal. One other soldier, John (Jack) O'Brien of the 4th Divisional Signal Company won these three decorations and also a Bar to the Military Medal. He was the only soldier in the AIF to win these four awards. He finished the war as a Lieutenant and served again in World War Two until May 1945, reaching the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He died in May 1974. The entry in the Australian Dictionary of Biography: O'Brien, John Patrick (1892-1974) states that he was awarded the French Croix de Guerre. However, according to our member Jim Moore, there is no record in the French or Belgian archives that he ever received such an award. (*Despatch*, journal of the NSWMHS, September-October 1977)

Notes from the Editor on contributions to *Sabretache*

While the following are merely guidelines, it certainly helps the Editor in preparing copy for publication if these guidelines are followed. Nevertheless, potential contributors should not be deterred by them if, for example, you do not have access to computers or typewriters. Handwritten articles are always welcome, although, if publication deadlines are tight, they might not be published until the next issue.

Typewritten submissions are preferred. Material should be double spaced with a margin. If your article is prepared on a computer please send a copy on a 3.5' disk (together with a paper copy).

Please write dates in the form 11 June 1993, without punctuation. Ranks, initials and decorations should be without full-stops, eg, Capt B J R Brown MC MM.

Please feel free to use footnotes, which should be grouped at the end of the article (however, when published in *Sabretache* they will appear at the foot of the relevant page). As well as references cited, footnotes should be used for asides that are not central to the article.

Photos to illustrate the article are welcomed and encouraged. However, if you can, forward copies of photos rather than originals.

Articles, preferably, should be in the range of 2,000-2,500 words (approx 4 typeset pages) or 5,000-7,000 words (approx 10 typeset pages) for major feature articles. Articles should be submitted in accordance with the time limits indicated on page 2. Recently, lateness in receiving articles has meant that the Journal has been delayed in publication. Nevertheless, where an article is of particular importance, but is received late, the Editor will endeavour to publish the article if possible and space permitting.

Authors of published articles retain copyright of their articles, but once an article is published in *Sabretache*, the Society, as well as the author, each have the independent right to republish (electronically or in print), or licence the use of the article.

Elizabeth Topperwien
Editor



.....

Application for Membership

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