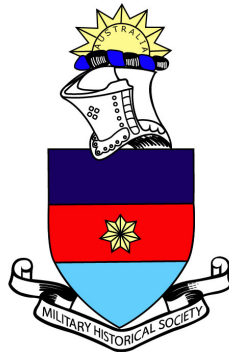


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Sabretache



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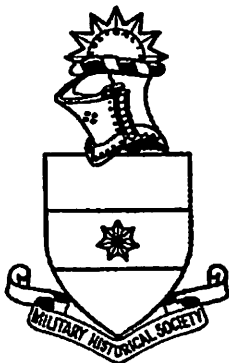
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Contributions in the form of articles, notes, queries or letters are always welcome. Authors of major articles are invited to submit a brief biographical note, and, where possible, submit the text of the article on floppy disk as well as hard copy. The annual subscription to *Sabretache* is \$26.

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SABRETACHE

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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.

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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.

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The Recent Military History of Ambon, Indonesia

Captain Paul Rosenzweig¹

The island of Ambon has been the site of military actions of various sorts fought over the centuries by those jealous of either her spices or strategic location. Particularly significant in recent times has been the part played by a relatively little known component of the second Australian Imperial Force – the 2/21st Battalion Group AIF – known proudly as “Gull Force”. There is today a strong link between the cities of Ambon and Darwin, forged when Darwin was a staging point for the Australian defenders of Ambon in 1941-42, and reinforced in 1988 when a Sister-Cities agreement was ratified between the Municipality of Ambon and the City of Darwin. On Anzac Day 1993, Gull Force veterans made another pilgrimage to Ambon, their commemorative services and community assistance helping to further strengthen already strong links with both Darwin and Australia.

The small island of Ambon is part of what was for many years known as the Moluccas group, now a province known by the Indonesians as Maluku, just west of what was Dutch New Guinea (now Irian Jaya). The Portuguese were the first to have established a settlement on Ambon, in 1521, but their Fort Victoria was taken over by the Dutch in 1605. Control then alternated between the Dutch and the English (when Ambon was the centre of the spice trade) until 1814 when the Dutch resumed control.

Britain had assumed control of the Moluccas during the Napoleonic Wars but, upon the return of the Dutch, there were several local insurrections. Thomas Matulesy, a former British Army Sergeant-Major², led a large party of local Alfur head-hunters in a resistance movement which, in 1817, occupied Fort Duurstede on Saparua Island (in the Eastern Lease Islands) near Ambon. At one time, Matulesy's rebels captured an entire Dutch contingent and all were executed at sunset but for one, the son of the Dutch commander. For this touching act, Matulesy was given the name Pattimura meaning “generous-hearted one”, and he assumed the rank of Captain (Kapten).

Pattimura was subsequently betrayed by one of the village chiefs on Saparua and was handed over to the Dutch on Ambon; with some of his followers, Pattimura was hanged on 16 December 1817 and his body was ditched in the Molucca Sea. To the Indonesians, Pattimura is a Pahlawan Perjuangan Kemerdekaan, a patriot or hero in the struggle for independence. There is an annual celebration starting at Saparua on 14 May and finishing in Ambon, and a large revolutionary-style statue in Ambon today marks the site of his execution by the Dutch.

As a consequence of this and other actions, the KNIL (Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger or Royal Netherlands Indies Army) was raised in 1830, comprising native Moluccan troops under Dutch commanders and fulfilling purely an internal security role. By 1941, Ambon was a well incorporated part of the Netherlands East Indies (NEI), but it was recognised that the KNIL was not able to defend the NEI against an external aggressor.

¹ Paul Rosenzweig has served in the Army Reserve since 1979, was commissioned in 1985 and has served as a reconnaissance troop commander, infantry platoon commander and reconnaissance squadron 2IC while, as a Captain on full-time service, he was the first Adjutant of 7th Training Group in Darwin. He has been Aide to the Administrator of the Northern Territory since 1991, concurrently seconded by the Department of Defence as the Administrator's ADC.

² Born on 8 June 1783.

“Gull Force”

Following discussions with the Dutch in early 1941, the Australian Government had promised to hold troops in Darwin ready to assist in the defence of Ambon and Timor if Japan entered the war. The 2/21st Battalion was formed after the fall of France, of men from the Riverina district of NSW, country Victoria and Melbourne and, in March 1941, was sent to Darwin on garrison duties as a component of the 23rd Brigade³. In Darwin, it became the 2/21st Battalion Group, known operationally as “Gull Force”, and was to become one of a number of forces deployed to the north of Australia to confront and stall the Japanese.⁴ In order to fulfil its role, the battalion was strongly supplemented by auxiliary troops from the 23rd Brigade, including a Field Ambulance company, an anti-tank troop, a section of engineers and various other support elements.⁵

On 14 December 1941, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel L N Roach, the 1,131 men of Gull Force sailed on the Dutch transports *Both*, *Velentijn* and *Patras* (escorted by the cruisers *Adelaide* and *Ballarat*) and, on arrival in Ambon on 17 December, they marched into Tantui barracks a little north of the town. The KNIL commander⁶, Lieutenant Colonel J R L Kapitz, assumed overall command of Allied forces on Ambon. Colonel Roach’s directive from Army Headquarters was to put up the best defence possible with the resources at his disposal, bearing in mind that the defence of the strategic Laha airfield⁷ on the southern coast of the Hitu Peninsula was the major objective of the Allied forces.

Eager to acquire the oilfields and Dutch refineries in the East Indies to provide the petroleum that its industrial might badly needed, the Japanese forces commenced a three-pronged sweep through the Celebes and the Moluccas to strike at Malaya, Borneo, Sumatra and Java, to forcibly bring the NEI into the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Japanese aircraft of the eastern force attacked Ambon on 6 January 1942 and on 10 January, due to difficulties experienced between the Australian and Dutch units working beside each other, Kapitz offered Roach the choice of two sectors to be taken over completely. Roach chose the Bay of Ambon sector, which comprised Laha Airfield and the entire northern coast of Laitimor Peninsula, facing the Bay, and Gull Force redeployed.⁸ The Dutch forces were mainly emplaced at Paso on the isthmus, near the Bay of Baguala where the main assault was expected.

³ 23rd Brigade AIF was commanded in 1940-42 by Brigadier E F Lind CBE DSO VD. A medical practitioner, he was a veteran of World War 1 in which he had commanded the 2nd Field Ambulance in 1918-19, and he had commanded the Australian Military contingent to the Coronation of King George VI in 1937. 23 Brigade was under the overall command of Brigadier D V J Blake, Commander 7th Military District.

⁴ The other such forces included Lark Force (2/22nd Battalion Group) at Rabaul, Robin Force (2/3rd Independent Company) on New Caledonia. The 2/12th Field Ambulance had a company with each of Gull, Sparrow and Lark Forces and all three were lost, with only the headquarters element which remained in Darwin surviving. The unit was subsequently reformed for service in New Guinea in 1943.

⁵ A company of the 2/12th Field Ambulance, “C” Troop, 18th Anti-Tank Battery, a section of engineers from the 2/11th Field Company, a detachment from the 23rd Brigade Signal Section, an Australian Army Service Corps section, a detachment from the 23rd Dental Unit and 104th Light Aid Detachment.

⁶ The Dutch KNIL forces already on the island in December 1941 comprised some 2,600 men — coastal artillery and Indonesian troops (mostly local Ambonese and Menadonese from North Celebes) organised into companies commanded by Dutch officers.

⁷ Largely used by the Hudsons of Number 13 Squadron RAAF.

⁸ a. Laha Airfield: B Company less one platoon (Captain D G Perry) and C Company (Captain N E Watchorn), with some 300 Dutch troops and two Dutch Bofors.

b. Latubhalat (southwestern tip of the Laitimor Peninsula): A rifle section supported by engineers and Bren carriers.

Gull Force had no naval or air support, however, and almost no heavy weapons, and Roach's continued demands for additional men and equipment saw him replaced by Lieutenant Colonel William John Randall Scott⁹, a veteran of Gallipoli, the Sinai and France during the Great War; as a Captain in the 19th Battalion AIF he had been decorated with the DSO for conspicuous gallantry in action at Flers on 14 November 1916. On that day, he had rallied the battalion together at a crucial stage of the battle and formed a strong point on their vital ground, repelling all attempts by the enemy to seize it. He then, "by judicious use of his machine-guns, kept off several threatened enemy attacks, thereby saving a critical situation"¹⁰. Now on Ambon 25 years later, he would need all the judicious tactics he could muster to again rally his battalion and save a most desperate situation.



Gull Force Laha Airfield Memorial at Tawiri.

Scott arrived in Ambon on 16 January, while on 24 January aircraft from the Japanese carriers Soryu and Hiryu commenced a series of air attacks against Ambon. The Japanese invasion fleet appeared on the horizon on 30 January and before long some 27,000 troops were swarming ashore. Marines of the 1st Kure Special Naval Landing Force (a battalion group about 820-

-
- c. Eri (southwestern end): A Company (Major G deV Westley) with a Dutch company (Captain E P Bouman) protecting their left flank.
 - d. Cape Batuanjut (just north of Eri): A platoon from B Company (Lieutenant W J Chaplin).
 - e. Amahusu (midway between Eri and the town of Ambon): Battalion HQ and vehicle-mounted D Company (Captain C F Newnham), along a line extending inland to Mount Nona.
 - f. Mount Nona: Pioneer Platoon (Lieutenant W T Jenkins).
 - g. Kudamati (south of the town of Ambon): transport, LAD and other detachments.
 - h. A Dutch rifle company and mortars were sent to Hitu-lama on the north coast, and another company was sent to cover the Australian left flank at Eri.

⁹ Interestingly, Scott had been a driving force behind the formation of the Australian independent (commando) companies, had been the staff officer at Army HQ G Branch (Special Operations) co-ordinating the despatch of the three "special" forces, had suggested that Roach be relieved of his command, and had then volunteered to lead Gull Force himself.

¹⁰ *The London Gazette*, 10 January 1917.

strong) and an Army company landed at HituLama on the northern coast of the island, opposed only by a Dutch platoon tasked with fighting a delaying action (the remainder of the company had been withdrawn to Paso); bridges had not been destroyed so there was little difficulty experienced by the marines in advancing south. An advance party struck at Laha Airfield on the afternoon of 31 January, and a concentrated assault began at dawn on 2 February, all resistance ceasing by 10.00 am. Of the 292 officers and men defending Laha airstrip, 47 were killed and 229 were later executed at Laha after surrendering, slaughtered by their captors in reprisal for their resistance.

Meanwhile, the 228th Infantry Regimental Group (about 4,500-strong) of the Japanese Imperial Army's 38th Division had landed on the southern coast of the Laitimor Peninsula at Hutumori and from Baguala Bay in the east. The defences at Paso, oriented to an attack from the north, were easily overcome by this assault from the south. Paso fell on 31 January, the Dutch surrendered on 1 February, and the Japanese advanced in overwhelming numbers, with frontal attacks against the Australian positions, through Kudamati and onto the Nona Plateau, the Australians pulling back towards the town of Eri.

A few escaped the island (a total of 52 managed to escape either before the surrender or from the POW camp), but some 600 Australians fell in battle before the Force was forced to capitulate on 3 February, Colonel Scott's surrender being accepted personally by the Commander of the Japanese Imperial Force, a veteran of the war in Manchuria.¹¹ As a result of the stubborn defence by the three Australian Forces on Ambon, Rabaul and Timor, the Japanese High Command feared a counter-offensive and deployed their 48th Division to Timor and the 5th Division, veterans of the Malayan campaign, to Ambon and Western New Guinea, these comprising a new Army with headquarters on Ceram island. Thus, Gull, Lark and Sparrow Forces had immobilised two divisions – over 30,000 elite Japanese troops – at a critical time in the war when the Australian mainland was seen to be under threat of invasion.

On 4 February, 809 members of Gull Force were marched into their former barracks at Tantui while, in October 1942, a third of them were taken to POW camps on the Japanese-occupied island of Hainan where they were treated shockingly and beaten continually. Of the 267 taken to Hainan, 75 died there and are buried in the British Commonwealth War Cemetery in Yokohama in Japan, and 10 remain unaccounted for and are named on the memorial at Kranji War Cemetery in Singapore.

By 1943, the prisoners at Tantui were suffering from deficiency diseases and in the last year of captivity were starving – one survivor recalls that he was reduced to just 28 kilograms. They became so weak that they were no longer able to lower the dead into their graves in a dignified manner and, later in the war, were unable even to dig graves.¹² The death rate of Gull Force was greater than that on the Burma/Thailand railway: of the 528 men who remained in camp at Tantui, 407 died and were buried within the grounds and only 121 survived, while from Hainan only 182 survived. From a force totalling 1,131¹³, the 300 Gull Force survivors who lived to return to Australia at the end of the war were disappointed to find that they were merely regarded as repatriated prisoners rather than heroic defenders.

¹¹ This same Japanese Colonel later summoned Her Britannic Majesty's Consul in Dili, Mr David Ross, requesting the surrender of the Australians of 2/2nd Commando Company.

¹² Mr Reg Brassey, Pers Comm, 24-25 April 1993.

¹³ Comprising 779 dead (694 buried at Tantui, 75 buried in Yokohama and 10 unaccounted for listed in Singapore), 52 escaped, and 300 repatriated to Australia.

After sweeping through the Celebes and Moluccas, the Battles of Lombok Strait (19-20 February 1942) and Java Sea (27-28 February) were followed by assaults on Batavia itself on 1 March and the KNIL, which had enjoyed over a century of domination, was forced to capitulate on 8 March 1942.¹⁴ Towards the end of the war, as the Japanese drew back into a "Zone of Absolute National Defence" and the Allied forces swept westwards along the top of Western New Guinea and thence up to Leyte Gulf in the Philippines, Ambon itself was almost completely destroyed by Allied bombs in August 1944.

War Memorials

At the site of the Laha airfield massacre, a simple monument was erected by occupation troops on 1 January 1946, commemorating Australian and Allied troops who died on Ambon in January and February 1942. Upon the revisit by Gull Force veterans in October 1967, and with the assistance of the Australian Embassy, Jakarta, this monument was given a paved area and fenced off from the village of Tawiri which had sprung up around it. Another small monument at an execution site in the Laha area is today to be found in a villager's yard.

After the war, the site of the Japanese POW Camp at Tantui which contained so many dead Australians was handed over by the people of Indonesia as a Commonwealth War Cemetery, and was consecrated as such on 2 April 1968, six months following the first return visit by veterans. Inside the entrance gates are two plaques – one in English and the other in Indonesian – acknowledging the land as a perpetual gift from the people of Indonesia. This is perhaps a unique history for a plot of land – from barracks to POW camp to War Cemetery. It contains the graves of over 2,000 Service personnel, from Australia, New Zealand, England, the Netherlands and India, including the Australian War Correspondent Damien Parer who was killed in New Guinea. There are 694 members of Gull Force buried there, and a special monument acknowledges this fact; some of the bodies were indistinguishable and unidentifiable, and there are rows of bronze headstones simply recording, "An Australian



Plaque on a Gull Force memorial in the Ambon War Cemetery.

¹⁴ And would later face official disbandment upon Indonesian independence in 1950.

soldier, known unto God". Two large bronze plaques in a separate memorial record the names of a considerable number whose remains were not located, including many of those executed at Laha.

At the time of their first return visit to Ambon, in October 1967, the Gull Force veterans presented the Governor of Maluku with a bronze replica of the RSL badge and a bronze plaque to commemorate their visit and to recognise the Australians who served and died on Ambon. Immediately following the consecration of the Ambon War Cemetery in April 1968, the Governor of Maluku Colonel Latumahina took the Gull Force contingent of nine veterans to Kudamati¹⁵ where an Australian War Memorial was unveiled. The people of the village had donated the land, the Governor had arranged the design of the memorial at the Bandung Technical Institute, and the erection of the monument and its surrounding fences and gates was carried out by local Ambonese. The monument was established on Jalan Kayadou on a site where the Australians had made a stand against the Japanese.

This memorial has, for some time, been the subject of a rather serious misconception. In some tourism publications, it is referred to as Tuga Dolan (Dolan Memorial) although this is in itself incorrect as the soldier's name was Doolan. Doolan allegedly single-handedly held up a significant Japanese force while covering the withdrawal of his mates, until he was eventually overwhelmed and killed. From this monument can be seen the knoll where Doolan made his stand, while his body, recovered by the local Ambonese after the fight, was buried near the site where the monument today stands. Further, the local Ambonese have a rhyme honouring the actions of Doolan. He was in reality, however, in the wrong place, in defiance of orders, and any attempt to praise his actions brings nothing but scorn from Gull Force veterans.¹⁶ Various attempts to have his actions honoured have faltered in the past, and it is stressed by veterans that the Australian War Memorial Kudamati was erected to honour the bravery of all members of Gull Force and of the Australian Services. As part of their ongoing commitment to the people of Ambon, a Medical Aid Programme was instituted in 1967 and the Gull Force veterans continue to bring valuable medical supplies and equipment for the General Hospital at Kudamati where, upon their return each year, they are hailed as heroes.

On Anzac Day 1992, in the Northern Territory's War Service Memorial Year, Gull Force survivors held another annual commemorative service in Ambon, their most successful yet, attended by 32 members of Gull Force, five veterans who had served in the Ambon theatre, and 23 serving members of No. 13 Squadron RAAF (which had served on Ambon during the war), accompanied by 150 relatives of men who died in Ambon. They travelled courtesy of the Department of Defence, on two RAAF C-30 Hercules transport aircraft and the RAN frigate HMAS *Launceston*. This pilgrimage, an annual event since the first in 1967, has for some years now been co-ordinated by Lieutenant Colonel Rod Gabriel MBE ED (retd).

In Australia, a monument in the gardens of the Adelaide River War Cemetery honours 287 members of the RAN, Australian Army, RAAF, Merchant Navy and Services Reconnaissance Department who were killed in northern Australia, Timor, or the waters north of 20° S latitude and do not have a recorded grave. Further, Gull Force Hall in Larrakeyah Barracks was named in recognition of the men of Gull Force who served in Darwin and in defence of Ambon in 1941-42, and as Prisoners of War on Ambon and Hainan Islands, 1942-45. Some relics of their service are contained in a display case inside the hall and a plaque in the garden outside the hall commemorates the men of Gull Force.

¹⁵ Kudama literally means "dead horse".

¹⁶ Lieutenant Colonel R C Gabriel MBE ED (retd), Pers Comm, 5 May 1993.

Moluccas rebellion

Near the Allied Forces Cemetery at Tantui is the Indonesian Heroes Cemetery (Taman Makam Pahlawan), dedicated to those Indonesian soldiers killed in the post-war campaign to suppress the Maluku rebellion. This was the second of what the Indonesians call Bom-Bom Waktu Kolonial (Colonial Time-Bombs) – insurrections inspired or spurred on by remnants of the Dutch colonial forces.¹⁷

On 27 December 1949, following bitter battles throughout the archipelago, the transfer of sovereignty from the Dutch was effected, and the following day Dr Soekarno¹⁸ was announced as President of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia (RIS Republik Indonesia Serikat).¹⁹ However, this Federation included the semi-independent State of East Indonesia (Negara Indonesia Timur) created by Van Mook, which opposed the formation of a unitary Republic. Soekarno was also appointed Commander of the Armed Forces (APRIS – Angkatan Perang RIS), which absorbed many of the officers and men of the disbanded KNIL. Unrest and open rebellion were fomented by former Dutch troops, together with Moluccan soldiers who had served the Dutch for many years, and they were also joined by various Moslem elements whose stirrings for independence had been allowed to flourish while the Christian Ambonese were suppressed by the Japanese.

While former Dutch Captain Andi Abdul Azis²⁰ led his rebellion in Makassar to ensure the viability of the East Indonesian State, in Ambon on 25 April 1950 Dr Christopher R S Soumokil proclaimed the independent Muslim state, Republik Maluku Selatan (Republic of the South Moluccas), seeking autonomy from both RIS and Van Mook's East Indonesian State. The KNIL troops which were forced to withdraw from the Azis rebellion in Makassar were transferred to Ambon and became the backbone of a prolonged RMS rebellion.

On 14 July, Colonel Alex Kawilarang's Expeditionary Troops landed at Laha on Buru Island, with smaller landings on Seram, Tanimbar, Aru and the Kei Islands. After resistance on Seram was neutralised, troops landed on the beaches of Ambon on 28 September 1950 and fighting broke out at Waitatiri and Poso. Waitatiri fell on 3 November 1950 and on the same day APRIS troops entered the town of Ambon. The remainder of the RMS troops escaped into the jungle and continued to carry out terrorist attacks, but the self-proclaimed "President of the RMS", Dr Soumokil, was eventually captured during Operasi Masohi²¹, on 12 December 1963, and was sentenced to death.

¹⁷ The first was the APRA rebellion in Bandung and Djakarta, West Java, 23-24 January 1950 by former Dutch KNIL troops under the command of Captain Raymond Westerling, fighting for a Moslem Indonesian republic.

¹⁸ Following the modernisation of the Indonesian language in 1972, "oe" became "u" and thus Soekarno became Sukarno. Contemporary spelling is used here.

¹⁹ This federal structure was soon abolished by Sukarno and the entire archipelago was incorporated into the Republik Indonesia, which was formally established in August 1950.

²⁰ Andi Abdul Azis had been the Adjutant-Lieutenant of the puppet East Indonesian State and, with the formation of APRIS, on 30 March 1950 had become a Captain commanding a company of former KNIL soldiers. In Makassar (Ujung Pandang since 1971) a few days later, with the support of a KNIL battalion which had not joined APRIS, Andi Azis arrested the Acting Commander of the East Indonesian Territorium, Lieutenant Colonel Achmad Yunus Mokoginta, and his entire staff. Azis failed to meet an ultimatum set by the RIS Central Government, and consequently APRIS Expeditionary Troops were despatched from Java to quell the rebellion. Rebel forces were withdrawn by the end of August, and in 1953, Azis was sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment by a military court in Yogyakarta.

²¹ The troops responsible for capturing Soumokil belonged to 2 Platoon, 2nd Company, 320th Infantry Battalion (*Badak Putih* — "White Rhinoceros") of the 15th Infantry Brigade, Siliwangi Division from West Java.



Detail of plaque at the Australian War Memorial Kudamati

Satya Lencana Gerakan Operasi Militer 3 (GOM 3) was instituted by the Indonesian Government for service from 25 April to November 1950, in putting down the Andi Azis rebellion in the Moluccas and then in the subsequent campaign against the Muslim state, Republik Maluku Selatan (Republic of the South Moluccas), which had been proclaimed in Makassar and Ambon. Indonesian medals are known by the title of Satya Lencana ('Badge of Loyalty')²² and there is a particular series of campaign medals which reward a variety of military deployment operations (Gerakan Operasi Militer – GOM). These were mostly small campaigns throughout the archipelago putting down insurrections and rebellions by the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI)²³ or by various

separatist Muslim terrorist groups.²⁴ GOM III is a circular medal with a scalloped edge, and with a plain reverse bearing the inscription REPUBLIK INDONESIA in raised capitals while the obverse bears the letters GOM III within a wreath comprising the national symbols of rice and cotton.²⁵ The ribbon is red with five yellow stripes towards the centre, not evenly spaced.

This incident, in the intervening years between war service and pilgrimage, was to hold some significance for the Gull Force veterans. When they decided to make their first pilgrimage back to Ambon, it was agreed that ANZAC Day, as a day of national remembrance, would be the most appropriate time. The Indonesian authorities were, for a time, a little wary of the motives of the pilgrims – why would a group of Australians wish to hold a commemorative service on the anniversary of the founding by rebels of the breakaway Republik Maluku Selatan? Once the coincidence of the date was explained and the Australian significance understood, the authorities were more than helpful, and strong links began to be renewed. Today, as well as the

²² Referred to as Satyalantjana prior to the modernisation of the Indonesian language in 1972.

²³ PKI: Partai Komunis Indonesia.

²⁴ Notably Darul Islam (Islamic State) terrorists of the rebel Tentara Islam Indonesia (Islamic Army of Indonesia).

²⁵ Symbolising "food and clothing for all", from the fifth principle of Pancasila, that of Social Justice.

annual pilgrimage, there is a mid-year Darwin-Ambon yacht race and, through the Sister-City bond,²⁶ a series of teacher and student exchanges.

Komando Daerah Militer VIII/Trikora

The Indonesian Army has always been organised geographically, with each Military Area Command (Komando Daerah Militer – KODAM) having a divisional structure, although they are no longer regarded as tactical formations. Following independence from the Dutch, President Soekarno established seven such Area Commands – with KODAM VII/Udayana covering the eastern islands of the archipelago – Sulawesi (formerly Celebes), Maluku (Moluccas) and Nusa Tenggara (Lesser Sunda Islands).²⁷



Pattimura monument, and insignia of the Indonesian Army's 15th Military District Command (KODAM XV / Pattimura) from the 1960s, which had its Headquarters in Ambon and was responsible for Maluku.

A decade later however, the Indonesian Army had expanded to such an extent that there were seventeen KODAMs, again organised geographically but structured as divisions. The Maluku provincial area became the responsibility of KODAM XV/Pattimura, with its Headquarters at Ambon. The division's name was taken from the name of Kapten Pattimura (Thomas Matulesy), the famous 19th Century Moluccan patriot in the fight against the Dutch. His statue in Ambon (described by unappreciative travel guides as "absolutely awful") on the site of his execution in 1817, bears the insignia of the old KODAM XV/Pattimura which depicted a bird of paradise (tjenderawasih) and native hunting spear, with the date 1817.

At the same time KODAM XVII/Tjenderawasih was established in Irian Jaya²⁸ as the Indonesian Army's 17th Area Command, named after the covert penetration behind Dutch lines in Western New Guinea by KOSTRAD²⁹ and the subsequent campaign of armed

²⁶ Letter of Intent signed by J Dicky Wattimena, Lord Mayor of the Municipality of Ambon, and Alec Fong Lim AM, Lord Mayor of the City of Darwin, 28 October 1988.

²⁷ There were also two in Sumatera (Sumatra), three in Jawah (Java) and one in Kalimantan (Borneo).

²⁸ Irian is an acronym of Ikut Republik Indonesia Anti-Netherlands ("Follow the Indonesian Republic against the Netherlands"), and Jaya means victorious.

²⁹ KOSTRAD: Komando Strategis Angkatan Darat, the Army's Strategic Command.



Indonesian Military Deployment Medal III (GOM III), for service in putting down the Moluccas Rebellion, 1950.



Shoulder insignia of the modern Indonesian 8th Military District Command (KODAM VIII / Trikora), with Headquarters in Ambon and responsible for Maluku and Irian Jaya.

insurgency prior to the main assault to liberate the province. The actual liberation of Western New Guinea from Dutch rule, 19 December 1961 to 1 May 1963, had been code-named Operasi Trikora (Tri-Komando Rakyat – People's Triple Command). The name of this operation has since been taken by the modern KODAM VIII/Trikora, with headquarters³⁰ in Ambon, which has responsibility for both the Maluku province and Irian Jaya.

The modern 8th Military Area Command was formed by the incorporation of the two divisions which had previously existed in the region – KODAM XV/Pattimura in Maluku and KODAM XVII/Tjenderawasih in Irian Jaya – and its shoulder insignia features the bird of paradise (cenderawasih³¹), incorporating the insignia of the former and the name of the latter. Another barracks within the city of Ambon, headquarters to the 733rd Infantry Battalion, is built on the

³⁰ On the outskirts of Ambon town, in the barracks formerly occupied by KODAM XV / Pattimura.

³¹ Tjenderawasih, spelt Cenderawasih since the standardisation of the language in 1972.

historic site of Fort Victoria, which was established by the Portuguese in 1521, taken over by the Dutch in 1605 and rebuilt in 1775.

On an island where the insignia of the modern Indonesian Army's KODAM VIII (loosely, their "8th Division") is to be seen everywhere, that a banner was displayed at the Ambon War Cemetery bearing the black over red diamond of the 2/21st Battalion AIF upon the horizontal grey oval of the Australian 8th Division was an interesting coincidence, perhaps only noticeable to a military historian. And that such a large plot of land should be given by the people of Indonesia as the perpetual resting place for Allied sailors, soldiers and airmen, including many 8th Division soldiers who defended the island, and were then imprisoned and buried in the grounds of what had been their barracks, was an act of great generosity. The magnitude of this gift is evidenced by the crowded village housing in the foothills surrounding the War Cemetery, land dedicated to the remains of some 2,000 foreigners which could instead provide housing for at least twice as many local Ambonese.

The Australian involvement in the recent military history of Ambon may have been brief when compared the extensive Portuguese or Dutch eras, but in living memory has been the most honoured. Relics of forts remain but have been built over, visits must be arranged well in advance and photography is forbidden by the authorities; massive statues commemorate the heroism of just two local patriots, Pattimura and Martha Khristina Tiahahu³²; and the Taman Makam Pahlawan honours those military patriots in post-war Ambon. By comparison, the efforts of the Australians are commemorated by two memorials at Tawiri, the impressive Allied War Cemetery at Tantui which includes the large honour roll and Gull Force monument, and the Gull Force Memorial at Kudamati as well as, in Australia, Gull Force Hall in Darwin and a general monument at Adelaide River to those with no known grave.

There are now many strong links between Australia (particularly Darwin) and Ambon, first forged in 1942, and renewed annually through pilgrimages, yacht races and Sister-City exchanges. All that is needed now is a direct air link to allow the relationship to further develop.

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³² Born 4 January 1800; died 2 January 1818 and buried in the Maluku Sea — an Ambonese leader of the revolution against the Dutch who assumed command after her father was executed. Her statue is atop Karang Panjang Hill overlooking the town and harbour.

³³ Awarded the Bronze Medal of the Royal Humane Society in 1947 for saving a life whilst a fireman.

A Man Of Immense Prestige — Lieutenant-General W H E “Strafer” Gott CB CBE DSO MC

David Vivian

William Henry Ewart Gott was born on 13 August 1897 at Scarborough, the son of a Lieutenant-Colonel. His early education was at Harrow and after this, he passed into the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. In February 1915 he was commissioned into the King's Royal Rifle Corps (KRRC). Gott served in the 2nd Battalion in France and in July 1917 he was wounded in action and taken prisoner. His actions at this time led to the award of the MC. During his time as a POW, Gott attempted to escape a number of times and on one occasion he even got as far as the Dutch border. It was during the First World War that Gott gained the nickname of “Strafer”.

In 1921 he was promoted Captain, and between September 1925 and October 1928 was adjutant of the 13th London Regiment TA. Later Gott entered the Staff College from which he graduated in 1931. January 1934 saw him gazetted to a brevet Majority. In this same year Gott married and from this union came two daughters. Between 1934 and 1938 Gott served in India. He served as GSO 2 in India until February 1936 after which he was appointed DAQMG in Baluchistan. This was a post he held until December 1937. Briefly, in 1938, he was Second-in-Command of the 2nd Battalion, KRRC. From here he was given command of the 1st Battalion, KRRC in the same year.³⁴

The 1st Battalion, KRRC had recently arrived in Egypt from Burma where it formed the first infantry component of the Mobile Force which had been raised by Major-General Percy Hobart in 1938 as an armoured division virtually from scratch.³⁵ Gott prepared his battalion for mobile war with great energy and taught himself and his men to know the desert environment well. It was said that Gott gained a reputation for knowing more about the Western Desert than any other senior officer. Gott said of the desert that: “To him who knows it, the desert can be a fortress: to him who does not, it can be a death trap.”³⁶ The foundations for this knowledge were laid in the immediate pre-war period.

On 16 February 1940, the Mobile Force officially became the 7th Armoured Division (the famous Desert Rats) and Gott became the GSO 1 of the Division. He was the Division's first wartime GSO 1.³⁷ By November 1940, Gott had been promoted to Brigadier and commanded the Support Group of the Division. The Support Group was a mixed infantry-artillery organisation. The infantry, known as “mounted infantry”, were lorry borne. They were trained to dismount quickly to get into action as the lorries could not be exposed directly to the enemy.³⁸

³⁴ Most of the above information comes from L G Wickham and J T Williams (eds) *Dictionary of National Biography*, 1941-1950, London, 1959, 310-312; *The Times*, 11 August 1942, p.6

³⁵ G Forty, *Desert Rats at War: North Africa, Europe*, London, 1980, p.28

³⁶ *The Times*, 11/8/42, p.6

³⁷ Forty, p.38

³⁸ Forty, p.74

Following Italy's entry into the war on 11 June 1940 the 7th Armoured Division, as part of Western Desert Force, moved up to the Egyptian frontier. Aggressive patrolling by forces under Gott's command at this time caused the Italians to think that they faced far more men than were actually deployed against them.³⁹ When the Italians invaded Egypt in September 1940 Gott withdrew skilfully before them. In December 1940, Lieutenant-General Richard O'Connor began Operation "Compass" which had the task of kicking the Italians out of Egypt (they had cautiously advanced to Sidi Barrani) and beyond if possible. On paper it was a formidable task as the Italians greatly outnumbered the British/Commonwealth forces. The offensive was a great success with Sidi Barrani, Bardia and Tobruk being rapidly captured. In February 1941, in order to prevent the Italians escaping altogether, O'Connor sent 7th Armoured Division deep into the desert to get behind the Italians and cut off their retreat. These rapid armoured thrusts into the desert were to be a great feature of the desert war.

4th Armoured Brigade severed the Italian escape route at Beda Fomm. With the escape route cut, and being pressed by the 6th Australian Division, the Italian army surrendered on 9 February. It has been said of Operation "Compass" that the British/Commonwealth forces were superior to the Italians in every way. O'Connor's control of his forces was tight, and the level of training in units like 7th Armoured Division was very high.⁴⁰ Part of the praise for the level of training belongs to Gott. Gott was very much a fighting general as well as an effective trainer of troops.

After the rapid advance the 7th Armoured Division was withdrawn to Cairo for refitting. However Gott was not to be out of action for long. Following Rommel's entry into the Desert War in March/April 1941 and his rapid advance to the Egyptian frontier, besieging Tobruk and negating O'Connor's success, Gott's Support Group was recalled to the frontier as the only force that General Wavell, GOC, Middle East, could find to put into the line. His force consisted of 22nd Guards Brigade and four "Jock Columns". The latter were mixed units raised for harassment of the enemy's supply lines and rear areas generally. They were named by the troops after the man who raised them, J C "Jock" Campbell VC DSO MC.⁴¹ "Jock" Campbell and Gott were close friends.

Rommel's advance had come to a halt on the Egyptian frontier and Wavell wanted to turn this fact to his advantage. Gott, reinforced with as much armour as was available, was to attack the Axis forces in the Sollum/Fort Capuzzo area and advance as far as possible towards Tobruk. "His attack, Operation "Brevity", began on 15 May. It was called off 36 hours later.⁴² Hard fighting at Fort Capuzzo and in the famous Halfaya Pass resulted in the British advance being blunted and a stalemate developed. This situation worried Gott enough to suggest a withdrawal. After five hours without a reply to his request Gott withdrew, three-quarters of an hour later he received an order to hold the Halfaya Pass area.⁴³ A breakdown in communications had helped to cause a British defeat.

On 15 June 1941 a more ambitious offensive, Operation "Battleaxe", was launched. This had the object of relieving Tobruk and throwing Rommel as far back as Derna. It was an operation prepared in haste mainly as a result of Winston Churchill's prompting and as a result it

³⁹ *The Times*, 12/8/42, p.3

⁴⁰ E K G Sixsmith, *British Generalship in the Twentieth Century*, London, 1970, pp.214-215

⁴¹ Forty, pp.76-80

⁴² B Pitt, *The Crucible of war: Western Desert, 1941*, London, 1980, p.275

⁴³ Pitt, p.277

failed.⁴⁴ As a result of this failure Wavell was relieved of his command and Claude Auchinleck was appointed GOC, Middle East in his place.

On 3 September 1941 Gott was promoted to Major-General and given command of 7th Armoured Division. He was to command the Division until 6 February 1942.⁴⁵ His appointment coincided with the formation of 8th Army out of Western Desert Force on 26 September. It was commanded by Lieutenant-General Alan Cunningham. 8th Army consisted of two Corps. XIII, commanded by Lieutenant-General Henry Godwin-Austen and XXX, commanded by Lieutenant-General Willoughby Norrie. XXX Corps was an armoured formation and it was as part of this that Gott served.⁴⁶

The 8th Army's first major operation began in November 1941. The plan of Operation "Crusader" was to seek out and destroy Rommel's armour. Following this the Tobruk garrison would stage a break out and a general advance would commence.⁴⁷ "Crusader" was the first large scale use of tanks by the British in the Second World War and as such Gott's Division was to have a vital role in this offensive. Gott commanded three armoured Brigades (7th and 22nd Armoured of the 7th Armoured Division and the attached 4th Armoured Group). Of these formations 22nd Armoured Brigade was quite inexperienced.⁴⁸ Gott's tank brigades attacked on a wide front on 18 November. The 22nd Armoured Brigade was roughly handled at Bir El Gubi and by 20 November Gott had concentrated his Division around the Sidi Rezegh airfield. This developed into a chaotic battle employing Gott's Division and several Commonwealth infantry formations. In an article of this length it is impossible to do justice to the confused nature of the fighting that took place in "Crusader", particularly at Sidi Rezegh on 22 and 23 November. An impression of the fighting can be gained from the eloquent words of Sir David Fraser: "In Crusader ... the tactical initiative passed from one side to the other and back again with great rapidity and little comprehension by those losing it. The confusion of the battlefield was immense, as larger and more evenly matched forces than hitherto were deployed. In the area of desert between Tobruk and the Egyptian frontier – perhaps 3,000 square miles it has been reckoned that some 30,000 vehicles of several armies were advancing, wheeling, withdrawing, counter-marching, attacking, defending, being supplied, or simply had broken down. Since action was concentrated in particular parts of the area the astonishing density of vehicles greatly contributed to the difficulty of planning coherent tactical manoeuvres, let alone carrying them out."⁴⁹

"Crusader" required men of all ranks to lead from the front. In this area Gott certainly was not lacking. It was said that his personal courage was astounding and that he was always at the forefront of the battle. On 24 November Gott's battle headquarters was "more or less" encircled, but Gott led them personally through the Axis lines to safety.⁵⁰ In fact Gott has been called a British Rommel who roamed the battle front to rally and spur on his men.⁵¹ Something of the ferocity of the fighting in "Crusader", particularly around Sidi Rezegh, can

⁴⁴ M Craster, Cunningham, Ritchie and Leese, in J Keegan (ed) *Churchill's Generals*, London, 1992, p.202

⁴⁵ Forty, p.38

⁴⁶ Craster, p.204

⁴⁷ Sixsmith, p.220

⁴⁸ Sixsmith, p.220; Pitt, p.360

⁴⁹ D Fraser, *And We Shall Shock Them*, London, 1983, p.162

⁵⁰ Comments on Gott's personal courage and the events of 24 November both from *The Times*, 14/8/42, p.4

⁵¹ C Barnett, *The Desert Generals*, London, 1983, p.143

be seen in the fact that 7th Armoured Division gained three VCs in this offensive, two of them posthumously. By the evening of 23 November, Cunningham felt that the battle was lost. His Corps commanders protested stating that the Germans had lost too many tanks to exploit a victory. Finally Auchinleck ordered the offensive continued. Rommel advanced further to the Egyptian frontier, his famous "dash to the wire", but events around Tobruk caused him to withdraw. After more hard fighting around Tobruk and the appearance of a reinforced XXX Corps on his southern flank Rommel had to concede defeat.⁵²

Gott's handling of his forces in "Crusader" has been the subject of criticism. It has been said that Gott commanded his Division like a cavalryman and not as a tank man, using his tanks to simply charge the enemy. Use of tanks like this tended to disperse the effect of artillery fire as the tanks became detached from other components of the Division. The result of this dispersal of artillery fire was that there were never enough where it was most needed.⁵³ Gott himself noted that the Germans refused to engage in tank versus tank actions rather: "In every phase of battle he co-ordinates the action of his anti-tank guns, Field Artillery and Infantry with his tanks and he will not be drawn from this policy."⁵⁴ The British still had many lessons to learn from this first major use of armour.

On 7 February 1942, Gott was promoted to Lieutenant-General and took over command of XIII Corps, the major infantry component of 8th Army. His command consisted of 1st and 2nd South African Divisions and 50th Division. The British advance after "Crusader" halted around Gazala and here 8th Army, under the command of Neil Ritchie, entrenched themselves behind minefields and in defensive boxes in a line that stretched deep into the desert to prepare for their next offensive. Gott's XIII Corps was in the northern most position around the coast road.⁵⁵

Rommel attacked the Gazala line on 26 May 1942. The major fighting in this attack took place in the southern area among the troops of XXXth Corps. Apart from 150 Brigade, which was destroyed, Gott's Corps took little part in the savage fighting to his south which made names such as Bir Hacheim and "Knightsbridge" famous. A XXX Corps counter attack against Rommel's forces, Operation "Aberdeen", on 5 June was a failure. After this the Free French garrison at Bir Hacheim was surrounded and XIII Corps would have to withdraw. On 14 June, Ritchie ordered Gott's forces back to the Egyptian frontier, without the knowledge of Auchinleck who had disallowed this. Gott was certain that what remained of 8th Army would have to withdraw. Tobruk fell on 21 June and after the British senior command decided that the frontier position could not be held, 8th Army retreated to Mersa Matruh, roughly half way between the frontier and El Alamein.⁵⁶

British leadership during the Gazala battles, characterised by a series of conferences, was indecisive.⁵⁷ However it is Gott's largely static role with XIII Corps that needs to concern us here. Major-General E K G Sixsmith offers the following criticism of Gott which is relevant to his role at Gazala:

⁵² Sixsmith, pp.224-225

⁵³ Barnett, p.107; Sixsmith, p.219

⁵⁴ Quoted in Barnett, p.109

⁵⁵ Sixsmith, p.230

⁵⁶ The above is drawn from Barnett, pp.151-152; 158-168; Sixsmith, pp.232-235

⁵⁷ Barnett, p.150; Craster, p.212; Fraser, pp.225-226

"He was certainly the man who had so often got Eighth Army out of its difficulties but it is doubtful if he was the man so to arrange matters that these awful emergencies would be less likely to occur. He had perhaps so read the lessons of the Great War as to eschew the concentrated battle, the persevering dog fight of the type Montgomery was to fight at Alamein. How else can we explain XIII Corps' aloofness from the Battle of Gazala."⁵⁸

In the Mersa Matruh position XIII Corps was the southern offensive wing of 8th Army. By this time Claude Auchinleck was in personal command of 8th Army. When Rommel attacked the Mersa Matruh position, XIII Corps had a chance to attack Rommel's right flank and destroy him against the northern Corps (X Corps). However, Gott did not move. The British in the Mersa Matruh position believed they were on the brink of further disaster and, on 27 June, Auchinleck ordered a further withdrawal to the El Alamein position.⁵⁹ It would appear that Gott was not at his best at this time. Correlli Barnett makes the comment that Rommel had gained the moral ascendancy over the commanders of 8th Army, including Gott which caused them to believe they were in a worse position than in fact they were. Barnett goes on to give a reason for this lack of resolve in the face of Rommel: "Gott at this time had supped too long on disaster; his optimistic energy had turned into an energetic pessimism."⁶⁰ However it needs to be pointed out that Auchinleck never intended to make a long term stand in the Mersa Matruh position, but rather to retreat to the best defensive line possible inflicting maximum damage on the Axis forces as he did so.⁶¹

In early July, Gott lead his forces cautiously in the early fighting in the El Alamein position and some advantages were lost. Of Gott at this time Auchinleck commented: "A very curious character. He was a tradition in the Army, especially with the junior officers. I thought he was tired at that time."⁶² However XIII Corps continued to play its part in thwarting Rommel's attacks and by 27 July Rommel's Panzer Army Africa had been fought to a standstill. 8th Army was also exhausted and went over to the defensive.

Auchinleck's decision to go over to the defensive won no praise from the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, who felt that 8th Army should go over to the offensive. He did not take into account that 8th Army was tired and would need time to regroup and re-equip.⁶³ On 3 August 1942 Churchill, along with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS), Lord Alanbrooke, arrived in Cairo. Churchill had plans for major changes in the leadership in the Middle East. Churchill had decided to replace Auchinleck with Harold Alexander as GOC, Middle East and he had selected Gott to take command of 8th Army.⁶⁴ On Gott's appointment Alanbrooke wrote that Churchill had selected him without having met him.⁶⁵ Gott's long experience of the desert no doubt impressed and influenced Churchill in his decision. Churchill stated that in selecting the new commander for 8th Army he also took into account the feelings of that Army.

⁵⁸ Sixsmith, p.236

⁵⁹ Barnett, pp.188-191

⁶⁰ Barnett, pp.188-189

⁶¹ P Warner, *Auchinleck: The Lonely Soldier*, London, 1982, pp.193-195

⁶² Quoted in Barnett, p.210

⁶³ P Warner, "Auchinleck", in Keegan, p.140

⁶⁴ Warner, "Auchinleck", p.140

⁶⁵ A Bryant, *The Turn of the Tide, 1939-1943*, London, 1957, p.439

He said of Gott: "Here General Gott seemed in every way to meet the need. The troops were devoted to him and he had not earned the title "Strafer" by nothing."⁶⁶

Alanbrooke had impressed upon Churchill that Gott, notwithstanding his fine record, was very tired and not the man for the job. Churchill had noted these concerns and on 5 August the Prime Minister met General Gott for the first time. Churchill's meeting with Gott, as described by him, has a poignant feel about it.

"I had asked for various officers to be brought, but above all General "Strafer" Gott. It was said that he was worn down with his hard service. This was what I wanted to find out. Having made the acquaintance of the various Corps and Divisional Commanders who were present, I therefore asked that General Gott should drive with me to the airfield, which was the next stop ... And here was my first and last meeting with Gott. As we rumbled and jolted over the rough tracks I looked into his clear blue eyes and questioned him about himself. Was he tired and had he any views to give? Gott said that no doubt he was tired, and that he would like nothing better than three month's leave in England, which he had not seen for several years, but he declared himself quite capable of further immediate efforts and of taking any responsibilities confided to him."⁶⁷

Alanbrooke had also talked with Gott on 5 August and this conversation further convinced the CIGS that Gott was not the man for the job. Alanbrooke wrote of this talk with Gott thus:

"It was not till we were sitting at tea together that he began to open out his heart to me. He said, 'I think what is required out here is some new blood. I have tried most of my ideas on the boche. We want someone with new ideas and plenty of confidence in them.' I knew Gott well enough to know that he would never talk about having 'tried most of his ideas' unless he was tired and had temporarily lost some drive."⁶⁸

On 6 August Churchill telegraphed his decisions to his War Cabinet and among the new appointments was that of Gott to command 8th Army.⁶⁹ Tragically Churchill's reorganisation would almost immediately be disrupted. Following his talk with Churchill Gott had requested a few days leave in Cairo, a request to which Auchinleck agreed. At 4:45pm on 7 August 1942 a Bristol Bombay of 215 (Transport) Squadron RAF took off carrying Gott and 14 wounded soldiers bound for Heliopolis. The plane flew at 50 feet to avoid attracting enemy attention. However, on this occasion the ploy failed and only a few minutes after take off the plane was jumped by a flight of ME109Fs. The Bombay was forced to the ground on fire and the Germans, in pairs, straffed the plane. Five people managed to get out but the others, including Gott, perished in the flames.⁷⁰

Churchill first learnt of Gott's death after dinner on the 7th. He wrote: "I certainly felt grief and impoverishment at the loss of this splendid soldier."⁷¹ The command of 8th Army was given to Bernard Montgomery, a command which was to launch him towards the zenith of his profession.

⁶⁶ W S Churchill, *The Second World War. Vol. IV: The Hinge of Fate*, Middlesex, 1985, p.413

⁶⁷ Churchill, p.414

⁶⁸ Quoted in Bryant, p.443

⁶⁹ Quoted in Bryant; Churchill, p.416

⁷⁰ N Hamilton, *Monty. The Making of a General 1887-1942*, London, 1981, pp.580-581

⁷¹ Churchill, p.418, for Alanbrooke's reaction to Gott's death see Bryant, p.449

William Gott was a fine fighting soldier who no doubt had his faults but had the confidence and trust of the men he commanded. His long service in the desert earned him the awards of the CBE and the DSO and bar in 1941 and in 1942 he was appointed CB.⁷² However even more fitting tributes to Gott are from those who knew him and appreciated his worth. A tribute to Gott written by a friend appeared in *The Times* of 14 August 1942. It was said of Gott that it was:

“hardly possible to exaggerate the strength and quality of his character, for he was, in its truest sense, a good as well as a great man. Kind, warmhearted, and understanding, he was blessed with a clear and broad vision. Although one of our most outstanding and determined soldiers, who could be ruthless when essential, *straffer*, in his heart of hearts, did not like war – he really hated it all – and longed for home and for his family. But he had a true sense of duty and nothing else mattered. He was out for the cause and out for victory, and determined to get it.”⁷³

Perhaps the final tribute to this distinguished soldier should come from an even more distinguished soldier, Field-Marshal Lord Michael Carver, who wrote of Gott thus:

“His clarity of mind, his rock-like imperturbability and common sense, his readiness always to propose a course of action when others faltered or were in doubt, all these qualities combined with a truly Christian character had made him the oracle to whom all, both high and low, turned for advice at all times, but especially in bad.”⁷⁴

⁷² DNB, p.312

⁷³ *The Times*, 14/8/42, p.7

⁷⁴ Quoted in Sixsmith, p.236

Rose Force

Peter Sinfield

At about 1700 hrs GMT on 7 December 1941 – over an hour before the attack on Pearl Harbour – Japanese troops landed in Malaya. Against fierce opposition by 8 Indian Brigade this landing took place at Kota Bharu, which covered the far north-eastern airfields of Kota Bharu, Machang and Gong Kedah. However, the main landings were at Singora and Patani in Thailand, the Japanese intending to use the main north-south lines of communication for their advance towards Singapore. These ran through Malaya down the western side of the central mountain range, the eastern side of the country then (as now) being largely undeveloped.

The main road and rail routes were defended in northern Malaya by 11 Indian Division, but by the middle of December the Japanese had pushed the defenders south of the Krian River. Penang Island had been abandoned, the two northern states – Perlis and Kedah – were lost and the attackers had almost total superiority at sea and in the air. The western coastal plain was therefore open to infiltration by sea, and on 18 December Lt-Gen Percival (GOC Malaya Command) gave orders that “the Perak Flotilla, consisting of the old destroyer SCOUT and some light craft (originally formed to stop enemy landings in northern Sumatra) was to deal with any attempt to move by sea down the west coast between the mouths of the Krian and Perak rivers”.¹

At the same time, offensive action behind enemy lines was being considered as a partial counter to the constant withdrawals on the main front. A proposal was put forward by Maj Angus Rose of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders – then GSO2 Training at GHQ Malaya Command – for a commando style raid to harass Japanese communications in the vicinity of Trong (some 30 miles west of Ipoh), and this was accepted by Gen Percival. The GOC considered the only troops that could be spared were Australians, and volunteers were called for from the two AIF infantry brigades (the 22nd and 27th) then deployed in Johore. This resulted in the formation of two platoons, of about 25 men each, led by Lieuts R E Sanderson (2/19 Bn) and M Perring (2/18 Bn) respectively. The whole force was under the command of Capt D T Lloyd (2/30 Bn), and each platoon also had two planters (from 1 Perak Bn FMSVF²) attached as guides and interpreters. Capt Lloyd was to travel with Perring’s platoon and Maj Rose with Sanderson’s. The party was designated “Rose Force” not – as may be thought – after Maj Rose, but “the name being chosen following the line of the Tulip Force already formed from the AIF”.³ Rose only went along as an observer for Malaya Command.

Rose’s plan consisted of three phases. In the first, the Navy was to transport the force by launch from Port Swettenham to “Point W” at the mouth of Sungei (River) Trong. Here it would trans-ship to motor boats of shallower draft, which would carry each platoon to the Trong jetty before hiding in the mangrove swamps during the actual raid. From Trong the force was to split, Sanderson’s platoon going NE and Perring’s SE to find and engage targets

¹ Kirby, S. Woodburn et al. *The War Against Japan. Volume I: The Loss of Singapore*. London: HMSO, 1957, p. 233.

² Federated Malay States Volunteer Forces. There were three separate political groupings in 1941 Malaya — the Federated Malay States (Pahang, Perak and Selangor), Unfederated Malay States (Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis and Trengganu) and Straits Settlements (Malacca, Penang, Province Wellesley and Singapore). Volunteer forces from each of these participated in the campaign.

³ Rose Force *War Diary*, p.1, (AWM 52: 1/5/67. *Rose Force Malaya and A Force*)

of opportunity. After 36 hours ashore, the platoons were to rendezvous at the jetty for re-embarkation and return to Port Swettenham.

On 26 December 1941, "Rose Force" embarked in two Perak Flotilla MLs at Port Swettenham, about 120 miles from the target area. The four motor boats and their crews had gone ahead to the Sungei Bernam (about half way) and were to be taken in tow by the MLs from there on. However, on reaching the mouth of Sungei Bernam, it was discovered that two of the motor boats were aground and therefore useless. A local replacement, *Myrtle*, was found and taken in tow with the other two boats and the expedition proceeded towards Point W under cover of darkness. On arrival, trans-shipment of the force commenced but *Myrtle's* engine refused to start at the crucial moment and Sanderson's platoon alone set out for the Trong jetty.

En route, Rose changed his mind about where they would disembark and the two boats headed on towards Teluk Langat (Langat Creek). At the mouth, the party stopped to gather intelligence from some natives in a couple of sampans and, when an attempt was made to continue, one of the motor boats refused to start. Against the now ebb tide, towing the second boat slowed progress considerably and the troops eventually had to climb out and fight their way through half a mile of mangroves. Rose himself admits this incident "predjudiced the whole raid", for it took the force three hours to get out of the swamp and onto dry land.

In the view of the two planter-guides (Harvey and Van Rennan), reaching the primary objective, Bukit (hill) Bubu Pass, by dark was no longer feasible; consequently, it was decided to head for the Bukit Rengam area originally assigned to Perring's platoon. As a result, the party set off about 1300 hrs on the 27th to cover the ten or so miles to Temerloh. After an abortive attempt to find a short cut, they reached the target area and bivouaced in the coolie lines of a local estate for the night. Sanderson and his two section leaders went to reconnoitre a suitable ambush site for the following day, while Rose carried out a reconnaissance of the main road on his own.

The troops woke about 0300 hrs the next morning and were in position by 0730 hrs. Being in the galling position of having devised the plan but having to accept the orders, not only of a junior officer but a *colonial* as well, Rose was, understandably, rather critical:

"I now realized that the ambush consisted of a dead straight length of road lined by the three sections of the platoon. There were no orders at all and a complete absence of any tactical plan. The field craft was not so hot either. The sun was low down and slap in our eyes and I thought that a little experience at decoying pigeon or flighting duck might teach the platoon commander some useful lessons in this kind of work ... This ambush was making no sense at all."⁴


This attitude of superiority and distrust of each other's capabilities was mutual and, apart from the personalities involved, would doubtless have arisen anyway, due both to lack of any specialised commando training and the AIF's "hands off" policy.

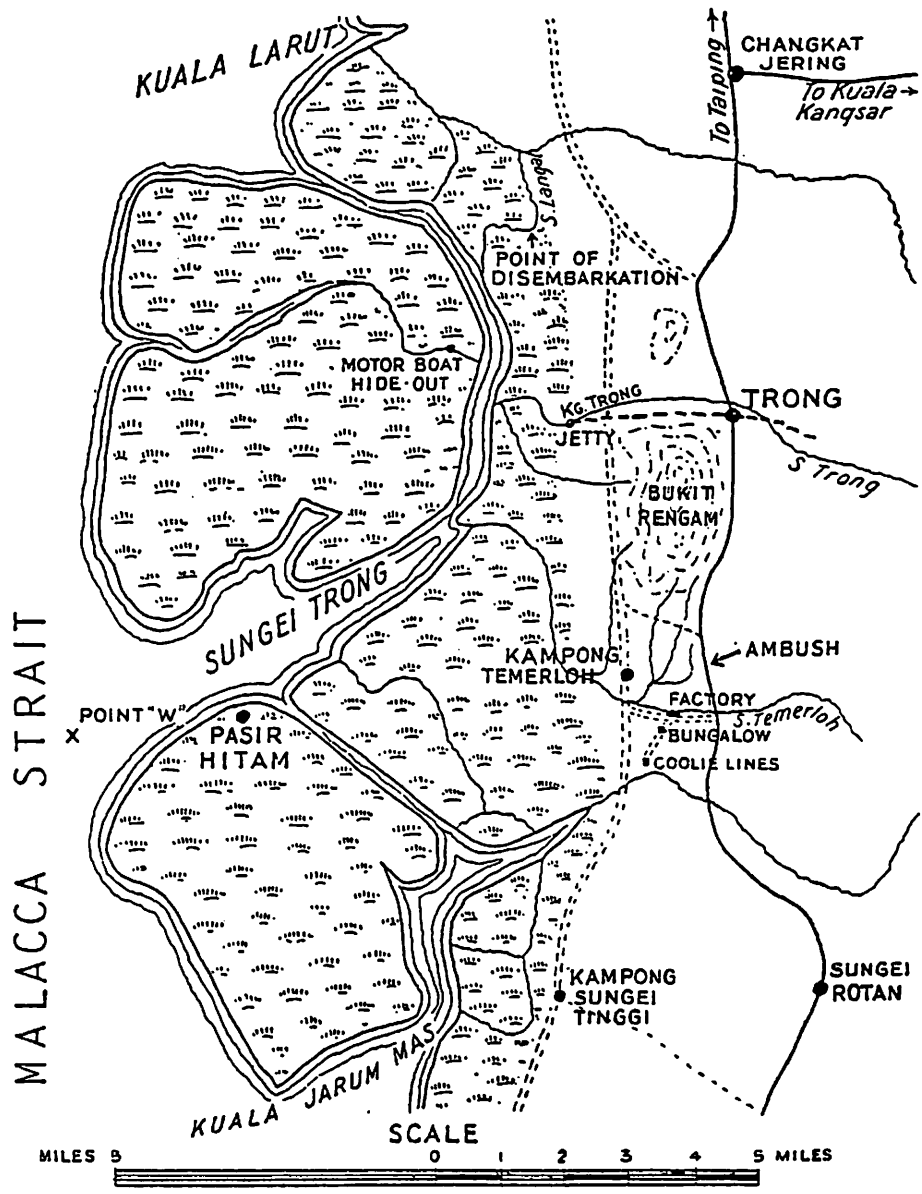
In keeping with the previous incidents, the ambush itself nearly failed at the critical moment. After an hour or so of inactivity, Rose, who had been placed on the left flank, decided to confer with Sanderson. He had moved about thirty yards when the sound of a motor convoy was heard approaching the site from the north, a car flying a blue pennant in the lead. Seeing this, Rose fired a snap shot from his rifle and hit the driver, causing the car to swerve off the road into the ditch. As soon as the rest of the convoy stopped, heavy automatic and rifle fire was opened and

⁴ Rose, Angus, *Who Dies Fighting*, London : Jonathon Cape, 1944, pp.69-70.

TRONG AREA (4°40'N, 100°40'E), PERAK, MALAYA.

FROM A SKETCH BY THE AUTHOR, DRAWN FROM MEMORY.

MAIN ROADS —————
TRACKS OR ESTATE ROADS - - - - -
JUNGLE TRAILS
MANGROVE SWAMP 



Source: Rose, Angus, *Who dies fighting*, p.59

grenades used. However, the effect was somewhat limited, as Rose's shot had sprung the trap before the whole convoy was properly in the ambush area. However, the staff car (which Sanderson identified as carrying a Japanese Major General), three trucks and a utility were destroyed or immobilised and their occupants accounted for before the platoon retired, having the distinction of being the first Australian infantry in action against the Japanese in the Malayan campaign.

Moving rapidly, the force regained the track they had come south on and retraced their steps towards the Sungei Trong. Here they were met by Harvey (one of the planter-guides), who had returned the previous night to gather sampans to carry the party from Trong jetty to the motor boats. Along with the sampans, Harvey had also rounded up three English survivors of the actions in northern Malaya – two of them from Rose's own regiment – and by 1300 hrs on 28 December the troops had regained the motor boats. While waiting for darkness, the inevitable post-mortems were held, Rose again being critical of the way "his" raid had been handled. A friendly Malay skipper also arrived with three further survivors, this time privates in the 2 East Surreys cut off after the fighting around Jitra and Gurun.

After hours of sitting in the mangroves at the mercy of mosquitoes and watching Japanese planes overhead, it was finally time to head for Point W. The two motor boats set off with the party now swollen by the English survivors. Fittingly, the second boat broke down again and had to be taken in tow. Nevertheless, they reached the rendezvous hours before the MLs were due, sitting in the darkness and rain until the launches arrived. After the troops had been transferred to the large vessels, the two motor boats were taken in tow and course was set for Port Swettenham, which was finally reached almost 24 hours later. Thus ended the major operation of "Rose Force", which, along with the Perak Flotilla, was disbanded shortly after.

Despite the lack of specific training, poor planning and things going wrong along the way, the raid demonstrated what might have been achieved on a larger scale, given a more widespread application of what Maj-Gen Bennett called "the offensive spirit". But the bad luck which was to dog the Commonwealth forces throughout the campaign was quickly in evidence. In the words of the British Official Historian:

"The success of this minor operation encouraged the hope of developing and repeating it; but two days later HMS KUDAT, the base depot ship for the [Perak] flotilla, was bombed and sunk at Port Swettenham. A serious loss was also sustained when five fast motor boats [LCP(L)s], on their way north to reinforce the flotilla, were attacked by enemy aircraft and sunk or driven ashore. These losses could not be made up and thus no further operations of this nature could be undertaken."⁵

⁵ Kirby, p.245.

Major General Henry Despard CB, “Corporal Desperado” (Part 2)¹

David Murphy

Since the reduction of the regiment in 1823 it had been on a recruiting drive to bring the regiment to its establishment. The regiment was constantly on the move in small detachments, with very little chance to practise its drill and field movements together; very little time for the regiment together and build up its camaraderie, especially with the newer recruits, but nevertheless its tradition and its excellent officers ensured that this happened.

The colours of the regiment proudly bore its connection to the East Indies and several men had served there with it. It was known that once the tour of duty to New South Wales was completed the regiment would once more be stationed in the mystical East Indies. One of the two graveyards of the British Army, the other being the West Indies. Very little is written in the regiment's official history about its tour of duty in New South Wales, nor of Despard's term as Commander of the regiment, but from observation of Sydney newspapers and official despatches from the Governor's of the colony, Ralph Darling and Richard Bourke between 1830 and 1836, it is possible to deduce that Despard was a very capable and competent military administrator with a paternal interest for his officers and men.

On 7 August 1830, Henry Despard, his wife and three children, two servants to Mrs Despard, together with a detachment of the 17th Foot embarked on board the convict ship *York* bound for Sydney, New South Wales. The detachment of soldiers comprised Ensign E B Owen, four Sergeants, three corporals, one drummer and thirty three privates, four wives and one child. Many of these soldiers were new recruits with the exception of the bandsmen. The ship *York*, 478 tons, was fitted out at Deptford, and 200 male convicts were embarked, from various hulks at Woolwich, Sheerness and Chatham. Before leaving Sheerness, one of the soldiers, Henry Howe, was taken ill with convulsions and after the treatment of bleeding and purging from the Surgeon Superintendent, Campbell France, was unsuccessful, was sent ashore to the military hospital at Chatham, thus reducing the number of privates to thirty two. All the members of the guard and convicts appeared to be in good health.

The ship received its sailing orders on 4 September 1830, but due to rough weather and westerly winds in the Channel, with most on board suffering from sea sickness, had to put into Spithead, at Portsmouth, and did not leave there until the 29th. Even then the winds were against them and it wasn't until 6 October that the weather improved and smoother seas enabled a more pleasant passage. The ship made a two day stop over at Teneriffe, due probably to the 25 days delay in leaving Portsmouth, to water and receive fresh meat. After two days the ship continued its long journey to New South Wales. During the voyage there were 118 persons admitted to the sick list. However, only two convicts died on the voyage, both in November.

Upon arrival at Port Jackson on 9 February 1831, and following the muster of convicts, Campbell France commented in his journal that the health of the guard and the convicts was generally much better than when they had embarked in England. During the voyage from England, Despard had spent considerable time in bringing up to date the Regimental Standing Orders, and these were printed in Sydney during March 1831. These included the numerous

¹ This is Part 2 of a three part article. The first part appeared in Vol XXXIV No.4, October/December 1993

changes that had taken place in the General Regulations and Orders of the Army, during the previous few years. These standing orders were broken up into two parts preceded by an introduction. The First Part dealt with the duties of officers, Divine service, quarters, leaves, colours, courts martial, enquiries and saluting. The second part dealt with the duties and responsibilities of non-commissioned officers, clerk, school, band, Drum Major, accounts, barracks, guards, punishments, marches, hospital, passes and servants. These orders are quite substantial and comprised 64 pages.

Among other things, a new pay and muster sheet had become in use in 1830 and for the first time men received a regimental number which remained with them for their entire service. This numbering system was based on seniority with the longest serving soldier receiving the lowest number, ie, 1, and the shortest serving soldier the highest. With this numbering system it is possible to work out when a soldier enlisted in the regiment. Men with numbers below 50 almost certainly served with the regiment in the East Indies. Men with numbers between 200 and 400 would have joined about 1823-4 whilst men with numbers around 600 enlisted in the late 1820s. Men with numbers in the 800 series enlisted in the early 1830s.

Despard was of the opinion that every NCO and private who wished it should attend school, and that the knowledge of reading and writing was almost indispensable in an NCO. Therefore, he recommended that everyone desirous of raising himself should avail himself of the opportunity afforded him, by attending the regimental school and becoming literate.

Upon arrival at Sydney, Despard visited the Barracks and made himself aware of the state of his regiment which had been arriving in the colony for over 14 months. He was made aware that his headquarters was to be stationed at Parramatta, sixteen miles away in the interior. Three detachments had already been stationed away from Sydney, one at Moreton Bay, under the command of Captain James O Clunie, who had been sent there in August 1830 as engineer, and following the murder of Captain Patrick Logan, 57th Foot, by Aborigines in October 1830 had been placed in command of that remote penal station. This detachment at Moreton Bay was to remain there until 1835.

Another detachment under Lt Isaac Blackburne had been attached to the NSW Military Mounted Police since September 1830, who was stationed in the Hunter River district at Wallis Plains, near Maitland. A large contingent of 48 men remained with this corps until February 1836, when the regiment was removed to the East Indies in March. In all, over 70 men served with this corps during this period. Several of these men were to remain in the colony after the regiment left in 1836, attached to this corps, transferring from regiment to regiment, and were to meet up with Despard when all the men in the corps were attached to the 99th regiment as supernumeraries in 1844. Some remained in the corps until 1849, taking their discharges after being returned to the 99th for this event. Despard was also notified that the NSW Mounted Police was considered by the Governor to be indispensable to the colony and was very necessary to control the menace of bushranging prevalent in the interior. The corps had recently been augmented to over 100 men and Despard was requested to ensure that only men of good character be considered for duty in corps. Several men had been transferred to the regiment from the 57th Foot who were currently in the corps.

The other detachment had been detained in the colony of Van Diemen's Land, under Captain George Romney, due to the depredations of the Aborigines against the settlers in the interior. He was made aware that this detachment had taken part in the Black Line in October 1830, when Lt Governor George Arthur had resolved to force the Aborigines into the Tasman Peninsula. The detachments of the 17th Foot in the field were commanded by Captain Phillip

MacPherson. These detachments were gradually forwarded onto Sydney as they were relieved by another regiment. All were transferred to New South Wales by early 1833.

Despard was notified that his regiment was to be broken up into small detachments and stationed in the interior many at remote stations throughout the colony. There was an imminent need for a suitable officer to be sent to the Headquarters of the Australian Agricultural Company (AACo) at Carrington, Port Stephens. The then Commissioner of the AACo, Sir William Edward Parry the noted Arctic Explorer, had requested the services of a suitable officer to be the Police magistrate at the Company's HQ. Despard had recommended Ensign E B Owen for the position but the Governor, Ralph Darling, had considered him to be too young. Two others nominated for the position, John A Edwards and Robert G Moffatt, both Captains in the regiment. Despard settled on Moffatt for the position and this was accepted by Darling and Parry. The detachment of twelve men sailed to Carrington in the AACo's cutter *Lambton* in late February 1831. This detachment remained there until December 1834.

Despard and his family and detachment made their way to Parramatta, where Despard formally took over command of the regiment from the junior Major, James W Bourverie, who had arrived in the colony on board the *Hercules* on 1 November 1830. As each of the small detachments of the regiment arrived in the colony during 1830, they were placed into barracks in Parramatta under the command of the most senior officer present. At Parramatta, Despard was notified that his regiment was to occupy the George Street, Sydney Barracks when the 57th Foot left the colony for Van Diemen's Land and later to the East Indies. Once the people of Parramatta were made aware of this they pleaded with the Governor for this fine regiment to be allowed to stay in Parramatta instead of being moved to Sydney. The band of the regiment had proven very popular even though it had only been there for a month, and during February the band had marched from St John's Church to the barracks playing music along the way.

This unusual occurrence had delighted the, young, old, rich and poor, of Parramatta and the question was on every one's lips "would the Governor allow the regiment to remain in Parramatta". Despard was asked to pledge that he would seek to ask the Governor for this to be allowed. Unfortunately the regiment was removed to Sydney shortly thereafter.

After a number of false starts, the regiment marched to Sydney, and arrived there on St Patrick's Day, 17 March 1831, behind the band which played the popular Irish air, *St Patrick's Day in the morning*. The band also proved very popular in Sydney and played in the Domain each week. When the *Larkins* arrived from Hobart in November 1832 the band played the *British Grenadiers*, as it marched from the wharf to the barracks. The band was a first class band under the bandmaster, Mr Lewis, who was an accomplished musician, and his wind instruments were considered quite superior to any other band previously turned out. However, the drum section was considered inferior to that of the 39th Foot. In September 1832, the 17th received new drums and a marked improvement was seen. The band was noted for its light music particularly that of Rossini and was much preferred to its successor, the 28th which played the dreary and sombre music of Beethoven.

Many times the regiment performed Field Days in Hyde Park and considerable public concern was raised in the newspapers of the day with the use of live ammunition. Mostly the regiment would practise the intricate evolutions and manoeuvres to a precise fashion. Once when the field firing was not up to scratch, the regiment was brought back the next day and remained there until it was perfected.

In June 1832, an inspection of the troops was made by the Commanding Officer present, which at this time was the Governor, Major General, Sir Richard Bourke.²

The regiment played a great part in the town of Sydney's entertainment with horse races, foot races, and cricket being played between the military or against the locals. Betting was quite prevalent and the fact that it was winter did not seem to bother the participants when a combined military side played the civilians on Monday 18 June 1832. The populace of Sydney showed tremendous interest and a large number of spectators including a great number of respectable females were present. Tents were erected on the northern edge of Hyde park which was the cricket ground and the match commenced at 11:00am. The military side which included several officers and soldiers of the 17th were determined not to be beaten by the "currency" lads, and the match was duly won by them.

Civilians		Military
All out 43	First Innings	All out 53
All out 86	Second Innings	4 for 81
129	Totals	134

The match being cleverly won by the military by 5 notches (as runs were called in those days). Betting was 3 to 2 on the soldiers. When the match was won the sky was darkened by the numerous caps thrown into the air. At night the Barracks was illuminated to show off their victory.

At the time of Despard's arrival in Sydney in 1831, Governor Darling was the subject of a constant stream of criticism by the local press and because of this his administration was also under pressure. During Darling's term of office, a bushranger called Jack Donahoe, the Original Wild Colonial Boy, had escaped and began a notorious career. The press made much of the police force's inability to catch him. However, in September 1830 Donahoe was shot and killed by a member of the Mounted Police, John Muggleston at Bringelly. The remainder of the gang being caught one by one. This is one of the reasons for the augmentation of the mounted police to 104 men in 1830 as Darling considered it vital in securing the country side from the depredations of bushrangers. With the success against Donahoe, Darling hoped that the press would be placated. However, in 1830, the mounted police had been defeated by an armed gang of bushrangers in which Lt Lachlan Macalister was wounded.

Of course the local press led by Wardell and Wentworth of *The Australian* criticised Darling and his administration. Furthermore, in 1827, Darling had illegally interfered in the trial of two soldiers of the 57th Regiment who had purposely stolen some cloth and allowed

² For this six monthly field inspection the troops fell in at Barrack square at 10:00am. The parade formed into open columns, wheeled into line and marched in sub divisions to Hyde Park, with the band playing suitable airs. Upon arrival, they formed up into companies, then close columns, change front and counter marching by subdivisions, formed line on the Grenadier Company, ready to receive the Governor. At about 11:00am His Excellency the Governor arrived, accompanied by his staff officers. The regiment presented arms, while the band played the National Anthem. The regiment shouldered arms and took close order and wheeled into line and into open columns, and marched past the Governor and his entourage, in ordinary and quick time. Despard then retired to the rear and the senior Major present put the Corps through the manual and platoon exercises, after which the CO resumed command. After loading with blank cartridges the regiment formed up in close columns on the Grenadier Company and in that order advanced. The Light Company extended in front in open files firing by ranks. This movement completed, they halted and formed line on the Grenadiers and began firing on the right side of the right companies, after which they retreated covered by the Grenadiers. The regiment commenced firing by ranks and went through the form of receiving cavalry, opened and formed line and fired by companies from centre to flanks, from left to right, from right to left. The CO then put them through a variety of field movements, after which they fired by wings. The whole battalion then fired a volley, saluted the Governor, this was due to his rank as Commander of the Forces, and marched back to the barracks. Once at the barracks the regiment was inspected in marching order, and the regiment would then be dismissed.

themselves to be caught, preferring the life of a convict to that of a soldier. These soldiers, Sudds and Thompson had been found guilty and sentenced to a soft penalty, which Darling thought lenient and intervened. The two men received a much harsher penalty being sentenced to the iron gang and to work in special irons. These irons were attached to the ankles, waist and neck by a collar to which was fitted with iron spikes making it impossible for the prisoners to lie down. Unbeknown to Darling, one of the prisoners, Sudds was seriously ill, and shortly after sentencing died. Wentworth and Wardell accused Darling of killing Sudds and together *The Australian* and *Monitor* newspapers began a tirade against Darling's administration.

Darling's term of office had begun in December 1825. The question of land grants was subject to much criticism, with the need to attract settlers who either possessed or had access to capital being the preferred type. There were two classes proposed to become cultivators of the soil, those who could purchase large tracts of waste land and those who needed the crown bounty to be placed in possession of the land. A committee comprising the Surveyor-General and two commissioners were appointed to devise means and to report on how the land should be divided into counties, hundreds and boroughs for the purpose of selling Crown land.

By September 1826, Darling was ready to publish the new land regulations, which stated that applicants must satisfy the Governor of their character and they would receive grants of land at the rate of 640 acres (one square mile) for each £500 invested, up to a maximum grant of 2560 acres. With further purchases up to 9900 acres by tender if so desired. To confine settlement within a convenient area for administrative and financial purposes the boundaries of settlement were fixed as follows. Northern boundary by a line from Cape Hawke due west to Wellington Valley, then due south to the Lachlan River, then due east to Campbell river, then south east to the latitude of Bateman's Bay, this brought into effect the 19 county system.

By 1831, however, Darling was informed by Goderich that this system for disposal of land had failed by not preventing large tracts of land being appropriated by persons who were unable to cultivate them, and that in future all land would be disposed of by auction at a minimum price of five shillings per acre. All further land grants were then suspended except to persons who had received positive promises of land from Darling.

In 1831 Darling was recalled and he left on board the *Hooghly* transport on 22 October 1831, with the *Monitor* reporting the event:

He's Off!
The Reign of Terror Ended.
God Save the King,
Down with the T.....!

His departure was heralded by fireworks and whole bullocks were roasted and great merriment was made.

The new Governor was Richard Bourke who arrived by the *Margaret* on 2 December 1831. Bourke was accompanied by his wife three children, and his Aide De Camp, Captain and Mrs Westmacott, Captain Hunter, Military secretary and his wife and three children, together with the Reverend G Innes and Dr Furneaux, and a contingent of the 17th Foot which acted as a guard for the incumbent Governor and his entourage. Everyone was eager to see how Bourke's approach to the colony and its problems would be implemented. The major policy initiatives were the implementation of the August 1831 Land Regulations, the Transportation Act and the extension of trial by jury. The new Land Regulations required the promotion of British labourers to alleviate the lack of skilled agricultural labourers. Working-class immigrants were to be attracted to the colony by providing free passage from a fund which derived from land

sales, and in 1834 over 7500 assisted immigrants arrived. In 1835, Bourke, set up the Bounty immigration scheme, whereby Colonists or employers could select immigrants and receive a bounty roughly equal to the cost of the passage. This scheme was to run concurrently with the free immigration scheme. These two schemes meant the end of the assigned convict system, and, by 1842, the end of transportation of convicts to New South Wales.

In 1831, the whole colony of New South Wales was in a state of turmoil with the aborigines caught up in the middle, while the ever expanding frontier pushed further out into the bush. As a consequence, the interior needed some protection against armed bushrangers and the depredations of the aborigines, with the consequence that the army was used for this purpose, supplemented by the Mounted Police and other Foot Police in the rural areas.

Despite the fact that the regiment was spread throughout the colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, for the majority of its service in the colonies, morale in the regiment was extremely high. Not one case of desertion is recorded in the musters of the regiment in New South Wales for this period. There were, of course, the usual misdemeanours and several men suffered transportation whilst in New South Wales. Of these only three were transported for life. One soldier was drummed out of the regiment in ignominy.

The army at that time was subject to the Articles of War, with these articles being read to the men frequently. The other regiments 39th and 4th, then stationed in New South Wales were not so well behaved. For in 1832, Thomas Brennan of the 39th Foot being executed for attempting to murder his Sergeant, whilst the sentence of death being committed to life imprisonment of Thomas McNabb of the 4th regiment for striking his superior officer Lt William Lonsdale. Soldiers, it seemed, were more prisoner than the convicts they were guarding.

During the period 1830 to 1836 returns of the colony showed the 17th Foot was spread throughout the colony. The detachment attached to the Mounted Police was consistent until February 1836 when several men were transferred to the 28th Foot. There were about 136 men remaining in New South Wales after the first two wings of the regiment left in 1836. About a dozen men were awaiting notification from the Chelsea Hospital of their admission to out pension. This information took quite some time to reach New South Wales from Horse Guards in London.

The Transportation Act and Bourke's leniency towards the convict classes was another problem area with the larger settlers and the most virulent of these critics was "Major" Mudie of Castle Forbes in the Hunter near Darlington (Singleton). Mudie claimed that after the arrival of Bourke he noticed a change in the manner of his assigned servants on his farm. He decided to put Bourke's leniency to the test, for rumours were put about that all convicts would find favour in Bourke's eyes and, horror of horrors, it was said that Bourke had issued instructions that, in future, convicts would be able to choose their own masters, and if they suffered any hardship they could write to Bourke and complain of their treatment. Mudie decided to crush this insubordination by a policy of severity which culminated in a mini revolt at Castle Forbes. Between August and November 1833 nine assigned servants of Mudie's were flogged with great regularity and, by November, a crisis was evident at Castle Forbes. In an exchange with a convict named Poole, who swore most profanely at Mudie with three others joining in, Mudie had them taken to a neighbouring magistrate who had Poole flogged and the others sentenced to the ironed gang.

Later the night of his flogging, Poole took to the bush and, in company with a convict at large, freed the others from the custody of the constable and, declaring vengeance on Mudie and his Superintendent Larnach, attacked Castle Forbes, plundered the stores, threatened the women and sought to kill Larnach who was at the sheep wash, but failed. Afterwards they attacked the home of Mr Sparke, whom they stripped and flogged. Soon after, a party of the mounted police captured the gang, killing one of the members. The remainder were sent to Sydney for trial by a military jury before the Chief Justice Forbes in December, where they were found guilty. Three of the gang were executed in Sydney on December 21, but Poole and Hitchcock had a further function to perform before their own execution. They were transported to Newcastle by sea and, from there, by horse and cart under a military escort, to Castle Forbes sitting on their coffins as an example to the convicts of the Hunter. Upon arrival there they found no one able to strike off their irons nor any clergy man of any denomination who could prepare them to meet their maker or hear their confession. After many hours trying to find a blacksmith, they arrived back at the scaffold too tired to hear the words of comfort said to them by a local schoolmaster. The execution went off very quickly without any last words from the condemned men. Afterwards the gallows was left standing for a month as a warning to evil doers and many a weary traveller saw this eerie spectacle. Part of the original building at Castle Forbes remains till the present day.

Bourke was furious over the handling of the incident by Mudie, and appointed the Solicitor-General to report on the whole affair and Mudie's part in it. Following his report, Bourke removed Mudie from the magistracy of the colony and Captain Charles Forbes, 17th Foot, was appointed magistrate in the district. In 1836 Three Visiting Magistrates were appointed to the Mounted Police for the remote areas and these visited each area, sat on the bench and gave judgments. All punishments were administered under their supervision. A scourger accompanied each magistrate, for this purpose.

During the early part of 1834, the *Sydney Herald* reminded its readers of the excesses and absurdities of the convict system, and called upon the British Government to have an enquiry into the system, which would banish forever the frightful system then in place in New South Wales and end the transportation of convicts to New South Wales. The home government replied by stating that in future all the stores for the convicts would be purchased in the colony, but this was seen as an attempt to defray the costs of the convicts in the future to the colony rather than paying for it themselves. Not surprisingly, the feeling became evident among the wealthy landholders, rather to employ a free labourer for a few extra pounds a year than have a set of idle layabouts and save £5 per head on assigned convicts. The demand was made to "End Transportation and grant the colony it's voice in it's legislature". This would then remove the stigma of convictism!

The extension of trial by jury was, however, a difficult problem to overcome, for the political basis in the colony was the same as that prevailing then in England. That of Tories versus Whigs. Bourke was a Whig but the majority his Legislative Council members were Tories. Chief of these being Alexander McLeay the Colonial Secretary, who caused Bourke much trouble during his term of office as Governor of the colony. When the trial by jury issue was put forward to the Council for discussion, five of its seven members voted against it, because they objected to the admission of anyone who had not arrived free in the colony. Only the free settlers with the largest tracts of land were against the proposal, with the smaller holders of land for it. After some debate however, it was passed by the Council and became law in February 1832. In all trials by jury which had been awarded by the Supreme Court, the jury was to comprise men between the ages of 21 and 60 years of age who possessed a clear income out of land, houses or other real estate to the value of £300. Every person who had not received

a free pardon or the term of his sentence of transportation had not expired was excluded from jury service.

Bourke further eroded the power of the large landholders and station owners by stating that the manners and morals of the people would be much improved by a gradual relinquishment of the services of convicts. In 1833, 8,000 people arrived in New South Wales, of whom 2,500 were free. So the proportion of the free compared to the convict in the population began to change. Many liberal minded people could not see why an emancipist in New South Wales could not be restored to his rights as he would be in England.

This then was the political state of affairs in the colony under which Despard served with the 17th Foot in New South Wales from 1831 to 1836. He could not help but see how his commanding officer, Bourke, a fellow Irishman, was treating the free by servitude or pardoned convicts and the leniency towards them. Despard was quite aware of this trend. Furthermore, several of his officers held colonial appointments as Police magistrates: Anley at Maitland, Moffatt at Port Stephens, Forbes at Patrick Plains, Blackburn, Steele and Darley who commanded the various districts of the mounted police in the colony, and Clunie commandant at the penal settlement at Moreton Bay. Even Captain MacPherson had a stint at Port Macquarie.

It was therefore impossible for Despard not to know the winds of change were evident in the colony. Before Despard left the colony in 1836, calls were made for the end of transportation to the colony, and the colony of South Australia was settled in 1836 without the stigma of transportation.

In 1833, the regiment was ordered to prepare itself to proceed to India. However, Governor Bourke wrote to the Minister for Colonial Affairs protesting the withdrawal of it without it being first replaced by another regiment given the conditions prevalent in New South Wales, the boundaries of the 19 counties being broken and the ever widening frontier, problems with the aborigines who objected to their lands being cleared and mobs of sheep and cattle eating the feed and the subsequent loss of their ancestral hunting grounds. All these conditions required a large military force to police it. The 19 counties covered over 35,000 square miles, and was extremely difficult to police. There were roads to build, all by the use of convicts placed in iron gangs after committing other offences in the colony. The only available guards being the military. The military was used to provide engineers and the like for this work.

New towns were being settled and large areas of land outside the boundaries were being used unofficially for sheep and cattle runs. Vast amounts of timber would soon be needed for the amount of dwellings that would be needed for its ever expanding population. The colony could not survive without the 17th regiment or another to replace it. The home government agreed with Bourke and allowed the 17th regiment to remain until another regiment arrived to replace it. In the meantime, the detachments of the regiment in the interior were gathering in Sydney preparing to proceed to India. However, word came and the regiment was once more sent out into the bush in small detachments.

In 1834 a Sergeant Dowdall died leaving an amount of money, and before allowing the widow to remarry, he ensured that the children of the marriage were taken care off. During 1847, a letter was written to him about the matter. He immediately wrote to Captain Moffatt and Colour Sergeant Nathaniel Connolly who were the Trustees of the children and ensured the matter was attended to. Moffatt had settled in Parramatta and by then Darling Downs, while Connolly had settled in Bathurst.

In September 1835, in England a Select Committee was appointed to inquire into the Orange Institutions. This committee reported that the order was deeply entrenched in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. This was due to the fact that the committee had in its possession letters written to the Deputy Grand Secretary of the Loyal Orange Institution in England, from soldiers of the 17th Regiment then serving in the Australian Colonies. There were three documents involved. The first was a letter written by the Committee of Lodge 260, in September 1832, Wilson, Cooper, Bryson and Fiddis, in which they stated that they had a membership of 75 and that, due to the fact the regiment had been scattered throughout Van Diemen's land and New South Wales for the last two years, they had been unable to correspond earlier. They claimed the 63rd regiment had a membership of 29.

The second letter written in February 1833 by the Secretary, Fiddis had a return showing a membership of 75, with 44 new members, 41 soldiers of the 17th. One, a soldier in the 4th regiment and two civilians of Sydney, although one was a discharged soldier. It was stated in this letter that the Commanding Officer had given out an order against the Orange Order, but he shuts his eyes so long as the members conduct themselves properly. The third letter written by William McKee, Corporal 17th regiment in February 1833 who gave a report on Lodge 260. McKee had been the master responsible for the inception of the Lodge. In 1829, he had exchanged the old number from Ireland held in 1828. Upon his embarkation for New South Wales he stated that his wife and two children had been left behind for no apparent reason, due he thought to the fact that his pay sergeant was no friend of his. He had been told prior to his embarkation that if he held a warrant for the lodge to send it back, but he had thought it not proper to obey this order. He had, however, been informed by Cheetwood Eustace not to worry about this disobedience of his Commanding Officer for no harm would befall him. He was no longer the Master of the Lodge due to him being stationed in a remote part of New South Wales. This was quite a dangerous state of affairs for Despard to allow to continue, considering the fate of his uncle E M Despard.

During 1835 word arrived that the 28th (North Gloucestershire) Regiment was ordered to New South Wales to replace the 17th (Leicestershire) Regiment, and the 17th was to proceed to The East Indies as soon as the HQ of the 28th had arrived at Sydney. In March 1836, the regiment was broken up into three divisions, with the 1st wing under Major Croker embarking aboard the ship *John Barry* which left Sydney on 4 March 1836, bound for India. The 2nd wing embarked aboard the ship *Lord William Bentinck*, which left on 15 March, while the 3rd wing remained in Sydney until October when it embarked aboard the ship *Moffatt*, which left on 11 October.

The regiment saw service in the 1st Afghan War where it distinguished itself in 1839 at Ghuznee and Khelat. Henry Despard, together with his family, left New South Wales on board the *City of Edinburgh* on 3 March 1836, bound for England. Also on board were Captain J O Clunie, private Daniel Cogan and his wife and children and private James Walton, all of the regiment. Upon arrival in England he went on leave and, in June 1838, exchanged to the Recruiting Staff as Inspecting Field Officer, where he remained until exchanging to the 99th Regiment in September 1842.

Blue Bonnets Over The Border — Australian Army Aviation's First UN Operation

David Chinn¹

In November and December 1962, a Detachment of the joint Army/RAAF aviation unit 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron/No 16 (Army Light Aircraft) Squadron supported the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA), West New Guinea, in eradicating a serious outbreak of cholera on the south-west coast.

Background

UNTEA was administering West New Guinea following confrontation directed by Indonesia against the Netherlands over sovereignty². A United Nations Security Force (UNSF), primarily Pakistan Army, was deployed to maintain peace between Netherlands and Indonesian forces. One element, A Company 14 Battalion The Punjab Regiment, was based at Merauke, the District Headquarters close to the southern extremity of the border with Papua New Guinea. The Indonesian Army elements in the area were a paratroop company and a commando platoon.

In October 1962, a serious outbreak of cholera was identified on the Casuarina Coast, a primitive tribal area, some 200 nautical miles north-west of Merauke. This was the area in which the American anthropologist Rockefeller Jr was lost without trace a year earlier. The cholera was purported to have been introduced by Indonesian crocodile hunters, working about and between the coastal villages of Agats and Pirimapuan. A World Health Organisation (WHO) medical team was deployed, with medical supplies including vaccine and bulk saline solution. About 1,200 people were reported dead before the epidemic was contained.

The area, apart from a muddy shore line, with some low sand-dune areas, was flat, primarily mangrove and rainforest swamp, almost totally inundated. The tides were of the order of four metres. There were no roads, however several small rivers provided water-borne access to the hinterland; villages were established scattered along these rivers. The sky in November-December, during the north-west monsoon, was generally overcast, with cloud cover from three to eight oktas, and intermittent rain from a cloud-base of usually less than 2,000 feet. The temperature by day averaged 30° with humidity 80% or higher.

In late October 1962, the Australian Government received a request from the United Nations for float-equipped helicopters to assist the WHO team based at Pirimapuan. Because 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron, at RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland was the only unit of the Defence Force so equipped, and experienced, Army was tasked. A warning order was issued to the squadron on 1 November 1962. At the time, the squadron was committed to a major Army exercise, "NUTCRACKER", in the rugged Singleton-Colo-Putty area, some 70 nautical miles west of Newcastle NSW.

¹ David Chinn was the commander, as a captain, of the Detachment 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron, UNTEA West New Guinea. His source material for this paper included the No 16 (ALA) Squadron unit diaries, the court of inquiry proceedings (downgraded classification) relating to the loss of helicopter Al-721, UNTEA published reports and his service flying log book.

² The UNTEA period of control was from 1 October 1962 to 1 May 1963.

16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron had been raised on 1 December 1960 at Amberley. Its role was the provision of light aircraft support to Army formations and units throughout Australia. Commanded by a wing commander, it comprised a headquarters and three flights. Operations Flight was commanded by a Major, and carried out light aircraft support missions employing its Bell 47G2 and G2A helicopters, and Cessna 180 landplanes, flown by Army pilots. Training Flight, commanded by a Squadron Leader who was also the Squadron's Chief Flying Instructor, carried out the conversion training of Army graduates from the RAAF Basic Flying Training School at Point Cook, Victoria, using the flight's Bell 47G2 and G2A helicopters and Cessna 180 landplanes; the flying instructors were all Army pilots. The Technical Flight was commanded by a Flight Lieutenant; it was responsible for the maintenance and repair of the squadron's aircraft. The squadron's strength was about 120 all ranks, approximately 50% each Army and RAAF. Most RAAF personnel were located in Technical Flight. In November 1962, the squadron was operating eight Bell 47G2 helicopters, three Bell 47G2A helicopters and 15 Cessna 180 D and E-model landplanes.

Deployment

The detachment for UN duty in West New Guinea was detailed on 1 November. Commanded by a Captain (aircrew), it comprised three more Army officer aircrew, and seven RAAF groundcrew: a Warrant Officer engineer (in charge of maintenance) and six maintenance ground crew, consisting of a Sergeant (engine fitter), Corporal (radio technician), Corporal (electrical fitter), and three Leading Aircraftsmen, one each airframe fitter, engine fitter and instrument fitter. The aircrew were all experienced in helicopter float operations, and one – a qualified flying instructor – had been a member of the detachment which had searched for Rockefeller Jr in the same area of West New Guinea a year previously.

Preparation of the detachment included the issue of Army tropical scale clothing to the RAAF groundcrew, and packing of camping equipment, rations (10-man packs) and water for 30 days, medical supplies and water purifying kits. Inoculations were completed, however the departure of the detachment was delayed until 18 November because of Army Headquarters' concern that the cholera vaccine used in Australia was believed not to be adequate protection against the cholera strain responsible for the epidemic in West New Guinea. The decision was finally taken for the detachment's deployment to proceed on the basis that the WHO authorities would inoculate the detachment members with the vaccine used to contain the epidemic when the detachment arrived.

Because of the potential for conflict between the Netherlands and Indonesian forces and the UNSF, and the risks inherent in operating in remote areas among primitive peoples, the detachment was issued with 9mm Browning pistols (aircrew), Owen sub-machine-guns (groundcrew) and 9mm ammunition.

Two Bell 47G2A helicopters (see box for data) fitted with floats were allotted for detachment duty: A1-672 and A1-721. The 47G2A helicopters were slightly more powerful than the standard 47G2 helicopters of the squadron, and could seat three including the pilot across the bench seat. They were allotted because of the additional load and drag involved with float equipment and because of the high density altitude (DA) prevalent in coastal West New Guinea: the average of 2,500 feet DA at sea level limited all aircraft performance. The helicopters' stores included platforms, with the alternative of bins, for load carrying on each side, cargo hooks and slings for suspension of loads below the helicopters, and life jackets for operations over and on water. The 47G2A helicopters were not however configured with ARC44 Army tactical radio (FM) sets as were the 47G2s, but only VHF and HF air traffic

radio sets. Because of this, a RAAF Willys Jeep fitted with VHF radio was allotted to the detachment to provide ground/air communication.

On 16 November, the executive order was received for the Detachment's deployment; the helicopters, jeep and all stores, rations and water were loaded onto a RAAF C130 Hercules on 17 November and departure was effected on 18 November.

The C130 captain, during refuelling at RAAF Base Townsville, was advised that Biak Flight Information Region (FIR) had issued a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) limitation on Merauke Airfield, restricting operations to aircraft of less than 30,000 lbs all-up-weight; the C130 with its payload clearly exceeded this limit. However, the C130 captain decided to proceed on the basis that the UN had requested the helicopter support and was ultimately responsible for control of Merauke Airfield. It was expected that direct radio contact with Merauke Airfield would result in special dispensation being given for landing. In the event this proved to be so, and after a low level run over the perforated steel plate (PSP) strip, the C130 landed. It transpired that the NOTAM was intended to prevent Indonesian Air Force C130s landing, because their pilots' technique of using excessive reverse thrust and braking had caused some buckling of the PSP, and hence a hazard for lighter aircraft.

On arrival at Merauke, the Detachment was quartered temporarily with A Company 14 Battalion The Punjab Regiment in the former Netherlands forces' barracks. Discussions were held with the UN District Commissioner, reconnaissance of the cholera epidemic area on the Casuarina Coast was carried out and deployment plans were completed. Meanwhile the helicopters were being rigged and test flown, and equipment, rations, water and stores being prepared for transportation by launch to Pirimapuan, to be the base for operations. Concurrently anti-cholera vaccine was administered to the Detachment, and arrangements were being made by the UN administration for fuel to be dumped at an intermediate airstrip for helicopter refuelling en route to Pirimapuan.

In the few days spent at Merauke, the Detachment was well cared for by the Pakistan Army, and noted with interest the early morning ritual of the Indonesian paratroop company arriving unarmed and on foot outside of the UNSF barracks to perform an energetic PT session, immaculately turned out in white T-shirts, neat green trousers and polished jump-boots. Also the Detachment was impressed by the Indonesian soldiers' paying of compliments to the Australian and Pakistan Army officers, as well as their own officers, when passing in the streets of Merauke.

BELL 47 G2A HELICOPTER

Length with blade extended 13.17 metres
 Fuselage length 9.62 metres
 Width - skid to skid 2.29 metres
 Height to top of mast 2.83 metres
 Main rotor diameter (two bladed) 11.32 metres
 Tail rotor diameter 1.78 metres
 All-up weight (AUW) 1293.9 kg
 Useful load 550.2 kg
 Engine-Lycoming V0435: 240 hp maximum, 220 hp continuous
 Fuel - 80/87 octane in two side tanks total 162 litres
 Maximum speed at AUW 91 knots (sea level)
 Maximum cruise speed at AUW 76 knots (3000 feet)
 Maximum range at AUW 176 nautical miles (5000 feet)
 Maximum endurance at AUW 3.3 hours (5000 feet)
 Maximum rate of climb at AUW 630 feet/minute (sea level)
 Service ceiling at AUW 9000 feet
 Hovering ceiling at AUW 4500 feet in ground effect
 Cabin- Plexiglass bubble, doors removable
 Seating - pilot and two passengers, side by side
 Controls- dual optional
 Instruments- central console
 Radio - VHF, HF (Army 47G2A configuration)
 Intercommunication - headsets for passengers
 Landing gear - skids, floats for water operations
 External side loads - bins, or litters/platforms (Army) on cross-tubes
 External slung load- cargo hook, net

Note: Data, except for Army-identified items, obtained from the Bell Helicopter Company brochure provided by Helitech Ltd (Brisbane). Performance figures are based on a standard day at 3200 engine rpm.

Operations

On 20-21 November, deployment of the helicopters and main party by launch to Pirimpuan was effected. However, due to the lack of a suitably-sized vessel, the RAAF jeep with its VHF radio could not be transported; its VHF radio system could not operate disconnected from the vehicle, hence the main facility for ground-air communications was lost.

The Detachment was allotted the former Netherlands district patrol officer's bungalow on the northern side of the airstrip, at the eastern end not far from the Catholic mission. The helicopters were parked nearby between the airstrip and a large storm water drain paralleling the airstrip, over which was positioned a footbridge, giving access to the patrol officer's bungalow and the Catholic mission. Operations commenced on 22 November, following a planning conference with the WHO team leader and staff, and the Catholic priest who had extensive long-term knowledge of the people, their villages and the area generally.

The Detachment's tasks were to extend the WHO medical team's reconnaissance of the area to determine the extent of the epidemic and to deploy nurses (European and West New Guinean), known locally as "mantri", to infected villages to administer saline solution by drip-feed intravenously to cholera sufferers; usually eight litres per person were required to achieve recovery. WHO doctors were carried on daily visits to the nurses deployed, and concurrently with these sorties, or independently, bulk supplies of saline solution flown in from Merauke were distributed to the nurses at infected villages.

A daily evening conference was conducted by the WHO team leader with the detachment commander and the Catholic priest, who frequently travelled on WHO reconnaissance missions, to determine the priorities and tasks for the next day. These were confirmed by first-light sorties the next day to critically affected villages.

The area of the operation was approximately 30 nautical miles radius from Pirimapuan, with some 33 villages eventually covered. Over 162 hours were flown, the daily average usually involving both helicopters, being six hours.

The risk of cholera, notwithstanding WHO vaccination against the particular strain of the infection, demanded high standards of hygiene. All Detachment personnel returning from sorties or maintaining the helicopters (which had flown into infected villages) were required to wash their hands in hand basins of disinfectant, located on a table by the footbridge providing access across the drain to the living areas on the other side. The health of the Detachment was monitored by the WHO team and no cholera infection, or indeed any other illness, occurred.

The lack of VHF ground to air radio communication was compounded by inability to establish communication between the Detachment's A510 HF ground radio set and the helicopter HF radios. As a result, for the purpose of search and rescue in case of a forced landing in the inundated, crocodile - inhabited terrain, the helicopters were tasked to fly in pairs "leapfrogging" village to village, or singly but with a UN light aircraft flying "top cover" if one helicopter was being serviced.

Navigation inland was difficult, due to inadequate detail and inaccuracy in maps, and the featureless terrain other than the coastline and the rivers, under the low cloud-base, often in rain, due to the north-west monsoon. There were no aviation navigation aids, although Pirimapuan boasted a large vertical-mast aerial which was a component of the Decca (nautical) navigation system. The helicopters were not configured for instrument flight, and aircrew were not instrument-rated; when visibility deteriorated below helicopter visual flight rules (VFR) minima, daily operations were delayed or postponed, with helicopters occasionally temporarily

grounded at villages away from Pirimapuan. The only "aid" to navigation in low cloud-base conditions was a single, extremely large tree referred to by the Catholic priest as "the Boom Kamp tree", which stood out above the rainforest canopy for miles, when flying low level. Although it was well inland, once it was reached, the coast could just be seen; it had considerable potential in the event of compass failure in low cloud-base conditions with no sun for general directional guidance back to the coast and Pirimapuan.

Due to the tropical and monsoonal conditions, helicopter performance at sea level-which was applicable to the whole area of operations – was restricted by the density altitude factor mentioned above. The climatic conditions of high temperature and humidity made ground activity quite uncomfortable, especially for the groundcrew. The aircrew were able to obtain some relief when airborne, the helicopter side-doors having been removed. Showers of rain had a cooling affect when airborne, as had the judicious use occasionally of a slight amount of "right-pedal" by a helicopter pilot.

The Detachment's accommodation at Pirimapuan was relatively comfortable. The wooden bungalow of about three large rooms had good ventilation, especially for sea-breezes, by the wooden walls" separation from the ceiling by about 30cm. Camp stretchers and mosquito nets as issued provided for sleeping, Army canvas water buckets with locally drawn cold water were used for showering and the Netherlands patrol officer's toilet – a porcelain Australian-style fixture, without a seat and mounted on a low concrete block in a relatively large separate room, was a distinct luxury. Local native-gathered fruit provided a pleasant fruit salad (chilled in a kerosene refrigerator) to break the monotony of the 10-man ration packs. The cocktail frankfurts of these packs induced pre-breakfast feelings probably akin to morning sickness after a few weeks. At least the ingenuity of Detachment members being daily duty cook on rotation gave some "lirt" to the ration scene, as did venison sent by the UN District Commissioner at Merauke, from time to time. Relaxation in the evenings was often taken, by invitation, at the Catholic mission, where a small supply of Heineken beer was usually on hand.

Being visitors to the area, members of the Detachment took the opportunity to obtain souvenirs by bartering, usually with plug tobacco obtained in Merauke for such items as carvings, bows, arrows and spears. Probably the first occasion on which an Australian Army helicopter was armed, for low-level attack, was when one helicopter returned to Pirimapuan with a three-metre-long spear, point forward, lashed to its crosstubes.

Whilst the Detachment's health throughout was good, the one element which had the potential to affect morale was the indeterminate nature of the commitment. Although the plan was for a deployment of up to 30 days, provided for with rations and drinking water, the epidemic as at mid-December showed no clear signs of abating. Further, the only communication with the UN District Commissioner at Merauke and through him to Australia was by a marginally effective radio telephone, through a relay station at Tanamerah, 110 nautical miles east of Pirimapuan. Daily situation reports for 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron were passed through this means, and any messages from the Squadron had to be passed through the same third-hand means. Certainly small detachments of the Squadron had probably operated for equally long or longer periods in remote localities in Australia, for example on survey tasks, but at least telephone communication direct to the Squadron at Amberley was, at worst, available from the nearest town or homestead.

The Detachment's operations came to a close when one helicopter, A1-721, crashed, injuring a groundcrew passenger, during a descent adjacent to the Pirimapuan airstrip on 16 December. The other helicopter A1-672 was unserviceable awaiting replacement parts from Australia.

The injured groundcrew was flown that day to Hollandia (Djajapura) by UN light aircraft for hospitalisation and was shortly thereafter evacuated to Australia.

Meanwhile, because of the poor communications in and from the area, the Detachment Commander flew to Port Moresby by UN light aircraft to report the accident formally to the nearest Australian Army headquarters, and to pass details directly to the Squadron by telephone.

Following hearings of a joint RAAF/Army Court of Inquiry at Pirimapuan and Merauke, the Detachment was withdrawn to Australia as its operations, through lack of aircraft, were considered by Army Headquarters to be no longer viable. It arrived back at Amberley on 25 December 1962.

Some Assessments

In hindsight, it could be argued that, notwithstanding the initial expectation of imminent departure following the Army Headquarters warning order on 1 November, and the inclusion in the Detachment of one aircrew familiar with the area of operations, a reconnaissance by Army Cessna 180 by the detachment commander would have been useful – the deployment of the Detachment would not need to have been delayed pending his return, any variations recommended to Detachment manning, aircraft, stores etc being adjusted by a supplementary airlift to Merauke. This action would have been consistent with normal Army deployment procedures.

On reconnaissance, the detachment commander may well have learned or appreciated that the RAAF jeep would not be trans-shipped from Merauke to Pirimapuan and hence arranged other means of ground-air communication for operations from Pirimapuan. This would have made single helicopter operations more viable, through position reporting, and for search and rescue (SAR) purposes.

Further, the inclusion of an Army Cessna 180 and aircrew in the Detachment would have provided a better guarantee of “top-cover” for single helicopter operations, for SAR if needed, and for a courier function flying to Merauke, especially to pick-up spare parts for the helicopters when delivered there by RAAF or other means. It would have released the UN light aircraft for other UN tasks which were sacrificed to meet the Detachment’s evolving need for light aircraft “top-cover” and other support. The evacuation of the injured groundcrew to Hollandia on the day of the accident was possible due only to the chance arrival of the UN light aircraft. Indeed, the operations of the Detachment might have continued on the basis of one serviceable helicopter, notwithstanding the crash of the other, if an Army Cessna 180 had been included in the Detachment, as considered above.

Finally, the poor communications situation in the area might have been recognised by a detachment commander reconnaissance – a Royal Australian Signals operator with an appropriate-range radio might have been included in the Detachment to provide direct communication to the Army signals network, either through Darwin or Port Moresby, to Amberley. Good, more direct, communications might have reduced helicopter (A1-672) downtime through faster, clearer passing of requests for replacement parts, and advice of delivery to Merauke for collection.

The shortcomings in Army land plane support and Detachment communications were subject of formal observation in due course by the Court of Inquiry forwarding authority.

Conclusion

The UNTEA and WHO operation to control and eradicate the cholera continued using other resources. The UN Report on UNTEA recorded a sharp decline in cholera cases as at 27 December, and it may well be that the Detachment's period of concentrated effort over the 25 days flying based at Pirimapuan broke the epidemic's hold and paved the way for its end, declared effective on 23 March 1963 by UNTEA.



Bell 47G2A Al-672 photographed at RAAF Base Amberley in 1965. It is not fitted with platforms across its cross-tubes, as it was in West New Guinea in 1962. However, its radio configuration post-1962 is shown: the ARC 44 (FM) radio aerial extends diagonally at about a "one-o'clock" radial angle from the tail boom near the tail rotor, and the pair of ARC 44 homing aeriels (short, vertical) are further forward along the tail boom. AWM negative no. P01844.001



Three of the Detachment's aircrew admiring the UN flag presented to the Detachment on its arrival. The scene is the Merauke Airport, in the background the terminal building and a UNSF vehicle. AWM negative no. P01742.001

Appointment of Force Commander of the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai

On 1 February 1994, the Director General of the MFO, Mr Wat T Cluverius IV, announced, with the approval of the Governments of Egypt and Israel, the appointment of Brigadier David Ferguson, AM as the next Force Commander of the Multinational Force and Observers stationed in the Sinai Peninsula. In welcoming the appointment, the Minister for Defence, Senator Ray said, "The appointment is a credit to Brigadier Ferguson and the Australian Defence Force. It also reflects Australia's ongoing involvement in multinational peacekeeping operations."

The MFO was established in 1981 to oversee the Camp David accords of September 1978 and the Egypt/Israel peace treaty of March 1979. The role of the MFO is to provide forces and observers to monitor security arrangements in the Sinai and on the Israel/Egypt border.

Australia was an original participant in the MFO, contributing personnel and helicopters from 1982 to 1986. In October 1992, the Government announced that Australia would renew its contribution to the MFO. Senator Ray said, "Brigadier Ferguson will assume command of the MFO on 21 April 1994 with the rank of Major General".

Brigadier David Ferguson graduated from the Royal Military College Duntroon in December 1962. In November 1963 he was attached to the British Far East Land Forces in Malaya where he served with 3 Company Royal Army Service corps until his return to Australia, promotion to captain. He saw operational service with 1 Company Royal Australian Army Service Corps in Vietnam from May 1966 to April 1967.

In November 1967 Brigadier Ferguson was appointed an Instructor at the Officer Cadet School. In May 1970 he was selected to attend a 12 month Officers Advanced Transport Course at the Army School of Transport Aldershot which was followed by attachments to British units in Germany for six months.

In 1974 Brigadier Ferguson was appointed Staff Officer Grade Two (Personnel and Logistics) Headquarters 3 Task Force, a position which he held until December 1976 when he left for the United States of America and attendance at the 1977 Logistic Executive Development Course at the United States Army Logistic Management Centre. He returned to Canberra, on promotion to the rank of lieutenant colonel, in June 1977 and served as a Staff Officer Grade One in Material Division, Army Office until his attendance at Joint Services Staff College in January 1979.

On graduation from Joint Services Staff College, Brigadier Ferguson was appointed Staff Officer Grade One (Joint Logistics) Joint Military Operations and Plans Division, Defence Central. In December 1981 he was promoted to the rank of colonel and appointed Commander Field Force Command Movements and Transport. He attended the 1983/84 course at the National Defence College Canada before promotion to the rank of brigadier.

In December 1986, Brigadier Ferguson was appointed Director General of Coordination and Organisation, Office of the Chief of the General Staff, and in October 1988 Director General Operational Logistics, Operations Division, Headquarters Australian Defence Force. Brigadier Ferguson moved to his present position of Director General Defence Force Plans and Policy, Development Division Headquarters Australian Defence Force in July 1991.

Australian War Memorial History Conference 1993

Alan Fraser

The Australian War Memorial's 12th History Conference was part of the Memorial's commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the end of the 1914-18 war, which also included entombment of the Unknown Australian Soldier, an exhibition "Echoes of the guns" and a special issue of the Journal. It was held at the Australian Defence Force Academy, Canberra, on the three days 27-29 September 1993, a one-day reduction over previous annual conferences.

For the first time, the conference had a theme, "1918 and beyond", signalling "the Memorial's recognition of the significance of the war and a need to continue and extend the scholarly scrutiny to which it has been subjected". Over 30 speakers included several from overseas, Australian academics (the majority), post-graduate students and members of the War Memorial staff. This year, there were none from the MHSa.

The keynote address, delivered by Professor J M Winter of Cambridge University, presented an unusual facet of the cultural aftermath of the war, the "return" of the fallen, as depicted in paintings (eg, Longstaff's "The Menin Gate at midnight"), cinema (reprise of those who died during the film (eg, "J'accuse" and "All quiet on the Western front") and the return of the bodies of the dead to family or their local burial places; the remains of some 300,000 French dead were returned to their families in 1922.

Not a great deal was offered on military operations in 1918 since the theme took in "beyond" 1918 into the 1920s and 1930s. Some aspects of the social aftermath were well covered, many of which would have been only dimly perceived, if at all, at the time, and now ventilated and analysed by researchers who may be uninterested in battles and guns and bombs. The apparent weighting towards social history in these conferences has been mentioned before, although that may be simply a reflection of the types of paper offered. It is worth noting that topics included "Gender relations" and "Art", novel in this reporter's experience of the conferences.

There were eight short outlines of work in progress, always of interest, but unfortunately running concurrently with two papers on "War and national identity" – a difficult choice for attendees, but the only simultaneous presentations in this conference. Papers directed at exploding "myths", eg, "the Anzac myth", are always interesting, but unwelcome to many who cherish their illusions. Current attempts to re-write Australian history in a search for a new "national identity" (whatever that may be; anything, so long as it is not Anglo-Saxon-based?) merit critical scrutiny. This year, papers are to be printed as "Proceedings", to be distributed later at a cost of \$15, and good value at that.

The conference was, as always, well organised, no doubt placing some strain on the Memorial's resources in what must have been one of its busier years.

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
KEYNOTE ADDRESS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prof J M Winter - Cambridge University Homecomings: the return of the fallen of the Great War 	GENDER RELATIONS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Jill Roe - Macquarie Univ The aftermath: scope or setback for women as citizens Ian Harrison - Melb Univ Washing blood from the wound: the post-war politics of Australian masculinity 	MEMORIALS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prof Ken Inglis - Aust National Univ - The unknown soldier Prof Annette Becker - Univ of Lille III - Spirituality and war
BATTLES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peter Simpkins - Imperial War Museum Co-stars or supporting cast? British divisions in the 100 days Dr Robin Prior - UNSW-ADFA Passchendaele: a reinterpretation Dr Chris Pugsley - NZ Those "other" diggers in 1918 	WAR AND NATIONAL IDENTITY: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Martin Travers - Griffith Univ - "We had to lose the war in order to win the nation": popular nationalism and the legacy of 1918 Prof Eric Andrews - Newcastle Univ - The Anzac illusion: Australians and the first world war 	ART <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anna Gray - Aust War Memorial George Lambert's memorial sculptures Christopher Wray - Melbourne War and the painted image Dr Heather Johnson - Sydney An "unusually important contribution": Australian women artists and modernism in the 1920s
HISTORIANS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prof Stuart McIntyre - Melb Univ - Sir Ernest Scott Prof Trevor Wilson - Adel Univ - Paul Fussell at War 	WORK IN PROGRESS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Chalk - Among the angels John Connor - War brides and the AIF Peter Edgar - 13th Brigade at Villers-Bretonneux Lynn Gorman - From one war to the next: French <i>anciens combattants</i> of 1914-18 and the events of 1939-40 Bobbie Oliver - Australian conscientious objectors to military service 1914 to 1945 Melanie Oppenheimer - The administration of patriotic funds in Australia during the second world war Joyce Sanders - 1914-1918: The bloodless war that Australia fought alone - the display of military history in Australia after the Armistice Elizabeth Willis - Images of valour - honour certificates 1917-1921 	AFTERMATH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Jan Bassett - Melbourne - Public pride, private pain Dr Anthea Hyslop - Aust National Univ - The last campaign: world war I and Spanish influenza in Australia 1918-1919 Kate Blackmore - Univ of Sydney - What Australia is doing for you: the early Australian repatriation bureaucracy
REMEMBERING: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> David Lloyd - Cambridge - Battlefield tourism & pilgrimages of remembrance: an aspect of the popular response to the Great War Bob Pynn - Nat Film & Sound Archive - Popular fiction and the war 	LOOKING BACK ON "THE BROKEN YEARS" Panel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Bill Gammage Prof Ken Inglis Dr Jeffrey Grey Prof J M Winter 	
	ARMISTICE AND AFTER: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr John Moses - Univ of Queensland Germany 1918 - a case of double frustration: Opportunity for democratic reform or the continuity of Imperialism Dr John Williams - Sydney - Interregnum : from armistice to ratification - November 1918 to July 1919 	

Honorary Award to US Admiral

On Friday, 25 February 1994, the Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Ray, announced that Admiral David E. Jeremiah, United States Navy, Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (the United States' second highest ranking military officer), has been awarded the first honorary appointment to the Military Division of the Order of Australia.

In announcing the award Senator Ray said, "As a pre-eminent naval commander and statesman, 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."

Admiral Jeremiah has had a distinguished naval career and has been a constant advocate of close cooperation between the navies of the United States of America and Australia. In 1993 he visited Australia as the personal representative of the President of the United States during Coral Sea celebrations. This is the first honorary award made in the military division of the Order of Australia.

Admiral David E Jeremiah was born on 26 February 1934, and is a native of Portland, Oregon. He graduated from the University of Oregon in 1955 and received his commission through Officer Candidate School in 1956. He served on seven Pacific Fleet destroyers, including command of the USS *Probie*. He commanded Destroyer Squadron 24 from September 1979 until October 1980.

While serving as Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group Eight, from August 1984 until April 1986, he commanded Task Force 60 in the Mediterranean and directed the capture of the Egyptian airliner carrying the hijackers of the Italian cruise ship *Achille Lauro*. He also directed actions resulting in the sinking of two Libyan warships and the destruction of an anti-air missile site during freedom of navigation operations in the Gulf of Sidra.

His early shore assignments included two tours in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and a tour in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Program Analysis and Evaluation. After serving as Executive Assistant to the Commander in Chief, US Pacific Fleet, from October 1980 until May 1982, he was reassigned to Washington, DC, and served as Executive Assistant to the Chief of Naval Operations until July 1984. In June 1986, he assumed duties as Director, Navy Program Planning and was promoted to Vice Admiral on 1 July 1986. Admiral Jeremiah received his fourth star in September 1987 and became the 23rd Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, that same month. He was appointed by the President as the second individual to be named the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, assuming that position on 1 March 1990. He began his second term on 1 March 1992.

His Navy awards include the Distinguished Service Medal with three gold stars, Legion of Merit with gold star, Meritorious Service Medal with gold star, and Achievement Medal with combat "V". In July 1991, President Bush awarded him the Presidential Citizens Medal for significant contributions during the Persian Gulf crisis and the successful liberation of Kuwait. He also has various foreign awards, unit commendations and campaign ribbons.

Book Reviews

Aboriginal History volume sixteen 1-2 (1992)¹

This review is unusual in that it deals with a journal, *Aboriginal History*, rather than a book. However, this issue is relevant to military historians and ethnohistorians alike due to its devotion to the examination of the wartime contributions of Australia's Aboriginal and Islander population from World War II through to Vietnam. Aboriginal history has a strong interest in Aboriginal and Islander participation in Australia's conflicts and was the first to publicise their efforts in their Volume 4 (1980) issue containing Robert Hall's path-breaking article.

This particular issue contains a collection of papers consisting of personal recollections, oral histories and significant primary documents for the interested researcher. Since these papers are diverse in their content, each paper is worthy of a brief evaluation.

Part 1 begins with extracts selected by Dennis Mulvaney of a report by Donald Thomson written during World War II in the Northern Territory. Thomson, a pre-war anthropologist was commissioned to form an observer and guerilla force of Aborigines to counter the expected Japanese invasion. Armed only with spears (no rifles were provided) and paid only in tobacco, this small force was intended to form the nucleus of a larger Aboriginal guerilla force intended to harass small Japanese units and provide assistance to Allied service personnel. It is interesting to note that only a few years before the war these same Aborigines were arrested for spearing Japanese pearl divers!

The following article by Robert Hall details the archival sources available to researchers examining Aboriginal involvement during the War. While many of these sources can be accessed through the offices of the Australian Archives, Hall justly criticizes the Queensland Department of Community Services for their lack of co-operation in opening their files. Hall's subsequent paper examines the career of fighter pilot Leonard Waters who, until a few years ago, had always been reticent in relating his wartime experiences. This paper compliments a recent work by Leonard's daughter. Jeremy Long's "Narritjin's story" is a good example of the oral histories he has recorded in other works and provides some historical insight when compared to the official history relating to the sinking of the *Patricia Cam*. Peter Grimshaw's contribution studies the career of the celebrated late Aboriginal warrior and officer, Reg Saunders. This paper does not greatly enlarge upon Harry Gordon's *Embarrassing Australia* (Cheshire-Lansdowne, Melbourne: 1962) except by the addition of Guest's interview.

The final paper by retired regular officer O M (Max) Carroll provides a frank and refreshing collection of case histories of Aboriginal and Islander soldiers serving in the Malayan Emergency and Vietnam. This consists of a straight-forward and personal testimonial by an ex-serving officer whose account is in praise of these soldiers and carries a sincerity in its conviction; "There is no discrimination in the Australian Army on account of a man's ... race ... we rely on each other too much ... for there to be any nonsense, such as misguided prejudice".

¹ Available by subscription through BIBLIOTECH GPO Box 4 Canberra ACT 2601. Correspondence should be addressed to the editors of *Aboriginal History*, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, GPO Box 4 Canberra ACT 2601.

Part 2 begins with a wartime report by F R Morris, Controller of Native Personnel in Northern Australia during 1942. This report details the contributions of the Aboriginal labour force to carry out many duties from the mundane to the technical and including the rescue of many Allied servemen (and the capture of Australia's first Japanese POW).

Collectively, this issue of Aboriginal History is invaluable to the researcher of Aboriginal participation in Australia's defence and serves to add some colour to the Anzac legend. Australia's military history has long overlooked the efforts of our black population in the nation's defence. The only deficiency which could be fairly levelled at this journal is that it has not examined Aboriginal military contributions in conflicts prior to World War II which truly set a precedent in this area. — Rodd Pratt

25 April 1915, Denis Winter, RRP: \$18.95

The Anzac Legend has almost sacred significance in Australia and the date of the Gallipoli landing, 25 April, is a national day of remembrance. Using official documents never before studied by historians, as well as private papers, Denis Winter sheds new light on the landing. The events leading up to 25 April are reconstructed through three interwoven strands in the narrative: the men, strategic planning and operational aspects. The individual experiences of the men — their attitudes, their feelings on the eve of battle and during it, the impact on survivors — are juxtaposed against the larger picture: the serious planning for Gallipoli that had begun as early as 1903 and the operational aspects that went so disastrously wrong and ensured that the campaign was doomed from the very outset.

Letters

Federal Secretary, MHSA

Thank you for your letter of the 30 November 1993 and the views you expressed regarding the Army's recent initiative in establishing the Research Grants Scheme.

The concern of the Military Historical Society about the quality of applications submitted to the Army Grants Scheme is noted. I should point out that there were many very good and possibly deserving projects among those received but not awarded a grant. The deciding factor in the nine selections was that they were considered the best of those submitted and, of course, we had to operate within the allocated budget.

The perceptions that non-academics are less familiar with the system of applying for grants than academics is probably correct. I would regard the matter of whether this creates a situation of disadvantage as debatable. The material on the Grants Scheme which is sent to intending applicants is clear about what is required; further advice and assistance has and will be given where it is sought. The essential criteria are that there be a good project that sits within the broad parameters of what we are seeking, a realistic budget, and some demonstration of ability to produce the desired result.

I thank the Military Historical Society for the offer to contribute to the membership of the Committee. I will address this when the composition of the Committee is next reviewed.

G D Carter
Major General
Deputy Chief of the General Staff

Editor,

Recently, I was reading the 1986 edition of the *Greece, Crete and Syria* volume of Australia's Official History of WWII. I noticed two errors and an omission. I wrote to the Australian War Memorial pointing these out. Dr Peter Stanley replied that I was correct and these points would be included in the corrigenda the next time it is reprinted, which will not be for many years. Dr Stanley also suggested that I could let you know about these points. Wherever I refer to a page number it is for the 1986 edition.

Between pages 218 and 219 is a map of dispositions in the Suda-Maleme area as at 19 May 1941. This shows the 2/8th Bn just north of the 2nd Greek Regiment near Mournies. On pages 218 and 226 it is stated that the 2.8th Bn was at Georgioupolis (about 15 miles to the east) and only moved to the Mournies area on the afternoon of 20 May after the German invasion had begun. The map is, therefore, incorrect.

On Crete a number of Composite Battalions (Comp Bn) were formed from troops evacuated from Greece. One of these was given the nickname "Royal Perivolians" by Major General Weston RM, supposedly because they had helped to protect the King of Greece who was staying in a house near Perivolia. In the index on page 587 it says under Royal Perivolians "see New Zealand Composite Battalion". I believe this to be incorrect. On page 226 it is stated that a 700 strong Comp Bn near Perivolia was named the Royal Perivolians. On page 224 the NZ Comp Bn is said to be 1,000 strong. The map between pages 218 and 219 shows the NZ Comp Bn to be in an area from the coast to just south of Galatas. Their closest positions to Perivolia are two miles away. On page 245 is a map of the situation on the Morning of 25 May. This shows a Comp Bn north of Galatas and the Royal Perivolians north of Perivolia.

The discrepancies between the strengths and the locations convince me that the Royal Perivolians and the NZ Comp Bn are not the same. It is possible that the position shown for the 2.8th Bn on the map between pages 218 and 219 should have been for the Royal Perivolians. According to page 226, when the 2.8th Bn arrived in the Mournies area, the Royal Perivolians were to its right. I don't know what troops made up the Perivolians. I suspect that they were British. This is only because units seemed to be under the command of officers of their own nationality, excluding the Greeks, at the beginning of the battle. The Royal Perivolians were part of Major General Weston's command. He was the senior British officer.

On page 219 the 102nd Anti-Tank Regiment, acting as infantry, are listed as being in the Suda sector under Major General Weston. The accompanying map shows the 102nd A-Tk Regt as being on the Akrotiri Peninsula, northeast of Canea. After page 219 the 102nd A-Tk Regt is not mentioned again. Instead, the Northumberland Hussars (NH) are mentioned as being on the Akrotiri Peninsula as infantry. The index refers to the 102nd in more places but in those places it is not mentioned. The NH are not mentioned in the index at all. From footnotes on pages 30 and 33 it is obvious that the NH were not involved in the campaign in Greece. This puzzle was solved when I found a history of the Northumberland Hussars Yeomanry. This was a Territorial Army mounted regiment. In 1939 it was one of a number of Yeomanry Regiments converted to artillery. The NH subsequently became the 102nd (NH) A-Tk Regt. Nowhere that I could see in *Greece, Crete and Syria* is it explained that the 102nd A-Tk Regt and the NH are the one and the same. The author, Gavin Long, must have known because on the pages on which the 102nd should be mentioned according to the index but isn't, the NH is mentioned.

M G Aitken (Mr)
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North Blackburn VIC 3130

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 either a 3.5" or 5.25" 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.

Elizabeth Topperwien
Editor



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