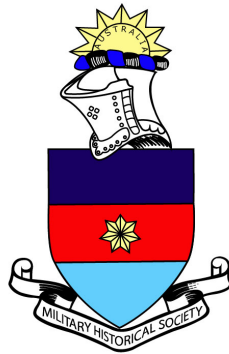


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*Sabretache*



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# SABRETACHE

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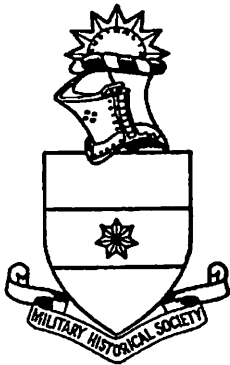
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Contributions in the form of articles, notes, queries or letters are always welcome. Authors of major articles are invited to submit a brief biographical note, and, where possible, submit the text of the article on floppy disk as well as hard copy. The annual subscription to *Sabretache* is \$30.

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# SABRETACHE

## The Military Historical Society of Australia

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

### Organisation

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

### Sabretache

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

### Members' notices

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

### Queries

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

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## One for every city<sup>1</sup>

Mark Clayton

**T**he *Argus* had created a powerful image with its description of Prime Minister Hughes “out at the front” exhorting his troops to retrieve, at least, one gun for every Australian city.<sup>2</sup> Owing more, one suspects, to the imagination than history, it nonetheless passed as good news copy. After five years of unrelenting sacrifice and restraint it was now clear to those back home that the government was about to share with them the rewards of victory.

The Prime Minister’s message had been received so clearly as to generate, in just three months, no less than 1,000 trophy applications which included requests from 300 rural and regional municipalities.<sup>3</sup> Meetings were hurriedly convened in every part of the country with countless committees and delegations appointed to decide how they might best be able to guarantee a trophy gun for their particular community. In some instances it was both logical and convenient to hand this important task over to some pre-existing organisation. The citizens of Northcote (Vic) for example empowered the members of the Northcote Soldiers’ Welcome Home Committee in September 1922 to make application on their behalf for “the gift of a cannon or some such”.<sup>5</sup> When that Committee ceased to exist the matter was simply passed on to the Anzac Memorial Hall Committee which in turn — just five months after the initial application — became known at the Northcote Soldiers’ Memorial Committee.

Others thought to try and improve their prospects by applying direct to the British Government, only to be referred back to their respective state governments.<sup>6</sup> Delegations began arriving from distant townships, the residents of Nhill (Vic), Red Cliffs (Vic) and Sandgate (Qld) being convinced that the occasion demanded nothing less than a show of force. These applications and delegations were still being received in 1928, almost eight years after Billy Hughes had first fired the Australian public’s interest in the matter.

The organisation responsible for handling these applications was the Commonwealth War Trophies Committee (CWTC) which closely resembled its Imperial namesake. When first convened in late June 1918 it comprised the Commonwealth Ministers for Defence, Home and Territories (Chairman) and the Navy, together with the Chairman of Trustees of the Melbourne Exhibition Building, Sir Henry Weedon.<sup>7</sup>

After a year of apparent inactivity the federal opposition began, in July 1919, to raise questions about the CWTC’s composition and performance. The Chairman defended his Committee’s position on that occasion by explaining that it had recently sought to expand its membership by

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<sup>1</sup> This article is the third and last of a series by Mark Clayton entitled, *To the victor belongs the spoils—a history of the Australian war trophy collection*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Argus*, 3 February 1919.

<sup>3</sup> *The Argus*, 26 June 1919, p.4.

<sup>4</sup> *The Age*, 18 June 1919, p.9.

<sup>5</sup> Northcote AMHC to Commandant, 3 MD, 22 September 1919, File 194 (Melbourne 22) (AWM).

<sup>6</sup> Treloar to War Trophies Committee (WTC), 17 February 1919, File 22 [739/6/3] (AWM).

<sup>7</sup> Trahair to Defence Secretary, 4 April 1919, File 93 [2/2/3] (AWM)

inviting “some gentlemen whose services would be of considerable help”. Although some replies were still outstanding the Minister was able to announce to the House (of Representatives) the inclusion of polar explorer, Sir Douglas Mawson, together with Sir W Blundell White who had distinguished himself at Gallipoli. Calls for state representation on the federal Committee were initially resisted on the grounds that membership “must be largely determined by possibility of attendance at meetings”.<sup>8</sup>

Charles Bean had previously warned the Defence Minister of the need to adequately accommodate the states’ interests in any trophy distribution solution that the Commonwealth might arrive at. To this end he had recommended the establishment of State Trophy Committees which would then assume responsibility for the intrastate distribution of all Commonwealth allocations. Bean insisted however that the Commonwealth had to be represented on these state bodies, possibly via the appointment of an AIF representative.<sup>9</sup>

The federal opposition continued though to hound the government over the matter of state representation, even describing the CWTC on one occasion as “a Melbourne committee”. In the face of sustained criticism the Government finally acceded to opposition demands by agreeing, in October 1919, to implement the State Committee solution which Bean had advanced 19 months beforehand.<sup>10</sup>

The states at that time were still mistrustful of Commonwealth ambitions and were continuing to resist attempts to widen the powers of the Commonwealth parliament. The Commonwealth Government on the other hand — having recently lost a third attempt to increase its powers by referendum — was reluctant to fuel these antagonisms by contesting the matter of trophy distributions. It was equally conscious of the need to play down any issues that might further provoke the civil unrest that had affected Australia throughout 1919. As Gavin Souter remarked many years later, this (ie 1919) was ‘the strangest, most violent year the Commonwealth had ever known.’<sup>11</sup> Riots and lesser disturbances flared up in many cities and towns and often as not, the returned soldier was to be found in the thick of each melee. Some soldiers believed that after having taken up arms to preserve the Australian way of life, they had earned “a special right to have their say in peace”.<sup>12</sup> Others seemed to believe that this right placed them above the law which led to a number of particularly violent confrontations between police and soldiers. Although the soldiers were in fact responding to a wide range of social and political issues, these outbursts of discontent were frequently (and conveniently) diagnosed as symptoms of Bolshevism.<sup>13</sup>

The recently established Returned Services League had partly foreshadowed these disturbances by drawing attention to the “possible state of chaos that may occur ... when all these thousands of men return if they are not intelligently organised”.<sup>14</sup> Hughes’ Nationalist government was equally sensitive to these concerns and, for this reason, sought to win the support of the returned soldier by introducing gratuities, preference in public employment and, later, an ambitious

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<sup>8</sup> Australia, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 11 July 1919, Vol.LXXXVIII, p.10668.

<sup>9</sup> Extract from memorandum by Mr Bean to Minister to Defence, March. 1918, File 16 [4386/1/44] (AWM).

<sup>10</sup> Australia, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 2 October 1919, Vol.XC. p.12938.

<sup>11</sup> Gavin Souter, *Lion and Kangaroo: The Initiation of Australia 1901-1919*, (Collins Publishers, 1976), p.286.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Sekules and Jacqueline Rees, *Lest We Forget, The History of the Returned Services League 1916-1986*, (Rigby Publishers, 1986) p.3.

<sup>13</sup> Souter, pp.290- 291.

<sup>14</sup> Sekules and Rees, p.24.

scheme to settle soldiers on the land.<sup>15</sup> Significantly, the war trophy distribution guidelines were also modified to provide for these new soldier settlements.<sup>16</sup>

Each State war trophy committee consisted of a Senator, a member of the House of Representatives, a representative of the State government, an AIF officer and the Director of the Australian War Museum.<sup>17</sup> The Victorian Trophy Committee later delegated part of its responsibility to the Mayor of Melbourne who in turn, convened a sub-committee of municipal mayors to determine how the city's allocation might be fairly apportioned.<sup>18</sup> These State appointments were finally resolved around mid October 1919 with the CWTC holding its first business meeting about a week later.

The Committee's first and most difficult task was to formulate a workable set of distribution policy guidelines which would satisfy what were often competing regional, state and national interests. In these matters it was able to derive some benefit from the work of the Imperial War Trophies Committee (IWTC) which had eventually arrived at a number of inalienable principles which might be applied with equal effect to the Australian collection. Charles Bean had also enunciated a number of distribution principles which derived from, or at least mirrored, the IWTC's own findings. Fundamental to both was the firm belief that the bulk of the collection should be equitably distributed amongst the population, but only after adequate provision had been made for the national interests, as represented by the Imperial and Australian War Museums. That these points were never contested may have had some bearing on the fact that they, too, were derived from Roman law.

“... among the Romans, every kind of spoil, including even moveable possessions, was acquired not for the soldier who seized it, and not even for the commander in his own right, but for the Roman people.”<sup>19</sup>

Trophy committees throughout the Commonwealth, and in North America were all of the view that the bulk of the trophies should be distributed amongst the population on an equitable basis.

Where they differed, and where historical precedent ceased to be of any benefit, was in relation to the interpretation of the word “equitable”.

This remained the CWIC's biggest challenge, one for which it was unlikely to receive much encouragement or praise. This situation was compounded somewhat by the fact that Australia also lacked a strong trophy tradition, one that might have offered the Committee a weight of domestic precedent. A small number of trophies had been allotted to Australia after the Boer War and it was known that these had been divided equally, as far as possible between the Commonwealth and the states. This however was hardly an adequate prescription for distributing 1,340 trophies amongst a population that had been wracked by political and social division, profoundly scarred by unprecedented casualty rates, and which remained deeply mistrustful of federal ambitions. There were no guarantees moreover that the distribution

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<sup>15</sup> Stuart Macintyre, *The Oxford History of Australia, Vol.4, 1901-1942*, (OUP, 1986), p.189.

<sup>16</sup> The Dreeite (Vic.) and Trawalla (Vic.) Soldier Settlements, for example, received 75mm and 77mm trophy guns, respectively.

<sup>17</sup> Australian War Museum to Northcote Anzac Memorial Hall Committee, 9 October 1919. File 194 [Melbourne 22] (AWM).

<sup>18</sup> Town Clerk St Kilda to Mayor of Melbourne, 12 March 1932, File 06/012/0011 (St Kilda City Council). See also *The Age*, 23 May 1922.

<sup>19</sup> H Grotius, *De Jure Praedae Commentarius, Commentary on the Law of Prize and Booty*, Vol.1, A Translation of the Original Manuscript of 1604 by G L Williams with the collaboration of W H Zeydel (OUP, 1950), p.146.



principles successfully applied to other allied populations would hold true for Australia. Both Canada and the United States for example had opted for the principle of proportional enlistments whereby each state received an allocation that was directly related to the number of troops they'd contributed to the war effort. Neither North American country however had been exposed to two bitterly divisive conscription plebiscites, the effects of which were still sorely felt in Australia.

It became evident that the Committee would eventually have to choose between the North American enlistment principle, or the proportional population criterion adopted by New Zealand. Committee members were painfully aware that significant sections of the community would be disadvantaged by whichever they adopted. Opponents of the enlistment principle expressed justifiable concern that the trophy could become a kind of patriotic barometer which would only serve to focus and sustain, rather than heal social divisions. The West Australians on the other hand felt that they would be unfairly disadvantaged by the application of anything other than an enlistment principle, particularly as they had contributed more enlistees proportionately than any other state.

"In 1921 the Federal Treasurer Sir Joseph Cook stood on a captured gun outside the Melbourne Town Hall and declared that the people of Western Australia had led throughout the war in men, money, general enthusiasm and patriotism. Western Australia recorded a much higher 'yes' vote in both conscription referendums than the other states ... The state death rate in proportion to numbers enlisting was (also) significantly higher than total AIF deaths."<sup>20</sup>

Local governments also recognised advantage in pressing for this option: "it was doubtful if any city in Australia had such a fine record for war efforts, or for the number of its citizens who had enlisted as St. Kilda".<sup>21</sup>

There appeared though to be even less support for the idea of a population based distribution which, it was felt, would only benefit the populous states and large metropolitan centres, leaving rural communities particularly disadvantaged. Questions were raised about the accuracy of the government's population statistics while those in rural centres were concerned that they might be even further prejudiced if the Committee used the town, rather than the shire as its basic population unit.<sup>22</sup> The Federal Opposition also made it known that it had serious reservations about a population based distribution formula, arguing that the various state War Trophy Committees (WTC) "will confine the trophies to the State capitals and ignore the country districts". It sought to overcome these inequities by calling for the establishment of a parliamentary review committee to oversee the CWTC's work, a suggestion that was politely dismissed by the Government.<sup>23</sup>

Communities throughout the country responded with equal predictability, public opinion on the matter having been influenced in part by a critical press: "If Sydney gets the monster railway gun, Eucla [WA] may ultimately mount a German revolver or a steel hat".<sup>24</sup> Despite these and many similar protestations the CWTC revealed in June that the distribution would proceed along population lines in accordance with the following principles.

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<sup>20</sup> Suzanne Welborn, *Lords Of Death: A People, A Place, A Legend*, (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1982), p.160.

<sup>21</sup> *The Age*, 25 June 1923

<sup>22</sup> *The Argus*, 25 December 1920.

<sup>23</sup> Australia, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 1 August 1919, Vol.LXX XVIII, p.11182.

“Towns with a population of more than 10,000 are to receive two guns and two machine-guns. One gun will be given to towns with a population between 3,000 and 10,000 while towns with a population between 300 and 3,000 are to receive one machine-guns (sic).”<sup>25</sup>

This initial step towards a formal policy position was met with a broad range of public criticisms. Supporters of the enlistment principle were told that there were no accurate statistics available to the Committee since many men from country towns had enlisted in the cities. The small wheatbelt town of Nyabing (WA) was particularly aggrieved and “began a series of impassioned pleas” by drawing attention to the “impressive” number of Nyabing men killed.<sup>26</sup> Rural communities felt handicapped by this arrangement which was certain to leave them not only with fewer trophies, but smaller ones at that (ie, machine guns rather than artillery). Residents began to draw critical comparisons with neighbouring communities until inevitably, trophy size became synonymous with civic importance.

The Corowa Council for example “refused to accept so small a thing” when, after having requested a gun, it was offered a machine-gun.<sup>27</sup> The federal member for Eden Monaro was also at pains to disguise his disgust, arguing on behalf of his constituents that, “What we have done is ignored, we sent dozens of men to the Front, and many of them lie buried in France today. We have subscribed thousands to the War Loans, and the First Peace Loan, and yet, when we apply for a war trophy for this district we are ignored.”<sup>28</sup>

This disquiet however was by no means confined to the bush. Williamstown (Vic) councillors were outraged to learn that they had been allocated a machine-gun, particularly after the Committee had recently presented the Williamstown High School with a canon. The Council refused to appoint three trustees as had been requested by the CWTC, adding that they were only “prepared to accept a trophy in keeping with the importance of the[ir] city.”<sup>29</sup> The offer of a trench mortar to St Kilda was said to have not only “hurt the dignity of the embers of the St Kilda Council, but also that of other public bodies ... The fact that the Caulfield Grammar School has been given a captured German field-gun is [also] strongly commented on when comparisons are made with the trench-mortar allotted to St. Kilda.”<sup>30</sup> And it was with an air of embarrassed resignation that Malvern’s Mayor had to report, “the best he could get was a trench mortar”.<sup>31</sup>

The CWTC had no sooner settled on this procedure when it was compelled to introduce another policy consideration. Australian soldiers had been led to believe throughout the war, usually by the Commanding Officers, that captured guns would eventually be returned “as far as possible, to the people to whom the units which captured them wish them to be given”.<sup>32</sup> This was partly the reason why captured guns were so speedily marked by their captors. Although it was never

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<sup>24</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 August 1920, p.8.

<sup>25</sup> *The Age*, 18 June 1919, p.9.

<sup>26</sup> Welborn, p.150

<sup>27</sup> Brian Burton. *Flow Gently Past* (Corowa Shire Council). p. 163.

<sup>28</sup> Australia, House of Representatives, *Debates*, August 1919, Vol.XCIII, p.3752.

<sup>29</sup> *The Argus*, 19 December 1922, p. 17.

<sup>30</sup> *The Argus*, 27 September 1921, p.7.

<sup>31</sup> Lynn Strahan, *Private Lives and Public Memory, A History of the City of Malvern* (Hargreen Publishing Co., 1989), p.171.

<sup>32</sup> *The Argus*, June 26, 1919.

officially endorsed by the Australian command the notion continued to gain widespread currency within the ranks. Orders were issued on a number of occasions, reminding "Commanding Officers of units and others [that they] are not permitted to make any promise with regard to the distribution of trophies captured by their or any other unit."<sup>33</sup> A number of officers were reprimanded for breaching these orders but all to little avail. State and Federal leaders even became embroiled in the issue when, in late 1916, the Defence Department refused to hand over to Queensland a trophy gun which had been captured by a locally raised unit and promised to that state by the Battalion's Commanding Officer.<sup>34</sup> Similar incidents involving both state and local governments occurred in South Australia and New South Wales.<sup>35</sup> Having failed for five years to correct the misunderstanding it was now felt, particularly by Charles Bean, that the Commonwealth had a moral obligation at least to try and honour these wartime undertakings.

Returned soldiers were "desperately keen on getting trophies" and had even "threatened forcibly to seize the trophies which were then going forward to the various towns and municipalities".<sup>36</sup> This was one of the significant factors which caused the CWTC to review its position and announce the following amended policy:

"... after making the necessary provision for the National War Museum [it has been decided) to give to each State trophies captured by the units it has raised, on the principle that these trophies are of the greatest value and interest in the place where their captors are personally known. In the case of units coming from more than one State, the trophies will be divided amongst the States concerned. Trophies not identical with any particular unit will be distributed between States on a population basis."<sup>37</sup>

Considerable care was taken at the time to assuage public concern about the proposed National War Museum by explaining, particularly to the ex-diggers, that it would take no "more of these [trophies] than would afford specimens to show to future generations", and that "these will mostly comprise trophies which cannot be connected with any particular state".<sup>38</sup> Among the first to benefit from this arrangement were the CMF (Citizen Military Forces) units with which the AIF had been affiliated. Next in line were the AIF battalions and regiments which had physically captured the trophies followed lastly by the civilian population. Most people were happy with this method but inevitably there were those who still felt they had been dealt an injustice. The Federal Member for Brisbane for example demanded to know why the country's "greatest" trophy — the 11" railway gun — had been sent to Sydney when it was well known to have been captured by Queensland troops.<sup>39</sup>

The citizens of Prahran were equally distressed to learn that a 105mm canon that had been captured by local lads (from the 22nd Battalion) had mistakenly been assigned to the nearby

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<sup>33</sup> AWRS to AWRS (BEF), 28 May 1918, File 16 [4386/1/26] (AWM)

<sup>34</sup> file 93 [12/12/1] (AWM) contains a full description of this incident.

<sup>35</sup> HQ AIF, 27 February 1919, File 16 [4386/1/50] (AWM)

<sup>36</sup> Treloar to Bean, 10 July 1925, File 38 [3 DRL 6673, Item 752] (AWM)

<sup>37</sup> Australia, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 8 October 1919, Vol.XC, p.13059.

<sup>38</sup> *The Argus*, 26 June 1919, p.4.

<sup>39</sup> *Debates*, 6 August 1919, Vol.LXXXIX p.11294.

municipality of Richmond. Fortunately for the Victorian WTC the two councils agreed to resolve the matter themselves by effecting an exchange.<sup>40</sup>

By the end of 1919, the CWTC had cleared the last of these policy hurdles and could finally begin focussing on the task of distribution. Trophies were consigned to their respective state committees on the agreed understanding that freight charges would be covered by the state governments. Distribution beyond the capitals then became a matter for the states to resolve, this being achieved with less difficulty in the more closely settled eastern states. As expected the largest single allocation went to New South Wales which possessed 38.7% of the national population (at 1920), and received 38% of the available trophies. Victoria received the next largest consignment with Queensland, South Australia, West Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory benefiting, in that order.

Included in this nationwide distribution were a number of German communities that had endured racial persecution throughout the war, and which had also been forced after 1917, by the Nomenclature Acts, to adopt non-German names. The offer of a war trophy may have been welcomed by some of these as a means to demonstrate publicly both their allegiance to Australia, and their rejection of German militarism.<sup>41</sup>

Although written offers were sent to a total of 3,497 towns the Committee sometimes had to wait months for a formal reply. Offers were viewed with considerable importance at the regional level and as such, usually became subject to lengthy community consultation. A total of 267 offers were sent to Queensland towns but as of early October 1920, only 86 acceptances had been received.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, a deadline of 8 December 1920 was imposed, with councils being advised that unclaimed trophies would be pooled and reallocated to other municipalities. These veiled threats however had little effect, as the first round deadline was progressively extended another year through to the 31 December 1921.<sup>43</sup>

By then of course the matter had begun to attract considerable Opposition attention with the Federal Government being regularly asked to explain the ongoing delays. Before long, Prime Minister Hughes also became embroiled in the issue with the Opposition calling on him to "stir up the Department in charge".<sup>44</sup> The Government's problems were only compounded by mounting allegations of neglect as by that stage, many of the trophies had lain idle and exposed to the elements for more than a year.

"Being an ex-Infantry Digger myself, I was disgusted to find that the weapons we lads with our own hands took from the German hordes, and on which we were proud to place our Battalion marks, are being left up in the Exhibition grounds to rust and rot ... the various gamins of Melbourne delight to climb all over them and multiply the parts. ... Could not ... arrangements be made for the proper distribution of these historical trophies?"<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> File 194 (Prahran) (AWM)

<sup>41</sup> Rosewood (Qld), Hahndorf (SA) and Germantown (NSW) each accepted captured German guns. The latter (two) were renamed Ambleside and Holbrook, respectively, following the introduction of the Nomenclature Acts.

<sup>42</sup> Australia, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 6 October 1920, Vol.XCIII, p.5345.

<sup>43</sup> The Allotment Of A War Trophy To St Kilda, nd, File 06/102/0011 (SKCC)

<sup>44</sup> *Debates*, Vol. XCII, p.2913.

<sup>45</sup> *The Argus*, 2 June 1920, p.11. See also *The Argus*, 4 June 1920, p.11.

Charles Bean, being particularly sensitive to such criticisms, also wrote to the Director of the Australian War Museum about the matter:

“On the asphalt beside the big parade ground at this barracks there are lying derelict six German guns, three trench mortars ... the trench mortars being partly dismantled. They are rusting, and give the appearance of so much old junk. It seems to me that a display like this always harms our collection.”<sup>46</sup>

The problems experienced by the CWTC were by no means unique to Australia as both Canada and New Zealand had had to overcome similar difficulties. Both these countries though were able to commence distribution by late 1920. In America the trophy program was delayed until late 1924 but this may have reflected, in part at least, the enormous size of their collection (2½ times larger than Australia's).

A second round of allocations was begun in late 1920 with the cycle of reallocations continuing on until at least May 1922. Although trophies were still being issued in the late 1920s the Director of the Australian War Museum was finally able to announce in September 1922 that the distribution was “practically completed”.<sup>47</sup> While most trophy gun offers were taken up a small number of these were declined. The citizens of Thursday Island (Qld) had no choice but to refuse the Committee's offer of a massive 150mm long range gun as there was simply no way of transporting the 11 ton colossus to their remote community.<sup>48</sup> Distributions were also affected by vocal pacifist and anti-war lobbies which had been gathering support in Australia since the late nineteenth century. Public opinion on these matters may have also been influenced by the publication in 1915 of a new book *Krupp and the International Armaments Ring*, which attributed the “monstrous development of the race in armaments” and the spread of jingoism to Germany's powerful Krupp dynasty.<sup>49</sup> The author, who coined the term Kruppism to describe these nefarious relationships, used the work of Australian artist Will Dyson to illustrate his treatise. Dyson, who later served with the AWRS as a war artist, had by that stage already established an international reputation with his anti-German Kultur Cartoons which he drew for the *London Herald*.

Park guns had become a focus for anti-martial interests in Australia, even before the commencement of hostilities in 1914. In 1913, for example, the Northcote (Vic) Council decided to install two obsolete 8" naval guns alongside the shire's main thoroughfare. The decision precipitated a bitterly divisive debate with public calls for both “unsightly disfigurements” to be rolled into the Merri Creek and covered up with mullock.<sup>50</sup> Councillors were also divided over the matter, some arguing that “the less military spirit ... instilled into the minds of the lads the better”.<sup>51</sup> These hostile attitudes were later echoed by *The Argus* when, in 1921, it described the recently arrived trophy collection as “so much artillery junk”, adding that

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<sup>46</sup> Bean to Treloar, 1 July 1925, File 38 [3 DRL 6673, Item 752] (AWM)

<sup>47</sup> McKernan, p.27.

<sup>48</sup> This gun (Fried. Krupp, Nr.103, 1918) was subsequently reallocated to the St Kilda City Council who, in the early 1970s, sold the gun to the Carribean Gardens entertainment centre in Melbourne where it is still being used today as playground furniture.

<sup>49</sup> H Robertson Murray, *Krupp's And The International Armaments Ring* (London, 1915), p.xi.

<sup>50</sup> *The Leader*, 24 May 1913.

<sup>51</sup> *The Leader*, 1 March 1913.

“it is the men behind the guns who are more interesting than these dumb mouths”.<sup>52</sup> It was in New South Wales, however, that the issue generated the most acrimony, developing eventually into a party-political debate which profoundly affected the distribution program in that state.

Attempts in 1924 to transfer the Australian War Museum displays to Sydney sparked off strong debate within the City Council causing one Labor Alderman to declare that he hated war and that the war museum collection should be “dumped over the Gap” or “outside the Heads”.<sup>53</sup>

This outburst had been preceded by other displays of anti-martial sentiment, most noticeably in 1920 when Council refused to convene a meeting of metropolitan mayors to assist the distribution of war trophies.<sup>54</sup> These actions though had only served to provoke Labor’s opponents and thereby, further politicise the debate. With media assistance the mute war trophy was soon transformed into an ideological pawn, a convenient focus for party politics. The State’s Labor Education Minister responded to these escalating attacks by prohibiting the exhibition of war trophies in schools under his control.<sup>55</sup>

The announcement was greeted with widespread public outrage, particularly in country areas where the public school sometimes offered the only suitable display facility in town. The citizens of Duri (NSW) and Nana Glen (NSW) both implored the Minister to reconsider, arguing that “they had no public building or appropriate place of any kind where it [the trophy] could be placed. Failing the Public School, the Trophy would be lost to us, a fact we would very much regret.”<sup>56</sup> Significantly, the policy was immediately overturned by State Cabinet following Labor’s electoral defeat in May 1922.<sup>57</sup>

There are indications that the public’s attitude towards war and military history may have also begun to shift during the early 1920s. Initial enthusiasm was replaced by disinterest and, as one military historian would have us believe, outright aversion.<sup>58</sup> Communities which had so readily joined in the trophy scramble were now having second thoughts as the anti-war lobby took on a broader, more grass roots complexion. In 1928 for instance the CWTC “offered another gun from its cupboard of war leftovers” to the residents of Malvern (Vic). The offer was subsequently declined by Council which had found “from experience of the Gun at present placed in front of the City Hall”, that these things “had caused great grief from time to time to widows and mothers of deceased soldiers.”<sup>59</sup> The Labor Call showed far less restraint in making known its opposition to the trophy collection and all that it represented.

Melbourne has two gruesome scrapheaps that are aftermaths of the world’s great war ... One of these scrapheaps is a human one Caulfield Military Hospital; the other is a ghastly collection of scrap iron in the Exhibition Gardens, Melbourne ... No father or mother, mourning a soldier son killed or one back home a cripple or a degenerate, can

<sup>52</sup> *The Argus*, 21 June 1919. *The Argus* soon abandoned this critical tone and began to describe the war trophies—like most other major Australian newspapers—in more positive terms.

<sup>53</sup> McKernan, p.84.

<sup>54</sup> *Debates*, 29 October 1920, Vol.XCIV, p.6091.

<sup>55</sup> *The Argus*, 26 March 1921, p.8

<sup>56</sup> Duri School file correspondence dated 9 March 1921, an extract supplied to the author by the NSW Department of School Education.

<sup>57</sup> *The Education Gazette* (NSW), 1 June 1922,p.132.

<sup>58</sup> McKernan, p.85.

<sup>59</sup> Lynne, p.171.

pass these hideous contraptions without a shudder. They have been referred to by the lip-loyalists as the glorious relics of a struggle in which our boys, dying, won undying fame ... but ... how many men care a jot about what guns were captured at Mont St. Quentin or Villers-Bretonneaux? Would it not have been better to spend the money on soldiers' hospitals that it cost to bring devilry devices to our shores? ... If the high panjandrums of Victoria think any edifying or educational advantages are gained by displaying Australia's captures of steel and iron loot in France and other seats of war they are mistaken".<sup>60</sup>

Events followed a similar pattern on the other side of the Tasman where the removal of trophies during the inter-war period was also attributed to the growth of anti-war sentiment at that time.<sup>61</sup>

Trophy guns, however, were more often seen in a positive ideological light and in some rare instances, were even adopted as peace symbols. Geelong's Boer War memorial gun for example was acquired and installed at the initiative of a "peace celebrations committee" formed in 1900.<sup>62</sup> Similarly, it was the Northcote Soldiers' Welcome Home Committee which first took charge of that municipality's trophy acquisition arrangements. Many trophies were also installed in peaceful parklike settings, often alongside shrines and commemorative statuary. Women were very much a part of these activities "with the ladies [of Coffs Harbour] who had helped so much with the war effort" being asked to unveil a captured German mortar.<sup>63</sup>

Trophy transfers were formalised by the signing of a printed Agreement which bound the recipient to observe a number of minimum obligations. Each Agreement had to be signed by three appointed Trustees and an ex-AIF member who in so doing, undertook to:

- "(a) Arrange for it (the trophy) to be permanently housed in a public park, garden, or building within the town, whichever may appear most suitable, and for its subsequent preservation and safe custody.
- (b) Arrange a simple ceremony, at which it should be formally taken over.
- (c) Bear all expenses connected with transport and installation after arrival at the nearest railway station."<sup>64</sup>

No provision though was ever made for enforcing these requirements as evidenced by the fact that some 80% of the trophies have since disappeared.<sup>65</sup> Fears that Australia might have not had enough trophies to go around were gradually allayed as councils failed to respond to deadlines, thereby increasing the number available for redistribution. Ironically the situation was even further alleviated by the NSW Government's decision to disallow war trophies in public schools, those weapons which had been earmarked for State School being released for

<sup>60</sup> *The Labor Call*, 21 January 1921, p.12.

<sup>61</sup> Fox, *Silent Sentinels*, pp.81-88.

<sup>62</sup> *Geelong Advertiser*, 24 August 1990.

<sup>63</sup> Neil Yeates, *Coffs Harbour, Pre 1880 to 1954*, Vol.1 (Coffs Harbour City Council, 1990), p.142.

<sup>64</sup> City of Northcote Agreement, 17 July 1920, File 194 [Northcote] (AWM)

<sup>65</sup> This estimate derives from national survey data collected during the period 1980-86 when the author was employed as a Curator of Weapons at the Australian War Memorial. The database has since been updated to 1993 using field data collected by the author, and provided by various interstate contributors.

reassignment.<sup>66</sup> This, in turn, allowed the CWTC to gradually relax its guidelines by again reconsidering the plight of those in soldier settlement areas, and “those in the great back country” who had “sent such a lot of fine young men to the Front”.<sup>67</sup> It was on this basis that some small rural communities, which had previously been promised nothing larger than a machine-gun, were eventually able to amass “formidable array[s]” of weaponry.<sup>68</sup> After refusing to accept “so small a piece” as a machine-gun the Corowa (NSW) Shire Council was subsequently allocated both a trench mortar and a field gun. Ironically though, it took the Council another ten years to agree on where to display these weapons.<sup>69</sup> The people of Warracknabeal (Vic) fared even better by finishing up with no less than seven machine-guns, a howitzer and a trench mortar.<sup>70</sup> But civic pride was never totally appeased. In Red Cliffs, a remote Victorian border town, the citizens were disgusted to receive a replacement 8.2” howitzer which they described “a heap of old rubbish ... a gas pipe on a farm wagon”.<sup>71</sup>

These victories however were but skirmishes compared to the community debates which sometimes followed. For having finally secured their trophies, councils were then faced with the problem of choosing a site that satisfied everyone. Recipients were left to decide their own display policy which cannot always have been a straightforward task, particularly as few people in country areas would have even seen a war memorial, let alone a canon or a mortar. Unlike its North American and European allies, Australia was also completely devoid of regional museums. It took the residents of Corowa Shire ten years to agree a suitable location for their trophies during which time they were relocated no less than six times.

These debates though were more often concerned with matters of detail rather than substance since in most cases, there was broad agreement on the underlying principles. Australians had all inherited the view that war memorials, like other civic monuments, should be given prominence. And as with graves and cemeteries, it was universally accepted that these captured guns should, ideally, also be placed in tranquil garden settings.

The link between grave and garden was of critical importance and has been traced back to the Enlightenment when changing attitudes to death transformed the Christian cemetery into a “peaceful wooded landscape of groves and meadows”. Pestilential odour and overcrowding had also hurried the separation of burial ground and church, and the consequent development of the new garden cemetery. Nature was thus afforded a dominant place in cemetery design with shade trees often being used to symbolise eternal sleep. “The new garden cemetery of Pere Lachaise, which was opened outside Paris in 1804, became a paradigm for cemeteries all over Europe — part park and part garden — [it] made burial in a natural setting not the privilege of a few, as it had been, but the norm for the population of Paris.” The latter was “transformed into a landscape garden with some twelve thousand trees, populated by birds and animals as well as the dead.” In this manner the “more disgusting reminders of mortality were kept out of sight”.

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<sup>66</sup> War Trophies, Municipality of Woollahra (MW), Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 28 February 1921, File 195.G.

<sup>67</sup> *Debates*, 23 July 1920, Vol.XCII

<sup>68</sup> *The Nhill Free Press*, 1 July 1921.

<sup>69</sup> Brian Burton, *Flow Gently Past* (Corowa Shire Council, 1973), p.163

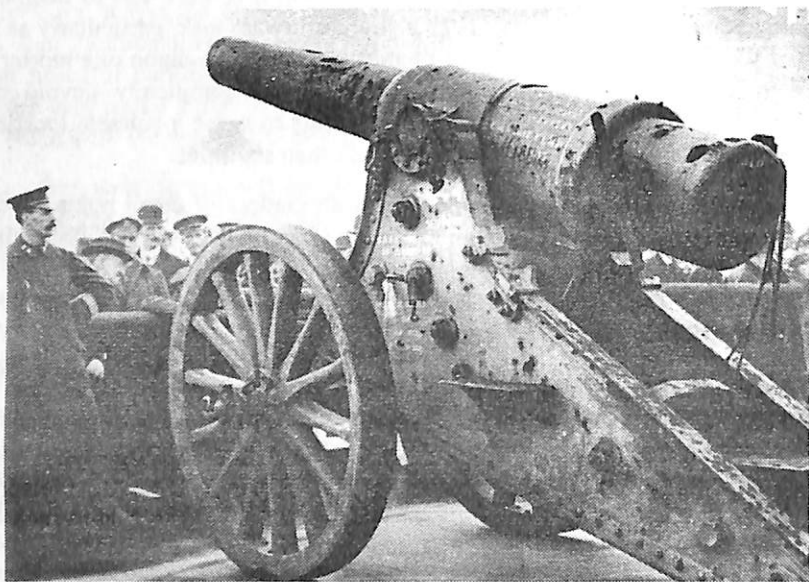
<sup>70</sup> Ian Maroske, *Warracknabeal: A Municipal History 1861-1991* (1991), p.97.

<sup>71</sup> *Mildura Telegraph* 20 October 1927.



The American Park Cemetery Movement (1830-50) may have also influential in helping, to shape European and thereby Australian attitudes towards death and commemoration.<sup>72</sup>

By the mid-nineteenth century these changing attitudes had begun to affect the way in which trophy guns were publicly displayed. As memorials and symbols of personal sacrifice it was felt that they should also be arranged in settings that allowed for quite reflection, just as the French had done in Paris by “tastefully arranging their guns captured at Sebastopol along the Boulevards”.<sup>73</sup> At the same time, across the Channel, the British started calling for their Crimean War trophies to be arranged “sphinx-like” alongside the new Terrace-walk that ran from Thames-bank to Chelsea.<sup>74</sup> These ideals had been so thoroughly assimilated that even during the First World War, the Imperial War Trophies Committee began entertaining the idea of placing its captured guns in parks where the public might derive greater benefit.<sup>75</sup> Australian troops returning from Europe must have encountered these symbiotic garden/gun arrangements time and again, and many would have also returned with memories of their own captured guns arranged near Nelson’s column, and amongst the trees that lined The Mall.



An Australian trophy gun displayed in London’s Mall in late 1918.

With seeming inevitability, communities throughout Australia began to copy these established European customs. Williamstown (Vic), in seeking to convince the CWTSC of its trophy worthiness, emphasised both the “importance of the city and the beauty of its botanic garden”.<sup>76</sup> Similar pleas were entered by the Prahran (Vic) Council which reported that it had “acquired thirty-one acres of park lands at ‘Como’”, and that it was proposing “to expend a considerable

<sup>72</sup> George L Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping The Memory of the World Wars* (OUP, 1990) pp.39-41.

<sup>73</sup> *London Times*, 10 September 1856, p.12.

<sup>74</sup> *London Times*, 16 September 1856, p.8.

<sup>75</sup> Notes on items of interest to Australia discussed at the 11th meeting of the War Trophies Committee held on 25 July 1918, File 16 [4386/1/25] Pt.11 (AWM).

<sup>76</sup> *The Argus*, 19 December 1922, p. 17.

sum on its beautification".<sup>77</sup> Similar arrangements had been made for Australia's largest war trophy, the 11" Amiens guns which was to have been "permanently placed in the gardens adjoining the central railway station" in Sydney.<sup>78</sup> Some trophies were displayed alongside park rotundas in a manner that clearly, and unconsciously, echoed the Roman practice of using captured property to adorn public stages.<sup>79</sup> The public green of course was common ground, a place "without territorial conflict" where "townspeople can expect their monuments to be maintained".<sup>80</sup> The commemorative purpose of these greenbelts was often reinforced by assigning the name "Anzac Park", an act which helped to give place a memory.

The commanding position was second only to the park and garden as the preferred trophy location and in many instances the two criteria were combined. The elevated location afforded both prominence and context with its clear visual reference to the gun's historical design function (viz, defensive armament). Some surmounted hills (eg, Goulburn, NSW) while others (eg, Sandgate (Qld), Warrnambool (Vic) and St. Kilda (Vic)) were installed in commanding positions overlooking the sea. The latter appears to have been an intentional and much favoured relationship, the combination of sea and hill having symbolic relevance to the terrain at Gallipoli. At least one returned soldier was compelled to remark on this geographical coincidence when, in 1915, a war memorial was unveiled at Mt Eliza on the cliff overlooking Perth (WA).<sup>81</sup>

Many memorials and trophies also had stepped bases "which raised them well above the spectator's eye level, demanding an attitude of reverence".<sup>82</sup> The citizens of Enfield (NSW) for example installed their trophy in a "commanding position" alongside the country's busiest highway, where it would not possibly be missed.<sup>83</sup> Civic buildings sometimes offered the same advantages and for this reason were also favoured as trophy display sites. The organisations benefiting from the CWTC's largesse were also required to arrange a formal unveiling ceremony. Additional caveats were sometimes imposed by State WTCs the Queensland Committee insisting for example that trophy guns should be integrated with any existing or planned memorials.

Although ceremonial guidelines were never issued to recipients these unveilings all displayed a common regard for martial, ecclesiastical, civic and political customs. The format for these trophy ceremonies had in fact been determined long before the war, similar rites having been performed throughout Australia following the Boer War. We need only consider one such ceremony, which took place in the tiny Victorian township of Longwood in 1904, to distinguish the elements that were common to hundreds of subsequent trophy unveilings.

The Longwood unveiling was attended by a "large and representative gathering" that included the Shire President, the district's parliamentary and senior military representatives together with children from all the schools in the district.<sup>84</sup> A succession of speakers praised the sacrifice and

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<sup>77</sup> Prahran Council to WTC, 23 November 1921, File 194 [Prahran] (AWM).

<sup>78</sup> *The Argus*, 2 August 1919, p. 19.

<sup>79</sup> H.Grotius, p.335. Trophy-rotunda arrangements can still be seen at Charters Towers (Qld.) and Mt.Gambier (S.A.).

<sup>80</sup> James M Mayo, *War Memorials As Political Landscape* (Praeger Publishers, NY, 1988), p.30.

<sup>81</sup> Welborn, p.151.

<sup>82</sup> Judith McKay & Richard Allom, *Lest We Forget: A Guide To The Conservation of War Memorials*, (RSL, 1984), p.4.

<sup>83</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*. 13 October 1924.

<sup>84</sup> *Weekly Times*, 13 February 1904, p.14.

recounted the circumstances until finally, the regimental trumpeter sounded the Last Post. Proceedings would then terminate with the whole assemblage singing the national anthem.

In many post-war trophy ceremonies the gun was quite literally unveiled, having been draped throughout the ceremony with a Union Jack. Patriotic fervour was particularly evident in those communities — like Enfield and St Kilda — which had supported the conscription referenda. The Mayor of Enfield asked his gathering to rejoice “that the British Empire had maintained its integrity”, and that “we were still able to enjoy the freedom that the British Empire gave”.<sup>85</sup> His counterpart from St Kilda displayed just as much loyalty with his opening address, “Whenever you gaze upon this great engine of modern warfare, I want you to remember that the British Empire, during the Great War, enrolled a magnificent army of 9,496,370 men”.<sup>86</sup> This last unveiling was preceded by the distribution of handbills and attended by a uniformed band which, in combination, lent a carnival air to the proceedings. The unveiling at Woollahra was also held in conjunction with a United Service and Patriotic Demonstration which had been organised specifically for that occasion.<sup>87</sup>

It was the ecclesiastical emphasis however, the inclusion of religious ritual and iconography which best distinguished these pre and postwar unveilings. Nowhere had the experience of mass death been more keenly felt than in Australia which had suffered more casualties, in proportional terms, than any other British army. Personal sacrifice on this scale demanded some form of spiritual reconciliation, particularly as Australia’s war dead had all (bar one) been buried overseas. Memorial unveilings (be they marble or metal) were overlaid with religious meaning as communities sought to “give [their] men each year the funeral they had never had”.<sup>88</sup> In this way people could also reaffirm, in public at least, their allegiance to the popular credo that gains to Empire and country outweighed the sense of personal loss. Belief in Australia’s war aims allowed people to not only justify their losses, but to also transcend death itself. Thus, “the fallen were truly made sacred in the imitation of Christ” their suffering and death being analogous to the latter’s Passion and resurrection.<sup>89</sup> This new civic religion, “provided the most solid ground from which the war experience could be confronted and transcended”.<sup>90</sup> War memorials were thereby transformed into sacred places, the foci for a new “cult of the fallen” which had provided the nation with martyrs and shrines of national worship.<sup>91</sup>

The intimate connection between the fallen soldier and Christ himself was reinforced by the iconography and ritual that accompanied these commemorative unveilings. Often the trophy site was set aside in a non-denominational religious ceremony jointly performed by a military chaplain and priests from all the local churches.

The citizens of Woollahra even sought the church’s permission to hold their unveiling on “the Sabbath” so as to further underline the sacredness of the occasion. The flag draped trophy, moreover, was clearly reminiscent of the catafalques used, then as now, during military burial ceremonies. The themes of remembrance and reverence were oft repeated throughout these

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<sup>85</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 October 1924

<sup>86</sup> A Message, Handwritten speech by Burnett Gray, 23 June 1923, File 06/012/0011 (SKCC)

<sup>87</sup> Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting, 29 May 1921, File 195.G (MW)

<sup>88</sup> K S Inglis, “Memorials of the Great War”, *Australian Cultural History*, No.6, 1987, p.5.

<sup>89</sup> Mosse, p.35.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p.75

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, p.35

ceremonies, and in dedicatory inscriptions like "To The Glory Of God". Many trophies were installed alongside masonry memorials whose form, function and appearance also owed much to Christian symbolism.

The Australian poet Geoff Page has well summed up the mood of those occasions in his poem, "Smalltown Memorials". From these lines we can also glean some hint of what the future held in store for Australia's war trophy collection:

"1919, 1920:  
 All over the country;  
 Maybe a band, slow march;  
 Mayors, shire councils;  
 Relatives for whom  
 Print was already  
 Only print; mates,  
 Come back, moving  
 Into unexpected days;  
 A ring of Fords and sulkies;  
 The toned-down bit from an  
 Ex-Recruiting sergeant.  
 Unveiled;  
 Then seen each day Noticed once a year;  
 And then not always,  
 Everywhere."<sup>92</sup>

### **Redefining the tradition**

The idea of conducting a religious service around a deadly, inanimate war machine would strike most of us today as absurd, profane even. It seems remarkable at this distance that such scenes could have been sanctioned, let alone acted out on countless occasions. What seems even more strange perhaps is that the apparent absurdity of these events went altogether unremarked. Feelings of unease and embarrassment if they did ever exist, were universally repressed in a manner that tends now to suggest the existence of a completely different morality and world view.

Australians, then, could gather around an 11 ton high-velocity German field gun, one that was certain to have killed a few diggers and listen attentively as their civic and spiritual leaders recounted in precise terms the details of its awesome destructiveness.<sup>93</sup> Spiritual, personal, and in some cases aesthetic qualities were extolled with equal conviction and often as not, politicians would scramble for the opportunity to participate in these important gatherings.

Things were different then, but just how different? Why was it so important for communities then to have their own captured gun, something which few, if any would have ever seen before? And how was it possible to reconcile the gun's form and innate destructiveness with established notions of aesthetics and morality? Furthermore, how might we account for the profound attitudinal shifts that have occurred during the last 70 years since the trophy was first installed

<sup>92</sup> Geoff Page, "Smalltown Memorials", *Paperback Poets, Second Series 5* (UQP, 1975), p.12.

<sup>93</sup> See for example *The Age*, 25 June 1923.

as a dominant feature of the Australian landscape? These answers, if they can be found, might lie in an understanding of the war trophy's original significance.

We have seen already how the war trophy acquired different meanings during the war, and how those meanings were sometimes altered to suit the dominant political and military agendas. Trophy guns were used initially to help stimulate recruiting, and to dishonour those who had failed to enlist and/or opposed the conscription plebiscites. On the other hand, the Belgian howitzers captured by the AIF at Pozieres had been imbued with historical significance since these were the first European trophies ever captured by Australian forces. The massive Amiens gun meanwhile had acquired icon status. As the largest of all World War One trophies it became a source of great national pride. The trophy was effective on a number of different levels and quite often its meaning would vary from one interest group to another, and from one individual to another. After the war, however, a whole new set of values was brought to bear on the collection as governments were again compelled to refocus on domestic issues.

Chief among these was the notion that the trophy should serve, first and foremost, as a war memorial. Trophy guns thus became the first, and the most common of all war memorials to be erected in Australia. These were, and still are, more numerous than the ubiquitous digger on a plinth which has since come to symbolise military commemoration in this country. Trophy memorials were usually installed years, sometimes decades, before their masonry counterparts at a rate that would seem to suggest an overwhelming preference for metal, rather than marble commemorative forms. It is more likely however that this outcome reflected a range of practical, rather than aesthetic considerations.

Trophies were relatively accessible and were available for distribution fairly soon after the war. These were also being distributed on a gratis basis whereas even the humblest of stone monuments might have cost several hundred pounds.<sup>94</sup> Trophies, moreover, were far less likely to precipitate the bitter community wrangling that characterised so many of the later attempts to select and install more conventional war memorials.

The range of choice with trophies was very limited, which also meant that there was little scope for subjective based argument concerning such matters of form, style, cost and medium. But this is not to suggest that trophies were completely devoid of ideological merit: quite the opposite. For the trophy memorial, unlike the digger on the plinth (and its many variations), could be transformed into a highly egalitarian symbol which forcefully represented collective rather than individual effort. There were never any names inscribed on these metal monuments whereas other commemorative forms displayed a high degree of selectivity by honouring some, and not honouring others. In this respect at least, the trophy gun seemed a more appropriate symbol, one that accurately reflected the egalitarianism of the Anzacs themselves. It must also be borne in mind of course that most war memorials had been dedicated to kings, queens and generals prior to World War One.

Many of the war memorials erected at this time made extensive use of traditional cemetery iconography and as such, were sometimes barely distinguishable from the monuments that filled the local burial ground. The trophy gun, by contrast, was a forceful and unambiguous symbol which, in post-war Australia, could relate to nothing other than recent military events. These factors in combination produced a monumental form that was both powerful and desirable.

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<sup>94</sup> Hawthorn's memorial column cost £2,371 in 1929.

There seems little doubt that artillery, then as now, was also imbued with an aesthetic quality, one that was appreciated by a significant cross section of the community. Strange as it may seem, Northcote's 8" naval gun was lauded even before the war as an "ornament", and something that would help improve the appearance of the town.<sup>95</sup> By war's end, one could also distinguish the beginnings of a connoisseurship with some trophies being passed over on the basis that "they were not decorative enough".<sup>96</sup> Even now, it is not uncommon for newlywed couples to choose these ancient guns as props and backdrops for their once-in-a-lifetime wedding portraits.<sup>97</sup>

Trophies also fulfilled a range of sociological and psychological needs which might conveniently be described as propaganda. This was a cheap and effective way of demonstrating both the prowess of the Australian soldier as well as the Empire's superiority, relative to Germany. Blockbuster trophy exhibitions were staged by nearly all the allied armies in a undisguised effort to try and maximise these effects. The demonstration of relative might was, however, just one of several propaganda objectives. Trophies were also used with great effect to help ridicule Australia's enemy to which end, the English language proved to be a most helpful medium. Trophy guns would frequently be described to the public and interpreted by the press in derogatory and anthropomorphical terms which helped foster the perception that German weaponry was ineffectual, or that the Germans themselves were a grotesque, sub-human race.

The Australian war correspondent Charles Bean was among the first to propagate this subterfuge by likening the German 8" howitzer to a "toad", and the 4.2" gun to a "snake".<sup>98</sup> These were soon joined by "'Dirty Dick' (a great squat howitzer which, by the way, had fired 194 rounds at his former employers)".<sup>99</sup> It did not matter that some of these trophies were battle scarred and disfigured as this helped to heighten the overall impression. To this ignominy would be added such headlines as "Krupps Made It, Ludendorff Lost It, St Kilda Holds It".<sup>100</sup>

It had been a common practice for the troops in the trenches to assign comic names to the various German artillery devices which had largely determined the ebb and flow of the conflict, and which had also inflicted the majority of allied casualties. These names — such as plum pudding (trench mortars), Whiz Bang (a 75mm field gun), Lovely Lilly (a 6" naval gun), daisy cutter and Big Bertha (a giant trench mortar) — were used to interpret the Australian trophy guns in a manner that was clearly intended to help downplay the nature of the artillery threat, whilst simultaneously belittling the opposition in general, and Friedrich Krupp in particular.<sup>101</sup>

There was, however, another far more subtle purpose to this strategy. By naming these inanimate objects, soldiers could also ascribe to them certain human attributes. In this way the troops were able to assign qualities, such as vulnerability, to an enemy that had remained faceless and invisible for much of the war. As Paul Fussell later remarked, "The German line and the space behind it are so remote and mysterious that actually to see any of its occupants is

95 *The Leader*, 1 March 1913.

96 Donald Grave's journal article "Booty! The Story of Canada's World War One Trophy Collection", *Arms Collecting*. Vol.23, No.1 (February 1985), p.8

97 *Western Independent*, 11 August 1992, p.28.

98 *The Argus*, 18 June 1919, p.9.

99 *The Argus*, 21 June 1919, p.8.

100 *The Sun* 25 June 1923.

101 Bertha was Gustav Krupp's wife.

a shock".<sup>102</sup> But if the enemy remained detached and illusive for those in the front line, then he was nigh invisible to the five million Australians who were 13,000 miles removed from the conflict.

Feelings of anxiety were compounded for these people who, until the arrival of the first German war trophies, had no way of comprehending the precise nature of the threat that confronted them, and their loved ones in Europe. These anxieties would perhaps have been less acute for the English who, on certain days, could even hear the sound of the artillery duels across the Channel. For many Australians it was a relief to be able to see and touch these silent guns with their splintered barrels and pock marked carriages. They could finally render visible an enemy that had remained faceless for five long years and by assigning to each gun a personality, they could be doubly assured of his vulnerability. The threat could be contained. This helps in part to explain why it was so important for Australians to own their own trophy, why "It was impossible to have too many [trophies]", and just why they were so frequently described in personal terms.<sup>103</sup> One prominent Melbourne trophy was reported, at the time of unveiling, to "possess an almost human air, as if looking vainly for rescuers who will never come".<sup>104</sup> And included in the first trophy consignment was another gun that "got one fair in the mouth".<sup>105</sup>

Related to their propaganda significance was the belief that trophies also represented the spoils of war, the just rewards for a nation that had been unjustly wounded. Victorious armies had for centuries been reaping these very same rewards and it seemed only proper that Australia, with its magnificent military record, should derive similar benefit. Trophies were also regarded as a form of compensation and, as noted previously, this desire for recompense was most keenly felt in those communities which had responded willingly to the call to arms. Tiny Nyabing (WA) with its "impressive number of ... men killed" felt particularly deserving, as did the Melbourne seaside suburb of St Kilda.<sup>106</sup> Although the latter had been compensated with one of the largest guns ever captured by the AIF, this gesture was still received by council as a "slight but welcome recognition of St. Kilda's splendid efforts in the war".<sup>107</sup> From this compensation notion sprang the perverse but popular belief that municipal stature was somehow linked to the size and number of one's trophies. There is ample evidence, as previously discussed, to show that in Australia, the war trophy became a barometer of civic pride. The idea of paying homage to a captured enemy gun seems less bizarre when considered in these contexts.

But just as personal suffering demanded compensation, then so too did Australia's injured (and infant) sense of national pride. The Australian nation may have come of age at Gallipoli but importantly, the Anzacs had retreated from the Dardanelles with nothing to show for their six month trial. To this ignominy was added the knowledge that Australians may have indirectly helped the Germans and Turks to victory on that occasion. The Krupp dynasty which armed most of Europe's armies had enjoyed a long and happy association with Australia that dated back to the Sydney Exhibition of 1879. The Krupp display of steel guns took out a gold medal on that occasion, marking the beginning of a long and mutually profitable liaison.

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<sup>102</sup> Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (OUP, 1975), p.76.

<sup>103</sup> Ann Millar, "Gallipoli to Melbourne, The Australian War Memorial 1915-19", *Australian War Memorial Journal*, April 1987, p.38.

<sup>104</sup> *The Sun*, 25 June 1923.

<sup>105</sup> *The Argus*, 21 June 1919, p.8.

<sup>106</sup> Welborn, p.150.

<sup>107</sup> *The Sun*, 25 June 1923.

The Public Library of Victoria even derived some small benefit from this unlikely partnership, receiving, in 1913, a personally inscribed centenary history of the Krupp company. Of far greater interest however were Krupp's capital investments in this region. Though rarely acknowledged, the Krupps, just prior to world war one owned much of Australia's base metal industry.<sup>108</sup> The Gallipoli defeat may therefore have been facilitated by gun metal mined in Australia, possibly even by some of those who wore the slouch hat. The odium of this knowledge may have increased Australia's desire for compensation which, in turn, would help to explain why so much Krupp metal was brought back to these shores after the war, why those trophies which had been turned against the Germans were particularly prized and why, during world war two, some communities were more than happy to see their trophies "recast ... in service against the Huns".<sup>109</sup>

Altruism also played a part in helping to shape community interest in the trophy collection. There is in fact a considerable weight of evidence to show that these guns were expected to perform a number of didactic functions. Australians were told time and again, "Whenever you gaze upon this great engine of modern warfare ... to remember" the horrors of war, the need for preparedness, and the "promises to care for those who had been left by those who would never return".<sup>110, 111</sup> For these reasons trophies were quite often installed at schools and repatriation hospitals where they were expected to perform like beacons, illuminating the future with a clear and positive message that would be received by "generations yet unborn".<sup>112</sup>

No assessment of the Australian War Trophy Collection would be complete without some discussion of its relationship to Australian nationalism, and the Anzac legend in particular. Historians on both sides of the Tasman have highlighted the war memorial's importance in helping to establish and sustain this shared legend.<sup>113</sup> Some have identified the memorial as a stepping stone, "an important stage in the creation of national myths around which have occurred the rituals of Anzac Day, the closest thing either country possessed to a ceremony of nationalism".<sup>114</sup> Similar links have been established in Europe where the war memorial is said to have "occupied a sacred place dedicated to the civic religion of nationalism".<sup>115</sup> Trophy memorials by comparison have only ever been cursorily investigated.<sup>116</sup> Attempts to link the trophy and Anzac traditions have been largely superficial, drawing for the most part on circumstantial evidence. Ann Millar for instance, in trying to explain why there were fewer trophies collected in the Middle East, draws attention to the fact that the immensely popular

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<sup>108</sup> William Manchester, *The Arms of Krupp 1587-1968* (Little, Crown & Co. Pty. Ltd., 1968), p.262.

<sup>109</sup> See *The Sun* (Melbourne) 8 April 1942 and Ann Longmore's *The Show Goes On*, Vol.3 (Hudson Publishers, 1989), p.102.

<sup>110</sup> A Message, Handwritten speech by Mayor Burnett Gray, 23 June 1923, File 06/012/0011 (SKCC)

<sup>111</sup> *The Age*, 25 June 1923.

<sup>112</sup> *The Argus*, 3 February 1919, p.4.

<sup>113</sup> See for example Shaun Patrick Kenaally, "Anzac Memorials", *IPA Review*, Winter 1990, Vol.43 No.4, pp 54-59; and Chris Maclean & Jock Phillips, *The Sorrow And The Pride, New Zealand War Memorials* (GP Books, 1990).

<sup>114</sup> K S Inglis & Jock Phillips, "War Memorials in Australia and New Zealand: A Comparative Study", *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol.24, No.96, April 1991, p.179.

<sup>115</sup> Mosse, p.101.

<sup>116</sup> Aaron Fox's BA(Hons) thesis *Silent Sentinels* is the notable exception to this rule, being the first, and most comprehensive investigation to date of Anzac war trophies.



*Anzac Book* had not been distributed there during the war (whereas it had been in western Europe).<sup>117</sup>

This lack of interest in the trophy-legend relationship is partly understandable given that there were no Australian trophies from Gallipoli. But by looking further ahead, well beyond these formative months, it is possible to distinguish a number of critical links which begin to suggest something more compelling than coincidence. The Anzac myth may have been hatched at Gallipoli in 1915 but in fact, it was not until the last years of the war, in France, that it was finally forged into a legend. The high point of that legend was the operation against the Amiens salient which took place on the 8th August 1918, "a day which the Germans regarded at the blackest in their history".<sup>118</sup> This was the campaign that established General Monash as a daring and innovative commander, and it was here that the Australians, after having been "thrown into the breach", succeeded in halting (and reversing) Germany's overwhelming advance towards Amiens, and thence to Paris.<sup>119</sup> This was the Australia Corps' "finest hour", the high point of a legendary campaign which had begun on the shores of Gallipoli.<sup>120</sup> Significantly, it also marked the AIF's largest ever trophy haul. The 173 trophy guns captured that day were all shipped to Australia and subsequently unveiled as war memorials, affording the only material evidence of Australia's crowning military achievement. These therefore became the very embodiment of the Anzac legend that was to grow in stature with each successive unveiling and Anzac Day. The events of that day were recounted over and again in terms that left no doubt as to the trophy's symbolic significance.

There were of course few communities in Australia, prior to 1919, which had a focus for their Anzac Day rituals and celebrations. The distribution of the Australian trophies helped overcome this problem as guns were progressively enshrined throughout the country. These became the first, and the most common of all Australian war memorials. More importantly, they gave many communities their first April 25th rallying point, a powerfully symbolic destination where previously, there had been nothing. The granite and marble memorials which appeared later were in fact the artificial constructs of a people far removed from the forge which had cast the legend. They were representational whereas the trophy was legend made manifest, something that could lend immediacy, purpose and ambience to the ritual occasion. Although the focus has since shifted (from the metal to the stone memorials) the trophy remained for many years integral, if not central to the annual Anzac ceremony. Guns of course were (and still are) very potent and unambiguous symbols which, when viewed within the context of an Anzac Park, a memorial hall or a war memorial precinct, spoke forcefully about legend and military commemoration. They could not be missed, if only because of the children perched on their barrels, whereas their masonry counterparts (Geoff Page's "Smalltown Memorials") were more easily overlooked.

"... seen each day —  
Noticed once a year;  
And then not always."

The *Sydney Morning Herald* sought to underscore this legendary importance by comparing the trophy collection with the "treasured relics of Cook's landing? or Phillip's foundation effort; or

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<sup>117</sup> Millar, p.37.

<sup>118</sup> *The Age*, 13 June 1921.

<sup>119</sup> *The Age*, 3 February 1919.

<sup>120</sup> David Homer, "Our Finest Hour, The Fight That Changed Australia", *The Australian Magazine*, August 7-8, 1993, p.12.

... the mighty days of the gold rush".<sup>121</sup> Significantly Cook's voyage of 1770 and the goldfields uprising of 1854 were later commemorated with monument-gun arrangements, which, in form at least, prefigured the Great War trophy memorials.<sup>122</sup>

Those who forged the legend in Europe and the Middle East continued after the war to nurture and promote the trophy-memorial-legend.

These legions regrouped under the banner of the RSL (Returned Services League) which remains, to this day, the keeper of the tradition. RSL representatives were usually always in attendance at trophy unveilings and significantly, it is this League which continues to sustain and protect the remnants of Australia's trophy collection.

It was the Enfield-Croydon Sub-Branch of the RSL which, in March 1987, convinced the Strathfield Municipal Council to rededicate its restored trophy on Anzac Day during the annual commemorative service.<sup>123</sup> The trophy's ongoing importance was highlighted again when the guest speaker on that occasion observed that "for many of our generation, memorials like this are the only tangible reminders we have of the tragedy of war, of the lives given so that we may live in peace today".<sup>124</sup>

The RSL has responded to these and similar remarks by reminding councils, in no uncertain terms, of their moral and legal obligations to their world war one trophies. A report that St Kilda may have disposed of its trophy drew an immediate response, in 1981, from both the League's Federal and State Branch Presidents. The latter reminded Council of the gun's "paramount importance" while the National Executive added that it "views the loss of this weapon as a serious matter".<sup>125</sup> The League is understood to have recently begun lobbying the Victorian Government for heritage legislation that could afford some measure of protection for the State's remaining trophies. The RSL has also provided funding for public restoration and education programs, Judith Mackay and Richard Allom's *Lest We Forget: a Guide to the Conservation of War Memorials* (1984) being one of the more practical outcomes of this strategy. Politicians have also begun to see merit in championing this cause, Dr John Hewson being among the more conspicuous of these.<sup>126</sup>

These factors in combination tend to suggest that trophy guns were much more than ritual appendages and that they may, instead, have been the very keystones that stabilised and sustained the Anzac tradition, particularly during its formative years.

Inevitably though the spokes and felloes began to rot, and the carriages began to rust, placing both the trophy and the Australian public at risk. Councils were quickly led to realise that steel and timber, unlike granite and marble, were simply not suited to prolonged exposure to the elements. Maintenance demands and public injuries steadily increased during the inter-war period and on one occasion, in Melbourne, a schoolboy was crushed to death when a trophy gun

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<sup>121</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 August 1924.

<sup>122</sup> I am referring here to the Captain Cook memorial in Cooktown (Qld.) and Ballarat's Eureka Stockade monument in Victoria.

<sup>123</sup> R Wallace to Town Clerk, 17 March 1987, File G/8 523, Strathfield Municipal Council (SMC)106

<sup>124</sup> Untitled typewritten speech by Mr Ford, nd, File G/8 523 (SMC)

<sup>125</sup> Ruxton to Town Clerk, 3 February 1981 and Keys to Town Clerk, File 06/012/0011 (SKCC)

<sup>126</sup> The Federal Opposition Leader has made a number of representations to the Municipality of Woollahra concerning the deterioration of their 150 mm naval gun. See Town Clerk to Hewson, 4 February 1990, File 195.G/6/1500 (MW).

collapsed.<sup>127</sup> These factors steadily undermined the trophy's cultural and spiritual importance to the point where, during World War Two, councils were actively seeking to divest themselves of these responsibilities.<sup>128</sup>

This pattern of events was repeated in both Canada and the United States. In 1940, the Dominion Archivist and Chairman of the Canadian War Museum Board even offered to the government, for scrap, all German war trophies on hand. The offer was accepted and later the Board extended their salvage operation to include all trophies returned by municipalities and institutions throughout the country.<sup>129</sup> New Zealand might have followed suit had it also possessed the industrial capacity for reprocessing these steel leviathans. The memories of World War One had by that stage been largely consigned to the pages of history, overtaken by a far more immediate crisis. The emphasis had shifted then to practical rather than symbolic commemorative forms, the memorial park, hall and swimming pool being far more common than the obelisk, cenotaph or trophy. Some councils however had great difficulty deciding whether to part with these generational landmarks which had been so thoroughly absorbed into their collective consciousness.<sup>130</sup> Hawthorn's council, in 1948, began searching for "some other-way of complying with the conditions of the trust agreement relating to the war trophies" so "that they may be removed from the parks and gardens".<sup>131</sup> A similar move by Geelong, that same year, met with strong resistance, one councillor despairing that "It was a pity to uproot everything of historic value".<sup>132</sup>

The trophy's symbolic values was further undermined during the postwar decades, hastened by the emergence, in the 1970s, of the all pervasive tidy towns ethic. Councils were hard pressed to justify the retention of these now forlorn relics which, in many instances, had even outlived their usefulness as playground furniture. Many of Australia's 1,340 trophy guns and mortars are now thought to have been destroyed during this post World War Two period. Some were sold for scrap while many found their way to the local dump, via the council depot. Others were dumped into the ocean and down abandoned mineshafts, or used as construction site infill. The trophy's spiritual significance was steadily eroded and replaced with a range of commercial, utilitarian, decorative, recreational, technological and antiquarian values. Guns were treated like "garden statuary", being moved from one park location to another, and from one town to another.<sup>133</sup> One Sydney council was even persuaded in 1957 to reinstate its trophy, believing that "it would be a wonderful plaything for small children attending the adjoining playground".<sup>134</sup>

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127 I am advised by the Archivist at Scotch College that this happened just prior to the Second World War, and that the gun was subsequently buried in the school grounds.

128 St Kilda made a number of unsuccessful attempts during the second world war to give its gun back to the Defence Department (see SKCC Report in No.29540, Box 117). Woollahra succeeded in 1930 in handing its gun back to the Army's South Head Depot.

129 Graves, p.9.

130 In his 1981 Australia Day address the Governor-General recounted his childhood memories of the trophy gun which once occupied the upper Esplanade at St. Kilda. Ruxton to Town Clerk, 6 February 1981, Council Minutes, File 06/012/0011 (SKCC).

131 Council Minutes, 21 January 1948, Hawthorn City Council (HCC).

132 *Geelong Advertiser*, 25 August 1948, p.1.

133 Judith McKay & Richard Allom, *Lest We Forget: A Guide To The Conservation Of War Memorials*, (RSL, 1984), p.3.

134 Transfer of field gun from South Head Military Reserve, Council Minutes, 23 September 1957 (WMC)

This dislocation of memory affected metal and masonry memorials alike, both of which were steadily uprooted by commercial redevelopment and urban expansion pressures.<sup>135</sup>

Intervention by private collectors during the 1960s helped to preserve a significant number of trophies, while simultaneously fuelling mainstream heritage and commercial interest in this long-forgotten aspect of Australian military history. In this manner responsibility for Australia's remaining trophies was passed from councils to museums (and RSL sub-branches), and from the public to the private sector. From this process there emerged a new commercial ethic, and a growing sense that the trophy, in some ill-defined way, was part of our collective heritage. Guns were valued as much for their collectibility, and their intrinsic, technological significance. Trophy market values began to steadily increase throughout the 1980s in line with the growing commercialisation of Australia's heritage. Interest was also fuelled by the advertising and entertainment industries, particularly the Australian film industry.<sup>136</sup> This gradual renaissance reached something of a peak during 1988 when local history studies were massively catalysed by Bicentennial funding.

Councils everywhere struggled to recover their pasts (and justify their grant allocations) and, in the process, would occasionally rediscover their war trophy guns. Many recoveries, restorations and research projects were subsequently initiated with the trend, even today, showing little sign of abating. Communities that had lost their guns even took steps to commemorate the memory of their trophies.<sup>137</sup>

For some however this reawakening was cause for renewed moral anguish. The Woollahara council was concerned by "changing community attitudes towards [these] bellicose symbols", and feared the trophy gun's potential to generate "heated and somewhat emotional debate".<sup>138</sup>

It recognised that "at the minimum" there was "a moral obligation" for council to preserve its gun, and that this would have to be balanced against the need "not to offend any person or group".<sup>139, 140</sup> The matter was finally resolved when council decided that inaction was the most appropriate course of action. It may have been rediscovered but like many of Australia's surviving trophy guns, it faced an uncertain future.

The situation at Woollahara is in many respects indicative of the dilemma now confronting all trophy owners and custodians. These first generation war memorials have been severely degraded to the point where they nearly all require major restorative surgery and financial outlay.

Only a fraction of these, moreover, are preserved in their original trophy-memorial contexts. And yet, although depleted by almost 80%, the Australian War Trophy Collection remains the world's largest, and most important World War One artillery collection. These scattered remnants have now acquired immense historical and technological significance, a point that is

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<sup>135</sup> See D Gilfedder, "The Mobile Monument: Circulation and the Mobile Art of Memory", *Transition* (RMIT, 1990). The metal memorials were comparatively mobile and portable and as such, began to disappear at a faster rate.

<sup>136</sup> Films such as *Break of Day* (1973), *Gallipoli* (1981) and *The Lighthorsemen* (1986) have all used WW1 trophy guns as film props.

<sup>137</sup> See *Geelong Advertiser*, 24 August 1990 and untitled commemorative booklet published in 1990 by the Sandgate Sub-Branch of the RSLA.

<sup>138</sup> Town Clerk to Property Officer, 15 November 1990, File 195.G (MW)

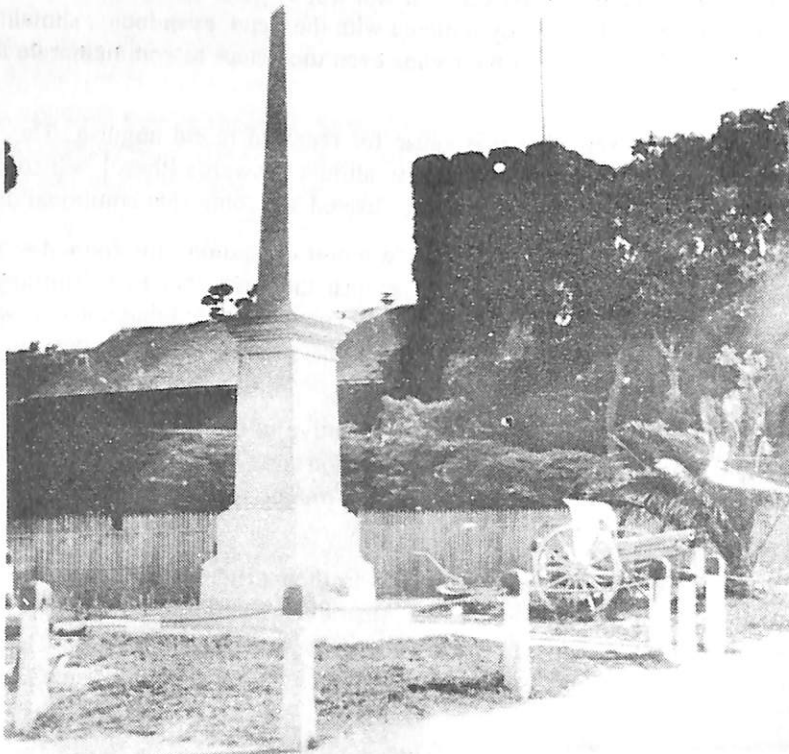
<sup>139</sup> Property Officer to Town Clerk, 12 September 1990, File 195.G (MW)

<sup>140</sup> Town Clerk to Municipal Engineer, nd, File 195.G (MW)

generally understood by councils, private collectors and mainstream heritage agencies (eg, the Australian War Memorial) alike.

But how can a service organisation like a municipal council possibly justify a \$37,950 expenditure on such a non-essential service as the restoration of a park gun, something that offers little more than a recreational benefit?<sup>141</sup> The sense of moral obligation is often there, but this is seldom matched by the necessary financial and technical services. For many trophy guns this eleventh hour reawakening may have come too late in the century to be of any practical benefit.

Then again, it would seem to matter little even if the resources were available to these modern day custodians. For what they would be preserving would be the history and the technology, rather than the memories and the sense of spirituality which once set these guns and mortars apart as the building blocks of an enduring national ethos.



Albany's (WA) trophy gun and cenotaph occupied a prominent position in the main street, alongside the church (Albany Residency Museum)

<sup>141</sup> This was the amount the Fineart Foundry Pty Ltd quoted in 1990 for restoring Woollahra's 1500 mm naval gun. Municipal Engineer to Planning Committee, nd, File 195.G (WPM).

## The day that wasn't: 18 September 1918 and the 48th Battalion's Day of Valour on the Hindenburg Line

Barry Clissold

My Uncle Thomas never did quite understand, or acknowledge, that there were other campaigns fought, and personal battles won, by others than those of the Australian 9th Division in the 1939-1945 World War. Not only was he simply one-eyed when it came to this division he just wasn't interested about others and this included actions from the other eight wars that Australia had fought in since 1,475 volunteers embarked for the Maori Wars in 1863.

A case in point is my own interest in the 1914-1918 War — a passion little understood by Uncle Thomas and one that I was forbidden to discuss at length whenever we met. Such was my chagrin one night that he reluctantly gave his consent for me to review an infantry battalion action during the 1914-1918 War that might, in my opinion, equal in significance that of an action undertaken by the 2/48th Infantry Battalion in October 1942. In this action that South Australian unit (Uncle Thomas was a South Australian) had captured a strategic feature, Trig 29, at the commencement of the Battle of El Alamein (see *Sabretache Volume XXXVI July/September 1995*). Uncle Thomas obviously felt on safe ground for in that action Private Percy Gratwick was awarded the Victoria Cross, and two companies of the 2/48th had successfully captured ground essential for the domination of the battlefield, the night action being the prelude to a major offensive.

What then could I base my comparison on for I had no "best division" as Uncle Thomas was prone to describe the 9th Division or indeed his most decorated battalion of the 2nd AIF, the 2/48th of that division. But that is not to suggest that there are not "infantry cameos" that I am fond of and which, for me, display military prominence, skills and courage of a high order. Prominent of those actions, in the latter part of the war, include the heroics of the 25th Infantry Battalion at Mont St Quentin on 2 September 1918, the aggressive spirit of both the 14th and 46th Infantry Battalions at the Hindenburg Line during the month of September in 1918 or the mystery and tragic loss of the 10th Infantry Battalion at Celtic Wood on 9 October 1917.

I explained to Uncle Thomas that comparisons were dangerous; one cannot measure, with some sort of criteria, valour or brave conduct, gallantry or aggressive spirit for each has their own circumstance. He smiled and agreed, but the offer to my reviewing a First World War action was not withdrawn. I thus retreated from the warmth of his study to consider not any comparison, or parallel, but something while being unique could also be linked in some way with that of the 2/48th's action. Or having some similarities. It would be a nice touch, I decided, to search first for similarities in a First World War unit, and action, with that of the incident involving the 2/48th at El Alamein. Such a find I thought would be the base for my "comparison". This however soon proved to be more difficult than I thought.

I would need to establish that both the infantry units were from South Australia (for the 2/48th was), that the chosen action to be assessed was a prelude to a major offensive, that it took place at night, that it was an attack, that it was late in the respective campaign, that the action captured strategic ground, that two infantry companies were involved and that a Victoria Cross, a

Distinguished Service Order and at least two Military Crosses were awarded as a result of the action.

Soon my own study floor was littered with scraps of paper, scribbles discarded in search of a thread that would connect two infantry formations, at war, separated by nearly 25 years. One wall was neatly covered with a large white sheet of paper; lines, crosses and circles, linked by words, became my paradigm — the quest for a thread elusive. But slowly an operation, and unit emerged. The Australian Corps' involvement in the breaching of the Hindenburg Line in September 1918 became a likely action; a nice touch would involve the South Australian 48th Infantry Battalion. For although the 2/48th had no lineage with the 48th the association for my review did seem appropriate. I knew it would be difficult for Uncle Thomas, a South Australian, not to be attracted to such a treatise.

Thus my story for Uncle Thomas would begin in early 1916 for that is when the 48th Battalion marched off the parade ground at Tel-el-Kebir, as a newly-formed infantry battalion of the AIF. The raising of the 48th was a result of a decision to double the AIF. The nucleus for two new divisions, the 4th and 5th, was to be provided by splitting the sixteen existing battalions — 1st to 16th — into halves and then expanding the halves by reinforcements. From the 16th Battalion, a veteran of Gallipoli, four officers and three hundred and fifty other ranks paraded as the 48th on 3 March 1916. Their Commanding Officer, Major (later Brigadier-General) R L Leane, had been appointed from the 11th Battalion and had been observed as an officer of conspicuous common sense and great moral courage. The horrors of the Battalion's first front line engagement on the Western Front, the Battle of Pozières in August 1916, when it lost, mainly by shellfire, 20 officers and 578 men, in the period of one day and two nights, was to require all that courage and leadership. In the nine days of action at Pozières in August 1916, the Battalion lost a total of 25 officers and 610 other ranks; the 16th Battalion, which was also engaged, lost 3 officers and 403 other ranks. Later that same year the 48th went into reserve but, in January 1917, it again occupied front-line positions.

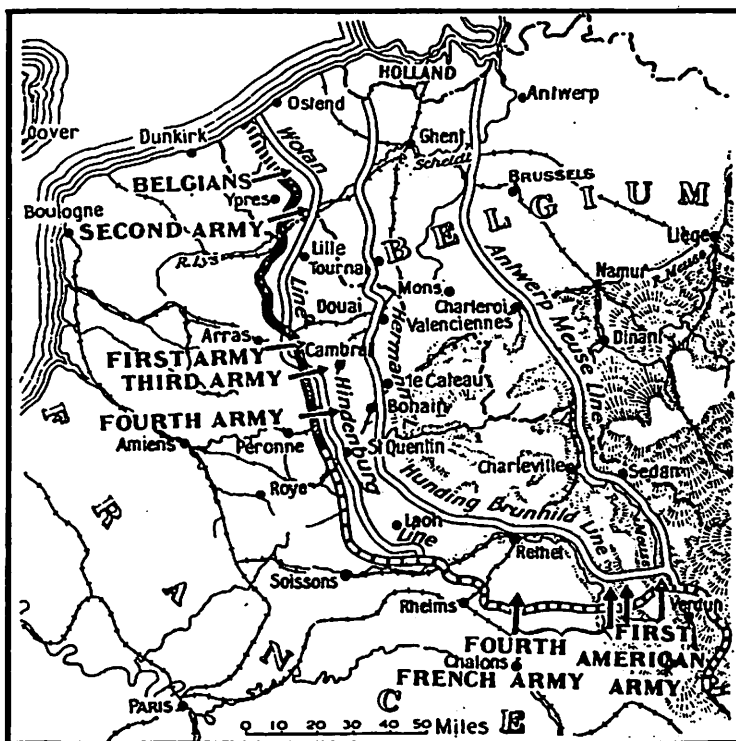
The year 1917 was to be a tough one for the 48th Battalion and its battle-hardened troops, many the survivors from the Gallipoli campaign. In March, General Haig ordered Australian and British troops to attack the German-fortified Hindenburg Line in what could only be described as appalling snow-squall weather. As part of the 12th Infantry Brigade the 48th, supported by tanks but without artillery support in the initial phase, attacked the line east of Bullecourt. Leading the infantrymen the tanks were to soften up the German defensive line, destroying positions and breaching the already half-cut wire defences. In the circumstances the 48th advanced faster than the tanks, despite the mats they carried to bridge the wire, and became easy targets for the German defenders. Superbly led by its commanding officer, Lt Col Leane, the battalion fought fiercely and gained the first line of German trenches, subsequently holding it and the German support line. But in tragic circumstances the allied artillery, believing the Germans had re-taken the now Australian-held trenches, laid down a barrage on the troops of the 48th. Under this heavy fire Leane had no option to withdraw. Following this abortive action the battalion was rested.

The 48th was to sustain further heavy losses in action during the remainder of the war. At Passchendale Ridge in October 1917 the battalion was to recall some of its worst memories of Pozières Ridge. In action in October 1917 the battalion lost 2 officers and 359 other ranks killed, missing or wounded out of a total of 610. Their sacrifice had not, however, gained them one yard of ground.

Early in 1918 saw the battalion defending Amiens in positions straddling the railway between Albert and Dernancourt. In the months that followed, the South Australians joined with the 45th

Battalion in a successful attack at Monument Wood and then occupied positions on a line running behind Villers-Bretonneux and through Aubigny.

Relief for the 48th arrived in May 1918 and the Battalion, now greatly reduced, received some new blood following the disbanding of the 47th Battalion. Now billeted in the eastern suburbs of deserted Amiens the battalion readied itself for the decisive battle of 1918, the Battle of Amiens which would be launched on 8 August 1918. It took part in that battle and was relieved from the front line on 24 August 1918 to rest for nearly two weeks at St Vast. On 11 September 1918, the 48th relieved the 49th Battalion near Flechin and on 14 September preparations were commenced that would lead to the 48th taking part in what would be its last front-line action.



The situation in September 1918 showing the main German defensive line stretching from the general northern area of Ostend to Verdun in the south. Indicated are the positions, approved by General Rawlinson on 18 September 1918, to be occupied by the allied armies for the launching of the major offensive. The Hindenburg Line runs south from the coast of Rhiems.

It was to take place, however, on the day that wasn't: for there is no entry in the Battalion's War Diary for 18 September 1918 describing the day that Private Woods won the battalion's only Victoria Cross, the day Captain Anderson won the Distinguished Service Order and the day the 48th Battalion breached the Hindenburg Outpost Line. I now knew that I had an action that Uncle Thomas would have to acknowledge rivalled the exploits of the 2/48th at Trig 29.

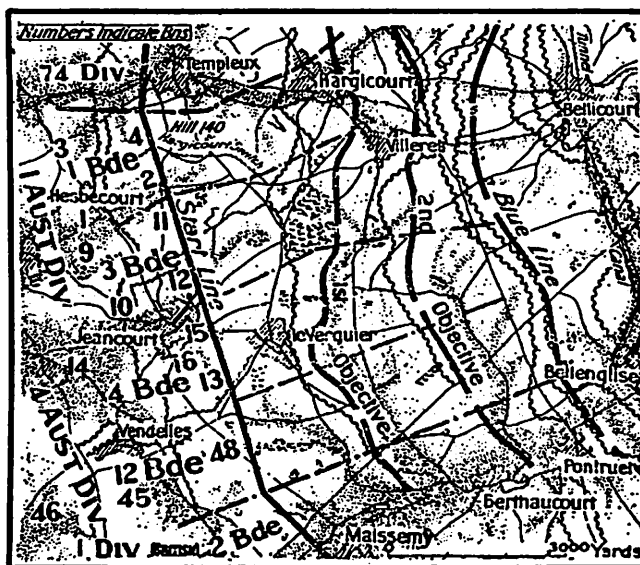
Preparations for an Allied advance towards the east had commenced in early September. As part of that plan General Rawlinson, Commander British Fourth Army, which included the Australian Corps, ordered his two Corps to press the Germans vigorously so as prevent roads and railways from being destroyed as they retreated east. The key to this strategy was to be the breaching of the Hindenburg Line (the Germans described it as the Siegfried Line). For this task



General Monash, Commander, Australian Corps, was to use the fresh troops of his 4th Division. Included in this formation was the 12th Infantry Brigade and its three battalions, the 45th, 46th and 48th. The first line to be breached in this new advance was the Hindenburg Outpost Line, running north/south from Hargicourt to Pontruet. The Outpost Line ran generally a mile west of the Hindenburg Main Line and a mile east of the old British Outpost Line except opposite the Bellicourt end of the St Quentin Tunnel. It is the first and third phase of what took place that was of interest to me and I hoped, Uncle Thomas.

Lt Col Perry, now commanding the 48th, Leane having been promoted and now commanding the 12th Infantry Brigade, issued Operational Order No 149 on 17 September 1918 for the attack. There were expectations that the weather would clear from the storms the previous day. In accordance with Monash's plan the 48th was to lead the 12th Infantry Brigade's attack against the western defences of the main German defended line. The 48th was the right flank guard of the Australian Corps, advancing on a two divisional front. On the right of the 48th the British 1st Division was to attack eastwards with the 2 Royal Sussex 2nd Brigade advancing as the left flank guard of the British advance. Perry explained to his company commanders that on reaching what was called Phase 1 objective, the old British Main Line, the battalion would hold and the 45th Battalion would pass through and advance to the Phase 2 objective, the old British Outpost Line. According to Monash's plan a further more easterly line, the Hindenburg Outpost Line, was not an objective but would remain as a possibility for exploitation, dependent upon the result of the advance in Phases 1 and 2. The exploitation towards the Hindenburg Outpost Line was a task for the 46th Battalion. Here Monash differed from Rawlinson who was keen for this line to be taken, and for it to be a stated objective, for it provided a commanding view of the main Hindenburg Line further east.

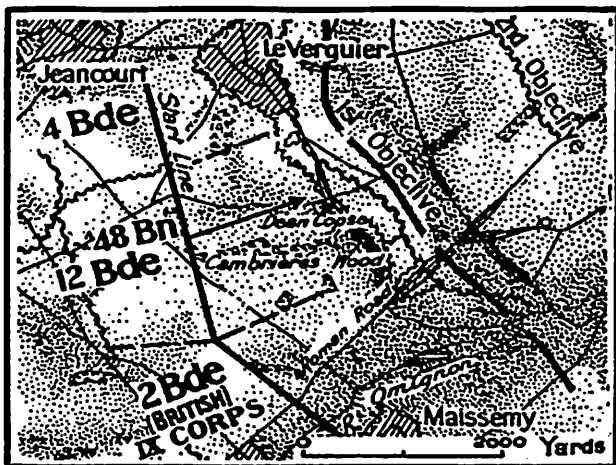
A commencing barrage deluged the German defenders at 5.20 am on 18 September 1918 as the 48th stepped over the starting line tapes. They advanced in groups, not employing the old tactics of an extended line. The groups were mutually supporting, grounded troops protecting those advancing with additional cover being provided by the fog and rain. Little opposition was met and the Australians quickly overpowered the defenders, driving and bombing their way along deep trenches and fortified dug-outs taking 480 prisoners. The objective was secured at 6.30am.



The situation at 5.20am, 18 September 1918: the three battalions of the 12th Infantry Brigade assemble for the advance to the 1st Objective. The British 2nd Brigade is to provide their right flank protection.

At 8.30am the 45th Battalion, travelling 400 yards to the rear of the 48th, now advanced through the South Australians towards their objective, the old British Outpost Line, a string of outpost trenches, each circled by wire, a further three-quarters of a mile east. The British 2nd

Brigade now on the right flank of the 45th was stopped but the 45th, finding the German defence disorganised, gained the Phase 2 objective, the line of posts on the hilltop and several hundred prisoners.



The situation at 6.30am: the 48th take the 1st Objective, clearing Le Verguier, Dean Copse and Cambrières Wood.

the Blue Line [the Hindenburg Outpost Line] by allocating to its capture certain bodies of troops". These troops would be limited and not to be increased to ensure a victory at that time. It was now that Leane decided to change his orders from exploitation to a set piece attack. In his judgment mere patrolling was inadequate. Other commanders issued similar orders and by 10.30am the right of the 1st Division, the left flank division of the attacking Australians, had reached and was consolidating on the Blue Line, its position overlooking Bellicourt and the Canal. Leane, with his 12th Brigade, realised that he had problems in advancing further owing to his exposed right flank; the British 2nd Brigade still had not reached their second objective and were not level with the Australians. To protect this flank Leane now ordered up two companies of the 48th to support the 46th's frontal assault on the Hindenburg Outpost Line.

Long grass, acres of thistles and dense wire screened their advance. But by 3pm, harassed by German heavy machine guns the 46th Battalion's advance stalled. It was agreed that the 46th would continue the attack at 11pm supported by artillery. The two companies of the 48th would again protect the right flank of the attack. A short but very heavy rainstorm burst over the battlefield at 10.55pm and the rain was still falling when they reached the first of the German trenches and outposts. On the right flank the British midnight attack failed, the 2 Royal Sussex advancing initially to Fourmi Trench, faltered, then withdrew. By that time, the two companies of the 48th had got into the fork of Pen Trench and Onoto Trench. They had avoided the valleys and made their approaches along spurs and had attacked the Germans from the flanks rather than head on. The Chaplain of the 48th, Captain W Devine MC recalled the pre-dawn action as "the struggle dragged on and on with increasing bitterness, until the fight in the darkness lost the dignity of battle and there was enacted something more crude and savage than mere warfare".

Leane, believing that the British had withdrawn and were not providing his brigade with protection, was concerned that the Germans would get around his right flank and threaten the Australians from the rear. He was not reassured by the commander of the British 2nd Brigade, General Strickland, who persisted with advice that his troops were level with the Australians. It was at this stage that a patrol from the 48th Battalion, which included Private JP Woods, sent to

The operation had now reached a critical stage. Monash had given orders that the battle's third phase, an advance to the Hindenburg Outpost Line, would be a line for exploitation only. Exploitation, he had instructed, "is to be undertaken in order to take advantage of the demoralisation of the enemy which usually ensues after an attack. It is not intended that a large body of troops should be detailed to capture this line".

Monash did, however, provide some flexibility for his subordinate commanders. He added a supplementary order that the divisions "are to make an honest and sincere attempt to capture

confirm the 2nd Brigade's position were fired upon by Germans defending both Pen and Entrepot Trenches. Charging a post held by four heavy and two light machine guns Woods and the patrol captured a knuckle of Pen Trench but about 30 Germans counter-attacked. Woods now lying flat on a parapet countered by hurling grenades at them. From the northern end of Pen Trench others from the 48th came to their defence. For this action Woods was awarded the Battalion's only Victoria Cross in what was to be their last engagement.

The capture of the strong point at the junction of four main German fire trenches may not be of equal geographical prominence with that of Trig 29 — that so intrigued Uncle Thomas — but the strong point's capture was of utmost importance as it gave the Australians a commanding view of the entire German canal system, and importantly, the Hindenburg Line. And it was from these captured positions that the Australians launched their major assault that breached the Hindenburg Line forcing the general retreat of the Germans.

That was how the day went even though the Battalion's War Diary has no entry for 18 September 1918. Even so, I had enough evidence to convince Uncle Thomas that the 48th had greatly distinguished itself. In capturing the Hindenburg Outpost Line, the battalion provided the start line for the attack on the main German defensive Hindenburg Line which was breached on 28 September 1918. It was the prelude to the major offensive leading to the withdrawal of German forces in France. Uncle Thomas was quick to acknowledge that nearly 25 years later, the 2/48th contributed to a similar situation which led to the withdrawal of the Germans from Egypt.

Although I had originally intended for my review to examine possible similarities — of actions in two world wars — the 48th's action at the Hindenburg Outpost Line became a story all of its own, although there are similarities with that of the 2/48th's attack on Trig 29. Not the least of these were the decorations won by the two battalions. It is acknowledged that the 2/48th Battalion was the most highly decorated battalion of the 1939-1945 War but few infantry battalions I venture can compare with the 48th and the decorations it won in a single day. That day, 18 September 1918, was special for the 48th for on no other day, in four years of active service, had it won a Victoria Cross, a Distinguished Service Order, six Military Crosses, five Distinguished Conduct Medals, twenty six Military Medals and a Belgian Croix de Guerre. Uncle Thomas had some views on the reasons for the high number of DCMs and MMs won and the DSO awarded to a Company Commander but I intend to agree with Charles Bean who observed that the feature of the operation was the performance of junior ranks.

Well that's briefly the story of the 48th's day of valour. Uncle Thomas was impressed.

#### **Selected Reading**

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Records AWM Series 38, Item 3DRL1722, Item 36, *Hindenburg Outpost Line*, Canberra: Australian War Memorial

Records AWM Series 28, *4th Australian Division 11-9-1918 to 24-9-1918* Canberra: Australian War Memorial

Records AWM Series 38, Item 3DRL 606, Item 210 Canberra: Australian War Memorial

## Leading Seaman Ronald “Buck” Taylor (1918 - 1942)

Lt G J Swinden

Ronald “Buck” Taylor was born in Carlton, Victoria on 29 April 1918, one of ten children born to Elsie and George Taylor, and grew up in the Port Melbourne area. As a child he was fascinated by the warships that visited Melbourne and at the age of seven became a mascot for the sloop HMAS *Marguerite*.

On 12 June 1935, at the age of 17, he joined the RAN as an Ordinary Seaman 2nd Class. After his initial training at HMAS *Cerberus* he joined the cruiser HMAS *Australia* in April 1936, then on exchange service with the Royal Navy in the Mediterranean. Taylor became an Able Seaman in March 1937 and later returned to *Cerberus* in April 1938 to train as a gunnery rating. After qualifying as a Seaman Gunner he joined the destroyer HMAS *Vampire*. Later, Taylor served in HMA Ships *Penguin*, *Adelaide*, and *Australia* before joining the sloop HMAS *Yarra* in August 1939. When War was declared in September, *Yarra* stayed in Australian waters until August 1940. In August she sailed for overseas service in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. On arrival in the Red Sea the sloop was active as a convoy escort and came under regular attack by the Italian Air Force and Navy. In August 1941, *Yarra* took part in the Allied takeover of Iran. Taylor, by now a Leading Seaman, was Captain of Number 2 Gun which fired *Yarra's* first shots in the battle at Khorramshahr on 25 August. *Yarra* sank the Iranian sloop *Babr* and captured an Iranian gunboat all without loss to the Australians. In November, *Yarra* proceeded to the Mediterranean where she briefly served on the Tobruk ferry run. During her third convoy to Tobruk, *Yarra* was attacked by German Stuka dive bombers. Taylor's gun was active in beating off the attack and was seen to hit one of the German aircraft.

On 7 December 1941 Japan entered the war following her attack on Pearl Harbour. *Yarra* was ordered to Java in December 1941 to help defend the Far East against the invading Japanese. From January to March 1942 she carried out convoy escort work while the Japanese pushed relentlessly southward. In one convoy to Singapore, *Yarra* came under attack from Japanese aircraft. Taylor's No 2 gun was again instrumental in defending the convoy. On 27 February, *Yarra* left Java on what was to be her last voyage. She had been ordered to sail to Fremantle as escort for a small convoy and her crew who had been absent from Australia for sixteen months were all looking forward to some home leave. At 0630 on 4 March Fremantle was only four days steaming away when the convoy encountered a Japanese force of three cruisers and two destroyers. There was to be no escape.

*Yarra's* Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Commander Rankin, turned his ship towards the enemy, ordered the convoy to scatter, began to lay a smoke screen and opened fire on the Japanese in a vain attempt to protect the convoy. An hour later only *Yarra* remained from the convoy. The sloop was drifting after shells had wrecked her engine room and two of her three guns had been knocked out. Lieutenant Commander Rankin, ordered abandon ship shortly before a salvo hit the bridge killing all on duty there. As *Yarra's* men abandoned ship they saw that “Buck” Taylor was still at his gun, although most of his gun crew lay dead at his feet. Calling on him to leave he replied, “This gun is still firing while I've got breath in my body”. Thirty-four men of *Yarra's* ship's company of 151 made it to the rafts (when they were rescued five days later only 13 were left alive). From here they saw the end of *Yarra* shortly after 0800. The Japanese destroyers circled the sinking sloop firing, while from *Yarra* came slow but accurate return fire. It was “Buck” Taylor, whose gun had fired *Yarra's* first shots at Khorramshahr in 1941. Having ignored the order to abandon ship he remained at No 2 gun firing slowly but defiantly at the enemy. From *Yarra's* battered hulk, from an inferno of smoke and flame Taylor continued firing until death silenced him shortly before the ship went down.

## Book Reviews

Richard Morris, *Guy Gibson*, (Viking, London, 1994), 400pp

Alan Cooper, *Born Leader*, (Independent Books, London, 1993), 167pp

### **Guy Gibson VC: born leader or bumptious bastard?**

Lloyd Brodrick

During and immediately after the Second World War, among the many audacious and gallant actions which were retold, popularised and immortalised in the public imagination, few stand out as prominently as the story of the Dam Busters. Even today the story of the airmen who carried out the raid, using the bouncing bomb of Barnes Wallis, remains fresh and vivid. Of all the Dam Busters, it is of course the leader, Wing Commander Guy Gibson VC, DSO and Bar, DFC and Bar who is best remembered.

Guy Gibson is still a popular hero, especially in the UK, and is remembered as a dashing and tenacious pilot who flew almost two hundred missions and won the Victoria Cross for leading his squadron against the dams at the very young age of 24. His death in action aged only 26 seemed to personify the enormous sacrifices of Bomber Command, and the numerous books and articles and of the course the film *The Dam Busters* set the seal on his status.

Apart from the film, the main sources for Gibson's post-war fame have been his own bestseller *Enemy Coast Ahead*, which appeared in 1946, and Paul Brickhill's popular book *The Dam Busters*, published in 1952. These sources, and the many other accounts drawn from them, reveal very little about Guy Gibson the man, beyond the superficial image of the hero. In view of the extensive coverage which the dams raid has received over the years, it is surprising that it is only recently that Gibson has been the subject of biography, with two books appearing to coincide with the 50th anniversaries of the dams raid, and Gibson's death.

The biographies, by Alan Cooper and Richard Morris, are stylistically very different. They are also poles apart in intent and in their approach to their subject. The subject is not an easy one for a serious biography, for in terms of scope and substance there is not much for a biographer to work with.

Guy Penrose Gibson was born in India in 1918, where his Russian-born father was an officer in the Imperial Indian Forest Service. At the age of six, Gibson returned to England for schooling. He went from St Edward's School, Oxford, straight into the RAF in 1936, and served as a pilot until his death in action. He flew about 170 operations, including two tours of operations on bombers and one tour as a night-fighter. Apart from *Enemy Coast Ahead*, Gibson appears to have left behind few letters or other personal papers, and many of the people who knew him best were killed during the war or have died in the years which followed.

These are the bare bones with which Messrs Cooper and Morris had to contend when researching their subject. As official historian Noble Frankland points out in the Foreword to Morris's book, a life which was over in 26 years is a daunting prospect for a biographer, particularly when the subject lived a specialised life which was re-invented even when he was still alive.

Alan Cooper's biography of Guy Gibson is entitled *Born Leader* (Independent Books, London, 1993). With such a title, Cooper gives himself little room to manoeuvre as his view of Gibson is established from the outset. When the book is opened, the very first paragraph tells us that Gibson was and is a legend, and with a few exceptions the narrative continues in similar vein to the end.

Perhaps the key to Cooper's approach is his sub-title, "The Story of Guy Gibson, Dambuster". The narrative is presented very much as a story, and Cooper does not concern himself with analysis. In recent years my yardstick for excellence in military biography has been Jeremy Wilson's outstanding study *Lawrence of Arabia*, and when measured against Wilson in terms of research, analysis and even structure, Cooper comes off very badly.

This is not to say that Cooper's book is devoid of interest. He obviously did a lot of research to write *Born Leader*, and had access to some of the few surviving people who would have known Gibson well. The quality of the research is wasted however, for Cooper does not include footnotes and he limits his bibliography to four sources. In the absence of these the critical reader is asked to trust the author, who as mentioned assumes the role of storyteller. Perhaps the most annoying aspect of this is on those occasions when Cooper recounts what is obviously an anecdote without giving a clue as to where the story has come from.

Richard Morris, on the other hand, is meticulous in his sourcing, and his attitude to his subject is ambivalent. In *Guy Gibson* (Viking, London, 1994), Morris is much more inclined to treat Gibson as a man, and to ask questions even when there is no satisfactory answer. Where Cooper avoids analysis, Morris is very much a modern biographer. This is difficult at times, for unlike T E Lawrence, who left a wealth of material behind for Jeremy Wilson and countless other biographers, Guy Gibson was disinclined to reflect on his young life, or if he did the sources are no longer available.

This gap leads Morris to indulge in psychoanalysis, and on a couple of occasions his speculations border on the fanciful. For instance, in his analysis of Gibson's marriage to Eve Moore, who was seven years Gibson's senior and apparently unable to bear children, Morris suggests that Eve may have represented a mother figure, and Gibson may have been to her the child she could never have.

From these different approaches, there are a number of points of convergence. Gibson was a good, rather than a great, pilot, whose characteristics were duty and determination. He drove his aircrews hard, and although Cooper skirts the point he was generally unpopular with the ground crews. Morris records that Gibson's pre-war ground crew in 83 Squadron nick-named him "the Bumptious Bastard", and to the ground crew in 106 Squadron he was "the Boy Emperor". This recalls Ralph Cochrane's tactful assessment in the *Dictionary of National Biography* that "it must be admitted that his relations with his aircrews had a special intimacy which he was never quite able to achieve with the groundcrews". Morris puts it down to the insecurity of a very young man in positions of great responsibility, combined with the class background of the time. Cooper tries not to analyse it, although he must have realised that Gibson was certainly not a "born leader" when it came to the ground crews.

While neither book gives a really adequate idea of the day-to-day life and duties of a bomber pilot, one critical point which Morris brings out is the contemporary evidence that AVM Sir Arthur "Bomber" Harris had marked out Gibson as an outstanding operational pilot in 1940, during his first tour. This is an important revelation, as it emphasises that Gibson's later prominence owed as much to his ability and attitude as it did to his status as a veteran. In this sense he was an outstanding leader, although the nature of his leadership is rather more complex

than Taylor would suggest. Morris suggests, with some support, that Gibson was either loved or loathed.

Other themes which emerge from Morris are Gibson's direct and unsophisticated political views and his total commitment to the prosecution of the war, with the full knowledge that such a commitment would probably cost him his life. Gibson had a hatred of totalitarianism, and according to Morris, after the Dams raid Gibson's decision not to be "sidelined" into a political career was influenced to some degree by his exposure (by Churchill) to smuggled footage of the Holocaust. Interestingly, Gibson also strongly resented the sacrifices which his generation was having to make for the mistakes of the older generation.

There is much less illumination to be gained from Cooper. He had access to a couple of sources which Morris did not, including Richard James, Gibson's gunner in 29 (Fighter) Squadron. However, while Morris might have made much of James, the reader suspects that Cooper was not a rigorous interviewer.

A major source which Morris has used, and which to me is of enormous importance to his book, is Gibson's original draft to *Enemy Coast Ahead*. Morris is able to confirm that Gibson wrote the book without a "ghost", although the book did go through a sanitising editing process before its publication. Morris is able to give examples where Gibson's disarmingly blunt descriptions of people or events were watered down by the editors. Thus, Gibson's front gunner on the dams raid was described as "pretty dumb" in the draft but ended up as "pretty green" in the published version.

Looking at the acknowledgments in both books it is clear that numerous sources which were of assistance to Morris and Cooper are no longer available. Amongst others, Morris lists Air Marshal Sir Harold Martin, Lord Cheshire, and David and Ann Shannon, all of whom are now deceased. Cooper also used some of these sources, and others, and it is clear that it would be very difficult to do original research on Gibson without access to at least some of these people.

While Cooper's book borders on the sentimental, he agrees with Morris that of the possible explanations for Gibson's death, the most likely is under-preparation and Gibson's lack of experience on Mosquitoes. Cooper does not probe the reasons behind any under-preparation, which is a pity because Morris' consideration is very interesting and gives an idea of Gibson's motivation and the degree to which he was used by his superiors. Morris quotes Micky Martin, who wrote before his death in 1988, "There was no target of sufficient importance for them to endanger his young life again".

From these comments it will be evident which of these two books give, in my opinion, a better understanding of the man behind the Dam Busters legend. However, I found that a reading of both books was useful in explaining the nature of the legend, and the interest and appeal which the achievements of Guy Gibson still have more than half a century after his death.

Clem Sargent, *The Colonial Garrison 1817-1824: The 48th Foot The Northamptonshire Regiment in New South Wales*, TCS Publications, Canberra, 1996, 200 pp, hard cover \$49.50, softcover \$34.50, p&p Australia \$7.50, TCS Publications, PO Box 281, MAWSON ACT 2607.

From 1790 to 1870, twenty five regiments of the British Army served on garrison duty in Australia at some time or another. However, as Society Vice-President Clem Sargent points out in the preface to his interesting book, the complete service of any one regiment has never before been recorded in detail. This is surprising, as the British Army played a key role in colonial

Australia, particularly in the early days, and no description of those times can be complete without at least some reference to the contribution made by the members of the regiments.

As the title suggests, Lt-Col Sargent has attempted to remedy the deficiency, at least in part, by examining the service of the 48th Regiment of Foot, the Northamptonshire Regiment, in New South Wales (including Van Diemens Land) from its arrival in 1817 to its departure for India in 1824 and 1825.

The 48th Foot is a highly suitable choice for a study of a garrison regiment, for its service covered the final years of Lachlan Macquarie's Governorship as well as that of Sir Thomas Brisbane. This was a time when the colony was beginning to emerge as a substantive community in its own right, although it was still essentially a convict settlement. The 48th Foot was the first of the Peninsular regiments to serve in New South Wales, and it is an overriding theme of Clem Sargent's work to measure the regiment against M H Ellis's assessment of the toughening effect of Peninsular service on the garrison battalions. The regiment was laced with Peninsular veterans, and it is clear that the impact of that distant war on the young colony, through the presence of hundreds of the combatants, has never been properly considered before.

Lt-Col Sargent's book is essentially a study of the day-to-day lives of the members of the 48th Foot, placed firmly in the context of the inter-relationship with the colonial administration and the broader community, both convicts and settlers. After sketching the service of the regiment in the Peninsula, he describes the various details of the 48th's service in New South Wales and Van Diemens Land, from matters involving the most senior officials and officials, to the common domestic arrangements of individual privates on outpost duties.

Because the members of the regiment were widely dispersed during their service, and the records which have survived contain varying amounts of detail, the narrative is often a series of interconnected stories, recounting individual instances of life in the colony. One impression which strongly emerges is of the tensions which existed at all levels of this closed and isolated society (inside and outside the regiment), and the importance of the army in keeping order. To illustrate the isolation, the regiment celebrated the birthday of George III in June 1820, more than four months after the King's death.

In addition to the administrative details, and a description of the officers' various civil and military duties and regular social outings, Lt-Col Sargent has uncovered stories of cannibalism, decapitation, bestiality, adultery, floggings, drunkenness, corruption, petty jealousy and much more, which certainly keep the reader's interest. Taken together, they give an overall picture of the service of the 48th Foot. One story which stands out is that of Private Brittain, who was ordered to carry despatches from Georgetown to Launceston in full uniform in the middle of summer, and who collapsed and died of exhaustion on the road. Another is that of Privates Parker and Reynolds, who followed some escaped convicts into the bush but were never heard of again. In all cases such as this, we are given a brief sketch of the background of the participants, which helps explain who these people were. Private Brittain, for instance, was a Belfast labourer in his early 20s.

Throughout the work Lt-Col Sargent demonstrates the extraordinary amount of research which he conducted over many years into this specialised subject, as well as his mastery of the material. The index is excellent, as are the footnotes, and the reader is left with a regret that the author did not explain in detail his painstaking searches in the various archives. Future historians would thank him for such an explanation (which may be forthcoming in *Sabretache*). The appendices provide various insights, including biographical details of the members of the regiment who remained in NSW, and the names of those who lived to claim the Military



General Service Medal. Considering the subject matter the book is surprisingly well illustrated, and the colour reproductions (particularly Major Taylor's panoramas) are absolutely first-class.

My only criticism of the book is that with all the detail of research, there could have been more analysis from an author who obviously knows his subject. This is a pity, as the really hard work had already been done and the additional insights would have been of interest. There are also several instances where a more attentive editor would have made amendments or deletions.

These are small points, which do not detract from the value of this original and groundbreaking piece of research. *The Colonial Garrison* should not just be of interest to military historians. It should be recognised as a valuable source book, of interest to genealogists, local and social historians and anyone with an interest in the flavour of early colonial life. Clem Sargent deserves congratulations and appreciation for this attractive and readable book.—Lloyd Brodrick

Anthony Hewitt, *Children of the Empire*, Kangaroo Press Pty Ltd, PO Box 6125, Dural Delivery Centre NSW 2158

Tony Hewitt was born in India, educated in England, commissioned from Sandhurst into The Middlesex Regiment (The Die-Hards). He served in Singapore, Malaya and Hong Kong. He fought with his Regiment in the Battle of Hong Kong, successfully escaped from Japanese imprisonment in Kowloon and made his way via China to India. He went on to serve in India (with the Lancashire Fusiliers) and in North West Europe. After the war he held numerous command and staff appointments including service with NATO, the colonial forces in Sierra Leone and The Gambia, Military Adviser to the British High Commission for Australia and Deputy Commander Singapore Military district. He was awarded the Military Cross and appointed MBE.

Elizabeth Hayley Bell was the daughter of Hayley Bell. A baby in Shanghai, she grew up in Macau, Chefoo, Canton and Hong Kong, moving with her family to wherever her father, a Commissioner of Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs, was posted. She, like Tony Hewitt, was sent to school in England (which, like him, she hated) and eventually returned to Singapore. Her father was Defence Security Officer in Singapore from 1936-1939 and repeatedly warned of the possibility of Japanese invasion via Malaysia. His views were dismissed.

Elizabeth married Martin Weedon in June 1939 and travelled to Hong Kong where his regiment was stationed. The start of their married life was clouded by the refusal of his Commanding Officer to acknowledge the marriage (at that time an officer under 30 was required to get his Commanding Officer's permission to marry!). After a few months a child was conceived but Elizabeth was evacuated to Singapore. In Singapore Mark was born, and Elizabeth fell in love with Noel Gudgeon. Attempts to patch up her marriage were not successful and Martin cut off all financial support to her. She returned to Singapore and Malaya for a few brief months happiness with Noel before returning to England in the face of the Japanese invasion. Noel died on 15 June 1943 in Takanon South, Kilometre 218 on the Burma-Thailand Railway. On her return to England Elizabeth joined the Wrens. She worked with the Ultra Secret organisation breaking German codes on the Enigma bomb. She and Tony Hewitt met again London in January 1944. The invasion of Europe was imminent. Tony's letters to Elizabeth from North West Europe are a moving record of a man's love and fascinating primary source material.

After the war Elizabeth and her husband realised their marriage was over. With no income and a small child, she needed a job and applied for and was accepted as an air hostess for the British Overseas Airways Corporation. (Two thousand applicants for ten jobs). She flew into South

Africa on Solent Flying Boats. Tony meanwhile was with the Royal West African Frontier Force, Sierra Leone. Eventually they managed to meet in London and married in September 1948.

Elizabeth, a woman of great strength with the ability to love and defy convention, who travelled wherever Tony's career took him, from Sierra Leone to Norway, to Germany and back to Africa, on to Australia. Tony and Liz Hewitt now live in Buderim Queensland. — Bruce Topperwien

Nicola Baker, *More Than Little Heroes: Australian Army Air Liaison Officers in the Second World War*, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Canberra 1994. glossary, B & W photographs, maps, bibliography, nominal rolls, 199 pages, \$23.00

It is unusual to find a critical analysis at a very important complex and specialist aspect of military operations combined with what is virtually a "unit" history.

Nicola Baker has; managed this interesting combination in a way which will ensure her book is on the "required reading" list at staff colleges and other centres of military learning for many years ahead and at the same time it provides another welcome contribution to the over-growing list of Australian unit histories. It will give much pleasure to the survivors of the Air Liaison Groups and their colleagues in the RAAF who provided support with dedication and skill together with the troops on the ground who so highly valued this assistance.

It is fair to say that on the outbreak of World War II, we didn't know much about Army-Air cooperation. There had not been much deep thinking about how we should manage the business of getting the right measure of air support on the ground at the right time and in the right place.

Who would control? What communications were needed? What planning procedures should apply? What organisation should be devised and put in place? The questions were endless and solutions were urgent. The problems were tackled with some imagination a measure of good will and a recognition of the need for a sensitive understanding of the roles, capabilities, limitations and indeed the cultures of the armies and air forces involved.

The Middle East experience gave the Australian services a sound basis to develop sound organisation and procedures for subsequent operations in the South West Pacific with the enthusiastic support of General George C Kenny, the outstanding commander of the Allied Air Forces SWPA. These concepts and methods influenced the systems developed for use with all forces in the theatre. These influences can be seen in the arrangements in force today. The principles established are unchanging and are well covered in the concluding chapter.

The reader will find some frustration at the lack of any index. An index is an essential element in any book which must be counted as a work of reference.

In summary, a well written book about a most unusual and effective World War II organisation. Full of interest for those with a bent for Australian military history and an essential reference for officers now serving in the Australian Defence Force. — J Whitelaw.

Neville Lindsay, *Loyalty and Service: The Officer Cadet School Portsea*, Historia Productions, PO Box 604, Kenmore 4069, 1995. xvi + 354 pp.

The Australian Army's Officer Cadet School at Portsea in Victoria existed for 34 years from 1952 to 1985. Less in the public eye than RMC Duntroon, its older counterpart located in the national capital, OCS Portsea can nonetheless claim that its products constituted the backbone of the ARA officer corps for many years. In its lifetime it turned out 2,825 junior officers for the Army (40% of the total) compared with RMC's 2,022 (28%) over the same period.

The origins of OCS lay in the need for a substantial increase in the output of officers in the early 1950s to support commitments in Japan and Korea and to provide junior officers to train the new national servicemen during their three months full-time duty. The four-year course at Duntroon was simply not flexible enough to perform this role. In the 1960s a new conscription scheme and the expanding commitment to Vietnam created fresh need for Portsea graduates.

After Vietnam Portsea continued to flourish, providing about 50% of all new officers for the ARA compared with RMC's 39%. But its position was challenged by the decision to establish ADFA to take over the academic education of RMC cadets. As Neville Lindsay suggests, OCS could have taken over the military training role of RMC and the latter might have disappeared. But tradition weighed heavy and it was OCS Portsea that was destined to lose its identity on incorporation into RMC.

It is worthwhile and timely, therefore, to record the achievements of OCS Portsea and to assess its contribution to officer training. Neville Lindsay's book does both tasks superbly well, offering a wealth of detail for the historical record and providing a balanced judgement of Portsea's contribution to the Australian Army and the wider world.

*Loyalty and Service* offers a factual record of immense variety. It covers the early history of the Portsea area and the original quarantine station on the site (for some years cadets had to be ready to evacuate within 24 hours in the event of a quarantine emergency). The bulk of the work, however, records cadet life: daily routines, training activities, discipline and punishments, living conditions and cadet language, prizes and awards, insignia and clothing scales, sporting efforts and entertainment (approved and unapproved). There is comment, too, on selection boards and recruitment, on cadet organisation and rank structure, on bastardisation and the travails of married cadets in the early years. All of this is amply illustrated by photographs, diagrams, lexicons, cartoons, maps and pictures, many of the latter in full colour.

As befits such a history, all graduates are recorded and there are photographs of every graduating class. The focus of the book, as the author acknowledges, is on the cadets, not on the staff. For it is those who came in as more or less raw recruits and who left after 12 short months to take up command positions who were the life-blood of the institution. *Loyalty and Service* records their trials and triumphs with insight and a degree of justifiable pride.

The book also provides material for assessing Portsea's contribution to the Army and to Australia. Though cadets were told in the early years that they could not hope to go beyond the rank of major, reality turned out rather different. OCS can boast two Major Generals so far and with 6 Brigadiers, 35 Colonels and 139 Lieutenant Colonels still serving in 1995, more can be expected. OCS graduates can also look back on a distinguished record of active service. Over 40 served in the Malayan Emergency and in Borneo while large numbers fought in Vietnam where 86 graduates won operational awards.

Nor should one overlook the impact of the 700 or so graduates who went into other forces, among them 378 to New Zealand, 91 to Malaysia, 61 to PNG (including a future Deputy Prime

Minister and a leader of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army), 40 to Singapore and 38 to the Philippines. Three African armies—Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria—also sent future officers to Portsea while another exotic force, the RAAF, received 30 OCS-trained officers (one of whom is now a federal MP).

In the last year of OCS female cadets were admitted and 14 graduated. It was typical of the college that it did not shrink from the difficulties involved. For OCS proved itself over the years to be an adaptable and enterprising institution. Colonel Neville Lindsay has told its story with balance, insight and a keen eye for detail. *Loyalty and Service* has much to offer not only to graduates who will want to remember and reminisce but also to those interested to learn about an institution that was a vital part of the Australian Army for over 30 years of war and peace. — Hugh Smith, Department of Politics, Australian Defence Force Academy.

Peter Dennis, Jeffrey Grey, Ewan Morris and Robin Prior, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History*, Oxford University Press Australia, 1995, Hard cover; 692 pages, \$69.95

This book is portrayed as a “landmark [which] explores the richness and diversity of Australian Military History”, and it certainly goes a long way to achieving that lofty claim. With an impressive directory of contributors, the more than 800 individual entries cover a widely diverse range of subjects related to Australian military history.

The alphabetically arranged entries vary in length and detail, from a few lines to several pages. While the majority of these are concerned with specific people, places or items of equipment, there are also 36 lengthy thematic entries, such as “Aboriginal Armed Resistance to White Invasion” and “Military History and Historians”. All contain a wealth of information, and are supported by 100 photographs, most of which were sourced from the Australian War Memorial. The alphabetical entries and photograph captions are generally well researched, though occasionally suffer from minor errors.

The captured A6M5 Zero fighter pictured on page 27, for example, has New Zealand Air Force markings, not Australian as stated, and the tank pictured on page 51 is actually a Vickers Medium Mark 2 (Special), not a Mark 2 as stated in the caption. The RAAC will doubtless be interested to learn that the Leopard tank replaced the Centurion from 1974 (the Leopard was ordered in 1974, but the Leopard AS1 actually started replacing the Centurion from early 1977 following the arrival of the first batch in late 1976). Likewise, that the M113 APC (sic) (presumably the M113A1 LRV or APC) is obsolete, despite the fact that the RAAC will be using them into the next century.

In addition to the alphabetical entries, the book also has a number of useful reference sections such as “Military Ranks: Service Equivalents” and Appendices such as a list of Prime Ministers and Chiefs of Staff of the armed forces.

The preface of the book states that the authors have sought to make the coverage as comprehensive as possible but that “the result to some extent reflects [the authors] interests and expertise”. This is very much the case, although it is difficult to understand why some items have extensive entries, while other, no less deserving items, do not appear at all. For example, aircraft operated by the RAAF are listed in a concise table spanning several pages, together with a large number of individual alphabetical entries. Both sets of entries are cross referenced to further assist the reader. By contrast, there are just two entries covering armour and armoured vehicles: an entry on armour in general, and an entry on the Australian built AC-1 Cruiser tank under the name “Sentinel”. Other tracked AFVs get little mention and no individual entry,

despite their significant contribution to Australian military history. Wheeled armour of World War 2 is summed up in half a sentence, with no reference to either local production or the types imported.

This apparent imbalance in subject coverage also extends to inconsistencies in the coverage of items within groups of material as well. The broad subject entry for Small Arms mentions a large number of weapons, but only a few of these have detailed individual entries. This poses the question why, for example, is the M60 GPMG deserving of an individual entry, when the M16A1 rifle and M79 grenade launcher of the same period are not? Likewise the entries for artillery: why are the 18 and 25-pounder guns entered individually, but not the 105-mm M2A2 and a host of other types?

Another aspect of the inconsistent presentation is in the use of metric and imperial measure. Some weights and measurements are entirely in imperial, others in imperial followed by the metric equivalent in brackets, while still others are in metric only.

Despite the apparent inconsistencies and imbalance in subject coverage, this is a valuable book of reference. Its strength is in the concise and readable way in which it covers the subjects that have been chosen by the authors for listing. Since receiving this book, it has become a prime source of reference in my library, if only as a stepping off point to more detailed texts. I recommend this book to anyone interested in the broader aspects of Australian military history, though those primarily interested in items of military technology may be disappointed by the restricted extent of the coverage. Perhaps a companion volume on Australian Military Technology is also needed? — Mike Cecil

## Letters

### Engineers in WW1

I am writing to you in the hope of gleaning some information about the history of the Australian Army Engineers in World War I, in connection with a book I am writing on their Western Front training depot of that period.

If there is anyone to whom you might refer me, I would be most grateful.

Between November 1916 and early 1919 the Australian Army field engineers with the Allied armies in France and Belgium drew their trainees from a base at Brightlingsea, Essex, England, officially initialled "AETD". My own grandfather (long deceased) was one of the 1918 trainees, and I was brought up near the town

I have read the following;

1. The official history of Australia in the First World War, by C E W Bean (this mentions the AETD and some of its "graduates");
2. An excellent history of the Australian Engineers by Major-General R R McNicoll which has similar information on the AETD;
3. The war diaries of the various Australian engineer companies in France, preserved at the Public Record Office here in London;
4. Some of the war diaries of the Brightlingsea AETD itself, sent to me from the Australian War Memorial at Canberra;
5. The army service dossier of my grandfather, sent to me from Australian Archives, Mitchell;
6. number of local newspaper reports from Brightlingsea itself.

However, these add up to a very incomplete picture, and I am still very keen to trace any other surviving records (however fragmentary), mementoes or souvenirs of the 1914-18 Engineer Training Depot. For instance, on leaving Brightlingsea the Australians were given an inscribed silver trophy, the whereabouts of which are now unknown.

I realise that it's a tall order, but wonder whether today's Australian Army Engineer organisation includes any expert, museum, or records, which link it to that far-off place and time.

Anything you would be kind enough to suggest would be much appreciated.

J P Foynes  
17 Cranmore Avenue  
Osterley  
Isleworth Middx TW7 4QW  
England

0181 570 0534

### **Clothing and equipment of the colonial Queensland Defence Force**

I am an historian working on a manuscript detailing the clothing and equipment of the colonial Queensland Defence Force, for the period 1860-1903.

I have contacted you in the hope that some of your members may hold photographs, ephemera, accoutrements or articles of dress which are attributed to the naval or military forces of Queensland prior to 1903. I have to date identified over 600 individual articles of clothing and accoutrements issued to the Queensland Forces, and would gladly exchange information with any collectors or interested parties.

Brian G Rough  
GPO Box 1226  
Brisbane Qld 4001  
(07) 3285 7962

### **Medals**

I am writing on the behalf of a committee charged with the responsibility of procuring three medals to make good the loss incurred to a collection here in Adelaide some years ago.

- Kelat-i-Ghilzie Medal 1842
- Star for Gwalior Campaign 1843
- British North Borneo Company's Medal, 1897-1916 (one only, any year)

R G Cundell  
PO Box 60  
Upper Sturt SA 5156  
(08) 388 2210

### **Membership fee increase**

Annual membership has remained at \$26 for 10 years. Expenses have risen over time, and it has become necessary to increase membership to \$30 as of 1 July 1996.

As per usual, invoices for 1996-97 membership renewal will appear in the April-June edition of *Sabretache*.

## **Members' notices**

### **The Colonial Garrison 1817-1824**

**The 48th Foot  
the Northhamptonshire Regiment  
in the Colony of New South Wales**

**Clem Sargent**

THE COLONIAL GARRISON 1817-1824 is the first comprehensive account of the service in the Colony of New South Wales of one of twenty-five British regiments which garrisoned the Australian colonies from 1790 to 1870. It traces the service of the 48th Regiment of Foot, the Northamptonshire Regiment, from its arrival from England in 1817, to serve under Governor Macquarie, to its departure for India in 1824, when Sir Thomas Brisbane was governor of the Colony of New South Wales. The book is based on the study by Clem Sargent mentioned in the Oxford Companion to Australian Military History (page 124).

TCS Publications

Canberra

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### **New Zealand Army Distinguishing Patches 1911-1991**

**Malcolm Thomas and Cliff Lord**

This book is a unique and valuable reference for military historians, insignia and uniform collectors, military personnel and the public. It concentrates on cloth "Distinguishing Patches", armbands, hatbands and other cloth distinctions used on New Zealand Army uniforms.

The book has been produced into two parts. Both are 280 x 210mm, two colour soft cover with durable sewn binding and is fully illustrated with black and white photographs and diagrams.

Part One (176 pages, 860 illustrations) Historical development of Distinguishing Patches used by the NZ Army. It also covers auxiliary WWII organisations, eg, the Home Guard, Red Cross plus sections on WWII Fiji and Tongan Military Forces. Appendices cover WWII New Zealand units and vehicle markings and code numbers. Part Two (148 pages, 670 illustrations) features NZ Army Orders of Dress followed by sections on current Corps and Regiments distinctions i.e. metal and cloth badges, wings, shoulder titles as well as flags, mottos, battle honours and Gdet Corps insignia.

Order from Malcolm Thomas, PO Box 12328, Thorndon, Wellington, New Zealand. Price NZ\$89.95 plus NZ\$11.00 for SAL postage to Australia.



## Loyalty and Service



The official launch by the Chief of the Defence Force Gen J Baker, AO, took place at RMC Duntroon on 11 Dec 1995.

For State launch information contact:

Brisbane — Maj Keogh 5 TPT on (07) 335 6020

Darwin - Mr D Burke MLA on (089) 99 7923

To order your copy of the book send \$40 plus \$7 postage & handling to:

Capt T Devine, RMC, Duntroon.

Make cheques/money orders payable to Harrison Memorial Trust.

## Torres Strait Force 1942- 1945

### Reg Ball

300 pages incl photos and maps - release date Anzac Day 1996

Account of units which became Torres Strait Force which was also responsible for Merauke Force in Dutch New Guinea. The 1942 Bombing Raids on Horn Island And those that followed are documented, as are the clashes with the Japanese in southern Dutch New Guinea.

The RAAF Operational Base Units at Iron Range, Jacky Jacky (Higgins Field), Horn Island and Merauke are covered and the comprehensive appendix has a full list of all units that served in the force. Over 600 Thursday Islanders signed-up to defend their homeland. several Dutch and American units also served as part of Torres Strait Force.

Orders to AMHP, 13 Veronica Place, Loftus, 2232 NSW. Price \$45 (including postage). Special Price until 30 April 1996 \$39 (including postage).

**MHSA Biennial Conference**  
**Queen's Birthday weekend**  
**8-10 June 1996**

The South Australia Branch is looking forward to a great weekend, renewing old friendships, making new contacts and also adding to our knowledge and understanding of Australia's military history. For the collector—perhaps an opportunity to swap and trade; for the researcher, perhaps a vital grain of information that may help conclude that project. Whatever your reasons are for attending, the South Australian Branch members will be striving to make everyone feel comfortable and at ease. Guests will be fed and watered well and frequently, while it is hoped you will find our speakers both knowledgeable and interesting.

**Accommodation**

There is an abundance of accommodation in Adelaide to suit all budgets and tastes. Contact the Conference convener for a copy of the Accommodation Guide and registration Form

**Conference Dinner**

A Conference Dinner will be held on Saturday evening 8 June at the SA Police Club, Carrington St, Adelaide. Partners are invited to attend. There will be complementary pre-dinner drinks & nibbles, plus complementary table wines & mineral waters with dinner. A full bar service will be available throughout the evening.

An inclusive 2½ days Saturday 8 June to 12.00 noon Monday 10 June — \$70.00.

Additional guest for Conference Dinner only \$25.00

Full 2½ days excluding Conference Dinner \$50.00.

Single day (or part) \$30.00. Conference Dinner \$25.00

A F Harris  
The Secretary, MHSA (SA Branch)  
PO Box 550  
MITCHAM SA 5062

Ph.(08) 2718619

## 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

✂ .....

## Application for Membership

I/\*We .....  
(Name/Rank etc.)

Of (Address) .....

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hereby apply for membership of the MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA and wish to be admitted as a \*Corresponding Member/\*Subscriber to *Sabretache* /\*Branch Member of the

..... Branch

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I/\*We enclose remittance of A\$30.00 being annual subscription, due 1 July each year.

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