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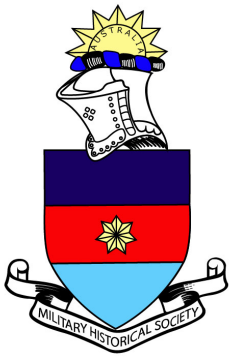

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Artillery and Australia

Major General John Whitelaw

Forget not your great guns for they are the most respectable arguments of the rights of kings.
– Frederick the Great

It is interesting that this advice came from one of the most competent commanders of the latter half of the 18th Cent. One who was known to detest, and had a continuing and unhappy relationship with the technical arms of his army. Perhaps his complaint in 1768 that artillery was becoming 'an abyss of expense' may have had something to do with it. It wasn't an original saying as there are guns made before his time inscribed, or which have moulded into their casting, the words, ULTIMA RATIO REGUM – 'the last argument of kings'.

I would like to mention first, the earliest known evidences of artillery in Australia as I think they will have some interest to this audience in historical terms. Then to move to the British settlement in 1788, the early colonial efforts toward defence, federation and onwards.

For a start perhaps one should come to grips with the definition of 'artillery' in the context of this talk. I find it interesting that a number of books and articles about artillery seem to dodge a clear definition. To some it means, the guns' to others, the troops or units concerned with the service of such guns. *The Macquarie Dictionary* goes along with both, So bear with me, there will be touches of both.

First, the guns: they come in many sizes sometimes described by the weight of the round fired but also by the diameter of the bore in either imperial or metric measurement. To this at times could be added a description deriving from calibre and length, for example a 6 inch 50 calibre gun has a bore 300 inches long. Thus giving an indication of the relative power of specific guns.

Then we have various types described as guns, howitzers, mortars and combinations such as gun/howitzers. We can move to descriptions relating to purpose such as coast, heavy, medium, light, mountain, horse, field, anti-aircraft, anti-tank and so on.

You will appreciate that we could become mired down in definitions for modern items let alone with those quite romantic terms that applied before any guns came to our shores. To give you an idea of some: bombard and bombardel, culverin, basilisk, falconet, licorne, petard, robinet and the darkly endowed murderer. Another interesting twist to these early names was the prefix of 'bastard', a term used to describe any gun which did not conform to the standard proportions of its calibre. This term does indicate that there was more than a little 'hit and miss' in gun manufacture in those far off days.

By now you are probably asking what is a 'gun'? Well, in the most simple terms it is a metal tube for throwing missiles with gunpowder or other propellant. The *Oxford English Dictionary* goes on to say 'piece of ordnance, cannon, rifle etc.' The origin is obscure and seems to be from Middle English 'gonne' or 'gunne' and surmises that it may have come from the Scandinavian 'Gunna' a shortened form of 'Gunnhildr', a woman's name.

Prior to 1788

Artillery first came to Australia aboard the ships of early explorers and on those of the Dutch East India Company. There are quite a number of these in Western Australia recovered in large

part by the efforts of the indefatigable Jeremy Green of the WA Maritime Museum. Guns from the wrecks of the *Batavia* and *Zweewick* at Houtman Abrolhos provide the back bone of the collection of at least 22 pieces dated 1603 to 1727 located for the most part at the Maritime Museums at Fremantle and Geraldton. Notable are two cannons made of an interesting composite construction. Why should they be constructed in this way? Perhaps some restriction in the defence vote?

There are two other mysteries I wish to mention concerning guns of an early date and associated with Australia. One known as the 'Rushcutter Culverin' because of its location at HMAS *Rushcutter* for many years in the early part of the 20th Cent. This gun came into the possession of the NSW Naval Contingent to the Boxer Rebellion in North China in 1900. The markings show the gun being cast in 1595 AD for Phillip II, King of Spain, by Juan Vasques of Acuna, Captain General of the Artillery of the Kingdom of Naples. The mystery is what happened to it between 1595 and 1900? In addition to the 'original' markings it is inscribed in Chinese 'Sky 12', which may have been a battery designation. Today it is believed to be safely at the Navy Repository at Spectacle Island.

A mystery surrounds two brass guns located by HMAS *Encounter* on an island in Napier Broome Bay WA in 1916, now called Carronade Island. One could be dated c AD 1787 in Malay script. The other has no markings. The more ornate one is understood to be in the Maritime Museum Fremantle, the other at Garden Island, Sydney. The riddle remains, conjecture abounds, why were they found up-ended and arranged like a leading mark? Thoughts of pirate gold entered the minds of *Encounter's* crew. They took every shovel aboard the ship and thoroughly dug over the island, they recovered a few brass items identified as corroded fittings of a chest. Perhaps one could assume the treasure had been taken? The mystery remains. Who left these guns, when and why? Where did they come from?

One other set of guns of the 18th Century while not presenting a mystery has an interesting story. As Cook sailed North along the coast of Australia. HM Bark *Endeavour* struck Endeavour Reef on 11 June 1770. Cook's record says, 'We not only started water but throw'd overboard our guns iron and stone ballast Casks, hoops staves oyle Jars, decayed stores & Ca---'.

The vessel was floated off and limped in to the Endeavour River, the site of the present day Cooktown, where she was careened and repaired. In 1969 the six cannon were recovered, treated and restored. During restoration one was found to be loaded. The Curator of the Museum of Cooktown, Mr Innes Wills, excavated on the site of the forge involved in repair work on the ship. He turned up a cannon ball that fitted! One of the guns is at Cooktown and one at the National Library in Canberra.

There are of course other guns still in Australia that predate settlement, such as a brass 4.5 in. mortar at Lindfield (1779), iron 6-pdrs from HMS *Sirius* (1780) in Macquarie Place, Sydney and Norfolk is, a brass 6-pdr at Victoria Barracks Sydney (1779) and perhaps a Chinese cannon, a relic of the Boxer Rebellion at HMAS *Creswell*, Jervis Bay.

Now as to the use of any guns in Australia prior to settlement, the only evidence I know of is a very interesting report by a Mr H V Howe who witnessed in 1909 aboriginals on Graham Moore Island in the area of Napier Broome Bay re-enacting a battle using two canoes with two tubes of bark said to resemble cannon which they mimicked as firing by making loud sharp noises with conch shells. Mr Howe, in his description of this battle, likened the body makeup of the 'invaders' to represent armour, he suggests the possibility of Portuguese having landed. This eyewitness account was before, but in the vicinity of Carronade Island where *Encounter* discovered the two brass gun already mentioned.

Phases in Fortification Construction

Turning to the settlement of Australia. Mr Ian B Wyness in a thesis during his studies at the University of NSW suggested that the development of fortifications in NSW occurred in three phases up to the end of the 19th Century. He based this on the various stages of defence policy relating to fortifications. it has been my good fortune to have seen Wyness' excellent thesis, I warmly endorse his phased approach and will follow it today.

The 1st Phase 1788 to 1835

The first phase started when Captain Phillip ordered Lieut Dawes of HMS *Sirius*, in July 1788, to build a redoubt on Bennelong Point (location of the Opera House). It was the first fort in Australia if one excludes the stockade at Houtman Abrolhos made by the *Batavia* survivors. The redoubt mounted two SB iron cannon from *Sirius*.

Shortly after, Dawes built another earthwork redoubt for a further eight guns from *Sirius* on the other side of Sydney Cove on the point which was later to bear his name, Dawes Point.

A fort remained on this site until 1925 when it was demolished to enable construction of the Harbour Bridge. An archeological dig a few years ago revealed the original positions of the five guns (42-pdrs), installed during the second phase in 1855 and which now stand under the Southern approach to the Harbour Bridge. This really is a historic site well worth preserving and displaying. Despite the enormous scale of the works involved in the construction of the Bridge, all five of the positions are exposed, but No 5 is somewhat 'stamped upon' by the SE pylon. A magazine together with foundations of the officers' quarters and Greenway's guardhouse also are evident.

Returning to the first phase: there was an important development in the closing days of Governor Hunter's tenure- the formation of a militia. On 7 September 1800 he ordered the formation of the Sydney Loyal Association, the first Australian Artillery volunteer unit, 50 men in Sydney and 50 in Parramatta. This was a reaction to the evident unrest of 'turbulent and worthless characters' who had been transported and of whom many were political prisoners. He also apprehended a threat from the French of whom it was thought may be inclined to count on support from Irish exiles.

Governor King, shortly after his arrival in 1800, reported the defences to be 'in a state of decay' indicating that in addition to the redoubts on the East and West of Sydney Cove and the two field pieces each at Sydney and Parramatta there were batteries of two 6-pdrs at Garden Is and four at Windmill Hill. It seems evident that there was no provisions for regular maintenance except that seamen from the *Supply* were charged with caring for the Bennelong works.

In 1801 the Governor ordered the construction of a two gun emplacement at Georges Head to engage any enemy before they closed with Sydney Cove. The gun defences had been improved during this phase by more substantial building but by any comparative standard they were fairly puny. The defences continued to be manned, if I may be partisan, by non-professional gunners. It was 'ad hoc' to say the least and the gun carriages suffered much from the depredations of white ants and weather. The Governor continued to urge the Colonial Secretary for 'one or two subalterns and a party of artillerymen to be sent here for the service of our guns and batteries, as a future war may direct the Spaniards' attention to this colony'.

Learning of the war with France in November 1803, King authorised the The Loyal Association for duties which included service of the guns, it is doubtful if this involved careful attention to

the state of the batteries. In any case they didn't last long as in 1810 they were disbanded, the Lieutenant Governor (Paterson) claimed that regulars would come more cheaply.

It was not long before Governor Macquarie in 1814 was recommending 'in view of the ambitions of Napoleon' the formation of a temporary militia and for some Royal Artillery to be made available. The response was negative and the colony of NSW remained responsible to do what it could with such Imperial resources as it had available. This was not the first time that assistance had been requested, nor would it be the last.

The first phase can be said to have concluded with a number of achievements. The infant colony had been provided with some rudimentary defences, initially earthworks, but moving toward more substantial stone construction, there were quite a number of 'close to the water' smooth bore small calibre cannon mounted to fire through embrasures rather than en barbette and there had been an extension of the defences toward the harbour entrance.

Sydney as an Example

At this point I should say that I will continue to talk about the defences of Sydney as an example. Of course for some years of the first phase there were no other colonies or outstations for a while, except Hobart, which had been established in 1804. As time went on there were demands for the defence of Newcastle, followed by the need to attend to the several colonies as they came into being. In general terms they followed a similar pattern to what was happening in NSW, but with different levels of enthusiasm dictated by their perception of the threat and their ability to pay.

The 2nd Phase 1835 to 1871

The second phase proceeded with many improvements in fortifications and a continued push outwards so there were quite distinguishable inner and outer lines of defence characterised by heavier calibres of rifled guns with greater range well emplaced, often en barbette in the living rock. So far my remarks have all related to the service of coast artillery. There were a few field pieces around, brass 6-pdr guns and 9-pdr howitzers as I have mentioned, but seemingly no organisation of RA to man them.

Largely as a result of recommendations of a select committee in 1863, batteries were established quite distinctly on outer and inner lines taking advantage of the availability of heavier and longer ranging guns, rifled rather than smooth bore, mounted en barbette and in flush positions for the most part excavated from the natural rock.

This period saw the construction of some gems of colonial military architecture – Fort Denison off Sydney Cove and the reconstruction, including the upper level, at Fort Dawes to name but two. It also saw some reawakened interest in raising volunteer corps in all colonies. Three batteries of volunteer artillery were formed in NSW and supplemented the RA troops which had arrived in 1856.

The first ordnance to be manufactured in Australia were produced in 1845 by Captain Gother Kerr Mann, lately of the Bombay Horse Artillery. There was a need to provide high trajectory fire in the attack on Maori pas (fortifications) during the campaigns in New Zealand 1845-1864. Mann organised the production of a number of 5.5 inch Coehorn mortars in Sydney. Replicas were produced in 1979. One is known to be at Keswick Barracks, SA and another was presented to the New Zealand Army.

This second phase was also notable for some perceived 'scares': the Russians in the 1850s, and later in the 1870s the French were also counted in the equation from time to time and during the

US Civil war the sudden appearance of the Confederate *Shenandoah* in Port Phillip gave the colonists a start. The response to such apprehensions was always long delayed. Notwithstanding, and despite the development of fortifications, there was a paucity of RA in the Colonies. The year 1871 saw an end to Imperial garrisons – from then on we were on our own.

The 3rd Phase 1871-1901

The first permanent troops in the colonies were formed at this time. In NSW one battery of artillery and two companies of infantry were raised from 1 August 1871.

The infantry was disbanded after about a year and the artillery increased to two batteries in 1876 and three in 1877 to man additional armament. The first battery raised has since had a continuous history, albeit with some change in title from time to time, but mostly it has been known as 'A' Field Battery. It served overseas with the NSW Contingents to the Soudan campaign 1885, the war in South Africa 1900-1901, the Great War, World War 2, with the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan, Malaysia, South Vietnam and most recently in East Timor.

While Lieutenant Colonel George Barney, Royal Engineers, was undoubtedly the foremost figure in design and construction of fortifications in the second phase, that accolade passed in the third phase to Major General Sir William Jervois and Lieutenant Colonel Peter Scratchley, both Royal Engineers of considerable experience. Initially they were charged, in 1874, with advising the British Government on schemes of defence work for all the colonies except WA. Most of the practical work which arose from their plans fell to the lot of the energetic Scratchley.

Again we see an 'up-gunning' and remodelling of the harbour forts as rifled muzzle loading guns became available, while a number of new works were put in hand. Notable among these were Fort Scratchley at Newcastle and Bare Island to close the 'back door' to Sydney through Botany Bay. Both these forts are attractive examples of military architecture, which are much visited today and are under the care of The Fort Scratchley Historical Society and the NSW NPWS respectively.

The introduction of breech loading and quick firing equipment presaged further changes towards the end of the century. The most important being the emplacement of 9.2 inch and 6 inch guns on hydro-pneumatic mountings located to engage an enemy well outside the harbour while light quick firing guns found a place covering controlled minefields and the introduction of searchlights reduced the uncertainties of a night attack.

A very important event in the history of Artillery in Australia was the establishment of the NSW School of Gunnery at Middle Head in 1885. This unit continues today in vestigial form as the Offensive Support Division of the Army Combat Arms Training Centre. It could be that sadly a military bureaucrat has been at work after 115 years.

On Friday 28 April 1893 proof rounds were fired from the guns at Albany forts. This was the culmination of much consideration and discussion between the various colonies and the British Government. It signalled a first practical and permanent era of cooperation between the colonies in defence and a contribution to Empire defence by the protection of the world wide network of coaling stations necessary to sustain the Royal Navy. The six colonies had agreed to combine to build, fund, and man forts at Thursday Island and Albany. The main armament being three 6-inch breech loading guns at each location contributed by Britain. South Australia provided the garrison for Albany, and Queensland for Thursday Island, each of about 30 all ranks from their meagre permanent artillery.

Another important regimental event of the period was the grant of the title 'Royal Australian Artillery' to the permanent artilleries of NSW, Victoria and Queensland with effect from

24 August 1899. This title was later to become the 'Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery'. It is interesting that the formation of the RAA antedates the formation of the Commonwealth of Australia by some 20 months.

The turn of the century and federation saw the coast defences of the colonies in fair shape as to guns and defence works, with limited permanent forces ably supplemented by garrison volunteers. On the other hand field artillery was clearly deficient in numbers of units and modern guns despite the enthusiasm of the volunteers.

Two Decades of Federation

1901 saw the production of one of the first Commonwealth defence papers. A report by a military committee enquiring into the state of our defences. It was a virtual stocktake and audit of the forces available in each of the States in great detail, in a number of parts and with many tables and appendices. Particularly valuable is Part IV prepared by Major Bridges (Artillery) and Major Owen (Engineers) dealing with armaments and fortification. It is a starting point for a catalogue of guns in Australia which is slowly coming together. WA has been completed by Bob Glyde of the RAA Historical Society of WA, and Bill Billett lately of the Museum of Victoria has dealt with pieces in Victoria prior to 1901 and World War 1 trophy guns.

For the two decades following federation the concerns of the Australian artillery were the reorganisation to build the colonial elements into a homogeneous force, the challenges of compulsory military service and the Great War. The artillery elements of the colonies were well placed to fit into a wider framework, each had been modelled on the Royal Artillery and had common technical standards and regimental culture. Each field battery was designated by a number and state designation, eg No 1 NSW Bty. This was not to last long – the military bureaucrats were waiting. With the introduction of compulsory training in 1911, the designations became No 1 Bty AFA and so on to No 16. The brigade organisation was introduced in 1912 and further refined in 1913 and we find by the end of 1914 we had 14 AFA brigades, six howitzer, and four fight horse batteries on the authorised order of battle.

Similar developments occurred in the garrison artillery, the major element being the designation of permanent companies in Roman numerals. This lasted until 1911 when Arabic numerals were decreed. Also in 1911 the title Royal Australian Artillery (RAA) changed to Royal Australian Garrison Artillery (RAGA) and Royal Australian Field Artillery (RAFA) for permanent units. (These titles changed back to RAA in 1927.) AGA and AFA continued to be used for the militia. Quiet resolve is needed to follow the changes in title of units in Australia before the war through various military orders. The formation of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) in 1914 was, by comparison, a fairly tidy affair although there were changes in designation from time to time, ably summarised in Bean's Official History Vol V, *The AIF in France 1918*, Appendix 1.

Quite apart from bringing the various colonial units together in a reasonable structure, there was an urgent need to standardise on effective equipment particularly for the field artillery. In terms of reasonably modern breech loading field guns our holdings in 1903 were 14 15-pdr guns (with six on order) together with 18 12-pdr guns which could be converted. There was a deficiency in numbers and a need to standardise on one type.

A new field gun had been developed in Britain taking account of the South African War experience and foreign developments such as the French 75mm. Twenty-four were ordered and distributed by 1907 and a total of 116 by 1914. It was first class quick firing equipment which, with some modifications, was the backbone of the British field artillery during the war and continued in useful service well into World War 2.

In accordance with war plans, the coastal defences were manned on receipt of the precautionary cables from the UK on 2 August 1914. The first shot in the war was fired by a coast battery at Point Nepean, Victoria, on 5 August as a 'bring to' round to prevent the escape of the German steamer *Phaltz*.

Notwithstanding their enormous expansion and successful efforts, their courage and determination and technical excellence, it will be possible only to touch on the record of the Australian artillery in the Great War. It involved the formation of 20 field brigades in the AIF and as noted, organisations changed from time to time as did the allotment of field guns and howitzers to ensure a common standard with British units. The field artillery for five infantry divisions, a siege brigade of two batteries, three army field brigades five heavy and fifteen medium mortar batteries, plus the five divisional artillery headquarters, counter bombardment offices and ammunition columns were the main elements in the Australian contribution throughout the struggle. The problem of fielding trained personnel to meet such an expansion was immense. It was fortunate Australia was not required to provide artillery for its mounted brigades. Chauvel and his ANZAC mounted Division in Sinai and Palestine were supported by RHA and RA units.

The first action of the artillery of the 1st and NZ&A Divisions was at Gallipoli. The terrain and the space available coupled with the types and quantity of available ammunition limited the number and effectiveness of deployed guns. The conditions demanded the use of howitzers – few were forthcoming. It was a case of doing the best with available resources. The artillery were a help to, and appreciated by, the infantry, but could not practice in this campaign the use of well coordinated massed fire. One very positive result was the experience gained by many young officers who would later, in France, have every opportunity to practice their art. After Gallipoli, the divisional artillery of 1st and 2nd Divisions had to expand from 36 to 60 guns while at the same time provide a base on which to form the artillery for the new 4th and 5th Divisions formed in Egypt.

By dint of a huge effort 1st and 2nd Divisions were made ready and moved to France in March 1916 in reasonable order. It was clear that the artillery of the 4th and 5th Divisions would take a few months to be operationally ready. The problem in its simplicity was to turn units with 10% gunners and 90% former infantry and light horsemen into artillery units that could take their place in the line of battle. Of course it could not be done before they left for France in May. They required some nurturing after arrival.

It was a new war in France – a gunners' war and every history acknowledges this. But it had taken two years to react to, and perfect, the modern requirement for control of artillery to be exercised at successive and higher levels of command. This was the key lesson. It was absorbed and acted on by a number of brilliant Australian artillery commanders. After some tragic and devastating battles on the Somme, Pozieres, Ypres, Passchendaele and Messines, the Australian artillery came into its own under its own Corps commander, Monash, first at Hamel on 4 July 1918 and in the next month on 8 August at Amiens. In both battles meticulous planning and coordination were distinctive features which led Ludendorff to comment that the 'the black day' of the German Army was 8 August.

At Amiens, Brigadier General W A Coxen, the GOC RA Australian Corps, had over 550 pieces under command including about 239 heavy guns and howitzers ranging from 60-pdrs to 12-inch railway guns. Never has an Australian commanded so many since. The artillery plan was the secret of the success of this battle. It opened the way for the operations of the ensuing six weeks when Monash maintained unremitting pressure on the enemy by masterly exercise of the use of the power of his artillery arm. These British operations led to the breaking of the German defence.

The war brought enormous challenges both technically and tactically. Artillery development responded and the Australian share in this was notable in so many fields, such as the perfection of indirect and predicted fire, survey and counter battery tactics and techniques, the construction of fire plans which took care of most contingencies and yet still retained a measure of flexibilty. The Australian infantry appreciated the steadfast support they rendered with such sustained courage and determination.

Between the Wars 1919-1939

One thing that was clear from the Great War: artillery fire, carefully coordinated with the actions of other arms, was a war winner and we in Australia had a great reservoir of experience.

The world remained uncertain, Australia retained compulsory military service. The order of battle at home remained for the time being that laid down pre-war. It wasn't long however, before the military bureaucrats were at it again. Numbers were changed and a general sorting out of field artillery was made to keep alive these units which had striven so mightily and had firm war time and State associations.

Equipment too was plentiful if somewhat slightly used. There were sufficient guns and basic artillery equipment for five infantry and two cavalry divisions, but with no reserves and no equipment for corps and army troops. The political mood was one believing that Australia's security had been assured by the outcome of the Great War.

Despite maintaining the pre-war order of battle, drastic cuts in the defence vote in 1923-24 dictated that the militia could only be maintained at 25% strength and one battery in each field brigade was disestablished. The permanent force suffered reduction and the enforced retirement of 72 valuable and experienced officers. The gunners were cut from 1088 to 518 and two field batteries disbanded.

In 1924 a modest five year defence program was introduced. There was an increase in the militia to 45,000, a provision for small numbers of anti- aircraft guns (a new field for the RAA) medium artillery and tanks.

This enabled modest progress in the field army but little in coast defences. Stronger coast defences, particularly at Darwin and Albany, were recommended by the Committee of Imperial Defence in 1925 and appropriate proposals put to the Council of Defence. A decision was deferred until 1929. Despite restricted circumstances, the 1st and 2nd Medium Brigades with 60-pdr guns and 6-inch howitzers were raised in 1925, mechanisation made some progress from 1928, and an anti-aircraft battery and two artillery survey companies established. The Depression continued the squeeze on resources. The year 1929 saw the suspension of compulsory service and a reduction in funds. Members of the Permanent Force were invited to have eight weeks annual leave without pay. Numerous units were disbanded and strength declined.

The invasion of Manchuria by Japan in 1931 illuminated the problem of coast defence. Despite the financial difficulties oil storage had been constructed at Darwin. The Thursday Island garrison of 12, together with barrack buildings, were moved there by RAN vessels. Four 6-inch Mark II guns from scrapped RAN cruisers with 42 RAA & RAE joined them and they were emplaced at Emery Point and East Point. Some 26 6-inch Mk II pieces and mountings were provided by the RAN about this time. They were a welcome boost to the fixed defences.

As the Depression receded, re-armament slowly gathered momentum: 9.2-inch guns were to be installed at Cape Banks, North Head, Fort Wallace, Rottnest Island (WA) followed later by East Point (Darwin), Garden Island (WA) and Fort Drummond (Kembla). In addition 6-inch Mk II guns (ex-RAN) were added to counter bombardment capabilities. Comprehensive fortress

systems were installed to maximise their capability. To deal with the close defence problem low angle 6-inch Mk 7, BL guns and various lighter calibre QF guns were installed or planned. The possibility of night action was catered for by the deployment of a number of search lights. In the field army mechanisation was pushed forward at an increasing pace. Field Artillery (18-pdr guns both Mk2 and Mk 4 and 4.5-inch howitzers) with their limbers were 'pneumaticized' – wooden wheels were replaced with pneumatic tyres – and tractors and battery staff vehicles slowly made their appearance. Hired civilian trucks were also a feature, they added to the colour of a battery on parade with their bright advertising signs.

Anti-aircraft defences also received attention after 1938 when we still had only the four 3-inch 20 cwt, guns purchased 10 years before. Australian manufacture of 24 guns was undertaken (The since Gother K Mann in 1840!). Orders were placed in the UK for fire control instruments, searchlights and 40-mm LAA guns. Anti-tank artillery was not entirely neglected. Although no unit was formed an order was placed in the UK for 22 2-pdr guns.

The immediate pre-war period saw the raising of Australia's first regular infantry force. The Darwin Mobile Force of 245 comprising an infantry company, a troop of four 18-pdr guns, four 3-inch mortars, four medium machine guns with other elements. All were enlisted as members of the RAA as the Defence Act would not allow enlistment of regular infantrymen.

When World War 2 started the artillery had a skills base nurtured and honed by militia and regulars who had served in the Great War and some who had learned well from them. This together with improvements in the numbers and capability of guns and associated systems gave a small but solid base for expansion.

World War 2 1939-45

Once again the coastal defences reacted to a precautionary war telegram on 1 September 1939. They were joined by the anti-aircraft cadres in Sydney, Melbourne and those flown to Darwin on 26 August (perhaps the first air-mobile operation by Australians!). Within a short while the militia gunners had closed up to their various equipment. Then began a routine of extended camps of continuous training and the formation of the 2nd AIF. This followed the pattern of the 1914 experience, with similar frustrations and achievements.

The School of Artillery performed a crucial role in the expansion necessary to field the first two divisions of the AIF, the 6th and 7th plus corps troops required. It expanded and new and separate elements were formed to meet diverse requirements. There were Schools of Artillery at various times for Coast, Anti-Aircraft, Searchlights, Anti-Tank, Field Medium and Survey, and the School of Radiophysics (Radar). These separate elements had either been disbanded by 1945 or became part of single School of Artillery that year at North Head.

During the early stages of the war shortage of equipment and ammunition plagued the militia, the AIF and training organisations, It was not unusual to conduct gun drill around some planks on the ground, relics from the Great War, German dial sights, were re-engraved in degrees, vehicles were at a premium so deployment drills were conducted with gunners bearing cards in their hats with vehicle designation or with the use of dinky toys on a hut floor.

The 6th Australian Division was the first formation of the 2nd AIF. Its artillery component was three field regiments of two batteries each of three troops with four guns apiece, together with a fourth field regiment as a slice of corps troops. Each battery had two troops armed with 18-pdr guns and one with 4.5-inch howitzers. It would be armed with 25-pdrs when they became available. The three troop battery was unwieldy and soon changed to three batteries of two troops.

Before the 6th Division had completed its move to the Middle East the War Cabinet had decided to raise 1st Australian Corps and 7th Division. This was shortly followed by the decision to raise the 8th Division and in September 1940 the 9th Division. Artillery units were raised to conform with the program. In addition to the three field and one anti-tank regiment for each of the four divisions there were three army field regiments, a survey regiment and an anti-aircraft brigade of three regiments. The AIF artillery was quite substantial and there was much juggling of guns to meet training and possible operational requirements.

There was action in store—6 Division in the very successful desert campaign to Benghazi: then to the heroic but short-lived rearguard actions in Greece and Crete in 1940-41; the 7th Division in the spectacular campaign in Syria; while the 9th showed an Anzac determination in the defence of Tobruk. Each of these campaigns showed the Australian artillery to be well trained, well handled, determined and innovative.

The rush of events in the Pacific put a new light on matters. After the Japanese attack on 8 December 1941, the 6th and 7th Divisions were withdrawn from the Middle East. The 9th Division followed after their considerable success at El Alamein and participation in the most powerful artillery attack Australians were involved during World War 2. The 8th Division on the other hand, despite a dogged defence were overwhelmed in the extraordinarily rapid advance of the Japanese in Malaya. We lost two field regiments and an anti-tank regiment but not before causing some difficulties for the enemy. The troops became prisoners of the Japanese and were grievously maltreated during the next 3½ years.

Security of the home base became of paramount importance. Australian manufacture of a variety of guns proceeded apace: 3.7-inch and 40-mm anti-aircraft guns, 4-inch naval guns, 25-pdr gun/howitzers, 2-, 6- and 17-pdr anti-tank guns together with associated stores, sights and fire control systems. The first air raid on Darwin on 19 February 1942 brought the war to Australia. The anti-aircraft defences performed well but were too sparse and the warning systems were deficient. This was corrected in time by the deployment of Australian designed and built radar.

We lost Rabaul with Selby's puny pair of 3-inch 20-cwt AA guns and a coast battery of 6-inch Mk 7s. Koepang was attacked and 2/1st Heavy Battery with two 6-inch Mk 11 guns was overrun. Milne Bay was attacked and resulted in Japan's first defeat on land. Major General Clowes, a gunner, commanded the Australian force and his anti-aircraft gunners and the 2/5 Field Regiment played a significant role in this success. Port Moresby was under frequent air attack and threatened by Japanese troops moving over the Kokoda Track from Buna-Gona.

Terrain difficulties and lack of mountain artillery had prevented artillery assistance as the devoted men of the 21st and 25th Brigades fought a masterly withdrawal. With enormous effort gunners of 14th Field Regiment partly dismantled two guns and hauled them forward to shell Ioribaiwa. This was a turning point. The Japanese fell back. It illustrated the urgent need for mountain artillery. Four 3.7-inch mountain guns were obtained from the RAN and RNZN and formed into 1st Mountain Battery. They assembled all the necessary horses and pack harness to use this mode of transport, but hot humid conditions were unsuitable for the horses. The guns had to be moved by jeep or man power (carriers). 1 Mountain Battery saw a great deal of action in the Buna-Gona-Sanananda area and on to Mount Tambu, where it could be said the guns and gunners were worn out and ammunition was exhausted. The battery returned to Australia, re-armed with US 75-mm pack howitzers and became our first parachute battery.

In mid-1942 there seemed little prospect of obtaining sufficient mountain guns for the task ahead. It was decided by the MGRA that endeavours should be made to lighten the 25-pdr. This was achieved to the extent that a practical lightweight and effective weapon emerged. It was first used by 2/4 Field Regiment during the air assault on Nadzab when two guns and gunners were

parachuted into action. The Short 25-pdrs proved to be useful, and were authorised on a scale of one battery in each field regiment on a jungle division establishment, but, as some complained, they were noisy and difficult to handle compared with their 'mothers'.

The early operations in New Guinea saw the Australians with a considerable force of artillery , but the means to deploy and sustain it effectively were lacking. These challenges together with lack of maps and survey information, difficulties of observation, uncertain radio communications, mostly a consequence of operations in a hot humid climate in rugged terrain, were progressively overcome. To meet the need for coastal defence of allied bases in forward areas. In 1942 the US made available 68 155-mm M1917/M1918 guns. Sixteen were lost at sea. In addition 24 155-mm Ml guns were received from the US in 1943 all with an outfit of fire control equipment and search lights. These guns were allotted to the batteries lettered from 'S' to 'U' and performed a valuable service as mobile coast batteries in Australia and New Guinea including on occasion in a field role in the Aitape-Wewak sector and on Bougainville.

In 1942 to meet the requirements of coordination of the growing artillery force the Commander in Chief appointed a Major General Royal Artillery (MGRA) to his staff. At this time there were 10 divisional artilleries, 33 field regiments, three medium regiments, 12 anti-tank regiments, 37 coast batteries, over 80 anti-aircraft batteries together with survey and searchlight batteries . The strain of manning and equipping this mass of units was considerable.

As the Japanese were forced on the defensive and the US forces gained supremacy at sea and in the air, the nature of the Australian involvement changed. The focus of our operations became the Wewak-Aitape area, New Britain and Bougainville as holding operations. None the less they were very active and depended on continued artillery support.

Then in the final months there were the successive and somewhat controversial Oboe operations, the landings at Balikpapan, Tarakan, Brunei and Labuan employing 7th and 9th Divisions. Naval gunfire support was provided for these landings and indeed had been an important feature for assault landings and coastwise movement for some time. To meet the need for observation of fire and navy-army coordination a new unit had been formed in 1943 the 1st Australian Naval Bombardment Group. It proved to be highly successful in controlling fire where and when the infantry needed it. They were much in demand by the US forces when their ships and f troops were involved.

The artillery effort during World War 2 was enormous. A figure for the number of men and women involved is not available. David Horner estimates 80,000 from a total establishment of 400,000 for the whole Army in 1942. He also quotes a figure of 34 brigadiers in artillery appointments and perhaps that gives a better perspective. Artillery had to consider their experiences of this war and look to the challenges. What was to be the shape of artillery in the future? Of course it would depend on the Government's defence policy as it developed. The iron curtain had not yet descended on Europe and the cold war had not been thought of. To quote David Horner again, 'whatever lay ahead, the Australian gunners could reflect on an outstanding achievement of organisation, training service and devotion to duty over six hard years'.

After the War

In 1945 there was a substantial residue of guns, equipment and expertise. All, of course, have a relatively short shelf life. It had been exceeded in a number of different types of equipment (eg radar) and methods by the time the reality of the cold war had been recognised. The most marked change in the early post-war days was the formation of a regular army based on a relatively small field force, It had a far reaching effect on the RAA for the remainder of the 20th Century.

There were also the seemingly continuous operational deployments. The first was to Korea in 1950. No RAA unit was committed to this campaign. However many young regular gunner officers gained valuable experience with 16 Field Regiment RNZA, with one of our infantry battalions, as air OP officers or with Commonwealth Division headquarters or units. In addition gunners provided a strong contribution to the anti-tank and mortar platoons of all the battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment. In Australia in 1951 we had a regular field regiment for the first time, far from complete and ill-arranged with anti-aircraft and locating elements. Air OP was on the order of battle, we took note of the need for self propelled artillery to support armour and hastily produced the 'Yeramba', a General Grant tank with a 25-pdr superimposed. The impetus was forward.

A form of National Service was introduced with three months full time duty followed by two years CMF service. The 30,000 annual intake put the Regular Army under intense strain to effectively handle them. The artillery order of battle indicated the magnitude of the task. It included for the first time Army Groups Royal Artillery (AGRA) both field and anti-aircraft, light regiments, heavy regiments, an amphibious observation regiment and a movement light battery. Anti-tank responsibilities were given to infantry and armoured units.

The Army began to think seriously about missiles and the demise of coast artillery was under way before all but one of the new 5.25-inch CA/AA batteries had been proof fired. RAAF was given the task of home air defence and the Army the low level air defence of the army in the field.

Forward defence was the theme from the mid-1950s for a decade. The building of the forts had led to requirement to man them and permanent gunners were formed to do this. It was an emotional experience for some of them to see the forts dismantled, wrecked and often vandalised. From the wreckage in some places military museums have arisen, which attempt to tell the story and in some way preserve this important part of our military heritage. First and foremost among them is the RAA National Museum at North Fort Sydney with a growing and already comprehensive collection of guns, artefacts, memorabilia and an excellent library reflecting the history of gunners in Australia. Sadly it does not have a 9.2-inch gun. Others are the RAA Association (NT) Museum at East Point, Darwin, the RAA Historical Society of WA at Leighton Battery, the Fort Queenscliff Museum, The Forts at Albany, Fort Scratchely Military Museum, just to name some organisations and locations where this heritage is being preserved.

The return of our UN contingent, from Korea (basically two infantry battalions) in 1953, enabled Australia to contribute to the British Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve (BCFESR) in Malaya. The roles of BCFESR were to provide a standing force for the defence of SEATO countries including Singapore and Malaya and to assist in anti-terrorist operations in Malaya. A battery of regular field artillery was included in the Australian contribution. It was an active and rewarding task which gave much practical experience in jungle operations at brigade level. The battery formed part of an RA regiment.

At home 1st Field Regiment with two field (25-pdrs) and one fight (4.2-inch mortars) batteries became part of the 1st Brigade Group. Our first regular field force since the DMF in 1938.

Australia went on to experiment. The 'pentropic' division was thought to be the answer. It was not. At least as far as artillery was concerned. There were many unsolved problems in providing responsive centralised fire support. When the new 'conventional' division was devised in 1965 there was a collective sigh of relief.

From 1959 major exercises with troops had a marked and beneficial effect on the Army and prepared individuals and units for forthcoming contributions in the confrontation with Indonesia

1963-67 and the Vietnam War 1965-71. The artillery contribution to confrontation saw the field battery with BCFESR serving in Borneo and the despatch of a light anti-aircraft battery for the air defence of RAAF Butterworth for 2½ years. In Vietnam the first gunner unit was 105 Field Battery in 1965 equipped with L5 pack howitzers. It became part of 319th US Artillery Regiment until the 1st Field Regiment deployed in 1966. From then until 1971 a field regiment with two Australian and one NZ batteries was maintained on annual rotation. A troop of 131 Divisional Locating Battery, on individual rotation, provided a counter mortar radar facility.

The most memorable actions involving the gunners were the battles for Fire Support Bases 'Balmoral' and 'Coral' where some portion of the gun positions were overrun. The battle at Long Tan was also dramatic, where intensive and effective fire with the intervention of APCs saved the day for the infantry. In Vietnam the RAA practised all the skills of their trade with the added experience of controlling the fire of heavy US equipment (8-inch howitzers, 175- and 155-mm guns). The use of counter mortar radar, frequent air OP sorties and much predicted and observed shooting were also features of the experience. The age old prime function was the support for our infantry and armour, and of course, defeat of the enemy. As it turned out the enemy was not defeated, but this was more a result of political action on the streets of Australia and the US. Notwithstanding, it cannot be denied that Australian soldiers had done their job well with an absolutely professional precision. The last artillery unit to withdraw from Vietnam was 104 Field Battery which left in December 1971.

The regular force now had three field regiments and a wealth of expertise. A reduction was in store with the suspension of National Service.

In 1971, while A Field Battery was serving in Vietnam there was an important anniversary, its centenary as the oldest serving regular unit. To mark this the RAA King's Banner, presented in 1904 by King Edward VII in recognition of services rendered in the war in South Africa was replaced by a new Queen's Banner. It was interesting to note that on the day of the Banner ceremony at Victoria Barracks Sydney, the Battery recognised the occasion in Vietnam by firing a 50 gun 'salute' at the Viet Cong.

This does not end the story of Australia and artillery, but it is a convenient place to end this quick scamper through history. There was, of course, later a small air defence contribution during the Gulf War and participation in peacekeeping, most recently with Interfet in East Timor. There have been, and will continue to be changes in armament, equipment, structure and locations to meet defence policy objectives. The RAA will continue to meet these challenges. it will continue to bring honour and pride to all Australians as it has in the past.

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The South African War, 1899-1902 – Stray Thoughts on its History and its Literature

Warren Perry[1]

Common sense, the resourcefulness which is born of a varied experience, and the habit of dealing with questions of organisation to suit special circumstances, are alone to be relied on where a new army has to be constituted from the disjecta membra *of an old one. When Lord Roberts landed at Cape Town on January 10, 1900, and decided to march on Bloemfontein, and so relieve both Kimberley and Ladysmith, the troops available for the enterprise were scattered in independent commands over a huge tract of country. There was no army organisation. There was very little transport. There was a deficiency of mounted men. The railway facilities were limited. There was no plan of campaign, and there was hardly any information regarding the physical features of the country to be invaded. In short, expect the organisation of the communication, almost everything to be dealt with* de novo. – From Colonel G F R Henderson's Introduction To Count Sternberg's *My Experiences of the Boer War*, Longman, Green, London 1901, p xvii.

The object of this paper is twofold. First it is to widen Australian intellectual horizon of the South African War, 1899-1902 and second it is to extend its historical boundaries from an Australian point of view. Such an approach should show that there was in conducting this war, from London, an overall want of better organisation and a need for more effective general administration. This was especially so at higher levels in the employment of human and material resources. This was certainly the view of the future Major-General Sir William Throsby Bridges, who when arriving at Cape Town on 6 December 1899 from Sydney, confided to his diary something to the effect that nothing seems to have been done in South Africa for the systematic employment of colonial troops. Hitherto, wars had been in the main matters for the British Regular Army.[2] Consequently in 1899 colonial military assistance with troops at first caused confusion, rather than being a contribution to British military power.

The centenary of the outbreak of the South African War of 1899-1902 occurred on Monday 11 October 1999, and the public interest that has arisen in this war can serve as a period of reappraisal.

The contestants were the two Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State on the one side and on the other side Great Britain and its self-governing colonies. Along with Canada, New Zealand and South Africa, the Australian colonies volunteered to send military forces to assist the British military forces in the field in South Africa. Once in South Africa, these forces were directed and controlled by a C-in-C, who was responsible to the War Office in London.

After war broke out, the day after the expiry of an ultimatum from Transvaal, General Sir Redvers Henry Buller VC (1839-1908) sailed on 14 October 1899 from Southampton for Cape Town, where he landed on 31 October 1899. He took overall command of British and Colonial

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[1] Major Warren Perry, MBE, ED, MA (Melb) 1st Cl Hons, BEc (Syd), Federal President Military Historical Society of Australia 1964-68.

[2] For the case of The Sudan Contingent from NSW in 1885 one should study Donald C Gordon, *The Dominion Partnership in the Imperial Defence 1870-1914*. Published by The John Hopkins Press, Baltimore, USA in 1965. See Chapter 4 – Colonial willingness to serve.

troops in South Africa. Under Buller the British suffered serious military reverses, and the War Office on 18 December 1899 replaced him with Field Marshal Lord Roberts VC (1832-1914).[3] General Lord Kitchener was concurrently appointed Chief of Staff to Lord Roberts. Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener landed at Cape Town on 10 January 1900. General Buller's magnanimous offer to serve under Roberts was accepted.

At the end of December 1899, British prestige was shattered. The cause lay in three major defeats and General Buller's failure to relieve Ladysmith. On 6 February 1900 Lord Roberts left Cape Town for the Modder River which he reached on 8 February 1900, and then pushing northwards energetically arrived in Kimberley on 1 March. General Buller occupied Newcastle on 1 8 May 1900. The British authorities proclaimed the annexation of the Orange Free State on 24 May 1900.

Pretoria, the capital of Transvaal, was captured by Buller on 5 June 1900. As General Louis Botha, the Boer leader, refused the surrender conditions, Lord Roberts, on 1 September 1900, proclaimed the annexation of the Transvaal. Later, on 19 October 1900, President Kruger of the Transvaal departed into exile, via Portuguese East Africa to Europe. Thereafter there were changes to the British command structure; General Buller, departed Cape Town on 24 October 1900 for duty in England; on 29 November 1900 General Lord Kitchener succeeded Lord Roberts as C-in-C of the British Field Force in South Africa; and on 11 December 1900, Lord Roberts sailed from Cape Town for London, where he succeeded Field Marshal Lord Wolseley as C-in-C at the War Office.

Lord Kitchener as C-in-C in South Africa finished the war, although it took longer than expected. The British, used to the tactics of the day of battles of armies – of advance, attack and withdrawal – had to contend with Boer guerrilla tactics of war without fronts. Until December 1900 the battlefields were in the Boer Republics and nearby territories, from then on fighting extended from the Atlantic to Zululand and from far North Transvaal to the southern Cape. Lord Kitchener introduced new and vigorous methods of devastation of land and deportation of civilians, crop burning and stock removal to British control, drives and raids, introduction of blockhouses, barbed wire and internment camps. The fighting became 'dirtier' on both sides, reflecting the increasing desperation of the Boers and the frustration of the British.

The devastation of the Boer sources of supply, the superior manpower and resources of the British finally in 1902 convinced the Boers of the inevitability of defeat. The Boer commandos were allowed to meet and confer. On 15 May the Vereeniging Conference began, and a draft proposal for peace was prepared. The Boer delegates met at Pretoria where a Treaty was prepared, finally accepted at Vereeniging, and on 31 May 1902 the war ended with the Peace Treaty signed at Pretoria. General Lord Kitchener, on 1 June, addressed the Boer leaders at Vereeniging. On 20 June, Lieutenant-General Sir Neville Lyttelton took over command from Kitchener who departed for London.

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For the military historian there is a vast accumulation of historical literature available in the English language. The past century has been responsible for works on various aspects of the conduct of this war by these commanders and others, including war correspondents and foreign observers. I shall be concerned generally with publications in English of the exploits of the British Regular Army and its non-regular British forces, ie those raised in the UK and those attached land forces of the overseas self-governing colonies, which made up the British forces in South Africa. Nevertheless, attention will be given to the military forces sent direct to South Africa at first from the self-governing colonies of Australia, and then after Federation in 1901 only from the Commonwealth of Australia.

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[3] The author of Forty One Years in India which became a best seller in its time.

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The greater part of the British forces in South Africa originated in the United Kingdom, and so it is reasonable to expect that the greater part of the vast literature which exists, is concerned with the arms originated in the United Kingdom. literature on the South African War of 1899-1902 published in the United Kingdom has been produced in many different forms – a fact which is not always indicated by an inspection of some bibliographies. These forms include books, pamphlets and articles in journals. Another fonn rich in expression and vast in quantity is of course to be found in newspapers especially those issued during the conduct of the war itself.

One more form of literature on the South African War is the Government Report. Such reports appeared on the South African War in many different forms, including Ministerial Statements to Parliament, which are then published in *Hansard* or issued direct to the public in the form of printed pamphlets and leaflets. Parliamentary Committee Reports and Royal Commission Reports, which are usually submitted to Parliament by a Minister; and, then ordered to be printed and thus become a parliamentary paper. So, literature related to the War includes Royal Commission Reports, Ministerial Statements published in *Hansard*, as well as reports and press statements by journalists, which may be subsequently published in newspapers.

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Unexpected changes in public life occur and in November 1900, Lord Landsdowne, the Secretary of State for War was succeeded at the War Office, London by Sir John Broderick (later the Earl of Middleton) and Field Marshal Lord Wolseley succeeded at the War Office by Field Marshal Lord Roberts VC in the Office of C-in- C. In July 1901 the Secretary of State for War formed a committee to investigate reorganising both the army medical and nursing services. The combined wisdom of the British inquiries took the War Office time to digest. However, it wasn't until 1906 that the RAMC had major reforms.

The publication of the Clinton Dawkins Committee's Report on War Office Administration occurred in 1901 The Report recommended decentralisation and that more responsibility for decision making be delegated to the District Commanders. This Report was followed in 1902 after the end of the war in South Africa, by the Report of the Lord Elgin Royal Commission. This Royal Commission inquired into the military preparations made for the conduct of the South African war of 1899- 1902. (These are some examples of Government Reports as mentioned earlier on). During the course of the South African War 1899-1902, and afterwards, a number of inquiries took place at the War Office, London concerned with the methods of conducting this war, and how to improve.

An important inquiry arising shortly after the end of the South African War was the Viscount Esher War Office (Reconstitution) Committee. It was known as 'The Committee of Three' and consisted of Ronald, Viscount Esher as Chairman and two members, Admiral Sir John Fisher RN widely known as 'Jackie Fisher', and Colonel Sir George Sydenham Clarke, RE (Rtd), a former Governor of Victoria in Australia. This Committee recommended the abolition of the post of Commander-in-Chief at the War Office. The creation of an Army Council, the creation of a General Staff and the appointment of a Chief of General Staff as its head. accepted and became effective without undue delay. The recommendations were This organisation was later adopted in Australia but on a smaller scale. Colonel (later Major-General Sir) W T Bridges became Australia's first Chief of the General Staff to date 1 January 1909. The War Office, London, like the Department of Defence in Melbourne was a Department of State and its staff was partly military and partly civil. These two groups serving under a Minister of State.

The last C-in-C at the War Office, London was Field Marshal Lord Roberts VC and the first Chief of the General Staff was Lieutenant-General, the Rt. Hon. Sir Neville Lyttelton, who was appointed to be the first Chief of the General Staff at the War Office, London to date 1904-08. Lyttelton,

although a soldier of wide experience, was one of the 'old school' and so did not make much of a contribution to this new appointment.[4] It required a younger officer, more receptive to new ideas.

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By comparison the output of literature written by Australians and published in Australia is neither as great quantitatively, nor as varied in the aspects of the war, as the literature written in the United Kingdom. For instance, I know of no Australian books written on those aspects of war and military training which are to be found in say [Reginald Rankinj A Subaltern's Letters to his Wife, London 1901; [Colonel N H Grant] The Mechanics of War, London 1902; and Anon, The Army from Within, London 1901. These books are still valuable as part of one's military education and military training. Several reasons may be given for this difference in the Australian writing on this war in South Africa. First, the Australian military forces sent to South Africa were not only numerically smaller, they were restricted at first to mounted and dismounted combatant troops of about a company strength, commanded by captains or majors. After Federation in 1901, the Federal Government took charge and the contingents sent from the States were, generally speaking, increased in strength to lieutenant- colonels' commands. Secondly, the employment of all these units, including how they were employed operationally, was a matter left to British GHQ in the field in South Africa. Further, as Australia did not send field formations such as infantry brigades, divisions and corps to South Africa, the size and nature of the independent units were reflected in the literature produced during the campaign. This shows up both in the writing by Australian War Correspondents and by writers at home in Australia.

It should be noted that the Federal Government in Australia has never published an Official History of Australia's part in the South Africa War of 1899-1902. When Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Hutton (1848-1923) was commanding and re- organising the military forces in Australia after Federation, he recommended that such a history be written and published, but the Federal Government of the time did not take any action on General Hutton's recommendation.[5]

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It is appropriate that this paper on the centenary of the war in South Africa should end by refreshing ourselves with the memories of a few of the 'old masters', not so common in libraries public or private today. Three great works must be mentioned, namely:

(a) The British Official History of the War in South Africa, 1899-1902 by Major General Sir (John) Frederick Maurice and his staff and published in 4 volumes by Hurst and Blackett, London.

(b) The Times History of the War in South Africa (1899-1902) published in 7 volumes by Sampson Low Marston and Coy Ltd London. Edited by L S Amery.

(c) The War in South Africa 1899-1902 by the Great General Staff Berlin. English translation published in 2 volumes by John Murray, London, 1904 and 1906. Authorised translators were Colonel W H H Waters CVO, RA and Colonel Hubert Du Cane MVO, RA.

Finally with regard to Australian literature, it is without an official history of Australian land forces part in the South African War of 1899-1902. It is my hope that the Australian Government will follow the example of the New Zealand Government, and have one written and published.[6]

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[4] General Sir Neville Gerald Lyttelton, Eighty Years: Soldiering, Politics, Games. Hodder and Stoughton, Chapters 19 and 20 [no date].
[5] See General Hutton's last Annual Report to the Australian Government.
[6] In preparation at the Australian War Memorial by Dr Craig Wilcox.

John (Ivan) Armstrong – Russian Cannon Maker[1]

Major R S (Bill) Billett MA

From time to time someone transcribes the Cyrillic script on the trunnions of trophy guns captured during the Crimean War 1854-7, and is surprised when the result reveals the name Armstrong. In connection with the history of the development of ordnance, Sir W G Armstrong, the 'Cannon King' is thought to be the maker, or designer of the gun. This is not the case; it was another Armstrong, whose name is on the Russian trunnions. This Armstrong was of British descent, but no relation to Sir W G Armstrong. A recent misinterpretation has occurred in Tasmania where an article appeared in an issue of the newsletter, the *Artillery Trust News* dated November/December 1999. Again, someone has transcribed the Cyrillic characters and, without further research, has been led down the wrong track attributing the gun to Sir W G Armstrong. So who was the Armstrong who constructed cannon for the Russians, and how did this come about? Research to provide an answer to this question reveals an interesting story of the transfer of knowledge, and technology, from eighteenth-century Britain to Russia. A trio of enterprising Frenchmen were also involved in establishing Russia's first modern arms factory during the reign of Catherine II (The Great).

In 1786, during the British Industrial Revolution, the Carron foundry at Falkirk in Scotland imported new technology from England that led to great improvements in smelting iron ore to mould cannon. A Mr Causse from Fareham in Hampshire had patented a new method of making cast iron by using coal, instead of the traditional charcoal, for smelting iron ore. Carron Company purchased the rights to use Causse's method for £4000 per year.[2] Using coal for smelting iron-ore, and Carron's blast furnace produced greater heat than the old charcoal method. This, in turn, reduced the amount of air bubbles in the molten iron, resulting in the production of stronger and lighter gun-barrels. The general manager of Carron at that time was an Englishman, Charles Gascoigne. Gascoigne was one of three claimants to the invention, or design, of the carronade. Indeed, for a short time it was known as the 'Gasconade'. A carronade is a short-barrelled cannon that is a cross between a howitzer, and a mortar. In appearance they differ from true cannon in that, apart from being shorter, they do not have the characteristic muzzle swell of a cannon. A carronade could deliver a large shot over a short range with devastating effect against the wooden hulls of the warships of the period. Because of this effect, the new piece was named 'the smasher'. The other two claimants were, General Robert Melville, a former officer of the 25th Regiment of the Line, and Patrick Miller.[3]

During the 1780s the Carron Company began to export cannon to Russia, and later, equipment and machinery for casting and finishing ordnance. At the time Gascoigne was experiencing financial problems, and was declared bankrupt. In 1786 Gascoigne was in Russia setting up the imported machinery at the Alexandrovski cannon works at Petrozavodsk on Lake Onega. He reorganised the Alexandrovski works and the nearby Konchezerski foundry, on the Carron system. He later established another branch of the Alexandrovski works near Kronstadt on Kotolin Island.[4]

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1 This article was first published in the journal of the Crimean War Research Society, *The War Correspondent*, Vol 18 Number 3, October 2000.
2 *The Times*, 14 Oct 1786, p. 3c.
3 See R. H. Campbell, *Carron Company*, Oliver & Boyd, London and Edinburgh. 1961
4 A. G. Cross, 'Samuel Greig, Catherine The Great's Scottish Admiral, *The Mariner's Mirror*, Vol. 60, 1974. p.217.

Two Frenchmen, Pierre Barral, and Dennis Chamony had established the Alexandrovski factory in 1765. It was first known as the 'French Factory'. Another Frenchman, named Foullon, joined them. His eldest son, Alexander Andrejevich Foullon had a successful career working under Gascoigne. In1818 he succeeded Adam Armstrong as director of the Olonets and St Petersburg factories.[5] Alexander Foullon's name appears on two trophy guns at the City of Adelaide, Australia.

Some of Carron's moulders were also taken to Russia at about the same time. During October 1789 it was reported in the newspapers that Andrew Strathern, master of the ship *Empress of all the Russias*, together with two Carron Company employees, Archibald and James Heugh, were tried for enticing 'away the servants of Carron Company'.[6] Carron Company had earlier been of service to Russia in the 1770s. The firm had been engaged to replace the windmills that emptied the Russian Navy's dry-dock at Kronstadt, on Kotlin Island in the Gulf of Finland, with a 'fire engine'. In 1770 a British admiral, Sir Charles Knowles was appointed to be President of the Russian Board of Admiralty. One of his initial tasks after arriving at St Petersburg was to modernise the dockyard. Knowles brought with him as his secretary, John Robison, a promising Scottish scientist. As part of the modernisation of the Russian dockyard, Robison conceived the idea of replacing the antique windmills by fire [steam] engines imported from Britain. A former lecturer at Glasgow University, in 1759 Robison had been employed by Admiral Knowles to tutor his son in navigation and mathematics.[7] In 1761 Robison's ability, and interest in nautical matters, resulted in his appointment to the Board of Longitude. Robison first tried to obtain the services of his friend James Watt the inventor of the steam engine to do the work. Robson was unsuccessful and eventually Carron Company was engaged to carry out the work.[8] Gascoigne and his engineer James Smeaton produced a 'Grand Plan for converting the Mill into a fire engine for draining the docks of Kronstadt'.[9]

Carron's chief engineer, Adam Smith, went to Kronstadt with fourteen workmen and began the installation of the steam engine in 1774. Knowles had departed from Russia by then and was replaced by a Scotsman, Admiral Samuel Greig in 1775. Greig had served in the Royal Navy until he resigned in 1764. Then, with the approval of the Admiralty, he and four other former Royal Navy officers, William Roxburgh, Douglas, Cleland and William Gordon, went to Russia to enter the Russian Navy. They were appointed by decree of the Empress to the following ranks; Douglas, Rear-Admiral; Greig, Captain of the first rank; Roxbrugh, Captain of the second rank; Cleland and Gordon, Lieutenants[10] It is here that the name Armstrong first appears. Greig took with him as tutor to his children, a Scot named Adam Armstrong.[11]

During the reign of Catherine the Great, Greig played an important part in the modernisation of the Russian Navy, and defence generally. Among his accomplishments he founded the Russian Naval Library at Sebastopol for the further education of his naval officers.[12] More orders were placed with Carron Company at Falkirk. During mid-1788 an order was placed from St

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[5] For more details see Jana L. Bara 'Russian Artillery' in *Canadian Journal of Arms Collecting*, Vol. 23, No 2.
[6] Reported in *The Times*, 4 October 1786,p.3b.
[7] R. W. Home & P. J. Connor, *Aepinus's Essay on the Theory of Electricity and Magnetism*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1979, p. 218.
[8] In 1773 Robison was appointed professor of natural philosophy at the University of Edinburgh. C. G. Gillespie, *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, Vol XI, Scribner's Sons, New York, 1975, pp. 495-7.
[9] I. G. Anderson, *Scotsmen in the service of the Czars*, Pentland, Edinburgh, 1990. p.84 See Also A. G. Cross, *'By the Banks of the Thames' Russians in Eighteenth Century Britain*, Oriental Research Partners, Newtonville, Mass. 1980, p.181 and 196.
[10] A. G. Cross, 'Samuel Greig, *The Mariner's Mirror*, Vol. 60, 1974. p. 252.
[11] See Jana Bara, Russian Artillery, in *Arms Collecting*, p.44.
[12] *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, Macmillan translation, London and New York, 1973-1983. Vo. 7, p.413.

Petersburg for 'one hundred and eighty pieces of cannon, thirty-six pounders, for the use of the Empress, which are now completing with the utmost expedition.'[13] The Empress also encouraged Britons to settle in Russia at this time. It was reported in *The Times*, on 19 October 1786, that:

> The greatest encouragement is held out by the Empress of Russia to settlers from this country, especially if they are artificers; the principal tradesmen, who at present do business for her Imperial Majesty and the Archduke, we are assured, by a Gentleman lately arrived from Petersburgh (sic) are either British or Irish.

In 1788, John Paul Jones, another Scotsman who became a naval hero during the American War of Independence fighting against the British, also joined the Russian Navy. He had left America in 1781 for France and subsequently obtained a commission in the Russian navy as a Rear-Admiral. This appointment enraged all the British officers in the Russian service. Jones retired to Amsterdam in 1789 after Catherine the Great dispensed with his services over a quarrel with his superior officer, Count Nassau-Seigen. He died in 1792 at Paris.[14]

After Admiral Greig's children had grown up, their tutor, Adam Armstrong, obtained employment in the Alexandrovski foundry. He went on to become its director during the period 1806-18.[15] It was Armstrong, (aided by a secretary at the Russian Admiralty, who was studying mathematics at Edinburgh University in 1786) who successfully recruited Gascoigne into the service of Empress Catherine II. Not that Gascoigne needed much urging, having been declared bankrupt in Great Britain. The British Government, and his colleagues at Caron, to his going at first, raised objections but he was eventually allowed to depart. Adam Armstrong's son John went on to become director of the Alexandrovski cannon works between 1833 until the late 1840s, when he was replaced by a Russian, named Butenev, whose name appears on pair of cannon in Centennial Park, Sydney. Butenev' s name also appears on the single Russian gun-carronade outside Hobart's Anglesea Barracks. Armstrong had ceased to be the director of the Alexandrovski works before the onset of the Crimean war. The Alexandrovski foundry at Olonets was constructed between 1773-74. The old French factory mentioned above, went into liquidation in 1777. It is suggested that the Alexandrovski foundry grew out of the former establishment. The Alexandrovski foundry later expanded with important branches in Kronstadt and St Petersburg. The latter two became separate entities in 1827.[16]

Not all the British that settled in Russia remained during the Crimean War, and there does not appear to have been any barriers put in the way of those who wanted to leave Russia. Mr James Johnston, principal engineer at the Admiralty yards at Kolpino, on the River Neva, near St Petersburg, resigned at once when the state of war was announced. The Russians did not want to let him go, and offered him the post of Engineer in Chief at Kronstadt if he would become a Russian Citizen–he returned home.[17] By December 1854, there were still many Britons in the Russian Service, and other foreigners as well. It was reported in *The Times*, that:

> Mr Baird's iron foundry is in full work again. He has contracted for five screw engines (four 300 horsepower and one 400 horsepower). The Americans (the same who have had so much

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[13] *The Times*, 8 July 1788, p.2.b.
[14] Robert Chambers (Ed.), *A Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*, Blackie and Sons, Glasgow, 1854, pp.275-81.
[15] See Jana Bara, Russian Artillery, in *Arms Collecting*, p.45.
[16] Notes on the Alexander works from *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, Macmillan translation, New York, 1973-1983. Vol.18, p.43-9.
[17] *The Times*, 16 May 1854, p.11e.

> to do with the Moscow Railway) are building a great many gun-boats (screws) and Colonel Colt has been or is here still, with his machinery for making revolvers.[18]

Many of the engineers on Russian naval ships were of Scots origin. No pressure was put on those who decided to leave. Many stayed and became Russian citizens.[19]

Directors of the Alexander Foundry were:

1777-1786	Foullon Snr. (French)
1786-1806	Charles Gascoigne (English)
1806-1818	Adam Armstrong (Scotsman)
1818-1833	Alexander Foullon, son of Foullon Snr. (French origin)
1833-1843	Ivan (John) Armstrong, son of Adam Armstrong. (Scots origin)
1843	Butenev the first Russian

Crimean War trophies in Australia are located at Centennial Park, Sydney, both cast under the direction of Butenev, one in 1852, the year on the other cannon is unreadable. There are two outside Victoria Barracks in Melbourne, both cast by Armstrong in 1838. At Adelaide, the pair on Torrens Parade Ground bear the name of Foullon, and are dated 1824 and 1828. Tasmania has two gun-carronades, one outside Anglesea Barracks at Hobart, cast by Butenev in 1847, the other stands in City Park Launceston on the site of the northern Governor's House, cast by Armstrong in 1840.[20] All but one of these cannon is stamped with the initials 'MA'; the translation of which is Morskaya Artilleria, meaning naval artillery.[21]

Markings on the Russian trophy guns are comprehensive. They record not only the details of the piece itself, but also the details of the factory where they were cast, and the name of the director. These details provide evidence of how Russia acquired the knowledge and technology to modernise the nation's naval and military forces that subsequently enabled them to challenge the other European powers of the period. The British, particularly the Scots, played a key role in transferring this knowledge.

One final point is offered to exercise the minds of members of the Crimean War Research Society on the legacy left by Greig, and others, who served the Tsars. Not only were there many excellent products of the Alexandrovski Cannon Works captured, bearing the names of Gascoigne, and the two Armstrongs, when Sebastopol was finally captured. There is also evidence that at least one of the descendants of these Anglo-Russians fought in the Crimea. On 20 September 1854, Captain of Cavalry, S A Greig, a possible descendant of Admiral S K Greig, was selected by General-Adjutant, Prince A S Menshikov, to personally report to the Tsar at St Petersburg and convey the news of the Russian defeat at the battle on the River Alma.[22] Perhaps other members of The Society can offer more information on the British descendants–on the other side?

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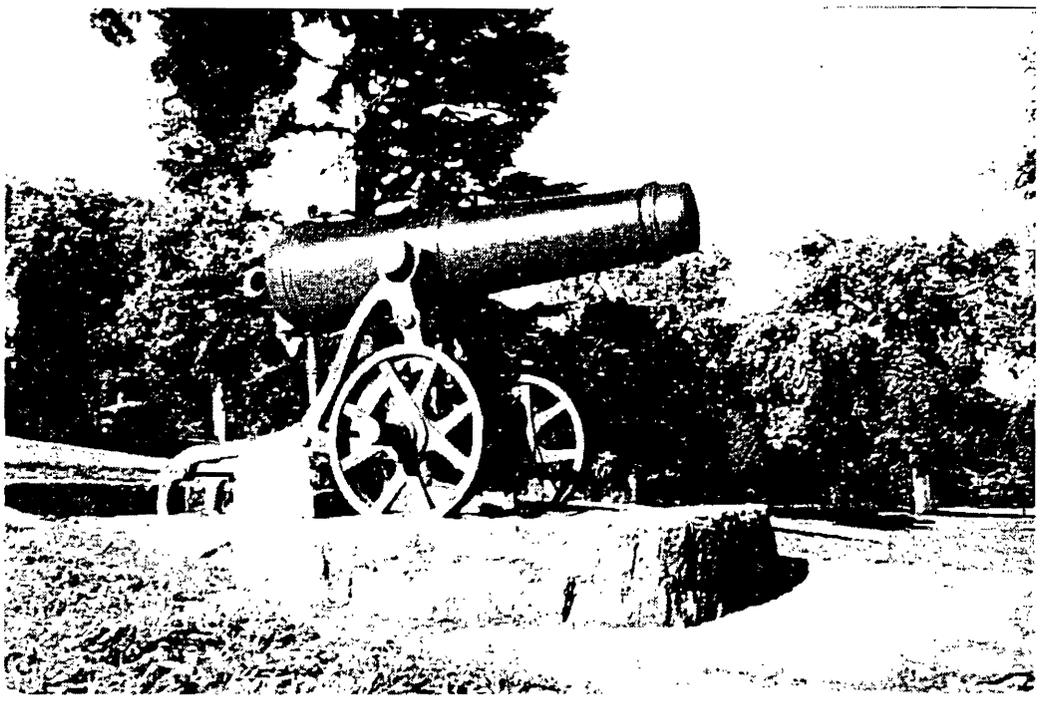
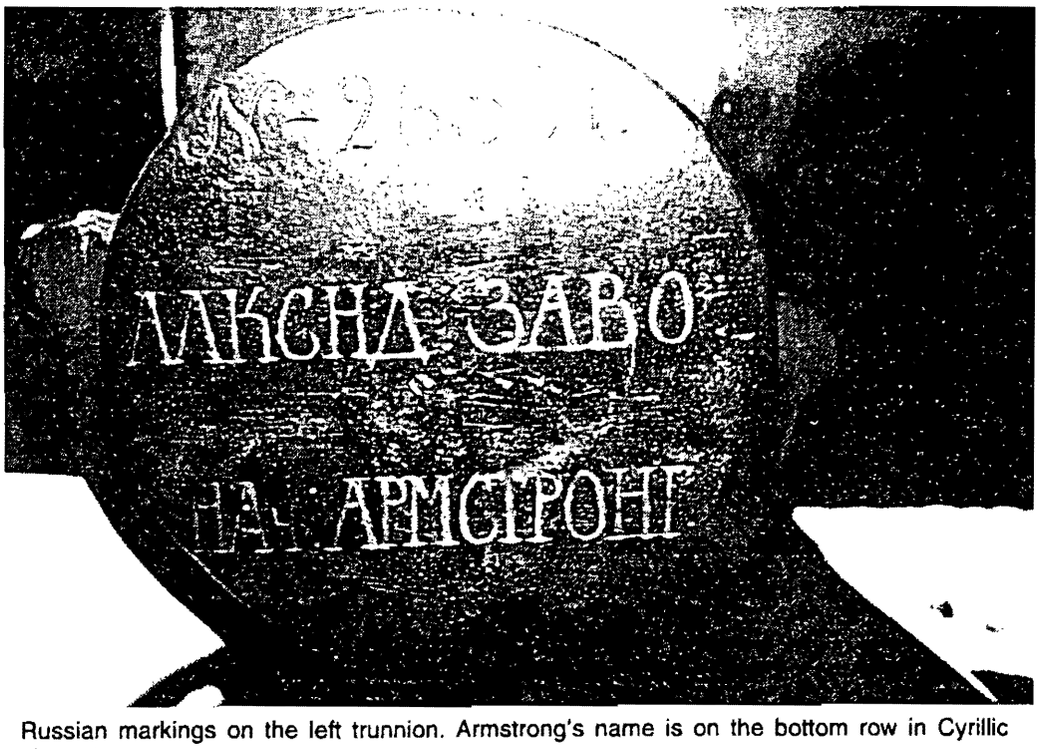
[18] See *The Times*, 11 December 1854, p.10c.
[19] See *The Times*, between 24 May-26 Jun for details.
[20] For more details of the Russian Trophy guns in Australia see Bill Billett, 'Australia's Trophies from the Crimean War', in *Sabretache*, Vol. XXXVIII No.1 1997.
[21] The exception is a pair of 24-pounders at Adelaide cast by Foullon in 1825.
[22] See, Albert Seaton, *The Crimean War: A Russian Chronicle*, Batsford, London, 1977, p75, and p.102.



A Russian gun-carronade, No 26851, in City Park Launceston, Tasmania.



Russian markings on the left trunnion. Armstrong's name is on the bottom row in Cyrillic characters.

Researching the South African War in South Africa

Craig Wilcox

My commission from the Australian War Memorial to write a new history of Australians and what used to be called the Boer war took me to South Africa last year. I went primarily to read records that historians before me had lacked the opportunity to read, but also to see a little of the country where fifteen thousand or more Australian soldiers fought a century ago and five hundred or more died. I timed the trip to coincide with the centenary of the war's outbreak so I could watch how a new, post-apartheid South Africa would remember an event that until recently had been a key building block in Afrikaner identity and the history of minority rule.

I considered taking a ship to South Africa, perhaps one to Biera in Mozambique where most of the bushmen contingents of 1900 landed, and like the bushmen taking a train through Zimbabwe and into what used to be called the western Transvaal. Fear of deadlines and love of comfort led me to travel by air instead, and in any case research in Zimbabwe was off – I learned that the country's cash-strapped and authoritarian government requires you to submit to a three-month application process and pay a US$200 fee to use its archives. So I arrived at Johannesburg after 9 hours in the air rather than 4 to 6 weeks on the water and another day or two on a train. If I was barely aware of the 10,000 kilometres that Australian soldiers had to cross a century ago to reach the fighting, I was at least able to look loftily down on the Indian Ocean and see it as the imperial lake it once was, a vast and secure highway across which soldiers, horses, food and fodder could pass safely from Australia, India and New Zealand to wherever the British empire was being challenged.

The highveld, the hard plateau a kilometre and a half above sea level on which much of the war was fought, has a testing climate and topography that are best experienced personally to understand how the harsh sun and blanched grass debilitated so many horses during the war, how hidden dongas (dry river beds) and abrupt kopjes (stony hills) offered the Boers natural trenches and fortresses, how the vast distances between any settlement allowed the Boers to vanish into thin air. But when you return to your hotel room and cool yourself down in front of the fan with a drink you start to think how familiar it all is to an Australian, or at least how tediously predictable. And in that predictability, perhaps, lay some of the value of the Australian soldier. Whether or not he could ride and shoot, regardless of whether he truly possessed the brutal will needed to crush a people's resistance to imperial rule, he accepted that it might take a day to ride from one farm to the next, that you would drip with sweat while you rode, that you hid from the sun when you could, and that water was a rare gift. Less familiar to an Australian, though, are the highveld's freezing nights and bitter winters, two uncomfortable products of elevation and distance from the sea.

I walked over a few Australian battlefields, the best known being on the Elands River west of Pretoria where three hundred Australians and two hundred Rhodesians resisted a Boer siege for two weeks in August 1900 and, some said at the time, kick-started an Australian military legend. The hard shale clinks like glass beneath your boots as you tramp, one reason why Australians were reluctant to entrench before the shelling started. Like most South African battlefields, Elands River remains largely farmland. Only a railway line, a highway, a dam and a house or two interrupt vistas that have changed little in a century. And a house, if approached with a local guide and in the right frame of mind, can add to your understanding of the Australian experience of the war. It might still contain a pious, cautious, hospitable white farmer and his family whose English isn't perfect – much like the people whom Australians fought. The graves of Australian soldiers and their black labourers who died at Elands River are well preserved, largely due to the efforts of Lionel

Wulfsohn, a local businessman and second world war veteran who developed an interest in the South African war and an affection for Australians. Wulfsohn and a fellow enthusiast, John Pennefather, would like to develop the grave site and its surrounds, which during the siege formed the heart of the Australian defences, into something that Australian tourists might like to seek out when visiting South Africa. They've received no encouragement. Local and provincial governments have more pressing demands on their funds, and the Australian high commission in Pretoria prefers to make Diamond Hill, a short drive from the capital but hardly the site of any sustained Australian heroism, into the focus of Australian commemoration.

When in Johannesburg I began to understand the uitlanders, those mostly British and Greater British immigrants (including many Australians) who built the city on gold in the 1880s and 1890s and whose agitation against the Transvaal government was a cause of the war. To scan the official pages of a city directory from the 1890s and, page after page, find no British surnames is to start to understand how these prosperous, pompous, seditious immigrants nevertheless considered themselves to be deprived of their rights and vulnerable to attack – expecially when, in retaliation for the botched coup known as the Jamieson raid, the government built a fortress on Hospital Hill whose guns pointed down into the city. To sit at the lonely Rand Regiments Memorial, a neglected, indeed unfinished monument to uitlander soldiers in the war (again, many came from Australia), with most of its grounds lost to a zoo, a museum and to car parks and with much of its stone cracked and defaced, is to see the hopelessness of the uitlanders' cause in spite of British victory in 1902. They had to do more than bring their Boer enemies to sign a surrender document; they had to outbreed them, or at least out-believe them, if they were to consolidate their victory and rule the Transvaal. In the end the uitlanders proved unable to do either. They could not outface others forever – unless those others were black. Gradually they fell in behind the Afrikaner call to unite, under Afrikaner leaders, against the black majority.

South Africa's libraries and archives can be a delight to use. Not only do they hold material unavailable elsewhere; they've also profited from decades of government attempts to foster national identity through historical consciousness, first among Afrikaners and now among black South Africans. Thus much of the holdings of the National Archives of South Africa, which include hundreds of kilometres of pre-federation (1910) official records created before named files were kept, have not only been itemised in paper lists but also on a computer database – something no Australian state archive has done despite mission statements proclaiming all the virtues of accessibility. Official action leads popular opinion, though. Few black South Africans have sufficient education to lead them to want to spend time leafing through what must in any case seem the detritus of white rule. This confers further benefits on researchers. I saw just one other serious researcher in the five days I spent at the Harold Strange (formerly Africana) Library in Johannesburg, probably the best repository of books on the war, and the two librarians there had little else to do but fuss over me. A less happy reason for their under-employment was their library's location in downtown Johannesburg, an ugly, decaying and violent district which anyone avoids if they can. Reports of crime in South Africa are often exaggerated, though, and it was only outside this library that I ever weighed up whether a day's research was worth the risk of robbery or assault.

The major National Archives of South Africa repositories, located in the old state capitals of Cape Town, Pretoria, Bloemfontein and Durban, hold few military records from the war, the small Frederick Carrington collection in Pretoria being an exception. Military records were the property of the British army, an imperial enterprise and a rival to civil government, and of its officers. Nor are there many official wartime records from the Boer republics, which in any case are in Dutch and so are unreadable by most Australians. But what remains is vast and fruitful if you want to understand the Australian soldiers' part in the war. The large civil series – executive council and governor, colonial secretary, treasurer, attorney general, district commissioners and magistrates,

military police, land settlement departments – reveal the war and the army through civilian eyes, whether of imperial officials who sought to trim the army's jurisdiction and administer the newly conquered republics, or of ordinary South Africans who sought to profit from the war and avoid its destruction. Australian soldiers are most commonly mentioned in files on the military police, which passed to civil control and to which many Australians were attached during the war, and from land settlement agencies, as thousands of soldiers settled after the war in what seemed a land of rich promise, and from public works departments, which cared for war graves or corresponded with those who did. At the close of this article I list the most valuable series and their location, and also useful private papers kept in the major libraries.

Probably no Australian interested in the South African war can hold back from visiting what has become an Australian sacred site – the grave shared by Harry Morant and Peter Handcock in Pretoria's Church street cemetery. Not that the grave is easy to get to. Cemeteries in South Africa are popular targets for vandals, sometimes politically motivated ones, and Church Street cemetery seems to be locked most of the time. It was when I was there one Saturday morning despite a sign suggesting I'd arrived well within open hours. Fortunately the tennis club next door had a key to one of the gates and allowed me to use it. Having died in disgrace, Morant and Handcock lie not in the cemetery's military section but near it, next to a soldier killed in a rail accident. I approached the grave in much the same mood as 19th-century English tourists visited Napoleon's tomb – curious to see the remains a romantic villain, and satisfied to reflect that his villainy had been punished, however harshly. I quickly saw that my mood was out of step with other Australian pilgrims before me. The grave was the only one with a wreath on it, and some visiting Queenslanders have reverently fixed a plaque to it. So the legend of Morant as an Aussie victim of British bastardry lives on. I turned instead to the grave sites of men whose sense of duty I can understand, whose ability to distinguish war from murder was uncorrupted, who died in tragic circumstances not of their own devising – men like Edwin Knox, the young Victorian bushman who drowned during the Great De Wet hunt in February 1901 and was widely mourned back in his suburb of St Kilda, and Keith Mackellar, brother of poet Dorothy, shot down in July 1900 after mistaking Boers for Britons. Mackellar's father was anguished enough, and rich enough, to have his son's body exhumed after the war and reburied in Sydney. It was the only Australian body thus repatriated.

The approaching centenary of the war's outbreak generated much media analysis, not to mention opportunism from regional tourist authorities. How would the new South Africa remember the war? It could easily have been dismissed as white man's dreaming, of no concern to the black majority. But the conciliatory mood of the country ran against such a line, as did the hard spadework by historians like Peter Warwick which showed how non-whites had been caught up in the war. The black middle class, from which the government is largely recruited, and white liberals, in which camp probably most of South Africa's historians stand, agreed that since the war had touched nearly all South Africans a century ago it ought to be commemorated by all, though in a way which emphasised the suffering of the black majority. The truth suffered slightly with this agreement. In order to make sense of the war within the old Afrikaner narrative of freedom and the new black narrative of liberation, the official view of the war, enunciated at public commemorations during the October 1999 centenary was that South Africans had been united in a shared struggle against British imperialism – ignoring that far more South Africans, black and white, had served the imperial cause. It was probably a politically necessary fudge, even if it left some South Africans wondering how talk of the bravery of the Barolong people under Baden Powell at the siege of Mafeking fitted in.

There was no mention during the centenary about the Australian part in the war. That was understandable. Australians made up less than five percent of the British army, their enemies rarely distinguished them from the rest of the 'English', and their comrades were more aware of imperial unity and common British ancestry than any nascent national differences. Still, I expected some

rural Afrikaners to blanch when I mentioned Australian soldiers, especially if I mentioned Breaker Morant and his crimes. But decades of anti-British sentiment and the release of Bruce Beresford's film *Breaker Morant* had long ago turned enmity into fraternity. I was invariably hailed almost as a cousin, a fellow colonial rebel against the British empire, a fellow critic of British foppishness, British condescension, British incompetence etc. I have bad news for my well-meaning Afrikaner hosts. My history of Australians and the South African war is going to show how keenly Australians fought for the imperial cause, and how many of them looked up to British generals and statesmen. I might even call the book *A new brand of sahib*, as Rudyard Kipling characterised those Australians who joined in the crushing of the Boer republics from 1899 to 1902.

Useful records in South Africa on Australia's part in the South African war
(Excluding records held in Durban)

National Archives of South Africa, Transvaal Archives Repository

(Pretoria, telephone 0011 2712 323 5300)

A1225 Sir Frederick Carrington papers 1884-1901 (for bushmen contingents in)

CS Transvaal Colonial Secretary 1901-1910 (for Bushveldt Carbineers)

GOV Secretary to Transvaal Governor 1901-1910 (for Arthur Lynch, who fought with the Boers)

IOP Intelligence Officer to Transvaal Military Governor 1900-1901 (for Lynch)

MGP Transvaal Military Governor 1900-1902 (for crimes, military police)

PMO Provost Marshal Army Headquarters 1900-1903 (for Bushveldt Carbineers)

SAC Chief Staff Officer South African Constabulary 1900-1908 (for South African Constabulary staff diaries)

TPS Transvaal Provincial Secretary 1900-1954 (for graves and their care)

National Archives of South Africa, Cape Archives Repository

(Cape Town, telephone 0011 2721 462 4050)

1/CBG Coleberg magistrate (for Australian soldiers, graves in district)

1/DGS Douglas/Herbert magistrate (for Australian soldiers in district)

1/MDB Middelburg magistrate (for Australian soldiers in district)

1/PKA Prieska magistrate (for Australian soldiers in district)

AG Cape Attorney General 1661-1923 (for crimes)

GH Cape Government House 1896-1910 (for Witton petition following Bushveldt Carbineers affair)

National Archives of South Africa, Free State Archives Repository

(Bloemfontein, telephone 0011 2751 522 6762)

CO Free State Colonial Secretary 1901-1911 (for applications for civil jobs, postwar settlement)

DLS Free State Director of Land Settlement 1902-1913 (for postwar settlement)

MCC Free State Military Claim and Compensation Board 1901-1903 (for looting)

PMP Officer Commanding Provisional Mounted Police 1900-1901 (for military police)

South African Library

(Cape Town, telephone 0011 2721 246 320, email jdwyer@salib.ac.za)

MSB 398 Reform Committee 1895-1916 (for Australian uitlanders)

MSB 946 Arthur Davey's Breaker Morant collection 1900-1991 (for Bushveldt Carbineers affair and historiography)

Harold Strange Library of African Studies

(Johannesburg, telephone 0011 2711 836 3787, email strange@mj.org.za)

Walter Karri Davies' Imperial Light Horse collection (for Australian uitlanders)

Rhodesian Field Force Graves In Zimbabwe From The South African War

with particular reference to Marondera/Marandellas

Robert S Burrett[1]

The late Colonel A S Hickman did much to document the incidents and associated sites relating to the part played by Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in the events of the South African War of 1899-1902. His research took him to many interesting locations in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa, and without doubt his work is invaluable in that he was able to rediscover several sites which had been forgotten since the end of the conflict. Of particular interest to me is his work on the Marondera area, or Marandellas as it was then. It is published in volume 2 of his history *Rhodesia Served the Queen*.[2] In it he makes extensive use of contemporary reports and papers, many of which are not generally available. This article will take a closer look at his work on the so-called 'Boer War graves' in the Paradise cemetery at Marondera. This article is not by any means meant to be an exhaustive study of those graves, but merely notes, corrections and personal reflections relating to the graves and their probable occupants.

Background

With the outbreak of hostilities between the British empire and the two Boer republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State, the imperial authorities began a massive mobilisation of men and resources. A small, locally recruited force, the Frontier Mounted Force, was enlisted to protect British colonial interests in the Bechuanaland Protectorate and Rhodesia. This small force had a rough of time of it. While half, the Protectorate Regiment, was besieged in Mafeking the other half, the Rhodesian Regiment, fought a series of skirmishes along the border between Tuli and the Northern Cape.[3] The latter encountered increasing Boer resistance as they moved southward and were unable to relieve their counterparts in Mafeking. This impasse, the enrolment of a sizeable number of active males from the small European population in Rhodesia and their reassignment to southern Bechuanaland, presented serious concerns to the imperial authorities. There were also huge misgivings as to the aspirations of the African populations in the country – it was after all only two years since the pacification of the 1896-7 uprising (or the First Chimurenga). The departure of the Rhodesian Regiment southward also left Rhodesia and Bechuanaland exposed to possible Boer attack, rumours of which were rife at the time.

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[1] I cannot thank enough several people who have helped me with this project. Firstly John Clathworthy in Marondera most kindly took me to see the graves. He also lent me resource material which I lacked. Then there are four very important email contacts who have assisted. Ken Hallock of the USA has, as usual, come up with a wealth of material from his immense collection of newspapers, articles and access to relevant documents. Andre van Rensburg and Craig Wilcox in Australia have come up with a lot of material on the Australian and New Zealand casualties, while Kevin Asplin has provided confirmation of details of those in the Imperial Yeomanry. Then there are the many members of staff of the National Archives of Zimbabwe. Their help is, as usual, invaluable.

[2] A S Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, Rhodesian Army, Salisbury 1975, 195-204.

[3] R S Burrett, 'Events in the Second Anglo-South African War, 1899-1902, in the wider Tuli Area, Zimbabwe-Botswana', *Heritage* no. 18; A S Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 1, Rhodesian Army, Salisbury 1970; P Millington & R S Burrett, 'Action at Crocodile Pools during the Anglo-South African War and the death of Captain Sampson French', *Botswana Notes & Records*, in press.

The imperial government realised the need for additional defensive measures in Rhodesia. It also appreciated that by maintaining an aggressive force on this northern frontier of the Boer republics it was possible to divide Boer attention and resources and assist British actions to the south. It was therefore decided by the War Office that a number of troops then due to arrive in southern Africa should be diverted to this theatre of war. This would involve them having to disembark at Beira in Portuguese East Africa (now Mozambique), travel along the railway to Salisbury (now Harare), then use wagons to reach Bulawayo from where they could be deployed in South Africa.

It was appreciated from the start that this deployment would be no easy task. Firstly there were the immense difficulties of trying to getting the troops and associated horses and armaments through Portuguese East Africa since Lisbon was trying to maintain a strictly neutral position in the conflict. Then the arrivals would have to acclimatise, and the different units would have to be trained and unified as one effective fighting force before they could move to the front.

It was decided that the unit would be called the Rhodesian Field Force (RFF) and that it would be a combination of imperial and colonial troops. The discipline and training of several squadrons of Imperial Yeomanry from Britain, and the determination and experience of similar terrain of the Australian and New Zealand contingents, was thought to a good combination. The latter included both Citizens' Bushmen, who were raised by public subscription, as well as Imperial Bushmen, who were raised by colonial governments as an act of imperial solidarity.[4] The RFF was placed under the command of Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Carrington, who had experience of colonial wars in southern Africa.[5]

To prevent drawing attention to themselves in a neutral country, the various squadrons that would make up the RFF arrived in separate, small groups at Beira from April to August 1900. They travelled by rail from Beira to a camp in the Pungwe swamps called '75 Mile Peg' (now Gondola), then moved to Bamboo Creek (now Vila Machado), a deathly hollow acknowledged by locals as a particularly sickly location. From there they travelled to Umtali (now Mutare) where, on reaching Rhodesian territory, they were able to receive improved medical care and rest. It would seem that many now succumbed to the ailments which they had contracted in passing through Mozambique, their condition being exacerbated by malnutrition. Those who recovered (almost all were sick at one time or another[6]) were then sent on to the main RFF base and training camp at Marandellas. After training the different squadrons there, they were assigned to RFF brigades, though the organisation very much reflected former unit groupings.

1st Brigade consisted entirely of citizen funded Australians.[7] They arrived in small parties and, after training in Marandellas, were dispatched south in sections from 11 to 20 May 1900, arriving in Bulawayo late May to early June.[8] 2nd Brigade consisted mainly of New Zealanders with some Australians.[9] They left Marandellas on 14 June, reaching Bulawayo on 8 July. Remaining troops who now arrived were not brigaded. These consisted of the 17th and 18th Battalions Imperial Yeomanry, who arrived in groups throughout June and early July. As part of their purpose in controlling African aspirations, on 16 July a small section of the Yeomanry was

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4 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 217.
5 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 161-2.
6 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 271.
7 1st Regiment being 500 New South Wales Citizens' Bushmen; 2nd Regiment 120 South Australian and 55 Tasmanian Bushmen, as well as 300 Queensland Bushmen; 3rd Regiment consisted of 250 Victorian and 125 West Australian Bushmen.
8 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 216-9.
9 4th Regiment being New Zealand Citizens' Bushmen; 5th Regiment New Zealand Imperial Bushmen; 6th Regiment consisted of New South Wales' Imperial Bushmen.

ordered to northern Mashonaland to attack Chief Mapondera, who was leading a successful revolt against British South Africa Company's occupation. Although the area was rather remote at the time, and the revolt was no real threat, it was felt that an example had to made of Mapondera to prevent his rebellious activities spreading throughout the country. After this action these troops finally departed for Bulawayo in late August, about the time a troop of Victorian Imperial Bushmen arrived at Marandellas.[10]

The movement of men to Bulawayo involved a twenty-day journey either on foot or in overcrowded mule coaches hired from the Zeederberg Company by the British South Africa Company – the latter 'luxury' being reserved for the officer classes. Regardless of the mode, the transfer was via Fort Charter, Enkeldoorn, Umvuma, Iron Mine Hill, Gwelo and thence to Bulawayo. Here the RFF was further divided into several small units. A very small minority travelled by rail directly southward to join the conflict there, and ultimately participated in the relief of Mafeking on 16 May 1900. The vast majority, however, were sent on futile chases and additional training camps in the Fort Victoria, Gwanda and Fort Tuli areas to discourage both African and Boer insurrection. At each of these locations men died of disease exacerbated by exhaustion.

Later, some members of the RFF crossed into the northern Transvaal where they saw action associated with the siege and attempted relief of the Elands River depot, but in truth most of their time was spent traversing and training in neutral or Anglophile territory. This led to considerable debate in some circles in London who described the RFF as a grandiose waste of time, if not a totally liable misuse of manpower.[11] As a result the War Office ordered some of the squadrons to the Cape Colony while by December 1900 the RFF had been disbanded and Carrington was ordered home into retirement.[12]

Parade cemetery, Marondera

The cemetery lies on the north side of Loquat Grove, and remains undeveloped although residential growth is encroaching rapidly.[13] It has been well looked after by the municipality, which ensures it is kept tidy and the plaques are periodically repainted. There are three rows of graves, two of which are of interest here (the third has a single, more recent grave dating from 1935 and lies at the back of the group).

Hickman's report

After reading Sharrad Gilbert's 1901 descriptions of the Marandellas camp in his book *Rhodesia and After: the story of the Sharpshooters*, Colonel Hickman tried in 1971 to trace it. He found it had been obliterated by time – not surprisingly, as most of it was temporary tented accommodation. However, he did record the relevant cemetery in *Rhodesia Served the Queen*.[14] Since then his work has been taken as definitive. Little investigation has been done since, either to extend his work or question his conclusions.

Essentially, Hickman generally accepted that the grave plaques in Paradeise cemetery were correct, although he did suggest that one, Trooper Studdart's, required investigation. He was also able to change some of the details given for one of the Imperial Yeomanry by using Gilbert's

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10 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol 2, 205-220, 271-273.
11 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol 2; Public Record Office WO 32/7944. Hickman provides a comprehensive record of the movements of this Force and readers who are lucky enough to have access to this book should read his work.
12 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol 2, 157-220.
13 Map reference 1831B1:449876.
14 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol 2, 202-4.

book.[15] (It is disconcerting that he does this within the text without comment, while on the map of the cemetery published alongside he leaves it unaltered.) Several graves remained unidentified, although one had a tantalising fragment, while a couple of others clearly had dating errors. After seeing the cemetery for myself, I decided that these challenges required further investigation.

A history of the site

The markers on graves 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 are typical circular cast iron markers which were erected by the Rhodesian branch of the Guild of Loyal Women before 1908, although their final dedication took place on 26 March 1910, the eighth anniversary of Cecil Rhodes' death. The markers were cast in Cape Town by the firm of Gregory, which had the contract for similar memorials across South Africa. Those with dates before the death of Queen Victoria are inscribed 'For Queen & Empire', while two with more recent dates are inscribed 'For King & Empire'. Once cast they were dispatched to the Guild's office in Salisbury at reduced rail charges courtesy of the then Administrator of Rhodesia, Sir William Milton.[16] Following the lead of their South African branch counterparts, the Rhodesian branch of the Guild worked on locating and marking the graves of those who 'fell in the late War'. Once this was completed by 1908 the branch turned their attention to other early settler graves.[17] They were a town-based organisation reliant on reports received from the rural police as to who was buried where and when. Their information must therefore be viewed as a secondary source, with all the problems this entails. It probably accounts for many errors and omissions associated with these markers.

In the drama of the South African War many men, especially those from foreign soil, fell in action or died of disease but their details were poorly documented. Local people did not know them, while imperial military records were unreliable. The official South African Field Force casualty list is a case in point. Research relating to similar graves elsewhere in southern Africa indicates sloppy recording – names were often spelt wrongly, initials confused, and individuals were mixed up – while many others are missing from their records entirely. Even the local administrative records which were kept by the British South Africa Company are faulty. As will be shown later, many individuals were missed in official death registers.[18]

This dearth of reliable information is especially the case in Marondera. During the war the town hardly existed. There were a few stores around the recently established railway station and refuelling point, but there no significant civilian population. The imperial authorities had in fact chosen this site exactly because of its lack of civilian distractions, along with its being the head of the most direct wagon route south from the then Mashonaland to Bulawayo – the railway had not yet joined Salisbury and Bulawayo.[19]

Since the local population was very small the identities of the deceased, when recorded by British South African Police some years after the war, had often been forgotten, and misinterpretations were made. Compounding this source of error was the relative sloppiness of the grave marker manufacturer, who made additional mistakes when casting the markers, and

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15 S H Gilbert, *Rhodesia and After: the story of the Sharpshooters*, Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co, London, 1901.

16 National Archives of Zimbabwe, Historical Manuscripts Collection, GU 1/1/1 (general correspondence, Guild of Loyal Women, Salisbury Branch).

17 National Archives of Zimbabwe, Historical Manuscripts Collection, GU 1/2/1 (graves fund correspondence, Guild of Loyal Women, Salisbury Branch).

18 National Archives of Zimbabwe, Public Archives Pre 1923 Collection, JG 7/1/6-8 (Attorney-General's Office, death register files).

19 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 196.

errors made by the police when they placed the markers on the graves on behalf of the Guild.[20] All of this makes for an interesting investigation.

Initial observations

Before beginning research on the graves I was struck by several things. Grave 6 is the particularly early one, said to be that of Trooper Studdart who died in March 1897. Clearly this marker is incorrect, and I agree with Hickman's hunch.[21] Marondera as we know it today did not exist at that time. The main European settlement was some distance south at the Ruzawi Drift, where Bottomley, Head and Moore had constructed a store and hotel in 1893. Nearby were all the related European administrative offices.[22] This settlement now lies at the centre of Ruzawi Diocesan School where a remaining corner of the original building can be seen near the front door of the main block.[23] A graveyard associated with this earlier settlement also exists in the school grounds and has been subject to investigation by R. Hodder-Williams.[24]

So at the time of Studdart's death in 1897 the Paradise cemetery was still virgin bush, with the site of Marondera's kraal[25] being closer to the modern high density suburb of Dombotombo, which lies to the north of the main Harare road. Why, then, was Trooper Studdart buried here, and not with the others who died in the 1896-7 uprising and buried at Ruzawi? Trooper J H Stoddart (note the spelling error on the plaque) was killed in action at Soswe's kraal south-east of the Ruzawi Drift. If he was brought to the Paradise cemetery, his bearers would passed the existing cemetery at Ruzawi and carried on about six kilometres to an area of isolated woodland just to bury him. This seems unlikely. Clearly an error has been made in marking him here. Like Hodder-Williams,[26] I suspect that Studdart should be in the graveyard at Ruzawi School. As the last to be buried there, his name was probably at the end of the list for that cemetery. When transmitting this information to the Guild of Loyal Women his name was incorrectly placed at the top of this list – an understandable error, since both cemeteries are in the Marondera area. Thus when the police placed the memorials the plaque was placed here. This conclusion frees this grave for someone who in fact died in the South African War.

The second problem concerns the markings on graves 2 and 7. The former has a typical Guild of Loyal Women marker, with the name and date 'Tpr J Kelly, Vict. Imp. Bushm. -/10/1900', while the latter has a home-made but iron marker with the name and date 'J Kiley, VIB, 13/10/1900, RIP'. I suspect that these represent one and the same person, and I disagree with Hickman who took them to be two people.[27] They are certainly in the same unit, and the spelling is so similar that an error in marking the two graves seems likely. This is supported by an early, but undated, report which names the graves but includes only one Kelly.[28] Why two markers? Possibly that for grave 7 is the original, made and erected by his companions. His name was later mentioned to the Guild of Loyal Women who, not knowing there was one already present, manufactured another marker which was then placed on the grave – there is evidence of this happening at other cemeteries. In time the markers have been separated to two different graves. However, the shift is

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20 National Archives of Zimbabwe, GU 1/1/1.
21 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 204.
22 Map reference 1831B1:473834.
23 R S Burrett, 'The Selous Road, Ballyhooley Hotel, and the Ruwa and Goromonzi Districts', *Heritage*, no. 17.
24 R Hodder-Williams, 'The Graveyard at Old Marandellas', *Rhodesiana*, no. 21, 1969, 10-18.
25 Established by a minor subchief of the Svosve Dynasty who was exiled from the core of their territory; see D N Beach, *A Zimbabwean Past*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1994.
26 Hodder-Williams, 'The Graveyard at Old Marandellas', 15.
27 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 202-4.
28 National Archives of Zimbabwe, Public Archives Pre 1923 Collection, A 9/1/1 (Administrator's Office, register of graves).

slight, and clearly either grave 2 or 7 is correct and not both. This releases yet another grave for identification.

The third problem is manufacturer error. Given that these graves are supposed to be of members of the RFF, Captain Hamilton's date of death, 1901, and Private Davis', 1906, are too late as the force had been disbanded by then. The original list which was probably the basis of the Guild's work gets the dates correct,[29] so the error must have been made by the manufacturer. In the Guild's correspondence there is evidence of errors being noted and replacement markers being requested from Gregory.[30] However these, like others seen elsewhere in the country, seem to have slipped through. It should be noted that the manufacturer corrected the reigning sovereign on these plaques to that applicable at the wrong date of death and that Hickman incorrectly gives the date of Davis' death as 16 July 1900, a typographical error for 26 July.[31]

Another important point to note is that graves 3, 4 and 5 are in fact in correct chronological sequence when looking at casualty dates. This would be expected in a military camp, where everything would be relatively well organised especially matters concerning death and burial.

The graves have been tided up over the years. The original piles of stone which would have covered the graves, evident from contemporary examples seen elsewhere, have long since been removed. Some of these stones are to be seen to the south of the cemetery outside the original fence. In their place someone has placed cement curbstones and laid a surface of granite chips over the top. I am confident that in doing so they have not destroyed or added any graves, though that may have happened. It also poses the question as to whether the markers were returned to their correct places. I am assuming here that they were, with the exception of the double Kelly-Kiley whose separation of the two grave markers may date from this period.

A last point to consider is that the fence around the graves is old, based on the type of uprights manufactured by A & J Main Company in Glasgow. These mark the gate and the four corners of the original plain wire fence and must predate the 1935 grave, which shows that the original fence was cut to allow this additional grave to be enclosed in a fencing style very different to the earlier enclosure. The original fence was probably erected by the British South Africa Company Administration, which agreed to do this across the country once the Guild of Loyal Women had marked the graves.[32]

Identifying the graves

Having looked at the site, my next step was to try and establish who died here in Marondera, why they died, and when. Sourcing this information has not been that easy, and I have to admit that I am far from satisfied with the details I have at this stage. My initial source was the work of Hickman,[33] who gives the casualty details of the Imperial Yeomanry published by one of their number, Sharrad Gilbert. Going through this list one finds reference to Private Davis and Trooper Armstrong. However, it also gives one additional name, Private Shaw, while confirming others who died elsewhere in the country. After this I placed a note requesting help on the Anglo-Boer War Email List. From the replies received I was able to gather several additional names and dates, but not all of these reports match. If only history was a simple matter of putting things together! The following lists are relevant to all Zimbabwe, not only the Marondera graves, and numbers following some of the names are regimental numbers.

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29 National Archives of Zimbabwe, A9/1/1.
30 National Archives of Zimbabwe, GU 1/1/1.
31 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 202.
32 National Archives of Zimbabwe, GU 1/1/1.
33 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 213-214.

List 1: South African Field Force casualty list

From the official *South African Field Force Casualty List for the Imperial Troops and Imperial Yeomanry* the following are indicated as having died at Marandellas. All are listed as 'Died of Disease' except where indicated. The relevant page reference follows each entry.

Captain H C W Hamilton, 12 May 1900, Queensland Mounted Infantry (p 134);

Sergeant H Brent (384), killed in railway accident, 15 May 1900, Victorian Bushmen (p 135);

Quartermaster Sergeant J N Walton (275), 21 May 1900, New South Wales Bushmen (p 132);

Private J C Swan (584), 26 May 1900, Victorian Mounted Rifles (p 135);

Private E R Apps (12468), 29 May 1900, 18th Imperial Yeomanry (p 27);

Private Stone (11289), 5 June 1900, 17th Imperial Yeomanry (p 27);

Private D Carron, (11088), 5 June 1900, 17th Imperial Yeomanry (p 27);

Private A E Shaw (12449), 7 June 1900, 18th Imperial Yeomanry (p 27);

Private J Brookes (12071), 9 June 1900, 17th Imperial Yeomanry (p 27);

Private J Hinton (12710), 10 June 1900, 18th Imperial Yeomanry (p 27);

Private B C Franklin (11622), 12 June 1900, 17th Imperial Yeomanry (p 27);

Private H C Blackden (4684), 12 June 1900, 17th Imperial Yeomanry (p 27);

Private J McCann (11300), 12 June 1900, 17th Imperial Yeomanry (p 27);

Private J B Bloomfield (4697), 12 June 1900, 17th Imperial Yeomanry (p 27);

Private F Saxon (1335), 19 June 1900, New Zealand Rough Riders (p 133);

Private D F McIntosh (1125), 3 July 1900, New Zealand Bushmen (p 133);

Lieutenant H Andrew, 9 July 1900, 18th Imperial Yeomanry (p 27);

Private S E Davis (4701), 25 July 1900, 17th Imperial Yeomanry (p.27);

Private G W N Stevens, died of exhaustion, 29 July 1900, Rhodesian Regiment (p 154).

Under Enkeldoorn the following appears:

Sergeant R Kelby (440), died of disease, 3 July 1900, New South Wales Bushmen (p.132).

List 2: London *Times* reports

From London *Times* reports the following persons are indicated as having died while with the RFF.

9 June 1900, p. 12, col. 1, 'Deaths From Disease – Marandellas': Trooper G F Shaw (12449), 29 May 1900, 67th Company (Sharpshooters) Imperial Yeomanry; Quartermaster Sergeant J N Walton (275), 22 May 1900; J C Swan (584), 26 May 1900, Victorian Contingent.

19 June 1900, p. 11, col. 2, 'General Carrington's Force': 'The following report from General Carrington at Marandellas has been received at the War Office: The following deaths have occurred, all from malaria and dysentery:

67th Co. Imperial Yeomanry. – 12468 Pte E R Apps, May 29;

61st Co. Imperial Yeomanry. – 11289 Pte Stone, June 5;

60th Co. Imperial Yeomanry. – 11088 Saddler D McCarron. June 5;

75th Co. Imperial Yeomanry. – 15507 Tpr A E Shaw, malaria, June 7.

The following deaths are reported from Umtali:

65th Co. Imperial Yeomanry. – 12071 Pte J Brook, dysentery, June 9;

71st Co. Imperial Yeomanry. – 12710 Pte J Hinton, dysentery, June 10;

61st Co. Imperial Yeomanry. – 11262 Pte D C Franklin, dysentery, June 12;

17th Bn. Imperial Yeomanry. – 11300 Pte J McCann, dysentery, June 12;

71st Co. Imperial Yeomanry. – 12738 Pte A Pugh, malaria, June 8;

50th Co. Imperial Yeomanry. – 4684 Pte H C Blackden, dysentery, June 12;

4693 Pte J B Bloomfield, fever and sunstroke, June 12.'

22 June 1900, p. 14, col. 4: 'Sir F Carrington reports from Marandellas that 4697 Tpr F H Burken, 50th Co. Imperial Yeomanry, died at Umtali, June 16, from dysentery and malaria.'

26 June, p. 6, col. 1, 'Beira': '4th New Zealand Mounted Infantry, – 1355 Pte F Saxon, malaria, died June 19'.

28 June 1900, p. 12, col. 2, 'Umtali': '67th Co. Imperial Yeomanry. – 12469 Pte A Dunne, dysentery, died June 24'.

List 3: Australian War Graves 1

A search of the website of the Heraldry and Genealogy Society of Canberra's Australian war graves database (http://www.hagsoc.org.au/sagraves/) yielded the following:

Trooper W Myers (46), died on service at Umtali, 25 April 1900, New South Wales Citizens' Bushmen;

Captain H C W Hamilton, died of disease at Marandellas, 12 May 1900, Queensland Mounted Infantry;

Sergeant H Brent (384), died on service at Marandellas, 15 May 1900, Third Victorian Bushmen;

Quartermaster Sergeant J N Walton (275), died of disease at Marandellas, 21 May 1900, New South Wales Citizens' Bushmen;

Private J C Swan (584), died of disease at Marandellas, 26 May 1900, Third Victorian (Bushmen's) Contingent;

Private E A Hambly (75), died of disease at Bulawayo, 26 June 1900, Third West Australian Bushmen;

Trooper McPhee (67), died of disease at Bulawayo, 2 July 1900, Third West Australian Bushmen;

Sergeant R Kelby or Kelly (440), died of disease at Enkeldoorn, 3 July 1900, New South Wales Imperial Bushmen;

Nursing Sister F E Hines, died of disease at Bulawayo, 7 August 1900. Attached to First Victorian Contingent;

Private T B Foster (367), on service, no date nor place listed, Fourth Victorian Bushmen;

Private J Kiley (418), on service, no date nor place listed, Fourth Victorian Bushmen.

List 4: Australian War Graves 2

Another internet connection, the official Australian government website dealing with the South African War (http://www.pcug.org.au/~croe/oz_boer0.htm) gives the following Australian war dead. It appears based largely on Pembroke Murray's 1911 book *Official Records of the*

Australian Military Contingents to the War in South Africa. In referring back to this original source Mr Craig Wilcox from Australia has provided me with the full Christian names of the deceased. Page references at the end of each entry refer to the pages in Murray's book.

Sergeant Walter Myers (46), cause not listed at Umtali, 24 April 1900, New South Wales Citizens' Bushmen (p. 83);

[Captain H C W Hamilton not listed];

Sergeant Herbert Brent (384), rail accident at Mandigras (sic), 14 May 1900, Third Victorian Bushmen (p. 245);

Quartermaster Sergeant John Nathaniel Walton (275), cause not listed at Iron Mine Hill, 22 May 1900, New South Wales Citizens' Bushmen (p. 80);

Private John Campbell Duncan McPherson Swan (584), died of malaria at Marandellas, 28 May 1900, Third Victorian Bushmen (p. 250);

Private Edgar Anthony Hambly (75), died of disease at Bulawayo, 26 June 1900, Third West Australian Bushmen;

Private William John McPhee (67), died of anaesthetic at Bulawayo, 2 July 1900, Third West Australian Bushmen (p. 412);

Sergeant Robert Kelly (440), no cause given at Enkeldoorn, 3 July 1900, New South Wales Imperial Bushmen (p. 94);

Nursing Sister Frances Emma Hines, died of pneumonia at Bulawayo, 7 August 1900. Attached to Third Victorian Contingent (p. 241);

Private Thomas Barnam Foster (367), of enteric fever at Umtali, 22 August 1900. Fourth Victorian Imperial Bushmen (p. 268);

Private John Kiley (418), of pneumonia at Marandellas, 13 October 1900. Fourth Victorian Bushmen (p. 94).

List 5: Contemporary death registers, National Archives of Zimbabwe

These (JG 7/1/6-8) are the official Southern Rhodesian death registers of the period. They were compiled from reports periodically sent to the Registrar in Salisbury from various outstations. The main towns are better covered, and it is clear that smaller outstations such as Marandellas, Umtali and Enkeldoorn (which matter in this discussion) frequently 'forgot' to report the deaths of the 'outsiders' passing through Rhodesian territory towards South Africa. Despite searching for all the possible names of those known from other sources to have died while serving in the RFF within this country, very few were located. Those that do appear include:

Quartermaster Sergeant John N Walton or Wolton, 21 May 1900, Iron Mine Hill of cerebral congentitus and malaria (JG 7/1/7/35);

Trooper John C Swan, 26 May 1900, Goldfields Hotel Umtali from carbonic acid poisoning administered by deceased while insane,[34] Victorian Bushmen (JG 7/1/6/359);

Donald Frazer MacIntosh, 4 June 1900, Umtali from dysentery, New Zealand Bushmen and RFF (JG 7/1/7/4);

James Stone, 5 June 1900, Umtali from malaria, Imperial Yeomanry (JG 7/1/7/9);

Hugh Chalfont Blackden, 11 June 1900, Umtali from acute septic pharyingtis, Imperial Yeomanry (JG 7/1/7/10);

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[34] Possibly fever-induced?

Edgar Hambly, 26 June 1900, Bulawayo from malaria, West Australian Bushmen (JG 7/1/7/27);

William John McPhee, 2 July 1900, Bulawayo from cardiac failure, West Australian Bushmen (JG 7/1/7/47);

Captain H C W Hamilton, 8 July 1900, Marandellas, Queensland Artillery (JG 7/1/7/130A);

Lieutenant Harry Andrew, 8 July 1900, Salisbury from dysentery, Sharpshooters (JG 7/1/7/35);

Private F E Davis, 25 July 1900, Marandellas, 50th Squadron Imperial Yeomanry (JG 7/1/7/131);

Private G W N Stevens, 28 July 1900, Marandellas, Voluntary Medical Service Corps and RFF Hospital (JG 7/1/7/132);

Frances Emma Hines, 7 August 1900, Bulawayo from pneumonia, nurse RFF (JG 7/1/7/69);

Private Thomas Barham Foster (367), 22 August 1900, Umtali from enteric, Australian Contingent (JG 7/1/7/88);

F J Madden, 13 October 1900, Gwanda from pneumonia and cardiac failure, Imperial Yeomanry (JG 7/1/7/43).

List 6: Rhodesian Field Force casualty ,ist

The following list, which appears in Sharrad Gilbert's *Rhodesia and After,* is reprinted in Hickman's book.[35] It covers those who died of sickness while serving with the Imperial Yeomanry. Only those relevant to the discussion here are included. Additional details, mostly Christian names, have been added courtesy of Mr Kevin Asplin, a researcher in the United Kingdom with interests in the history of the Yeomanry. His data are derived from the Queen's South African Medal roll and relevant War Office files (WO 128).[36] There are no differences in the surnames, service numbers and casualty figures – so Gilbert's original list must be reliable.

50th Squadron Hampshire Yeomanry:

Trooper Hugh Chalfont Blackden (4684), 12 June 1900, died Umtali of dysentery;

Trooper John B. Bloomfield (4693), 12 June 1900, died Umtali of fever and sunstroke;

Trooper Frederick Henry Burden (4697) 16 June 1900, died Umtali from dysentery and malaria;

Trooper Sidney Edward Davis (4710), 26 July 1900, died Marandellas from blood poisoning.

60th Squadron North Irish Imperial Yeomanry:

Saddler Daniel McCarron, (11088), 5 June 1900, died Umtali from dysentery and malaria;

Trooper Thomas Austin (11084), 24 August 1900, died Enkeldoorn from dysentery.

61st Squadron South Irish Imperial Yeomanry:

Trooper Denham C Franklin (11212), 5 June 1900, died Umtali from dysentery;

Trooper James Stone (11289), 12 June 1900, died Umtali from dysentery;

Trooper Joseph Matthew McCann (11300), 12 June 1900, died Umtali from dysentery;

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[35] Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 213-5.
[36] K. Asplin, emails to author, 6 and 8 April 2000.

Trooper Thomas G B Armstrong (11254), 7 August 1900, died Marandellas from meningitis;

Trooper Frederick Joseph Madden (11242), 18 October 1900, died Gwanda from pneumonia;

Trooper Thomas Millar (11311), 9 February 1901, died Bulawayo from enteric.

65th Squadron Leicestershire Imperial Yeomanry:

Trooper John Roper Brooker (12071), 9 June 1900, died Umtali from dysentery.

67th Squadron Sharpshooters Imperial Yeomanry:

Trooper Edward Russell Apps (12468), 29 May 1900, at Bamboo Creek (Mozambique on the Pungwe Flats) from malaria and dysentery;

Trooper George Frederick Shaw (12449), 29 May 1900, at Bamboo Creek from enteric;

Trooper Alfred John Dunne (12469), 24 June 1900, at Umtali from dysentery;

Trooper Charles Olney (12498), 28 October 1900, at Fort Victoria from enteric.

70th Squadron Sharpshooters Imperial Yeomanry:

Lieutenant Harry Andrew 9 July 1900, at Salisbury from dysentery;

Trooper Bennet Grey (12580), 15 October 1900, at Fort Victoria from enteric;

Trooper Patrick B Russell (12612), 3 December 1900, at Tuli from enteric.

71st Squadron Sharpshooters Imperial Yeomanry:

Trooper Albert James Pugh (12738), 8 May 1900, at Umtali from malaria;

Trooper John Hinton, (12710), 10 June 1900, at Umtali from dysentery;

Trooper Walter Stanley Peck (12793), 25 October 1900, at Fort Victoria from enteric;

Trooper Arthur Victor Lloyd (12784), 28 December 1900, at Bulawayo from enteric.

75th Squadron Sharpshooters Imperial Yeomanry:

Trooper Albert Edward Shaw (15507), 7 June 1900, died Marandellas from malaria.

List 7: Hickman's *Rhodesia served the Queen*

Hickman was able to access several personal diaries and books not easy available here in Zimbabwe. Some of these have additional references – the page indicated is that of the second, 1975 volume of Hickman's *Rhodesia served the Queen*.

p. 165: by mid June 1900 there had already been 22 deaths.

pp. 173, 194: Bamboo Creek on the Pungwe flats. The small existing cemetery had three men added. Gilbert names two of these as Trooper E R Apps (12468), 29 May 1900 of malaria and dysentery, and Trooper G F Shaw (12449), 29 May 1900 of enteric.

pp. 202-4 records the cemetery as follows:

Tpr T G B Armstrong, 7 August 1900, 61st South Irish Imperial Yeomanry no. 11254, meningitis;

Pte G Stevens, 29 July 1900, Medical Staff;

Tpr S E Davis, 16 July 1900, 50th Hampshire Imperial Yeomanry no. 14710, blood poisoning;

Tpr J Kelly, October 1900, Victoria Imperial Bushmen;

Capt. Hamilton, 12 July 1901, Queensland Artillery;

'Tpr ----eyd', 20 July 1900, Imperial Yeomanry;

(Tpr) J Kiley, 13 October 1900, Victoria Imperial Bushmen;

Studdart, March 1897. 'This burial seems to be completely out of place and requires further research'.

p. 220: Quarter Master Sergeant John Wolton died at Iron Mine Hill after falling unconscious in the wagon, date not clear but must be about evening of 21 or early 22 May 1900. He had been ill since leaving Marandellas. Was buried there and Hickman did not relocate this grave.

List 8: Administrator's Office list of graves, National Archives of Zimbabwe

This list (A9/1/1) gives a number of identified (presumably by local British South Africa Police) graves of early settlers and South African War casualties in their areas of jurisdiction. It was clearly used by the Guild of Loyal Women as the basis of their orders for markers from the manufacturer in Cape Town. Unfortunately it does not mention how the names were obtained where there was no previous marker or remains thereof – perhaps oral tradition, with all its inherent problems. Recorded under Marandellas we have six marked graves:

Studdart, March 1897, no cross, killed in action;

Cpt Hamilton (Queensland Artillery), 12 July 1900, killed in action. Wooden cross and zinc name plate.

Tpr Kelly (Victoria Imperial Bushmen), 25 July 1900, wooden cross, zinc name plate. The date has been later changed crossing out the day totally and changing the month to October.[37]

Tpr Sydney Davies (30th Imperial Yeomanry), 25 July 1900, wooden cross, zinc name plate, wood damaged by ants.

Pvt G H N Stevens (Medical Staff), 29 July 1900, wooden cross damaged by ants, zinc name plate.

Tpr C B Armstrong (61st Imperial Yeomanry), 7 August 1900, wooden cross damaged by ants, zinc name plate.

List 9: National Archives of Australia, Canberra repository

Craig Wilcox located the following references from this collection which are relevant to the Australians who died in this country while serving with the RFF.

Series A6443, file 392

Report of Captain Dobbin (Victoria Bushmen) to Hon. Minister of Defence Victoria. Dated 17 May 1900 written from Marandellas. 'We've been joined with the West Australians in the 3rd Australian Bushmen's Regiment and leave tomorrow by road for Bulawayo. Sergeant Brent was killed on 14th April in a rail accident. The weak point of the rail being the inability or inebrity of the engine crews. He drove the engine for several hours after the drivers declared themselves incapable of doing so but the delay caused by the change-over and the slow pace caused the following train to collide and Brent was knocked off the engine

[37] This entry is suspect.

and fell under it. His right arm was severed and head fearfully smashed. He was buried at Umtali with full military honours.'

Series A6443, file 397

Report of Major William Dobbin (OC Victoria Bushmen) to Hon. Minister of Defence Victoria. Dated 10 October 1900 written from Daasport near Pretoria. 'Wrote to PMO Bulawayo to say that the Bushmen desired ... to erect a memorial stone to Sister Hines. No reply yet, but Sister Rawson writes from Mafeking that she thinks this has already been done. Hines was beloved by all.'

So who is where?

Much of the above seems terribly contradictory. The main problem arises from the fact that the official reports of the deaths often came from RFF headquarters at Marandellas rather than the place where the individual died and was buried. The *South African Field Force Casualty List* and many of the newspaper reports of the time were particularly prone to this source of error. In addition, their records are often in error as to date of death as opposed to burial, individuals are often confused, and poor transmission via several telegraphic systems often resulted in additional errors. Thus Lists 1 and 2 must be treated with extreme circumspection and only used where there are no alternative sources. Likewise the Australian War Graves List 3 is suspect since, I believe, it derives its information largely from the *South African Field Force Casualty List.*

A more reliable source is List 4, based on the contemporary work of Pembroke Murray. In fact an Australian contact suggests that since 'not all listings reconcile, I'd probably use Murray except where evidence and records on the spot differed'.[38] The letters in List 9 also provide valuable and reliable information. Of particular importance here is the letter which clearly indicates that Brent was buried in Umtali and not Marandellas as most records indicate – another example of reporting from the RFF headquarters being erroneously taken as place of death.

The official death registers from the National Archives of Zimbabwe (List 5), while incomplete, are probably essentially correct for those mentioned (other than the date of Hamilton's death, discussed below). I also feel we can accept as correct the list of imperial yeomen as published by Gilbert (List 6). He was able to provide additional detail about the campaign as a whole, and I suspect that he kept a diary which he drew on when writing his book. His details are also corroborated by the work of a more recent researcher, Kevin Asplin, who has been going through the War Office records of these men.[39] The Guild of Loyal Women record of the graves as they where marked in 1908 (List 8) generally supports the conclusions with regard the Marandellas graves, although some errors in dates and spellings are evident. This may result from badly corroded original markers, which the recorder found difficult to decipher. I have found a similar problem with original rusty metal sheets at Fort Tuli Cemetery.

If we combine these lists, correcting dates, causes and places in the light of the data base as a whole, it would seem that the RFF dead were buried as follows, in order of geographical location from Beira to the Transvaal:

Bamboo Creek (now Vila Machado on the '61 mile peg' of the railway in Mozambique), two graves: Apps (dysentery and malaria); G F Shaw (enteric fever).

Umtali (now Mutare), sixteen graves: Blackden (dysentery); Bloomfield (malaria and sunstroke); Brent (rail accident); Brooker (dysentery); Burden (dysentery and malaria);

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[38] C Wilcox, letter to author, 24 May 2000.
[39] Asplin, emails to author, 6 and 8 April 2000.

Dunne (dysentery); Foster (enteric fever); Franklin (dysentery); Hinton (dysentery); McIntosh (dysentery); McCann (dysentery); McCarron (dysentery); Myers (dysentery); Pugh (malaria); Stone (dysentery and malaria); Swan (suicide).

Marandellas (now Marondera), seven graves: Armstrong (meningitis); Davis (blood poisoning); Hamilton (unknown); J Kiley (pneumonia); Saxon (malaria); A E Shaw (malaria); Stevens (exhaustion).

Salisbury (now Harare), one grave: Andrew (dysentery).

Enkeldoorn (now Chivhu), two graves: Austin (dysentery); R Kelly (unknown).

Iron Mine Hill (no settlement today, closest present village is Lalapanzi), one grave: Walton (not Wolton) (malaria). Site of cemetery remains unknown.[40]

Bulawayo, five graves: Lloyd (enteric fever); Hambly (malaria); Hines (pneumonia); McPhee (heart failure); Millar (enteric fever).

Gwanda, one grave: Madden (pneumonia).

Fort Victoria (now Masvingo), three graves: Grey (enteric fever); Olney (enteric fever); Peck (enteric fever).

Fort Tuli, one grave: Russell (enteric fever).

The 39 deaths counted here – including thirteen from dysentery, eight from enteric fever, six from malaria, and none from combat – illustrate the shameful loss of life from avoidable causes during the campaign, and suggest the liability of the imperial authorities.

The Marondera graves

From all this we see that we have seven people who were official war casualties in Marondera and who should be buried here. That we have nine graves is a problem. I am going to stick my neck out and suggest that two are not war graves but civilian ones added to the existing cemetery some time, not too long, after the military left. These I believe to be graves 8 and 9. Grave 8 is marked with a slab of granite which must have once borne a name. However, more recently it has been painted silver and no trace of the original name remains. Grave 9 has a tin plate cut into the shape of a heart which is now nailed to a cabbage tree at the head of the grave. This sheet has been repainted many times and is no longer decipherable. However, Hickman noted in 1971 that 'Trooper ----eyd IY, 20/7/00' was still discernible, while I can make out today 'Trooper ...D... July .....'. This is a problem. No additional, and unaccounted for, trooper died on this date. I wonder if the date was not clear and Hickman was in error in reading it? I also wonder if it really came from this grave, and would postulate that this is one of the few remaining 'zinc plates' recorded as being on the since-named graves before the Guild of Loyal Women had the cast plaques erected. The vague similarity in date with that of Davis, and the end of his Christian name Sydney with the letter 'D', actually indicating date of death which follows, suggests to me that this plaque does not in fact belong here but should be on grave 3. That it is now nailed (and was in 1971) to a cabbage tree, a relatively short-lived species, supports the view that it may be a more recent mismarking.

This leaves me graves 1 to 7 for the seven people identified earlier. Five, I am sure, have been correctly named, even if the present plaques make spelling and date errors. The remaining two

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[40] Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 220.

unmarked graves can, I think, be fitted in if one remembers that in a military establishment there would have been some degree of order in burial. On this basis that I suggest the following.

Grave 1. Certainly this can be identified as Captain H C W Hamilton, 2nd Regiment 1st Brigade RFF and Queensland Mounted Infantry, first to be buried here in this cemetery and whose grave thereafter sets the order. There is some problem with the date of death. The present plaque gives 12 July 1901. However most of the Australians involved had returned home by this date, and it is likely that this is a manufacturer error as the original Guild of Loyal Women's list gives 1900 and the death register gives 8 July 1900. However, this report is inserted as 130A, indicating it was not reported at the time of death and, since the following two reports are of persons who died in July 1900 in Marandellas, it may be that the wrong date was recorded at the time. In addition, by July 1900 this regiment was already in Bulawayo, so Hamilton must have died earlier. Certainly there is one date, 12 May 1900, which appears in the other lists, and this is taken as correct. A poorly marked tin plate may account for the error in reading the month in the Guild of Loyal Women's report, while manufacturer error accounts for the wrong year on the present plaque. It is incorrectly marked 'For King & Empire'. An additional matter of interest is Hamilton's unknown background. Said to be a captain of the Queensland Artillery or Mounted Infantry, depending on the source, he is not listed in Murray and it would seem that he was not an Australian. It is probable he was an imperial officer seconded to the Australians when they joined the RFF. Investigations have failed to link him to the Imperial Yeomanry, an obvious source of secondment.[41]

Grave 2. I do not believe the present Guild of Loyal Women marker should be here. It was probably made for grave 7, still marked with the original Kiley memorial. If this is taken as an unmarked grave then I would think that it should be the next person who died here – it makes more sense to bury next to Hamilton rather than below him, which is the only other unmarked option. If this is accepted, then we can suggest that the grave is that of Trooper Albert Edward Shaw, RFF and 75th Imperial Yeomanry, who died on 7 June 1900.

Grave 6. As already argued, this grave is not the 1897 grave of Studdart, but I suspect that this was the next grave and third chronological casualty. By suggesting this one gets a sense developing order in the cemetery pattern. This grave is, I suggest, that of Private F. Saxon, 4th New Zealand Mounted Infantry, who died of malaria on 19 June 1900. It is probable he was hospitalised at the time since by this date the rest of his unit had left Marandellas and were marching from Fort Charter towards Enkeldoorn.[42] Of course it is feasible that he could be in grave 2 and Shaw is buried here; but that would have resulted in a rather odd layout when there were only two graves. Whatever the case, I feel we can be fairly certain these two individuals must be in one or other of these two unmarked graves as the others are marked correctly (barring the double Kiley).

Grave 3 is the next. Chronologically it is Trooper Sydney Edward Davis, RFF and 50th Imperial Yeomanry, who died on the 26 July 1900, possibly late in the evening of 25 July. This is a certain identification although the present plaque has errors. It incorrectly gives the year as 1906 (adding 'For King & Empire') which is clearly a manufacturer error as the Guild of Loyal Women have it originally as 1900.[43] He is also incorrectly indicated as 30th Squadron Imperial Yeomanry, a unit that was never part of the RFF. As this error appears in the Guild of Loyal Women list as well, I suspect it is a reader's error from an obscure handmade metal marker which was originally on the grave. The placing of Davis next to Shaw (as proposed here for

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41 K. Asplin, email to author, 18 June 2000.
42 Hickman, *Rhodesia served the Queen*, vol. 2, 273.
43 National Archives of Zimbabwe, A9/1/1.

grave 2) suggests a plan with all the Imperial Yeomanry men in the back line. I would think that this would be quite likely in a military situation. In addition it is argued here that the original 'zinc plate' for this same man now in error marks grave 9.

Grave 4 follows both chronologically and spatially. It is certainly Private G H N Stevens, one of the medical staff of the RFF Hospital and a member of the Imperial Voluntary Medical Service Corps. He died of exhaustion on 29 July 1900, and his Guild of Loyal Women marker is correct.

Grave 5 certainly contains the remains of Trooper Thomas G B Armstrong, RFF and 61st Imperial Yeomanry, who died next on 7 August 1900. His Guild of Loyal Women marker is also correct.

After the death of Armstrong the Imperial Yeomanry moved on to Bulawayo and were replaced at Marandellas, temporarily, by the Victorian Imperial Bushmen, the last unit to arrive from Beira. One of their number, J Kiley, died on 13 October 1900 and was buried in Grave 7 with a home-made iron marker made from locally available scrap. It was probably produced and erected by his companions at a time when those remaining in Marandellas were less busy with rigorous training and departure for the front, as by that time the very existence of the RFF was being questioned and it was likely that disbandment was on the cards.

Conclusion

While accepting that this paper presents nothing truly significant in terms of research into the South African War, it does highlight the general disarray and inadequacy of official imperial documentation during the war. Minor troop movements, skirmishes and isolated deaths were ignored or confused. All of this makes the task of the historian an interesting one. It also shows the great wealth of material which is contained in the National Archives of Zimbabwe, and how the wonders of the Internet can assist in research on a global basis. Data bases not usually available to a local researcher can now be accessed and material combined in establishing a better picture of what happened in the past.

This research has hopefully answered some of the earlier questions posed by Hickman and corrected some of the errors which he made in his important research. However it is not, and cannot, pretend to be the final word on the subject. New material may come accessible to other researchers, and conclusions (or presumptions) made here may have to be altered once again. I also hope that by including references to other areas that fellow researchers will now start to relocated these graves which may be nearer to their homes.