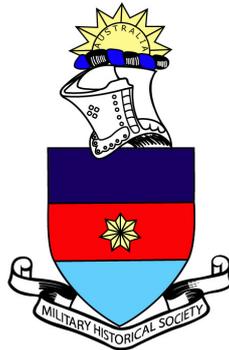


Military Historical Society of Australia
Sabretache



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

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(FOUNDED 1957)

*Authors
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Editor

Barry Clissold
7 Medworth Crescent
North Lyneham, A.C.T. 2602
(06) 247 2548 (H) (06) 249 1788 (W)

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South Australia—Mr A. R. Clark, The Hermitage Drive, Anglesey Estate, Anglevale, S.A. 5117

Western Australia—Rhonda Grande, 19 Sillman Way, Duncraig, W.A. 6023

Paul Rosenzweig, *The Darwin Mobile Force*, is a frequent researcher for *Sabretache*. His research interests are wide ranging and include British and Commonwealth decorations, and Australian military history generally.

James Ritchie Grant, *A soldier's lot... the Dutch East Indies 1945-46*, a Western Australian, is a regular contributor with a broad-span of knowledge in military history. See page 50 of this issue for a review of his latest monograph on military volunteers in Western Australia.

Doug Wyatt, *The first military encampment Tasmania - Easter 1885*, is an officer in the Reserve Forces with an interest in local military history. His first book, of the volunteer military forces of the North West and the West Coasts of Tasmania, was titled *With the Volunteers*. See also page 48 in this issue for a review of his latest monograph.

Steve Danaher, *Brunei Revolt: The Australian Involvement*, is currently serving with the SAS and has been in the army for 12 years, a member of MHPA for 7 years and at present Vice President of the WA Branch. He has contributed to *Sabretache* before.

Christopher Fagg, *Military Cross Awards to Australian Aircrew 1914-1918*, has been a contributor to *Sabretache* for many years and has a special research interest in Australian medals and medal recipients.

Clem Sargent, *The first medal to troops in Australia*, is an internationally recognised scholar on the Peninsular War and British regiments in Australia.

Don Pedler, *Joseph John Harrington, Drum Major*, is a South Australian Branch member of about twenty years standing, and a dedicated researcher of many aspects of Australian military history. He has a particular interest in worldwide Scottish military units, and is a specialist glass etcher by profession.

John Price, *Australian Military Personnel, serving in South Africa, who attended King Edwards VII's Coronation*, is a long-time contributor to *Sabretache*, with a special interest in the Boer War and colonial military forces. John Price is the convener of the Society's British Army in Australia Research Group.

SABRETACHE

The Rising Sun badge has replaced the crossed swords and kangaroo as the principal emblem of the Army.

The new badge was officially unveiled on Tuesday 19 February by Defence Science and Personnel Minister, Mr Gordon Bilney, at a ceremony in Parliament House.

At the launching ceremony Mr Bilney said the badge had become symbolic of the distinguished and gallant service given by Australian soldiers in war and he was pleased that the Army had decided to adopt it as its principal emblem.

The crossed swords and kangaroo was adopted as the official emblem in 1969, although the Rising Sun continued to be recognised as symbolic of the Army.

The basic shape of the Rising Sun badge has remained unchanged since 1904 and was worn with pride by soldiers of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) during both World Wars, and in Korea, Malaya and Vietnam.

The modified badge has the words 'The Australian Army' on the scroll while the original version was inscribed 'Australian Commonwealth Military Forces'.

The Chiefs of the General Staff, Lieutenant General John Coates, in his introductory remarks, said he believed many Australian were searching for more traditional values and it was fitting that the Army should enter into the same spirit and identity more closely with its heritage.

The crossed swords and kangaroo emblem will be restricted to use in

special circumstances such as United Nations or other multinational forces on occasions when the kangaroo might be a more suitable emblem

The Queensland Branch of the Military Historical Society of Australia has issued a medallion to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the seige of Tobruk. Details of the medallion appear on page 55.

Australia's first memorial to Aboriginal diggers at a sacred site on the Gold Coast was unveiled in April this year.

A large rock painting was unveiled as a memorial at the Jebbribillum Bora Park, at Burleigh Heads. It honoured service personnel from more than six clans, known collectively as the Yugambah Aborigines, who lived in the extreme south-east corner of Queensland and served in every major campaign from World War I to the Gulf Crisis.

The memorial, painted by an Aboriginal artist, Marshall Bell, features symbols and animals representing the Yugambah clans.

The Town of Albany is seeking assistance in the pursuit of information and military memorabilia relevant to the Princess Royal Fortress in Albany.

The Fort is currently being restored, with the intention of producing a military establishment highlighting its operational era of 1892-1956, with the associated museum detail. Council is endeavouring to tap any source available in the hope of collecting both information and items of interest, to provide a complete working model of the establishment.

Interests currently lie in trying to make the Forts 'live'—bringing back the activity and sounds that

were so long associated with the daily routine—uniforms, guns, documents, badges, medals, mess room fittings—all are extremely valuable.

Contact the Town Clerk
(098) 41 2333

A total of 268 crew, including medical staff, perished when the hospital ship AHS *Centaur* was torpedoed and sunk on 4 May, 1943. Its status as an historical wreck and a war grave will be protected following an announcement by the Government.

The wreck, which is located off the Queensland coast near Stradbroke Island, will be protected by the provisions of section 5 of the *Historic Shipwrecks Act 1976*.

Under the terms of the declaration, interference with the wreck or the removal of any parts or articles from the wreck is prohibited without a permit. Interference with the wreck or removal of any item can attract fines of up to \$10,000, imprisonment for up to 5 years, or both.

The protective measures do not prohibit diving on the wreck site.

The *Centaur* has a fascinating history. Before World War II it traded between Singapore and Western Australia. Early in 1943 the AHS *Centaur* was commandeered for military services by the British Ministry of War Transport and chartered to the Australian Navy. It was converted for duties as an hospital ship, and was making only its second voyage to Port Moresby when it was torpedoed. The strike came at 4 a.m., setting the *Centaur* alight and sinking it in two to three minutes. With most of the crew and personnel asleep, there was little chance for escape. Of the 332 personnel aboard only 64 survived, picked up nearly 36 hours later by the *Mugford*, an American destroyer.

The Darwin Mobile Force

Paul Rosenzweig

The construction of fortifications in Darwin had begun as early as 1932 with the placing of a 6-inch gun battery at East Point, while the construction of Larrakeyah Barracks was commenced in the following year. One of the first units to serve in Darwin was the Darwin Mobile Force, a rather unique unit of the time—artillerymen tasked with providing mobile protection for the headquarters of the Army in the Northern Territory, known then as the 7th Military District.

The Defence Act of the day did not allow for the raising of an infantry fighting force, so the Darwin Mobile Force was raised as an Artillery unit and its members enlisted as gunners, although the Force held only four guns. Their hat badge was the Royal Australian Artillery badge with the motto 'Consensu Stabiles', while on the collar they wore the Militia badge with the scrolled initials 'RAA' above the motto.

The raising of the Force was one of many steps in the preparation for Australia's defence, the unit being formed in response to a report tabled by the Inspector-General of British Forces in the UK, General E. K. Squires, who had been approached by the Australian government to prepare a plan on how best to defend Australia.

The Darwin Mobile Force was formed in November 1938 at Liverpool in NSW as a mixed force of 245 all ranks, comprising some 90 mobile infantrymen, and armed with four 18-pounder guns, four 3-inch mortars, and four Medium Machine-guns. In March 1939 they sailed from Sydney on the SS *Montoro* bound for Darwin, having been tasked with providing a mobile force to guard against sporadic attacks in the Darwin area

The arrival of the Main Body in Darwin on March 28th 1939 was heralded in the press as follows:

Bagpipes played on the steamer Montoro as it drew into the Darwin jetty to-night with 200 troops of the Darwin Mobile Force and their ten officers on board. The arrival ended the largest movement by sea of Australian troops since the war.

The uniformed soldiers clung to every vantage point on the vessel to gain an early view of their home for the next three years. They shouted greetings to those on the jetty.

The men were granted several hours' leave when the Montoro berthed. They lost little time in exploring the town. In large crowds they wandered in full field uniform through Chinatown and the main shopping areas.

To-night the troops will sleep on the deck of the Montoro where their beds have been lined in neat barrack-room fashion. They will march to their new quarters in Vestey's disused meatworks to-morrow morning, passing through the Darwin streets.

A salute will be taken by the Commandant of the Seventh Military District, Lieutenant-Colonel H. C. H. Robertson.¹

The following day, Wednesday March 29th 1939, the Force paraded in Darwin led by their Commanding Officer, Major A. B. MacDonald, the Commandant 7MD taking the salute in Bennett Street near its intersection with Smith Street. In attendance to welcome the Force were members of the Darwin Garrison—soldiers of the 9th Heavy Battery, Royal Australian Artillery and 7th Fortress Engineers, Royal Australian Engineers.

Some of these soldiers had already welcomed the gunners in typically military fashion the previous day, with notices painted in large letters proclaiming 'Welcome to your doom, you glamour boys' (on the pier) and 'Abandon hope all ye who enter here' (at Vestey's meatworks). Another, referring to the hessian walls within Vestey's, announced 'Welcome to Bagville!'

The unloading of the *Montoro* was an exhausting task as, in addition to the Darwin Mobile Force's equipment, it carried a huge consignment of material for the garrison in Darwin, including a thousand pipes for Darwin's reticulation project and material for building construction. The *Sydney Morning Herald* further noted that *More than 3,000 cases of beer and a quantity of draught beer, which have been eagerly awaited since Darwin ran out of liquor several days ago, are also in the holds.*²

Feverish activity followed the welcoming formalities. In addition to unloading the vessel, each soldier was responsible for moving his personal property to the meatworks where he was required to assemble his bed and secure his effects before sunset. Upon the completion of these settling-in activities, the Force commenced training.

The Force was organised into five sub-units. An Artillery group manned the four 18-pounders and the Mortar Group manned the four 3-inch mortars, while the Heavy Machine-Gun Group possessed four Medium Machine-guns. In addition, there was a Rifle Group some 72-strong and a Reconnaissance Group which provided the Force with a surveillance capability.

Their period in Darwin commenced with intense training and occasional field exercises. This was followed by defence tasks of various sorts, including building roads, erecting barbed wire defences, guard duties at the oil tanks at the wharf and protection of other key facilities. One of the more unusual tasks was to guard the flying boats on the Sydney-London route which moored overnight in Darwin harbour. And of course their most important task, the conduct of long-range reconnaissance patrols from Darwin to some of the more remote areas of the Top End coastline.



*Colonel Guy Fawcett, OBE,
Torrens Parade Ground,
Adelaide. April 1983*

Guy Fawcett served with the Darwin Mobile Force from its inception in 1938, being the Force's Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) in 1939 and 1940, largely responsible for the organisation of the men as they went about their security duties and preparation of defences. Born in Oakey in Queensland, he had enlisted in the Army in 1936 and retired in 1961 after 25 years of distinguished service, and was in 1956 appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his outstanding organisational work in Korea. Among his military memories, those of his time in the Northern Territory are his most treasured.

Soon after arriving in Darwin with the Advance Party, he recalls, a shooting party was sent out to provide sufficient wild duck and geese for the garrison's Christmas dinner in 1938.³ The Territory was teeming with wildlife and the troops made the best of the wide variety of wild ducks and abundant magpie geese. The latter were in such numbers that owners of experimental rice farms had to call on the Army to provide troops armed with Bren guns to try and disperse the flocks which were slowly causing the failure of their crops.

In August 1939, as war with Germany became more inevitable, 44 Permanent Force soldiers were flown in as reinforcements, while the local Commandant, Colonel Horace Robertson was given authority to enlist a Militia force of up to 250 men. One of Guy Fawcett's most notable memories of this time is *the night the bugles sounded the alarm at our Adelaide River camp and we raced through the night along a dirt road to take up action stations at Darwin at dawn.*⁴ This was September 1939 and Australia was at war.

He also recalls that at that time *there were numerous rumours in those days of mysterious comings and goings of various nationalities*, and these were to afford the soldiers of the DMF some degree of purposeful activity. *Upon the outbreak of hostilities, every known enemy alien was rounded up and brought into Vestey Barracks—in many instances to their astonishment and dismay.* These barracks were established in the Vestey Meat Works at Bullocky Point overlooking Fanny Bay, the site of which is today occupied by Darwin High School, although one of the old water tanks still stands. *In those days Darwin had a very mixed population, and indeed I always regarded it as the last of the Frontier towns, and a wild one at that!*⁵

When the first soldiers arrived in Darwin in 1938 and 1939 they found it to be very much a country town with its own characteristic atmosphere. There were three hotels recalls one of the first gunners to arrive. *The Darwin which had an old and new section—Society patronised the new section—the Victoria and the Don which was in Chinatown and a pretty rough sort of place. There was one Picture Show The Star, partly open air. The set-up was aborigines in the front stalls which was open to the skies, back stalls half-castes and poor whites, and circle for everyone else. The aborigines loved a western and it was entertainment itself to go on a night when one was on to see and hear their reactions.*

*In Chinatown there was a cafe known as Phil Jeans and it was the best meal in town—a bit rough, dirt floors, but they could cook fish in batter and most of the soldiers went there. Another place of interest was on the edge of Chinatown—a shop run by Chinese where you could get a really thirst quenching drink, non-alcoholic; they shaved (on an old plane) ice into a schooner-size glass, added some syrup, either orange or lemon whichever you needed, and some cold water and believe me it was great—it was a very popular place.*⁶

In September 1940 the DMF was reorganised and renamed the Darwin Infantry Battalion (DIB), an Infantry organisation. The Artillery Group of the DMF retained its role, becoming the 18th Field Battery, RAA. The members of the DIB wore a colour patch which was a small black square within a larger green square. All Army enlistments in Darwin had received a regimental number prefixed with 'D'. One of the earliest to enlist from Darwin was an Islander Samuel Fejo, well known about town as 'Smiler',⁷ who acquired the regimental number D11; Smiler Fejo died in 1955 aged 54. Another of the early Darwin enlistees was W. D. Muir who later served overseas with the AIF, his regimental number then becoming DX221. William Muir continued to live in Darwin after the war, only to lose his life when Cyclone Tracy struck on Christmas Eve 1974. His name is listed on a commemorative plaque outside the Darwin City Council Offices which was unveiled by Queen Elizabeth in 1977.

On November 1st 1941 the Darwin Infantry Battalion was absorbed into the 19th Battalion from NSW, which had previously

been a machine-gun battalion, and the soldiers were given AIF status. The Battalion was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel L. D. Miell, and at this time had a strength of 838 all ranks. It trained in Darwin until September 1942 when it joined the Joint Operational Overseas Training School at Nelson Bay in NSW to perfect beach landing procedures for the AIF and Allied Forces. It served with particular distinction on New Britain as a member of the 6th Brigade under Brigadier R. L. Sandover which belonged to the 5th Australian Division. After February 1945 the Battalion was commanded by the Perth barrister Lieutenant-Colonel J. A. Maitland, ED, who earned the OBE for his war service.

The Australians of the 5th Division were mostly militiamen although they were led by quite a few officers who had already served in the AIF as NCO's. The 19th Battalion had been at the forefront of some severe fighting by the Division against some 53,000 Japanese on New Britain, but lost only seven officers and 57 other ranks.⁸

A plaque which hangs in the conference room of the Commander, 7th Military District⁹ in Larrakeyah Barracks, contributed by original members of the Darwin Mobile Force, many of whom continued on to see active service with the 19th Battalion AIF in the Pacific, recalls that *Members of the Darwin Mobile Force have left their mark in the archives of Australian Military History.*

Warrant Officer First Class Guy Fawcett meanwhile, had been commissioned as a Lieutenant in the AIF on August 1st 1940 and appointed to the 2/27th Battalion AIF which had been raised in Adelaide in May. He fought with the battalion in the Western Desert, most notably at Mersah Matruh, and in the Syrian Desert. Late in 1941 his experience was put to good use with a series of instructional positions in Australia with the Infantry School and the 1st Army Weapons Training School, ultimately as the Chief Instructor of the 1st AWTS in 1943.

He rejoined the 2/27th for service in Borneo and New Guinea, of which his command of D Company in the upper reaches of the Uria and Faria River valleys was most notable. It was here in October 1943 that his Company distinguished itself amid heavy fighting deep within Japanese territory. 'Guy's Post' was named in his honour, at the foot of 'Shaggy Ridge' which had been named after a fellow Captain Bob Clampett, who had earned the nickname 'shaggy' after letting his hair grow too long when they were in the Middle East.¹⁰

From October 1944 he held a series of Staff appointments until 1948 when he attended the Army Staff College. Upon his graduation and promotion to Major he was posted to the Northern Territory once again, as Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quarter-Master General (DAAQMG) at HQ 7MD in Larrakeyah Barracks. He accepted this post with relish, recalling his pleasant life in the tropics a decade earlier. With the onset of the Wet

Season in December 1949 he was Administering Command of the 7th Military District, while in the following year for two months he was Administering Command once again, over NT Command. He recalls that *both these postings I enjoyed immensely and I have many happy memories of my time in the Territory.*¹¹

A promotion to Lieutenant-Colonel on November 1st 1950 took him to Canberra, and for a while he was commanding the 16th National Service Battalion. On July 28th 1954 he was appointed to the Headquarters of the British Commonwealth Forces in Korea (BCFK), firstly as Assistant Quarter-Master General (Plans), and later as AQMG (Plans & Operations). He served with BCFK after the armistice until 1957, and for his *remarkable powers of imaginative planning, accurate detailed work and concentration of effort* he was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire. His citation records that *He has, throughout his tour of this theatre, displayed energy, independence of thought and leadership. He has done an outstanding service not only to his own country, but also to the other Commonwealth members of BCFK.*¹²

Returning to Australia, he held Command and Staff appointments, notably as Commanding Officer and Chief Instructor at the School of Infantry in Singleton, where his photograph today hangs amid a succession of CO's. He retired as a Colonel in 1961 at the age of 50 and settled in Adelaide, although he busied himself in retirement as Bursar of King's College, later Pembroke.

In this capacity he is invited each year to address the students on the meaning of Anzac Day, emphasising the nature of teamwork in time of war, and the fact that on this one day each year old soldiers are reunited irrespective of subsequent achievements or status—it is the common bond of mateship that they share, the distinctive and legendary characteristic of the Australian soldier. And who better to give the oration than a man who has seen military life from both the low and high end of both commissioned and non-commissioned rank, in the hesitant phony war of Darwin before 1942, in the scorching deserts of North Africa, the steamy jungle warfare of the Pacific, and in the wind-down of Australia's involvement in the Korean 'police action'.



Darwin Mobile Force memorabilia displayed in the Larrakeyah Barracks Officers' Mess, including a 'walking-out cane' which was required to be carried whilst out of the Barracks.



Darwin Mobile Force plaque, unveiled 12 March 1989.

He has been able to return to the Northern Territory only once since his two terms of service there, when, as Chief of Staff at Army Headquarters in Canberra, he visited an Army Survey Team based at Yirrkala in 1961. Despite this, he hopes one day to return to the Top End, the scene of many enjoyable times and pleasant memories.

In March 1989, 50 years after the arrival of the Darwin Mobile Force in Darwin, a service was held and a plaque unveiled to commemorate the event. The Plaque, unveiled by the Administrator of the Northern Territory Commodore Eric Johnston, AO, OBE, is on a low wall around the Darwin Cenotaph, relocated from its original site in the city to a new location at the southern end of the Esplanade. Unfortunately vandals have since removed the scrolled collar badge, RAA hat badge and RAA shoulder title from the plaque.

Over 100 surviving members of the DMF were residing throughout Australia and New Zealand at the time of the Anniversary, and most were able to participate in the commemorations of the unit's formation and arrival in Darwin.

The Darwin Mobile Force holds a special place in Australian military history, raised in peace-time despite the restrictions of a peace-time Defence Act and serving on Australia's vulnerable northern shore during the 'phoney war' period. The intended roles were passed on to other units of the AIF after the bombing commenced in 1942, the defence of Darwin passing to Artillery and Infantry units, and the reconnaissance/surveillance role being inherited by the 2nd/1st North Australia Observer Unit (1942-45), which in its turn passed the role on to the North West Mobile Force (now NORFORCE) since 1981.

Notes

- ¹ Sydney Morning Herald, 29 March 1939.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Col. G. H. Fawcett, OBE, *Pers. Comm.*, 3 June 1984.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Ibid.
- ⁶ Arthur Kennedy, *Pers. Comm.*, 4 December 1986.
- ⁷ Mrs C. King, *Pers. Comm.*, 2 November 1987.
- ⁸ 7/57 lost from a Divisional casualty tally of 73 dead and 140 wounded.
- ⁹ *Now Northern Command (NORCOM)*.
- ¹⁰ Col. R. A. Clampett, AM, *Honorary Colonel of the Adelaide University Regiment (AUR)*; awarded the AM in the Civil Division 'for services to local government' as a city alderman, 14 June 1977.
- ¹¹ Fawcett, Op. Cit.
- ¹² Citation for award of the OBE to Col. G. H. Fawcett, London Gazette, 31 May 1956.

A soldier's lot . . . the Dutch East Indies 1945-46

James Ritchie Grant

With the defeat of the Allied armies in the Far East in 1942 and the complete occupation of the Netherlands East Indies by Japanese forces, the Dutch administration was dismantled and replaced by Japanese control exercised through areas of army and navy influence. The islands were incorporated into the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere and to encourage a voluntary adherence to Japanese interests, anti-Dutch elements were permitted to develop a nationalistic independence movement and allowed to set up regional councils with limited powers. These councils flourished most strongly in Java and Southern Sumatra and were to be the cornerstones of opposition to Dutch attempts to regain control in 1946.

The Japanese encouraged this development, with the intention of granting Indonesia independence, within the Japanese sphere of influence, by the middle of 1946. However as the Japanese were forced back across the Pacific the date for nominal independence was brought forward to August 1945. On the 11th August Field Marshall Count Terauchi held a conference with the Indonesian nationalists in Saigon and announced the policy on independence whereupon a council of twenty-five representatives was immediately established. On the 15th August this council heard that Japan had surrendered and two days later Soekarno proclaimed the independent Indonesian Republic.

The Dutch, who had every intention of resuming their former position in the islands after the defeat of the Japanese were totally unprepared for this move. Other than a limited naval and airforce presence the only troops they had in the area were just being released from prisoner of war camps and were unable to move in immediately and their hopes that the British forces in South East Asia would assist were illusory. The British Government, contemplating independence for India, was not about to use its armed forces to regain another nation's colony and the Government of India, large numbers of whose troops would have had to be involved, was in sympathy with the action of the Indonesians.

British involvement was necessary however to disarm the Japanese forces in the area and then transport them back to Japan, in addition to which there were large numbers of prisoners of war and civilian internees to be released and repatriated and so plans were made to achieve these limited aims. Understandably the Indonesians did not like having yet another foreign army move into their country but general disorder and attacks by extremist groups on internment camps resulted in greater numbers of troops being sent than would have been necessary had a peaceful repatriation programme been possible.

Following the surrender of Japan RAPWI (Recovery of Allied Prisoner of War and Internees) officers were parachuted into the country to commence arrangements for repatriating the prisoners of war. The first members of Force 136 were parachuted into Java

on 8.9.1945 to arrange for the reception of the main RAPWI party which was arriving on HMS *Cumberland*. This ship arrived at Batavia on the 15th September, along with the first British troops and negotiations commenced with the Indonesian authorities. However rising political tensions and the outbreak of violence which threatened the internment camps prompted orders for the despatch of Headquarters, 23rd Division and the 2nd Brigade Group to Java. The situation on the island deteriorated so fast that units were instructed to proceed as soon as they were ready. The first unit to arrive, 1st Bn Seaforth Highlanders, disembarked in Batavia on the 29th September and were immediately sent into the city to quell arsonists, rioters and looters.

As this violent situation pertained throughout Java and Sumatra the whole of the 5th, 23rd and 26th Divisions, with Royal Air Force support, was eventually involved.

Throughout October 1945 the Indonesians, consolidating their hold before the expected return of the Dutch, caused many problems for the British, culminating in the murder of Brig. A. W. S. Mallaby while he was on the way to a meeting on the 29th. It seemed that the internees could only be rescued by force of arms and as this action could precipitate hostile retaliation considerable tact was going to be needed.

In support of the original aims British troops were sent to secure the camps and to bring the internees to collection points. Many attacks were made on the troops involved in these activities and British officers engaged in negotiations were being murdered with depressing regularity. Attacks on larger groups were always beaten off and mounting Indonesian casualties caused a change in tactics. Throughout January and February activity was concentrated on the political front but by March the Dutch had returned in some force, with six brigades spread between Java and Sumatra, where, armed with Dutch and Japanese weapons, resistance was best organised. They were in conflict with the Indonesian Army who were supported by some Japanese who had not surrendered. The Dutch lacked the manpower to win on their own but never ceased to hope that the British Army would assist them.

High level consultations between the British and Indonesians, which emphasised the limited nature of the formers presence, gradually eased the situation of the internees and areas were cleared of prisoners and surrendered Japanese but not without fighting and sometimes open warfare. The return of the Dutch Army was frequently the spark which set comparatively peaceful areas alight. Throughout the first half of 1946 the evacuation of the internees on Java was carried out steadily and by August large numbers of British and Indian troops had been withdrawn and plans for the final withdrawal were being made.

On Sumatra, despite some heavy fighting for a short time at the end of 1945, the recovery of allied prisoners of war mostly went ahead without any major difficulties. On the outer islands there was no interference to the orderly removal of prisoners of war and allied troops quickly departed after their work was completed.

What the Indonesians feared most was the combination of the British and Dutch armies to force the reintroduction of colonial rule on the new republic. With the advantages of hindsight we



know that this could not have happened but at the time the Indonesians held the not unreasonable suspicion that one colonial power might co-operate with another in re-imposing its authority. They also believed that places temporarily occupied by the British, key administration and tactical areas, could fall into Dutch hands before the Indonesians could move back in.

Had a greater trust existed in September/October 1945 or if the Indonesian Republic had had more time to consolidate itself, then most of the bloodshed could probably have been avoided. However, by taking on the British Army, the Indonesians stood up and served notice on the world that they were prepared to pay the price of the independence, whatever it might cost them.

As it was by the time some 11,000 prisoners of war and approximately 120,000 Dutch and native supporters were evacuated and the last troops withdrawn on the 30th November 1946, British and Indian casualties, on Java and Sumatra amounted to 655 officers and men killed, 1663 wounded with 325 missing. Indian Army personnel formed the majority of the latter as a number of Mohammedan soldiers deserted in response to calls from their religious brothers.

The General Service Medal (1918-62) with the 'S.E. Asia 1945-46' was issued to all troops who served on Java and Sumatra (only) between the 3rd September 1945 and the 30th November 1946. The naming is normally in thin impressed letters, however engraved

naming appears, infrequently, on medals issued to Indian troops and un-named medals also exist.

For an operation which should have been quick and bloodless a large number of awards were made for gallantry and administrative services.

Major General James Francis Robert Forman, C.B.E., D.S.O., was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath and Lieutenant-General Eric Carden Mansergh, C.B., C.B.E., M.C., a Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

Seven officers were appointed to be Commanders of the Order of the British Empire, eighteen to be Officers of the Order, two Warrant Officers, two Subadar, one Chaplain and twenty-two officers were appointed to the Order as Members.

A total of twenty-six decorations and medals, as listed below, were awarded for 'gallant and distinguished service in the Netherlands East Indies'.

The Distinguished Service Order

T/Lt-Colonel Rodney Lyon Travers Burges, Royal Artillery.

A/Brigadier Hubert Gervais Lennox Brain, O.B.E., 13 Frontier Force Rifles.

A Bar to the Military Cross

Subadar Karandhoj Rai, M.C., 10th Gurkha Rifles.

The Military Cross

T/Major Francis Bagenol Boyd, Indian Armoured Corps.

A/Major John Willaim Arthur, 1st Punjab Regiment.

Jemadar Phul Singh, 8th Punjab Regiment.

Subadar Ganga Sing Rawat, 18th Royal Gharwal Rifles.

Jemadar Tulbahadur Rana, 3rd Gurkha Rifles.

T/Major Kuldip Singh, Patiala Infantry.

The Military Medal

14994082 A/Sergeant John Harthman, Royal Armoured Corps.

14402091 Private Denis Norman Fowler, Seaforth Highlanders.

2825 Daffadar Santokh Singh, Indian Armoured Corps.

45899 Signalman Mohd Zaman, Royal Indian Artillery.

5054 Company Havildar-Major Baba Nikam, 5th Mahratta L.I.

14753 Naik Hari Kadam, 5th Mahratta L.I.

15119 Lance-Naik Krishna Sawant, 5th Mahratta L.I.

17964 Lance-Naik Tufail Mohd, 7th Rajput regiment.

12960 Lance-Havildar Rugnath Sing, 13th Frontier Force Rifles.

19462 A/Naik Nahar Singh, 13th Frontier Force Rifles.

30809 Sepoy Mohd Afsar, 13th Frontier Force Rifles.

110555 Rifleman Bhattebahadur Limbu, 10th Gurkha Rifles.

The Indian Distinguished Service medal

8373 Company Havildar-Major Ganpat Bhosle, 5th Mahratta L.I.

10057 Naik Wasudeo Sawant, 5th Mahratta L.I.

7900 Naik Sukwakhari Thapa, 3rd Gurkha Rifles.

3073 Company Havildar-Major Banta Singh, Patiala Infantry.

3099 Havildar Gurmakh Singh, Patiala Infantry.

Finally eighty-six Mention in Despatches were made to members of the British Army and two hundred and sixteen to members of the Indian Army.

The Royal Air Force also had a considerable presence but that is another story.

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The first military encampment Tasmania - Easter 1885

Doug Wyatt

The Tasmanian Defence Force Reorganization Report written by the Commandant, Colonel William Legge in May 1884 outlined the unsatisfactory attendance by the volunteers to daylight military training. As a consequence of this and the decline of volunteer military force at this time, Colonel Legge recommended the introduction of a period of four days continuous training, similar to which, he had witnessed at Sydney during the previous Easter period.

With the possibility of war between Great Britain and Russia being anticipated, the Government quickly approved Colonel Legge's recommendation and authorised the necessary expenditure in the estimates for 1885.

The location selected for the encampment was the estate of Mona Vale, located four miles south of Ross in the Tasmanian midlands. Mona Vale was selected because it was central to Hobart and Launceston and was close to the railway, by which men and stores could easily be transported. The area was well watered with the Macquarie and Blackman Rivers flowing nearby.

A few days prior to Easter, the site was marked out by Staff Officer Captain Boddam on a gentle slope near Battery Hill, about a quarter of a mile to the east of the Mona Vale homestead.

On Wednesday, a detachment of the Engineer Corps also proceeded to Mona Vale where they laid a field line from camp to the main telegraph line, thereby linking it with other parts of the colony.

By Thursday evening the camp was beginning to assume the appearance of a 'tented field', but by 5 pm there was a still a great number of stores lying about and a railway baggage wagon from Launceston that was shunted into Ross, rather than Mona Vale, had somewhat delayed the camp preparations. A report from the *Mercury* newspaper observed.

The camp is pitched in column, facing the east, which is also the declivity of the ground. By being pitched in column is meant that instead of companies following each other as they would appear in line, each company is wheeled facing the head of the camp. But taking the natural view of the position that the camp faced the east, it may best be described by stating that the staff occupies the centre. On the right are a lateral line of five tents for the Engineers, who usually occupy a position nearest the staff. Further away on the right are two more rows of five tents for the two companies of Artillery, with a space between where the guns will be placed as soon as they arrive. On the left of the staff tents are four rows, again of five tents, for the four companies of Rifles, and further on the left is another row for the cadets and civilians. Immediately at the rear of the staff is the

telegraph tent, and between, on each side of the staff, are the officers and non-commissioned officers' mess marquees. At the rear of these again, and on the extreme right, or head of the camp, are the latrines.

The canteen—presided over by Mr M. Keen, of Keen's Hotel, Campbell Town, who also has a booth for the convenience of the public—is at the left end of the camp.

The broad arrow kitchens, of which there are three, placed at the rear of the tents of the Rifles, obtain their name from the peculiar shape of the trenches which hold the fire. From a rough furnace, constructed of rubble and earth, radiate three trenches towards a deeper trench formed like an arch of a circle. These trenches are filled with fire, and over the radiating lines are placed rows of pots to be boiled. A good fire is kept up in the archshaped trench, which is drawn toward the furnace under the pots by the draught. Down in front of the camp the magazine is placed, and close beside it the tent of the camp guard.

The Mercury 6 April 1885.

The camp construction continued after dark with the aid of candle lamps and although sufficient tents were available, some of the poles were missing, which resulted in a shortfall when the main body arrived during the night.

With limited accommodation available, the cadets were provided with shelter in Keen's public booth, where they were made comfortable with a good supply of blankets and waterproof sheets.

The Press accommodation was also among the missing baggage, but the reporters were comfortably quartered in the telegraph tent in close proximity to the non-commissioned officers mess, where a good supper was served in the small hours of the morning.

The total number of men in camp on Friday morning was 532, made up as follows:

The Staff: The Commandant (Colonel Legge), Captian Boddam and Captain Hunt.

The Tasmanian Engineers: Lieutenant H. J. Burnett and J. J. McDonald; Quartermaster Sergeant Instructor John Falconer; 45 men total.

The Southern Tasmanian Volunteer Artillery: Captain T. M. Evans; Lieutenant J. E. Bessison; Quartermaster Sergeant Instructor Andrew Reid; 90 men total.

The Launceston Volunteer Artillery: Captain T. Y. Collins; Lieutenant G. E. Harrap; Quartermaster Sergeant Instructor F. Martini; 67 men total.

The Tasmanian Volunteer Rifle Regiment: Major and Assistant Commissary General Just; Captains John O'Boyle and W. H. Smith; Lientenants J. E. Addison, E. J. Freeman, H. S. Barnard, Alfred Robertson, and Geo. Beedham, the last two officers in charge of the Regiment Colours; Quartermaster Sergeant Instructor William Alderton; 135 men total.

The Launceston Rifle Regiment: Major W. Aikenhead; Captains H. J. Room and William Marten; Captain and Paymaster H. I.



Colonel William Vincent Legge

Rooke; Lieutenants T. H. Gould and F. K. Fairthorne; Quartermaster Sergeant and Instructor William Welsh; 118 men total, and a band of 20 men.

The Launceston Cadets under Staff-sergeant Beasley, numbered 30 all told.

The conditions that existed at Mona Vale on Easter Friday are best described in the following report, as published in the *Mercury* on Saturday, 4 April 1885.

BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH
FROM OUR SPECIAL REPORTER

CAMP, Friday

Quarters and Commissariat.—The arrangements under this head, which may certainly be considered the most important for care and attention in the preliminary details, were wretched in the extreme and went very close to causing a complete fiasco, as was anticipated before the arrival of the men. There was not sufficient accommodation to shelter them without inconvenient and unnecessary overcrowding. Several men had to pass the night in the open air, while many others were insufficiently provided for. As the men did not get into camp till after 2 o'clock in the morning, and had then to make their preparations for the rest, and the reveille was sounded at 6, very little time was left for sleep. Then the breakfast was late, and only consisted of bread and butter, though the men had not had anything but a cup of coffee since they left their homes. Dinner was promised at 1 p.m., but it was past 3 before it was ready, and was then prepared in such a wretched fashion that the men grew disgusted, and insubordinate murmurs arose. The men lost all interest in the encampment, which they had anticipated with so much interest. The officers, too, got disheartened, and

represented to the commissariat authorities that the men were complaining. It was not so much that there was a deficiency of food, though bread ran out this evening, as the cooking was ill-done and long delayed. The arrangements were so bad that the supply of meat, which arrived cut up into sections, was left deposited on two boards out in the open ground for more than half a day. The long delayed dinner was so wretchedly ill-dressed and ill-cooked that many of the men barely tasted it. About 50 men and cadets returned home this afternoon, and though many of them had arranged to go back for the Saturday, several of them left the camp on account of the unfortunate circumstances mentioned. The officers worked hard against the effects of these misfortunes, and appealed to the men to work together to remedy them. The useless lot of batmen who had been engaged were replaced by squad cooks, to whom the rations for the squad were given. This was the original intention, but was not adopted from the first, in consequence of the necessity of meeting the requirements of the men arriving in camp at an awkward time. As soon as the men commenced cooking for themselves a marked improvement was manifest.

Duties in Camp.—This afternoon there was a good deal of company drill in all directions. Subsequently a company of the Northern Rifles, under the command of Major Aikenhead, and a company of Southern Rifles, under Captain O'Boyle, went skirmishing over the hill west of camp, a body of Artillery, under charge of Captain Collins, proceeded to the hill, about two and a half miles away, and were exercised in trench work prepared for the 40 pounder guns, a work which was commenced by the Engineers this morning. The Engineers were employed about the camp, amongst other things, in making targets for the shooting practice. They also erected two fine tents for the cadets, who will be comfortably quartered tonight.

The Press.—The representatives of the Press have suffered all the inconveniences arising from the want of preparation, but they have borne them as cheerfully as any. The promised tent for their use is probably still in Hobart, any way nothing is known of it here, and if it had not been for the usual friendship that exists between the knights of the pencil and the knights of the electric keys, the former would have been out in the cold, but they were comfortably provided for in the telegraph tent, and beyond having to write while kneeling over a gin-case, or lying down on a rug, and to occasionally pass up a brother scribe's pen for a dip of ink, they are very adequately provided with every convenience.

Disobedience of Orders.—An unfortunate circumstance occurred during the evening, which forebodes a blot upon the record of the encampment. Quarter-Master Sergeant John Falconer, of the Engineers, who is president of the sergeants' mess, was ordered by the Commandant not to go into the sergeants' mess tent, whereupon the sergeant-major declared his intentions of doing so. Colonel Legge then declared that the sergeant-major was a prisoner. Sergeant-Major Falconer has not been absolutely placed under arrest; still nearly all of the Southern troops regret the incident, for he was deservedly popular amongst them, and had worked zealously for the success of the encampment.

Midnight.

The volunteers are now mostly safe in the keeping Morpheus. Quiet reigns supreme throughout the camp, with the exception of the sentries,

who continue pacing their dreary rounds under the pale light of the moon. Orders have been given to stop all-strangers, and if any luckless knight should have missed or forgotten the password, 'Mona' and the counter sign, 'Hobart', the bayonet or the guardroom, until a strict investigation can be held, awaits him.

Before the sun had risen, the sound of reveille announced the beginning of another day. With expectations of an improvement in camp arrangements the volunteers were eager to rise. The *Mercury* reporter leaves us with the following graphic account of the camp as he observed the proceedings from a nearby hill.

Ascending the rising ground at the rear of camp a capital view of it in the animated though orderly appearance it presented on Saturday morning is obtained. The tents, numbering altogether about 60, stand out better in their lineal relation to one another when looked upon from this point of vantage. The peaked white tents are relieved from the dullness their geometric relations give by the bright uniforms of the men, who are now seen in large numbers between the tents cleaning up the accoutrements, or chatting over the morning smoke. Over against the fence, at the watercourse, a little knot of men are examining the spoils of an early foraging expedition, consisting of five grey rabbits. The band of the Launceston Rifles ranged in a circle near the officers' mess are playing a lively air. Near the centre in front of the Staff office, floats the Union Jack, and probably the Staff officers are now busy within the tent going through the routine office work for the day. The cooks are clearing up the debris of the breakfast and preparing for the dinner, with plenty of willing help. Close by the kitchens, men with axes, wielded with lusty arms, are cutting firewood from the heaps in hand. The Launceston Artillery are preparing for a march out with their guns for firing practice. Several parties are going to and from the watercourse with buckets for supplies of water. At the rear of the camp the sentry is just being relieved. Well done! The men stand erect, port arms, and relieve guard with the precision and gravity of old field warriors. A party is at the little magazine getting out the ammunition for the field guns which go out later on. Around the telegraph tent is a circle of enquirers, for there are stationed the telegraph operators, the post office representative, and the Press. Newspapers are being asked for as there is a great desire to know what is being done at the Sudan and in Afghanistan. Mr Edgar Hannaford, the camp postmaster, is besieged with anxious demands for letters from home, or for postage stamps to send friends a few lines of their life in camp. A few ladies have just arrived in a carriage and complete the scene.

Following the first parade on Easter Saturday the infantry forces were exercised in battalion drill, while the Southern Artillery underwent field gun drill on the two breech-loading 12 pounder, field guns prior to a live firing practice after breakfast.

The Launceston Artillery prepared to dismantle their new 2.5 inch rifled muzzle loading 'screw guns', and packing them on pack saddles they moved off to Battery Hill where the guns were re-assembled for a live firing practice.

These guns were designed by Colonel Le Mesurier, Royal Artillery, and consisted of two parts, each joined by a loose trunnion ring. The ring was attached to the muzzle portion and

screwed into the breech section, hence the term 'screw gun'. The whole gun was a load for five horses, each fitted with pack saddles made for that purpose.

The 'screw gun' first saw active service on the North-West Frontier of India with the 1/8 Mountain Battery, RA, in 1879. However, this was the first time that they were used in the Australian Colonies. Being so versatile, with an accurate range 2500 to 2800 yards, they were not 'retired' from the Launceston Artillery until 1908. They now proudly flank the entrance to the Officers Mess at Anglesea Barracks, Hobart.

The first encampment was not without the need to exercise the necessary measures to 'maintain good order and military discipline', and this did not escape the notice of the press, who filed the following report in the *Mercury* newspaper.

The case of the man who had disgraced himself by an attack upon the sentry placed over the guard tent, in which he was confined for disobedience, was dealt with yesterday, and it was decided to formally dismiss him.

The man, Gunner Drew, of the Southern Artillery, has dearly paid for the sorrow he has caused to his corps, and the pain his offence has given others at the encampment. Placed under arrest for an insolent and blaguard expression to Major Just, he behaved himself badly in the guard tent, and upon Gunner Smith, a fellow soldier in the same corps, who was in guard over him, remonstrating with him he struck the sentry a very severe blow in the face from the effects of which he suffered for two days. The dismissal took place at early parade this morning, and was a most impressive ceremony, the gravity of which was fully realised by the men, drawn up on the spot.

When the men had been drawn up the command, 'Attention' was given, and the man was marched from the guard to the front between two sentries. The commandant then detailed the circumstances of his offence and the decision arrived at, adding that to strike a sentry was a very grave crime, and one visited by penal servitude in the army.

Sergeant-Major Reid then, by command, advanced to the man, and commenced cutting the facings off his uniform, a bugler at the same time cutting off the buttons. A sense of shame he had incurred was visible in the man's face and manner. In the movements to place him in right position he turned and marched in a soldier-like manner between the sentries, and stood perfectly still and silent while being stripped of the facings. These removed, his kit was brought and emptied out of the bag. It was noticed that a set of boxing gloves and a short dagger were amongst his things. The sentries then marched him off the camp on to the side line, where he was left, the bugler bringing up his effects. A hysteric Celt, prompted by the good nature of his country, sympathised with the lonely man in his wretched position by going up and shaking hands with him. With this exception, the men were somewhat still and silent after they were dismissed, impressed with a scene every man in camp regretted the necessity for.

Caught by the Southern Rifles, a black crow, named 'Old Corvus' became the regimental mascot and was confined to camp by being securely tethered by one leg to a bell-tent.

Although a hospital tent was erected, the camp was without a doctor for two days due to the inability of Dr Maddox to attend. Dr Crouch, of the Southern Tasmanian Volunteer Artillery finally arrived in camp on Sunday morning, providing the necessary medical support.

Prior to this one case requiring minor surgery was attended to by Ambulance Sergeant Oldham, while a volunteer who suffered a series of fits was attended to by Dr Foucart from Mona Vale, who administered a liberal douch of water to correct the problem.

At 10.30 the Roman Catholic priest, Father Murphy celebrated Mass on the camp side of the watercourse, while the protestants were marched to a parade ground on the other side, where the Church of England service was held by the Rev. C. N. Vaughan, of Campbell Town. A reading stand was constructed of three drums covered with the Union Jack.

The Headquarters' band provided the music, which consisted of the three hymns 'Onward Christian Soldiers', and the Easter hymns commencing, 'The strife is o'er, the battle done' and 'Through the night of doubt and sorrow'.

During the afternoon about 150 visitors arrived in camp by an excursion train from Launceston and others from the surrounding district. The visitors included Messrs Letts and Sidebottom, M.H.A's, the Mayor of Hobart (Mr G. Davies, M.H.A.), and Mr Charles Rocher, the Town Clerk of Launceston.

In the afternoon, following an inspection by the Commandant, the camp was exercised in striking and re-pitching tents, after which the men were stood down for the remainder of the day. The *Mercury* reporter was active, however, that night.

A surprise attack by night was one of the probable events of the encampment which the men looked forward to with considerable interest. The idea was naturally kept very quiet, but as the men had been working too hard on Saturday to admit of it taking place before 12 o'clock, they were mostly confident that it would take place on Sunday night or Monday morning, consequently most of the men went to their blankets with their boots on and all ready to turn out at the first note of alarm, but they were in many cases deceived, for the general idea was that it would occur towards daybreak so as to give time for a night's rest. At a few minutes past midnight the alarm was given by firing a gun. Instantly there was motion and murmur in every tent, and the men rushed out like rats. At first sight it would almost have appeared that the Engineers, 'The Pets', as they are being designated in camp, were in league with the enemy. Before the echo of the gunshot came from the opposite hill, a soldierly voice was heard—'Now me lads!'. Like the matured harvest of the dragon's teeth sown in the mythological ages, the Engineers seem to spring out of the earth. Simultaneously with the echo of the gun came the cry—'Numbers, one, two, three, four,' and so on, and Lieutenant Burnett seemed by magic to spring up before the Colonel with a salute and 'The Engineers have fallen in, Sir'.

The *Mercury*, 7 April 1885

With light rain falling during the morning the troops were dressed in great coats and a skirmishing exercise was conducted on Battery Hill between Northern and Southern forces.

The Launceston Artillery, with support from the Engineers occupied a defensive position on the forward slope of Battery Hill. The position was fortified with gun pits and a stone rampard, behind which a second battery was constructed as a reserve position. On completion of the defence works, the Engineers formed the reserve force.

The attacking force comprised the Hobart Artillery, the whole of the Rifles and the Cadets. Again the *Mercury* reporter was in the heart of the battle:

The Hobart Artillery, with the 13 pounder and the 9 pounder field pieces, took up an unfortified position on the parade ground in front of the camp, and commenced a brisk fire upon the position on the hill. The Hobart Rifles advanced to the attack on the front and right flank of the Engineers' position, and the Launceston Rifles with the Cadets attacked on the gentler acclivity of the left flank and rear of the enemy's position. The Hobart Rifles, after firing and advancing several times, charged up the hill in such good style that the defender's skirmishers who were out had to retire to their battery, and the Launceston men coming up on the other flank, they had shortly afterwards to retire to their reserves. Finding the attacking force too strong for them, the Engineers had to retire, and the Commandant ordered the Cadets to charge them. The Cadets nearly brought the 'Pets' to ruin, but having a few more rounds of ammunition than their youthful opponents, they were able to make good their retreat. The combined attack of the two charges of Rifles, and the brisk cannonage of the Hobart Artillery, had utterly destroyed all chances of their escaping from the rash consequences of such an assault upon the camp, and the Engineers and L.V.A. were declared defeated, and could doubtless have all been made prisoners. The field presented a splendid spectacle during the engagement. While the Artillery of both sides were pounding away, working their guns in full view of the spectators, the Rifles were advancing in five lines of skirmishers, and charged in grand form, and the three staff officers were galloping backwards and forwards during the action to direct both sides.

The Mercury, 7 April 1885.

In the afternoon a review of the troops was conducted on the main parade ground, at the conclusion of which the Honourable, the Premier, Mr Ayde Douglas thanked the men for their attendance and excellent performance. In conclusion he called for three cheers for the Queen.

Following a final address by the Commandant the camp was broken and shortly before 6pm the Hobart contingent departed with the band playing 'Should old acquaintance be forgot' and 'Britannia rules the waves'.

The first of many annual encampments yet to follow had concluded.



An Australian in Russia -1919

Bruce Muirden

Ernest William Latchford, the AIF captain who fought in France in 1917, didn't really know what he was getting into when he arrived in Siberia early in 1919.

For most mortals the Great War was over but in newly Bolshevik Russia the triumphant Reds faced counter-revolution from the Whites most of whom wanted a return to the Czarist regime.

Latchford, born in the small settlement of Wharing (between Murchison and Nagambie) volunteered to serve with the British Military Mission, set up in Irkutsk in Siberia, to help train units serving in the White cause under Admiral Kolchak.

The young Australian already had some inkling of the tortuous nature of post-revolution Russian factions when serving in the Caucasus in 1917 where the British were alarmed about a possible German and Turkish drive on India.

But if he found himself still perplexed at the political and racial turmoil in civil war-torn Siberia he was certainly not alone.

Siberia was then, and probably remains, something of an enigma.

Tantalising glimpses are constantly on offer through the continual stream of accounts of travellers on the vast trans-Siberian railway. Geoffrey Blainey was just one of scores of writers to tackle this fascinating topic.

To many people around the world, Siberia is a name synonymous with 'end of the world', a fitting place for the unwanted.

And although Irkutsk was in fact the site of a large prison there was little truth, by 1919, in this popular vision of it being a place to be avoided.

Irkutsk was described as 'thriving, jostling, gay' by world traveller John Fraser in 1902.

At a time when Melbourne's population was 600,000+ and Adelaide's 180,000, Irkutsk exceeded 200,000.

In 1919 Latchford found himself one of '24 British in a town of 200,000 full of generals and colonels'.

He arrived in the city expecting to be sent to Omsk to the west where there was another British Military Mission. Firmly in his mind was the desire to take part in whatever fighting there was.

He was disappointed to find he would be kept at Irkutsk, helping to instil musketry skills into the men of the 14th Siberian Division.



Captain E. W. Latchford

The 'front' in Siberia kept moving (the Reds finally triumphing) and he was forever denied permission to join in.

As far as he was aware he was the only Australian within hundreds of miles, if not actually thousands.

What he saw and thought during his stay of about six months has been revealed in letters sent to fiancée, Linda Dehnert of Ballan (later to become his wife).

These letters are now destined for the files of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

His opinions demonstrate how difficult it was for a soldier fresh from an uncomplicated war on the Western Front in Europe with almost static front lines with 'advances' being measured often in hundreds of yards to comprehend what was happening in Siberia where the 'front' kept shifting and the allegiances of many units was constantly in doubt.

Captain Latchford's letters reflect his Australian bewilderment at what was going on around him.

He was certainly not alone. US author Walter Duranty categorised the fighting in Siberia as 'not a war but a madhouse'. And the learned US scholar of Soviet affairs George Kennan saw it as a 'fantastic brew of misunderstanding, war hysteria, coincidences and mistakes'.

Captain Latchford understood military affairs very well indeed. Born in 1889 and raised by relatives in the Riverina when his father was killed in an accident, he enlisted in the Militia in 1906, reaching the non-commissioned rank of sergeant by 1909.

Very early in a military career spanning 43 years—38 in the Regular Army—he was attached to the instructional staff. One of his first tasks as an instructor was to train young cadets at Armadale and Moonee Ponds under the Area Officer, Major T. Blamey.

In 1914 he was refused permission to enlist in the AIF. The Army needed staff to train units of the First and Second Divisions.

Finally he was released in 1915, being commissioned Lieutenant in the 38th Bn raised at Bendigo.

In France he saw action in the punishing assault on Messines in June 1917 when he was awarded the Military Cross. His later service in the October attack of Passchendaele was also recorded in the Official War History.

His move to Siberia had its earliest origins when he was selected to constitute a special force to operate in Mesopotamia, Kurdistan and Persia late in 1917.

General Monash, the Australian commander, recommended Captain Latchford to join this group of 20 officers and 20 NCOs.

They became known as 'Dunsterforce' named after their CO, Major General Dunsterville.

Captain Latchford served at Hamadan, Abshineh, Bijar and Baquba, all now in present day Iraq or Iran.



*Captain Latchford, in shorts,
with Vickers machine gun in
Siberia*

When Dunsterforce disbanded in October 1918, following the surrender of the Turks, Latchford volunteered for service in Siberia.

He quickly found that those he was there to assist were a very mixed bag including:

- White Russians, most rallied behind Admiral Alexander Kolchak, self-declared Supreme Ruler in Siberia;
- Substantial disciplined Czech forces (former prisoners of the Axis powers) who were trying to get out of Russia via Vladivostock but were having trouble with the Red Army en route;
- Japanese troops, anxious to secure a permanent foothold on the Asian mainland;
- American troops, more concerned about the Japanese than any variety of Russian soldied; plus
- A miscellany of observers, advisers, intermediaries, 'secret' agents from around the world, and among these were several British Military Missions who had not been sent to fight but to observe and assist the Whites by providing equipment and training.

Among the Whites were marauding Cossacks under the notorious freebooter, Ataman Grigori Semonov. Latchford thought 'Ned Kelly was an amateur compared with him'.

All the above were involved in some way with one of the most confused chapters in the Russian civil war that began after the November 1917 Bolshevik takeover until the final Red triumph in 1920.

Latchford had a gradual introduction into the Siberian cauldron along the railway west from Vladivostock.

It could have been far worse climatically—in a region where weather could be as serious an obstacle as any armed enemy. He set out on April 10, 1919 at a fairly benign time of the year, as the bleakest months were ending.

He appears to have understood from the start that his stay would not be for long. He wrote to Miss Dehnert: 'if you see anything in *The Age* or *The Argus* dealing with the Permanent Forces or staff ect. etc., cut it out and send it along'.

Mail was of course his only contact with faraway Australia although he was once surprised to come across a boy who had been born in Brunswick but had returned to the Irkutsk district with his parents who had been on the Russian consulate staff in Australia.

He picked up anti-American feeling early, having detected signs when passing through Hong Kong. He thought some US troops 'an awful crowd of stinkers' because they had apparently refused to go to the aid of Japanese.

Behind this opinion was his unfavourable reaction to the American belief that 'they all seem to think they won the war' (in France).

A later letter showed a deeper understanding of American motivation: 'the Japs want Siberia and the Yanks don't want to let them'.

He accepted small talk in the British officers' mess which had it as gospel that 'all Bolshevik activity in China, Turkestan, Russia etc. etc. is controlled by the Germans and their agents'. Latchford was not alone in believing this. The Germans were certainly active in the Baltic states and Finland but that was as far as it went.

One British general, reporting back to his Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir Henry Wilson, said the 'the Hun is a little anxious about us and has been getting busy at Archangel in anticipation of our landing'. When 1500 British and French troops landed at Archangel, north of Petrograd in August 1918 they found no Germans.

The original War Office plan for Siberia was for Captain Latchford and his British and Canadian Officer colleagues to raise Anglo-Russian brigades. These were to have been units of White Russian troops officered largely by British officers and NCOs. But when word filtered through of insubordination, unrest and even mutiny among similar units, known as North Russian Regiments, in the Archangel region, these brigades were not formed in Siberia.

Latchford was unhappy about this. He was therefore condemned, as he put it, to be 'an Australian officer teaching a British system of musketry and fire control to Russian troops armed with Japanese rifles!'

If he suffered severe culture shock on arrival in Siberia so did many of the Russians who came to be instructed by him in the Irkutsk version of Duntroon.



Captain Latchford in familiar slouch hat



*White Russian officer trainees:
part of Latchford's class.*

His slouch hat, for example, caused a sensation in the streets.

Even more disturbing to the locals was his habit, in the warmest months, of wearing shorts.

'The Russians' he wrote to Ballan, 'think it very strange to see officers in short trousers whereas the Russian girls strip off and go swimming with their menfolk and seem to think nothing of it'.

The British Military Mission encouraged its Russians to play cricket and football. 'Their officers', Latchford noted disapprovingly, 'never play with them and the gap between them is very large'.

As important to the Russian as British training was the provision by the British of huge supplies of warm woollen uniforms and strong leather boots.

On the central political issue—Bolshevism or not—Latchford's opinions evolved subtly.

In May 1919 he was the Bolsheviks as 'simply extreme Socialists with a leavening of crooks, murderers and loafers. Their idea is simply to kill anyone who wears a clean collar, take any woman they want, and pollute everything. No scruples'.

By July he was criticising the class system that separated the anti-Bolshevik White Russian officers from their men. He wrote: 'No wonder they have Bolshevism in this country. I'm fed up with the Russians'.

He was still convinced the Germans were behind it all: 'the swine should be banished from society for ever!'.

Among the Whites he noted continual friction. 'The various factions war among themselves as much as ever . . .'.

He became increasingly cynical about his chances of ever getting back into active fighting. He met General Knox who

'promised to let me go up to the front, but so far nothing has come of it'. Then he added this footnote: 'It may be only a few weeks before the Front and the Back are one and the same place!'

He observed that larger numbers of refugees were streaming into Irkutsk from towns to the west along the railway, ahead of the advancing Red Army.

By September he could see the end was close. 'The Japs and the Yanks are going to look after the Siberians. God help Siberia!'

Chaos reigned in the extensive Irkutsk railway yards. 'Some of the officials had to be shot as they were selling boxcars to wealthy refugees . . . shooting is the usual remedy in Siberia'.

Latchford left as the November freeze began. About this time, the obsessively anti-Bolshevik Winston Churchill confided to his military command: 'if the whole of Siberia goes up to Lake Baikal, the consequences will be far reaching and long lasting'. There can be no quarrel with his opinion.

Latchford's departure was far less eventual than that of Brian Horrocks, later to become a British general, who had been attached to the British Military Mission in Omsk. He was captured by the Reds west of Irkutsk in January 1920—and lived to write a book about it.

Had the Whites been given 'the backing their cause deserved', Latchford said later, 'the world would have been a very different place today'.

Yet one of the senior White Russian officers associated with the Irkutsk military training school, Major General Sakarov put a less rosy light on the White counter-insurgency. In reminiscences published in Munich in 1923 (nine months after Mussolini's march on Rome) he declared 'our party id Holy Russia . . . opposed to Bolsheviks and other socialist filth. The White movement was in essence the first manifestation of fascism'.

Earnest Latchford returned to Australia on the *SS Tango Maru*, arriving in January 1920. Until the last he nourished a desparate hope that he could be sent to one of the last White armies, the one under General Anton Denikin, fighting on in southern Russia. But the Defence Department in Australia wanted him home.

Not long after he left Irkutsk, the Czech author of *The Good Soldier Svejk*, Jaroslav Hasek, moved in . . . but that is another story.

On his return home, Latchford was required to revert to his pre-war rank of Warrant Officer Class II in Australia's permanent forces but it was not long before he gained his commission in our newly formed Instructional Corps.

In May 1921 he married his war time correspondent at Ballarat and they left to live in Sydney where he joined the staff of the Small Arms School at Randwick.

Later his contribution to this establishment was rated so significant that it became known as St Latchfords.



Captain Latchford in Siberia during summer

In 1942 the school moved to Bonegilla (in north-eastern Victoria) and later still (1946) to Seymour.

Bonegilla's Army Apprentices School was officially named Latchford Barracks in 1982.

During his long military career—he died in 1962—he became responsible for the training of literally thousands of officers and NCOs of the pre-war permanent forces and the militia, then the wartime AIF and AMF, and finally the post-war Regular Army.

His son Kevin, who also contributed 39 years of Regular Army service, feels that although he reached the rank of Major-General, his contribution was relatively small compared with that of his father's.

General Latchford, now living in retirement in Sydney, thinks the local Latchford service—in Australia, France and Russia—of 73 years must stand as some kind of record for a Regular Army only established in 1911.

██████████

Brunei Revolt: The Australian Involvement

Steven John Danaher

The oil rich state of Brunei, which was governed by an autocratic system under the Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin was pressured by the British and Malay Governments to run elections for the Legislative Council. A first for the people of this small but wealthy country.

The Patrai Raayatt (Peoples Party) with its militant wing, the North Kalimantan National Army (TNKU), exercised its strength on the population with the aim of forming a Confederation of Borneo States: Sarawak, North Borneo (now Sabah) and Brunei. The movement gained majority support as most of the population believed that their Sultan would become the Head of State. Which needless to say Sukarno, the Indonesian President would not stand for that to occur and when Partai Raayatt won all sixteen seats only for the Sultan to nominate seventeen of his own supporters, the stage had been set for revolt.

The TNKU, under the military leadership of Yassin Affendi, was to raise fifteen companies of volunteers, numbering some one hundred and fifty men per company, by the beginning of December 1962. The training and equipping was of poor standard, with only a few shotguns to arm the rebels in the early stages.

The military objectives of the rebels were to seize firstly the Sultan, procure more sophisticated weapons by capturing the main Police Station and finally to take command of the oilfields at Seria in order to use European hostages and the fields as a bargaining platform with the British and the Brunei Shell Corporation. Due to the poor organisation of the TNKU two of the main objectives failed which saw the beginning of the end for the TKNU and the Partai Raayatt.

The rebellion commenced at 0200 hrs on the 8th of December with attacks on the Police Station, the Palace, the Prime Minister's house and the Powerstation. Immediately the British put 'Plan Ale' into action by alerting their forces in Singapore. To summarise, elements of the 1/2nd King Edwards Own Gurkhas were landed at the main airfield of Brunei and proceeded to secure Brunei Town. By the 10th of December the Gurkhas had been brought up to full strength and the Queens Own Highlanders had landed. After an earlier failed attempt to relieve the Seria oilfields by 'C' Coy 1/2 Gurkhas, a second and more successful attempt was made by the Queens Own and all the European hostages were saved.

The next stage was to recapture Limbang. The only feasible way of doing so was by a watercraft assault; this task was allocated to 'L' Coy 42 Commando Royal Marines. On the 13th of December the marines assaulted, saving all hostages with the loss

of only five marines killed and eight wounded. The enemy suffering considerably more with fifteen dead and eight being captured.

Primarily the rebellion had been broken but it was not until the middle of May 1963 that all resistance had ended with the capture of Affendi, the TNKU commander.¹

The Australians

It is a little known fact that some Australian servicemen did take part in Pale Ale; the numbers differ depending on which reference material one is reading (more on that latter). All were Army personnel on detachment to British Units in the Far East at the time and the policy was, if your fostering unit went to war, you went with it. Unlike in 1982 when RAN Officers were removed from RN ships which were to be deployed to the Falklands war.

A brief note on each participant is recorded at the conclusion of this article; my aim also is to provide detail on one man as an illustration as to the type of post war operational service opportunities that existed if a soldier was 'in the right place at the right time'. Since writing the bulk of this article, we have witnessed the Gulf war where Australian Naval ships served as part of the United Nations Coalition and single members of our forces served with British and USA forces. It is encouraging to see that the policy of 'old' has been re-introduced by the Government of today.

Edward Copeland BEACROFT

Edward (Ted) was born on the 13th of August 1913 at St Marys to Robert Copeland and Ive (nee Cummings) Beacroft, his education began at St Marys Primary School in 1920 and he concluded his school days at Penrith High in his mid teens. He then trained as a butcher under the supervision of an uncle until the 21st of February 1940 when he enlisted, firstly in the Citizens Military Forces (CMF) before transferring to the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) on the 4th of November 1942. He rose through the ranks from a Private soldier to Senior NCO rank of Sergeant before being commissioned on the 29th of October 1942 as a Lieutenant in the 20 Bn AIF. Whilst the unit was stationed at Rutherford NSW, Ted met Sister Edna Ryan during social outings where a number of friendly tennis matches were played between the Officers and Nursing staff. Ted and Edna ended up swapping tennis racquets as each preferred to use the others during their games on the court. Later Ted saw service in New Britain with the 19 Bn leaving his tennis partner initially at Wallgrove Camp Hospital. Edna Ryan was selected for service in New Guinea but due to a slight medical problem was posted to 113 Australian Garrison Hospital at Concord. Whilst on leave from the 19 Bn Ted and Edna were married on the 9th of June 1945, unpacking their belongings Ted is fondly remembered by his wife to have remarked 'Well at least I've got my tennis racquet back'.



Lieutenant Beacroft, 1945



*Korea 1951.
Returning from a 20 mile
patrol in temperatures 40° F
below. Lieutenant Beacroft on
left.*

The war in the Pacific soon ended but Ted went to Lae, New Guinea for the final stages returning six months later when Mr and Mrs Beacroft were discharged from the services to begin a shared life raising a family. Ted opened his own butchery business until the onset of the Korean War when he volunteered his services once again.

Post War

Ted was appointed a Lieutenant on the 4th of September 1950 and embarked for Korea via Japan on the 6th of October where he joined the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR) on the 4th of November after disembarking from HMAS *Sydney*. He was given command of the Anti-Tank Platoon, Support Company under the Officer Commanding, Major John Callander who, in a conversation with the author, described Ted as a 'fine soldier'.² Ted remained with 3RAR until the 9th of March 1951 when he was

evacuated to the British Commonwealth Occupational Force (BCOF) General Hospital, Japan. He was diagnosed as having pleurisy and 'snow glare' affecting his eyesight. An operation was required immediately to prevent permanent damage but Ted, fully aware of the personal risk, continued with his new position as Training Officer of the 1st Reinforcement Holding Unit, training 'reos' for service in Korea. For this dedication he was awarded a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE). The citation appears at right:

A fitting reward for a man who had endured the hardships of Korea and gave our soldiers a fighting chance of returning to Australia. Ted left Japan on the 12th of December 1951 and after six weeks of well earned leave took up his new position in the Pacific Islands Regiment, New Guinea as Adjutant. At least it was familiar territory for him and a chance to renew old acquaintances. He returned to Australia in October 1954 and was appointed Second in Command of Support Company 4RAR at Ingleburn NSW, after almost three years there he was posted to 30 Bn CMF from August 1957 to January 1958, then 2RAR as 2IC of the Battalion. In December 1959 he was appointed Admin Officer (Army Component) of Air Support, RAAF Williamtown NSW. After gaining two years experience in Land/Air Ops he was posted to Singapore as G.S.O.2. Air, 17 Gurkha Division attached to 224 Group RAF in September 1961.

Ted saw his 'special service' in Brunei from the 11th December 1962 to the 12th of May 1963 with the Joint Land/Air HQ. Unfortunately his exact employment is unknown during this period but one assumes that his expertise in Air Ops supporting ground forces came into its own during Plan Ale.

After his posting to the Far East had come to a close, Ted and his family returned to RAAF, Williamtown. His new position being an Instructor with the Air Support Unit. While there he 'visited' South Vietnam between the 10th of July and the 1st of August 1965. I can only assume, from his background, that this trip would have been to see what the 'helicopter war' was all about and according to Mrs Beacroft he did in fact 'Partake in a number of missions with the airforce'.

After a posting to Headquarters, Eastern Command and the 1st Division at Holsworthy, he was granted the retired rank of Lieutenant Colonel on the 14th of August 1971.

In his retirement from the services Ted gained a Supervisors position in Gove, Northern Territory. To quote a verse from a poem titled A TOWN IS BORN written by Ted in 1972.

*'Tis true that pain accompanies birth;
And that threr as too oft' a dearth
Of thought for those who pay the price
God demands avarice.
So when'er you of Nulanuy
The pleasures of your town enjoy—*

Lieutenant E. C. Beacroft was evacuated from Korea on the 9th of March 1951 suffering from eye trouble caused through snowglare. Although this Officer was suffering pain from his complaint he immediately commenced other duties, knowing the urgent need for trained reinforcements without waiting for the necessary operation on his eyes and by doing so risked his eyesight. It was not until ordered that this officer had the necessary operation carried out on both eyes.

Immediately Lieutenant Beacroft was allowed to get up he returned to duty and for six months worked up to twenty hours a day training and equipping reinforcements for Korea. As the unit was continually short of officers there was no chance of relieving this brilliant young officer, and he carried on uncomplainingly.

Through the efforts of Lieutenant Beacroft, young reinforcements were given a much better chance of fighting the vast numbers of Chinese, without they themselves becoming casualties. There is no doubt that many Australian youths owe their lives to the efforts of this officer.³



Major Beacroft, second from left, with colleagues at Defence Conference in Adelaide, late 1960's

*And you throughout the Nation wide
The spoils of progress do divide—
Remember the great debt we owe
The many men who made it so—
To those at war and work who died;
And those whose great national pride
Determined that there is no bar
To life on the Gove Peninsula.⁴*

It can be seen from the verse that Major Edward Copeland Beacroft was a very patriotic man and as his wife wrote in a letter to me 'he devoted his life to the Army, loved his work and in his Record of Service Book, GAVE HIS BEST AT ALL TIMES. Ted passed away on the 31st of October 1975.⁵

AUSTRALIANS AND PLAN ALE

237660 BEACROFT Edward Copeland Major
Served WW2 (No. NX127467) and Korea (No. 2/400340)
Medals MBE
39/45 Star
Pacific Star
British War Medal
Australian Service Medal
Queens Korea
United Nations Korea
General Service Medal Clasp BRUNEI attached to
Comm British BOR
Campaign Service Medal Clasp BORNEO

- 17058 BELL David Scott Captain
Medals General Service Medal Clasp BRUNEI attached to 14 Liaison Flt Armoured Car Sqn
Campaign Service Medal Clasp BORNEO & MALAY PENINSULA
National Medal & Clasp
- 237612 FRANCK Ronald Sterling Major
Medals 39/45 Star
Atlantic Star
Burma Star
Defence Medal War Medal WW2 service with Royal Navy (No. 584837 Sub Lt)
Naval General Service Medal Clasp Minesweeping 1945-51
United Nations Korea, 2 RAR
General Service Medal Clasp BRUNEI attached to Gurkhas
Campaign Service Medal Clasp BORNEO
Vietnam Medal
Vietnamese Campaign Medal. AFV Amenities Unit, Lt Col
- 335112 WILLING Richard Thomas Captain
Medals MBE
General Service Medal Clasp BRUNEI attached to 3 Army Air Supply Organisation
Campaign Service Medal Clasp BORNEO
- 53104 WOOLMER Donald Ralph Lieutenant
Medals General Service Medal Clasp BRUNEI attached to 3 Army Air Supply Organisation
Campaign Service Medal Clasp BORNEO
Vietnam Medal
Vietnamese Campaign Medal
National Medal & Clasp
- 22715 LANE Arnold James Staff Sergeant
Medals MBE
Queens Korea
United Nations Korea. 2 RAR
General Service Medal Clasp BRUNEI attached to 36 Sqn RAAF
Vietnam Medal
Vietnamese Campaign Medal. AATTV

Notes and References

- ^a *I wish to thank Mrs Edna Beacroft and family for their assistance with this article, for without their dedication to a husband and a father this would not have been possible.*
- ¹ *E. D. Smith, Counter-Insurgency Operations; 1, Malaya and Borneo, Surry, UK, 1985.*
- ² *Conversation between Author/ Callander April 1990.*
- ³ *Citation; Member of the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. Supplied by Mrs Beacroft.*
- ⁴ *Extract from the poem A Town Is Born by E. C. Beacroft 1st of July 1972. First revised 20th of July 1972.*
- ⁴ *Biographical details obtained from Mrs Edna Beacroft: correspondence 28th of August 1989, 20th of February, 6th of July and 23rd of July 1990.*

Military Cross Awards to Australian Aircrew 1914-1918

Christopher Fagg

Sabretache, Vol. XIX, February-March 1988, pp 18-21, contains an article that I wrote on the Military Cross awards to Australian Flying Corps personnel gained for service during the First World War.

Further research over the past two years has shown that the article should be amended to bring it up to date. So follow the necessary amendments.

Figure 5, p. 20 is to be amended as follows by deleting Smith, F. R. Capt., because although he was a member of the Australian Flying Corps, he actually gained his MC while serving with the AIF prior to his transfer to the Flying Corps. AG 19.4.1917 refers.

To be inserted in Figure 5, are Fraser, H. L., Lt., AG 30.8.1918 and Petre, H. A., AG 6.4.1916.

The full gazettal date of Wilkins, G. H., Lt., MC first bar award is AG 15.9.1919.

On p. 21, insert the following additions to the RFC/RNAS MC Australian Recipients Medal Roll.

Binnie, A.	Capt.	LG 26.5.1917
Horn, K. K.	Maj.	LG 1.1.1918
Taylor, G.		LG 1917

Having made these amendments, alterations are required to the annual distribution totals list under the RFC/RNAS heading.

1917	now reads	8
1918	now reads	6
Total	now reads	16

These amendments now mean that there were 31 Australian MC awards to AFC personnel, with a further 16 Australians gaining the MC while serving in the RFC/RNAS. These figures are not inclusive of bars being awarded.

Details of gazettal dates to Taylor, G. and Kenny, E.P., Lt., would be appreciated if anyone has knowledge of such.

Sometimes an Albert, R., and a Gordon, J. R., are referred to as AFC MC recipients. This is incorrect as Gordon gained his MC whilst in the AIF prior to transferring to the AFC, and Albert, R. is in fact Austin, R. A.

The first medal to troops in Australia

Clem Sargent

In *Sabretache* Vol. XXVIII, No. 1, pp 3-11 and Vol. XXIX, No. 4, pp 16-18, it was claimed that the regimental medal issued to the Other Rank members of the 48th Regiment for service in the Peninsular War was issued during the regiments service in New South Wales, that only those veterans who served here, estimated to be 253, received it and that there was evidence that the medal was made in NSW. This latter claim was challenged on the grounds that there was insufficient silver available in the colony at that time for production of so many pieces.

Evidence has now been found which proves beyond doubt that the medal was issued here, it confirms the number issued and greatly substantiates the claim that the medal was made in NSW.

In September 1819 John Bigge, Commissioner of Inquiry, arrived in Sydney to examine in depth, on behalf of the British Government, the administration and organisation of the penal colony of New South Wales. And he pursued his investigations in depth, examining administrators at all levels, free settlers and emancipists, captains and corporals. He followed meticulously every hint of administrative scandal so it is not surprising that the accounts of the windmill operated by the 48th came under his scrutiny. Six months before Bigge's arrival the operation of the mill by the military as a commercial venture had been the subject of bitter controversy between Drennan, the newly arrived Assistant Commissary General, and James Erskine, Commanding Officer of the 48th. The latter claimed that the profits from the mill operations went to the 48th's regimental fund where it was used to buy bedding for the married soldiers and clothing for their children.

In due course Bigge requested Terence Murray, Paymaster of the 48th, to produce the accounts of the mill fund. This Murray did and a copy of the account is now on microfilm at the National Library of Australia where it was found recently while checking for other material in the records of the Bigge inquiry. The accounts give the details of expenditure from 7 May 1818 and show two entries for 1 January 1820:

'Paid at Diff't times for 242 Silver Medals, by order. £143-4-0

Paid ac/QMS Barlow for Silk Strings for Medals. £4-19-0'

The medals cost eleven shillings and ten pence each.

It is considered these entries settle, beyond doubt, that the medals were issued in New South Wales. The number produced—242— agrees closely with the estimated 253 and the fact that the payments were made at 'Different times' indicates that the supplies

came forward either from a number of silversmiths or that they were supplied and paid for as completed. Either way it is obvious that they were manufactured locally. It is regrettable that, as in other entries on the account, the recipient of the payments is not shown. However, the evidence in the account and the fact that local silversmiths had sufficient silver to produce flatware at this time deals effectively with the proposition that there was insufficient silver at hand to produce the medals. The provision of 'Silk Strings' for the medals strongly suggests that the wire suspender seen on the Australian War Memorial medal to Thomas McLoughlan on page 5 of the first article is not the correct one but that the ring on the Mint and Barracks Museum medal to Thomas Hewitt is the correct suspender arrangement. The ring seems far more suitable for suspension by a string.

Further surviving medals have been identified since publication of the first article. Twenty six are now known, all to soldiers who served in New South Wales. It should almost be possible to produce a medal roll.



References

Bigge Report, Appendix, Miscellaneous and Military, CO 201/132, National Library of Australia. mfm 119.

Joseph John Harrington, Drum Major

D. W. Pedler

Joseph Harrington was born in 1864 and spent his early days at Raglan Barracks, Plymouth, where his father was stationed. At the age of 17, he left for Australia in the *Star of India*.

On his arrival at Beachport in the South East of South Australia, he was met by Charles MacKenzie and his wife (Harrington's sister) and then travelled with them to Mount Gambier. Some time later they left for the Mallee Country and took up a selection. An accidental poisoning followed by a prolonged stay in Hill Hospital and Harrington's subsequent poor health forced the abandonment of the selection and return to Mount Gambier.

Mr MacKenzie, whose trade was that of a cutter and tailor, commenced business at the main corner of the town and Joseph Harrington was associated with him for 40 years.

He married Christina Burdett on Christmas Day 1888, the family eventually being John (jr), Archie, Ken, Colin, Ethel, Jean, Lily and Jessie.

He was a member of the Manchester Unity Oddfellows, also the Ancient Order of Foresters. Well known in Masonic circles, he passed through the chairs of the Mount Gambier Lodge No. 35, the Mark Lodge and others.

A keen supporter of the Caledonian Society, he took an active part in all associated events. For many years, he was a judge and steward at the New Year Day Sports. A good athlete, he competed in cycling events and had outstanding success as a track competitor, holding the championship for a number of years, on occasion starting 150 yards behind scratch in 2 mile events.

A justice of the peace, he was very interested in public affairs, was concerned in the Mount Gambier Institute and played a leading part in amateur theatricals, particularly in connection with the movement to build a Methodist Church Hall.

The Military career of Joseph John Harrington began as shown in 'A List of Members of the Mount Gambier Rifle Company, kept pursuant to the Rifle Companies Act of 1878'. The rolls were kept from 1879 to 1886. John Harrington, tailor of Mt Gambier joined 6/3/1885 and resigned 8/5/1886 (Charles MacKenzie's service was as a member of No. 2 [Scotch] Company, Adelaide Regiment of Volunteer Rifles in 1866, also in the Mount Gambier Company with Harrington and as a Second Lieutenant South Australian National Rifle Association. He was placed on the retired list of the South Australian Military Forces 15/8/1900 as a Lieutenant).



Lieutenant J. J. Harrington



*Lieutenant J. J. Harrington,
Drum Major, with the Band of
the Mount Gambier Scottish
Company*

On the 13th of March, 1900 a meeting was held in Mount Gambier to form a Military Company. It was resolved on the proposition of J. J. Harrington that a Scottish Company be formed. Other points were that kilts would be worn and that while Scots would be preferred, membership would not be restricted to them. C. MacKenzie and J. J. Harrington were part of the committee elected to oversee the formation of the Company, finally formed as 'H' Company, 2nd Battalion (Reserve), Adelaide Rifles.

In the *Border Watch* of 12/5/1900, the following advertisement appeared 'LOOK — DO NOT MISS THE SCOTTISH COMPANY forming Monday evening next'.

During July 1900 Privates A. C. Haig, J. J. Harrington, R. Hutton and H. W. Osbourne were appointed corporals on probation. Later the following appointments were made. Acting Corporal A. E. Haig to be Colour Sergeant, A/Cpls Harrington, Hutton and Osbourne to be Sergeants.

In July 1901, following an examination to confirm the N.C.Os of the Company, the results were Sergeant Harrington 92/100, Col-Sgt Haig 84/100. The position of Col-Sgt being held on probation was therefore won by A. C. Haig, the position depending on a satisfactory pass not actual points scored. However, the position was held in abeyance for some weeks and in the *Border Watch*, 7/8/01, it was announced that Sergeant Harrington, with the highest score, would be Col-Sgt. Sergeant Haig keenly felt the prospect of losing his rank, and in the circumstances, Sergeant Harrington magnanimously waived his right to the position.

On the 4th of October, Sgt Harrington was appointed Drum Major of the newly formed company pipe band which comprised 6 pipers, 2 side drums and a bass drum. On December 13th, he was appointed Sergeant Drummer and Private A. Stewart, Sergeant Piper.

In mid January 1902 it was announced that under the new division of the 2nd Battalion, Adelaide Rifles, 'H' Company (Mt Gambier) would become 'C' Company.

On the 1st of January 1903, Drum Major Harrington led the band and parade to Frew Park for the Scottish Sports. He competed and did well in the highland dancing.

The *Commonwealth Government Gazette* (C.G.G.) No. 62 lists new Regimental Titles and 'C' Coy, A.R. became 'G' Company, South Australian Infantry Regiment.

In August 1904, Harrington became Col-Sgt in place of A. C. Haig who had resigned to accept a Lieutenancy in the Mt Gambier half squadron of the Light Horse. Haig's christian names are Archy Crosby and he should not be confused with Alexander Campbell Haig, one of the original Scottish Company Officers who retired in September 1906.

C.G.G. No. 53 1907 Joseph John Harrington was appointed 2nd Lieutenant (provisionally) dated 3rd October 1907.

New Year's Day 1908. In extreme heat, Lt Harrington, as Drum Major, led the band and company at the head of the parade to Frew Park for the sports day. On this as on many other occasions, he won prizes as the best dressed highland gentleman. Apparently he would have to have appeared in civilian attire for these contests.

C.G.G. No. 50, 1908 gives confirmation of appointment of 2nd Lieutenant Harrington.

February 1909, examinations for promotion to 1st Lieutenant.

C.G.G. No. 52 2nd Lieutenant J. J. Harrington to be Lieutenant, dated 13 September 1909.

In January 1910 he, with 20 men of 'G' Company attended a camp at Brighton (South Australia) held for the inspection of local forces by Lord Kitchener.

On the 21st of February, Captain C. H. S. Williams, Officer Commanding 'G' Company, was transferred to the unattached list.

In December 1911, Lt Harrington passed the theoretical examination for Captain (97/100).

C.G.G. No. 24, 1912 S.A. Infantry Regiment Lt J. J. Harrington to be Captain, dated 1st April 1912.

In early June, 1912, a Church Parade for the Scottish Company was led by the pipe band under Drum Major, Captain J. J. Harrington.

The C.G.G. No. 51, 1912 gives alterations in designations and formation of new units '4 companies of the South Australian Infantry Regiment, 1st Battalion to be the 74th Infantry.

During August 1912, a deputation attended the Federal Minister of Defence (Senator Pearce) to request the retention of Scottish uniform in the Australian Forces. This request was ultimately unsuccessful.



Lieutenant Charles MacKenzie. At the time of this photograph he was on the Retired List.

6th of September 1912, a military dinner and dance was held in connection with the late Mt Gambier Scottish Company. Upholstered easy chairs were presented to Lt Charles MacKenzie, Lt Alex Haig and Lt Col Daniel, all on the retired list. Captain Harrington was then presented with a similar chair. It was remarked that he was second only to Chas MacKenzie in responsibility for the formation of the unit and that he had been the life and soul of the company throughout its existence.

C.G.G. No. 65, 1912 74th Infantry Captain J. J. Harrington late S.A.I.R., 1st Battalion to be Captain in the 74th Infantry, 'C' Company.

His service continued with the 74th. During World War I, it is stated that he was concerned with various military camps. He retired from military service on 1/7/1918 with the rank of Captain (see footnote).

On the 27th of April 1941, Joseph John Harrington died at Mt Gambier Hospital and was buried at the local cemetery. 'The Flowers of the Forest', played by piper J. Blair was a final tribute to a full and rewarding life.

Footnote

Joseph Harrington's obituary in the Border Watch of April 29th, 1941 states that he was a Major in the 74th Infantry. This conflicts with documentary evidence, i.e. Commonwealth Government Gazettes and the Army List, August 1918, page 633.

It was also stated that he was Adjutant of Morphetville Camp and later Mitcham Camp. A brief history of Mitcham Camp, 50,000 Men by Robert J. Miller lists Officers and N.C.O.s concerned with running the camp, but Harrington does not appear.

Australian Military Personnel, serving in South Africa, who attended King Edwards VII's Coronation

John E. Price

Many years ago I was given two lists of those Australians who, after having served in South Africa, had been chosen to represent their unit, and country, at King Edward the Seventh's Coronation. Looking at both lists there appeared to be no common criteria in the selection, although officers and men who had been awarded decorations, medals, or mentioned in despatches, were probably the first to be chosen, but how the others were selected remains a mystery to me.

From research studies I have learned that the Scottish Horse contingent embarked for England on board the steamship *Bavaria*, so it may be assumed that other Coronation contingent troops travelled on the same vessel. Yet, without definite proof, this assumption could be incorrect.

The Coronation was to have taken place on the 26th June 1902, the date appearing on the commemorative medals that had been struck in preparation for the event. However, on the 24th June, it was reported that His Majesty was suffering from an appendicitis necessitating surgery (a dangerous operation in those days) therefore the auspicious event would have to be postponed. The King made a rapid recovery and the belated Coronation took place on the 4th August, and was made extremely colourful by the presence of the large Colonial contingents, from every part of the British Empire. Nevertheless it was fortunate that, because of the postponement, resulted in many troops, from the Colonies had to leave for their homes before the new date of the ceremony. The King decreed that everyone who would have attended the Coronation, in June, would receive the medal. Silver for officers, bronze for the other ranks.

Earlier I mentioned two lists but, although I have no evidence of their source, there is little reason to believe them to be erroneous. Even though there appears to be some names in the one that are not in the other. This will explain the absence of a unit against several of the names.

Like all the other lists that I have compiled, and have appeared in *Sabretache*, this one is only a guide so, therefore, I cannot guarantee its absolute accuracy.

AUSTRALIAN CONTINGENTS**Regimental Staff:**

Lieut-Colonel C. St. C. Cameron, C.B., 1st Tasmanian Mounted
Infantry, Commanding Officer

Captain M. A. Hilliard, D.S.O., 1st New South Wales Mounted
Rifles, Paymaster

Lieutenant S. S. Ryrie, Adjutant, New South Wales Citizens
Bushmans Contingent

Lieut-Colonel G. F. McWilliams, Medical Officer, 1st Western
Australian Mounted Infantry

R.S.M. J. Costella, D.C.M., 1st Tasmanian Mounted Infantry

R.Q.M.S. G. H. Goodall, 2nd South Australian Mounted Rifles

New South Wales Detachment Members:

Sergt E. A. C. Corlette, 2nd New South Wales Mounted Rifles

Sergt T. N. Render, D.C.M., New South Wales Army Medical
Corps

Sergt W. C. James, N.S.W. Lancers

Sergt J. M. Juleff, 1st Australian Horse

Sergt W. Walpole, New South Wales Army Medical Corps

Corpl W. Cameron

Corpl A. McSpadden, 2nd New South Wales Mounted Rifles

Corpl H. H. Pascoe, 2nd New South Wales Mounted Rifles

Corpl H. B. Podmore, 1st New South Wales Mounted Rifles

Corpl A. Willis, New South Wales Army Medical Corps

Bglr C. S. Binns, 1st New South Wales Mounted Rifles

Dvr A. Gazzard, 'A' Battery, Royal Australian Artillery

Dvr W. H. Watson, 'A' Battery, Royal Australian Artillery

Gnr A. Perrin, 'A' Battery, Royal Australian Artillery

Gnr E. Pugh, 'A' Battery, Royal Australian Artillery

S, Smith H. Garlick, 'A' Squadron, New South Wales Mounted
Rifles

Trumpr L. P. Gillard, 'A' Battery, Royal Australian Artillery

Pte W. W. Ash, 6th New South Wales Imperial Bushmen

Pte F. W. Axam, 'A' Squadron, New South Wales Mounted Rifles

Pte W. Beck, 1st New South Wales Mounted Rifles

Pte J. A. Bucholtz

Pte D. Buffett, 6th New South Wales Imperial Bushmen

Pte J. E. Buffett, 6th New South Wales Imperial Bushmen

Pte J. W. R. Coupe, 'E' Squadron, 1st New South Wales Mounted
Rifles

Pte A. D. Coxhead, 'E' Squadron, 1st New South Wales Mounted
Rifles

Pte V. Davis, 'E' Squadron, 1st New South Wales Mounted Rifles

Pte C. F. Duck, New South Wales Army Medical Corps

Pte A. Ezzy, 6th New South Wales Imperial Bushmen

Pte W. J. W. Fisher, 1st New South Wales Mounted Rifles

Pte H. G. Gaites, 1st New South Wales Mounted Rifles

Pte H. W. Golledge, New South Wales Army Medical Corps

Trpr J. W. Haydon, 1st Australian Horse

Pte J. S. Howarth, New South Wales Army Medical Corps
 Pte E. T. Hutchings, 2nd New South Wales Mounted Rifles
 Pte C. Lindfield, D.C.M., New South Wales Army Medical Corps
 Pte A. Livingston
 Pte W. McPherson, New South Wales Army Medical Corps
 Pte J. Maccabe, 1st New South Wales Mounted Rifles
 Pte H. D. McCredie, 'E' Squadron, 1st New South Wales
 Mounted Rifles
 Pte C. H. Mitchell, 6th New South Wales Mounted Rifles
 Pte J. Moore, 6th New South Wales Imperial Bushmen
 Pte E. L. Moody, 1st Australian Horse
 Pte F. J. O'Connor
 Pte W. J. R. Richardson, 6th New South Wales Imperial Bushmen
 Pte E. Robinson
 Pte A. R. Seguss, New South Wales Army Medical Corps
 Pte A. J. Slattery, New South Wales Lancers
 Pte W. J. Stinson, 'E' Squadron, 1st New South Wales Mounted
 Rifles
 Pte S. H. Saxelby, 'E' Squadron, 1st New South Wales Mounted
 Rifles
 Pte F. Townley, New South Wales Army Medical Corps
 Pte W. Warby
 Pte R. Young

Victorian Detachment Members:

Capt S. T. Staughton, D.S.O., 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
 C.S.M. E. H. Scouller, 4th Victorian Imperial Bushmen
 Sergt T. W. Finlayson, 4th Victorian Imperial Bushmen
 Sergt C. J. Masters, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles
 Sergt S. R. Prowse, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
 Sergt W. Walpole
 Sadlr.Sergt A. E. Satchwell, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
 Corpl F. H. Naylor, 4th Victorian Imperial Bushmen
 Corpl R. J. Nethery
 Corpl S. Robinson, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
 Corpl C. H. Sutherland, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles
 Corpl U. Whelan, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles
 L.Corpl J. Dobson, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
 L.Corpl J. Kerr, 4th Victorian Imperial Bushmen
 L.Corpl O. W. Pleasants, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
 L.Corpl D. Squires, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
 Bglr W. J. H. Brenchley, 1st Victorian Infantry
 Dvr A. C. Morey, 3rd Victorian Bushmens Contingent
 S.Smith D. E. Mason, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles
 Pte J. Broadfoot, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles
 Pte A. H. Crocker, 5th Victorian Mounted Rifles
 Pte C. T. Earnshaw, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
 Pte J. W. Fechner, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles
 Pte F. C. Hart, 1st Victorian Infantry
 Pte J. J. Hesthorpe, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles
 Pte A. E. Hillman, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles

Pte W. E. Hull, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
Pte G. A. Kelly
Pte J. Kerr, 4th Victorian Imperial Bushmen
Pte F. T. Krcrouse, ex 2nd Scottish Horse, Victorian Government
Representative
Pte R. G. Lyle, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
Pte C. H. Mohy, 1st Victorian Infantry
Pte C. Miller, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
Pte J. M. Morey, 3rd Victorian Bushmens Contingent
Pte J. Nadenbousch, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
Pte F. H. Naylor, 4th Victorian Imperial Bushmen
Pte W. J. Penno, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles
Pte T. Reardon, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles
Pte E. P. Rich, 3rd Victorian Bushmens Contingent
Pte D. Sheehan, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles
Pte A. E. Starkey, D.C.M., 1st Victorian Infantry
Pte P. J. Vallance, 1st Victorian Mounted Infantry
Pte F. T. Westcott, 2nd Victorian Mounted Rifles
Pte W. T. Will, 1st Victorian Infantry

Queensland Detachment Members:

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C.S.M. J. J. Walker, 1st Queensland Mounted Infantry
Sergt C. E. Deacon, 3rd Queensland Mounted Infantry
Sergt L. Donkin, 3rd Queensland Mounted Infantry
Sergt J. J. Walker
Far.Sergt C. Luxton, 4th Queensland Imperial Bushmen
Corpl A. P. Desham, 3rd Queensland Mounted Infantry
Corpl F. J. Hockey
Pte H. Barnes, 3rd Queensland Mounted Infantry
Pte W. A. Chamberlain
Pte L. Donkin
Pte G. French, 3rd Queensland Mounted Infantry
Pte G. L. Hutton, 1st Queensland Mounted Infantry
Pte P. Lake
Pte H. W. Lindley, 4th Queensland Imperial Bushmen
Pte C. Luxton
Pte H. H. Missing
Pte E. H. Shedforth, 4th Queensland Imperial Bushmen
Pte W. G. Strong
Pte F. Schy, 2nd Queensland Mounted Infantry

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Sergt J. C. Walters, 1st South Australian Mounted Rifles
S.Smith Cpl H. H. Newbold, 2nd South Australian Mounted Rifles
L.Corpl A. E. Scott, 1st South Australian Mounted Infantry
Pte E. Bristowe, 1st South Australian Mounted Infantry
Trpr J. G. Clarke, 2nd South Australian Mounted Rifles
Pte M. J. Dew, 1st South Australian Mounted Infantry
Pte S. R. Jones, 1st South Australian Mounted Infantry
Pte W. Justice, 1st South Australian Mounted infantry

Trpr S. H. Mayfield, 4th South Australian Imperial Bushmen
 Pte J. Mounsey, 2nd South Australian Mounted Rifles
 Pte J. W. Parsons, 1st South Australian Mounted Infantry
 Trpr T. W. Wilkins, 4th South Australian Imperial Bushmen

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 Sergt J. A. Bullock, 2nd Western Australian Mounted Infantry
 Bglr E. W. Arundell, 4th Western Australian Mounted Infantry
 Pte P. Allen, 1st Western Australian Mounted Infantry
 Pte R. Corkhill, D.C.M., 1st Western Australian Mounted
 Infantry
 Pte J. B. Mills, 2nd Western Australian Mounted Infantry

Tasmanian Detachment Members:

Sergt H. J. Cox, 1st Tasmanian Mounted Infantry
 Corpl E. S. Brown, 3rd Tasmanian (I.B.) Contingent
 Pte J. Ducie
 Pte H. H. Facy, 1st Tasmanian Mounted Infantry
 Pte C. W. Hynes, 1st Tasmanian Mounted Infantry
 Pte W. K. McIntyre, 2nd Tasmanian Bushmens Contingent

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 Corpl A. Waltisbuhl
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 Trpr W. Murray, 1st Regiment

**Acknowledgements
 and sources:**

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 1887-1977. *Lieut-Colonel
 Howard N. Cole, O.B.E., T.D.*
 Records of Australian
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 South Africa 1899-1902,
*Lieut-Col. P. L. Murray,
 R.A.A., Melbourne 1911*
 Southern Cross Scots
*(completed yet unpublished),
 John E. Price.*

Book Reviews



D. M. Wyatt, *A Lion in the Colony*, ISBN 0-646-01177-4. Available from the publishers, the 6th Military District Museum, Anglesea Barracks, Hobart, 7002. Priced \$16.99 (including packaging and postage). 63 pp with 45 illustrations, including four in colour.

Whilst even the youngest schoolchild knows that Tasmania is Australia's smallest State very few Australian may be aware that the 'Apple Isle' is extremely rich in military history. Oh sure! nearly everyone has heard of Eaglehawk Neck and the penal settlement of Port Arthur with its redcoated 'warders'. However in this gem of a publication, with its striking cover, Major Wyatt has delved deeper into the many lesser known aspects of the military presence in Tasmania. The book's sub-title 'An Historical Outline of the Tasmanian Colonial Volunteer Military Forces 1859-1901' does precisely that. In fact, to be pedantic, it takes a step further and lists the Tasmanian detachments of the Australian Commonwealth Horse that were despatched in 1902 to participate in the closing weeks of the Anglo-Boer War, a conflict that gained Tasmania eleven decorations including two Victoria Crosses.

In his Foreword H.E. The Governor of Tasmania, General Sir Phillip Bennett modestly states that the book is a welcome addition to Tasmania's military history. Yet, to be more specific, it is a most valuable enhancement to written military history. The work takes us from the days when British troops garrisoned the infant Colony through several periods of 'ups and downs' when the Defence Force was frequently on a low priority rating, (I seem to have read that somewhere before) it deals fully with the Volunteer era, with the ever constant threat of a Russian 'invasion', touches on the Permanent Forces and Rifle Clubs, and ends with Federation.

Whilst trying not to be too critical I found that the numerous photographs could have been sharper but, having said that, they prove fascinating a fact that I am certain military historians will agree. For everyone who specialises in uniforms, accoutrements, military insignia, and all aspects of armaments, this book is a 'must'. While Genealogists may bemoan the fact that few of the photographs give the names of those depicted, nevertheless they will find the book a veritable 'goldmine', for countless personalities abound in the text.

I congratulate the author and gladly place the volume into my library of early Australian colonial military history.

JOHN E PRICE

Lex McAulay, *The Fighting First*, Allen and Unwin, North Sydney, 1991, 293 pp.

The Fighting First is the chronicle of the 1968-69 tour of duty in South Vietnam of the First Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (1 RAR), as one of the major combat elements of the First Australian Task Force (1 ATF). Lex McAulay served three tours of duty in South Vietnam—the first with 1 RAR on its first tour in 1965-66—and is the author of two other histories of the Australian Army in South Vietnam: *The Battle of Long Tan* and *The Battle of Coral*.

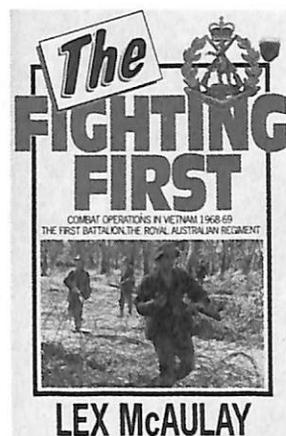
Dealing briefly with the battalion's preparation and training in Australia, as well as its return, its content is primarily the coverage of the battalion's operations in the 1 ATF tactical area of responsibility, Phuoc Tuy Province. Its foray, with 1 ATF, into an area to the north-east of Saigon in May-June was to win, with its sister battalion 3 RAR, the battle honours 'Coral' and 'Balmoral', which are the names of the fire support and patrol bases defended against major Viet Cong (VC) and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) attacks. Later, in Phuoc Tuy, with 4 RAR, it was to earn a further battle honour for the Regiment—'Hat Dich'.

The narrative is based on the battalion's operations log, supplemented by many detailed accounts from individuals involved in the various actions. This is reinforced by a good collection of photographs of personnel, of weapons and equipment, and scenes from various operations. There are also some interesting summaries of lessons learned, taken from operational reports. The narrative is, in effect, a blow-by-blow description of the battalion's tour of duty primarily at rifle company and platoon level. Some fine detail from the log, although relevant, detracts a little from the flow of the narrative.

The bigger operational picture, from 1 ATF through to South Vietnam's national level, provides, at appropriate stages, a useful perspective on the part played by 1 RAR. There are some illuminating reflections on the capabilities and characteristics of the VC and NVA troops, as well as the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), our US Army and USAF allies and other Australian participants, notably RAAF and RAN aircrew.

More maps might have been provided, the better to orient the various operations, particularly those to the north-east of Saigon in May-June 1968. The map of the III Corps Tactical Zone, which included Phuoc Tuy Province, depicts some suspect boundary detail. Further, a summary of operations conducted would have been a useful appendix, to complement the good series of appendices detailing those killed in action, wounded and all who served with the battalion as well as citations for various awards.

Apart from operations, there is a pleasing coverage of other aspects of 1 RAR's tour of duty—administrative, humorous and reflective. It is unfortunate that some 'throwing of stones' at another battalion was included with emphasis early in the book.



Although the broader issues of the war and the Australian Army's involvement are not addressed in any detail in the body of the book, the introduction deals briefly with these subjects. Its first sentence is open to challenge, because the Australian Army had been preparing for a counter-revolutionary war for some years, and when in 1964 it became apparent that South Vietnam could not be saved by sending more advisers, Australia's military leaders believed the time and place for trained combat troops had come. The deployment of 1 RAR in 1965 was the outcome.

The Fighting First is a soldier's story, about fighting soldiers; it is not, nor was it conceivably intended to be a footnoted military history treatise. It is about the nature of counter-revolutionary warfare for those involved day-by-day in patrolling, contacts, ambushing, fighting through bunker systems, cordoning and searching, and being mortared and rocketted in defensive positions; it is about those who rode into battle in helicopters and armoured personnel carriers, but who in the main moved on foot, heavily laden with weapon, ammunition, equipment, rations and water, in the most demanding of tropical conditions.

Lex McAulay has presented a dynamic record of an Australian infantry battalion's experience of nearly a year continuously at war. He has breathed life, and death, into this excellent story of its tour of duty in South Vietnam.

DAVID CHINN

James Ritchie Grant, *Officers of the Western Australian Defence Force, 1861-1901*, John Burridge Military Antiques, Swanbourne, W.A. Price: \$28.00 plus postage.

As the British Army withdrew from Western Australia in the 1850s and 60s the handful of European settlers in tiny settlements clinging to the edge of the vast western third of the continent were concerned for their security. To fill the gap and provide the security, in principal, if not in fact, were groups of local volunteer soldiers. These volunteers were a colourful band and represented a broad cross section of colonial society in Western Australia. To be a volunteer was to be a member of a respected 'gentlemen's club' and was not without its social advantages. But the purchase of expensive uniforms and unpaid hours on the parade ground, rifle range, and route march meant that the life of the volunteer was not entirely a merry one!

Information on the volunteers of the Western Australian Defence Force has been, at best, sketchy. Until now the only reference available was George Wieck's *The Volunteer Movement in Western Australia 1861-1903*. After years of meticulous research Jim Grant has compiled and published a very usable supplement, *Officers of the Western Australian Defence Force, 1861-1901*. This book alphabetically lists every officer of the WAVF and WADF with his service details. It also contains some very useful appendices, one outlines the lineage of volunteer units in colonial

Western Australia, another lists the colony's commandants and a third has embarkation details of Western Australian contingents to the Boer War.

This book lists all of the officers of the Western Australian Defence Force and gives their military service details from first commission to retirement or death as the case may be. Non-commissioned service, medal entitlements and appointment dates as well as thirty pages of illustrations depicting some eighty officers in a variety of uniforms make this a very useful reference book.

This book is a must for the military historian as well as any one with an interest in Western Australian colonial history. It is available from the author, c/- Western Australian Museum, Francis St, Perth or John Burrridge Military Antiques, 91 Shenton Road, Swanbourne. It is hardbound, gold blocked book, from a limited edition print run of only 300 copies so get your order in soon.

BRAD MANERA

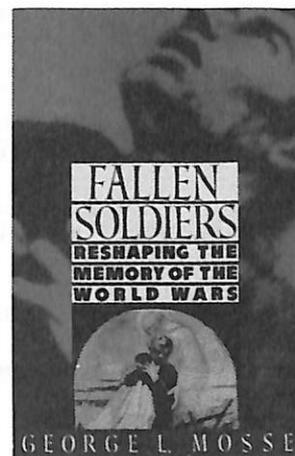
George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: reshaping the memory of world wars*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Through exhaustive research and careful analysis of European and American sources, Mosse explores much of the romantic mythology surrounding war, in particular the cult of the fallen. In doing so he reveals an essential truth that the search for meaning in such horrific conflicts often involved a justification for them.

From this, Mosse introduces us to the Myth of the War Experience as it developed from the French Revolution and found its most elaborate expression in the world wars. Due to the mass nature of these wars there was a concomitant need to mask its horror and make the memory of personal loss more bearable by the belief in sacrifice in a just cause rather than waste in a senseless slaughter.

Surrounding such belief was the development of a religion which asserted that war was a necessary and inescapable part of the social order and that by personal sacrifice the nation or race could be purified. The most tangible expression of this belief in personal sacrifice, and one which Mosse examines in great detail, is the design of war cemeteries and shrines of remembrance. These were influenced by, according to Mosse, deliberate parallels between the fallen soldier and Christ's Passion. The fallen were the sacrificial lambs whose blood purified the nation and whose memory, as with the crucifixion, inspired subsequent generations. Altogether, *Fallen Soldiers* is a readable and thought provoking work which does not question 'lest we forget' so much as what it is we are actually remembering.

RODD PRATT



C. D. Coulthard-Clark (in association with the RAAF), *The Third Brother*, Allen & Unwin. Hard cover, illustrated, 533 pp, \$45.

An obvious need has been filled by the timely publication, at the 70th Anniversary of the RAAF, of *The Third Brother—the Royal Australian Air Force 1921-1939*, by Mr Coulthard-Clark.

This is the story of the creation, against heavy odds, of our separate Air Force, and of the struggle to survive in the face of political and service obstructions, the Great Depression, and of a degree of internal dissention. Readers of the official histories of the Australian Flying Corps in the Great War, and of the RAAF in the Second World War, can now enjoy the story of the years between, when the course of our present life-style was being chartered.

Lacking the total confidence and unqualified support of their Government, it was not easy for senior officers of the infant RAAF to deal with their more senior counterparts in the Navy and the Army, and they were kept continually in a position of concern and uncertainty as to their future. It was always a distinct possibility that they would be subordinated to either or both of the senior services.

The struggle to replace the obsolescent aircraft and stores (given to Australia by the British Government after the Great War to enable the establishment of the Service), with the more modern equipment needed to carry out an adequate defence role in later years was only one of many problems.

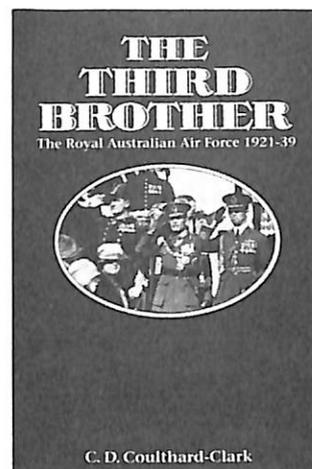
The early RAAF, in addition to its traditional public-relations appearances, was also required to justify its existence by carrying the first air mails; conducting mineral, ocean and geographic surveys; carrying out search-and-rescue missions and bushfire patrols; weather flights; and even early crop-dusting experiments, generally with equipment that was not designed for the job. In its gradual progress towards a capacity to react efficiently when war came, it learned 'the hard way' the lessons of politicking, administration and finance, man management, supply, maintenance, and discipline in the air and on the ground.

The importance of leadership and management, as well as of the ability to fly and fight, was not realised by all the early pilots, and some difficulties were encountered in harnessing the energies of some individuals. Insistence on adequate staff training for officers eventually produced some of the leaders in the wartime RAAF; and a highly professional (albeit small) Force emerged.

Bound up with the development of the RAAF was the attempt to found an Australian aircraft industry, which became a reality solely as a wartime expedient, and which died soon afterwards, without the demands of wartime production to keep it going. In the process, however, a great deal was learned about aeroplanes suited to our needs.

The rivalry and discord, known to have existed in the leadership of the RAAF, has been dealt with by the author in an impartial but compassionate way; and it is easy to understand how the best efforts of all involved during these critical years resulted in the very effective RAAF of the Second World War. It is to be hoped that the lessons learned will continue to be of value in the future maintenance and development of the RAAF.

This is an excellent book, which brings out both the excitement and the drudgery of the RAAF between two wars; many of the



chapters will strike a responsive note with many of today's members, as well as with those who lived through the period under Review. Highly recommended reading!

BARRY VIDEON

James Boyle, *Railway to Burma*, North Sydney, NSW, Alien & Unwin, 1990, hard cover, 198 pages, including index, \$24.95.

James Boyle was a 25 year old Australian soldier at the fall of Singapore and was one of thousands of prisoners who worked in inhuman conditions to build the Thailand/Burma railway. He introduces his work with a comprehensive description of the defence of Malaya and the nightmare of the last days in Singapore. His keen powers of observation are portrayed in his account of the incidents which occurred during the dreadful march of F Force from Changi to Thailand. He describes the terrible four day rail trip packed in trucks and then the march of some 300 kilometres through jungle along muddy tracks for 12 to 15 hours per night. He relates the lashings and ill treatment by the Japanese and Korean guards. The force was completely exhausted by the rigours of the march and the brutality of their Japanese captors by the time they reached the Three Pagodas Pass where they were to work on the railway line. They were to live for three months in a disease ridden and poorly constructed camp.

It was during the second day of the march that James Boyle decided to record in shorthand the events of the past few weeks. From that day until he returned to Singapore at the end of 1943 he recorded day by day the main happenings of the camp. He would take his little notebook out on the railway and conceal it from the guards and make notes during the lunch break. He said he would mostly use the stump of an old pencil to transcribe the events. He hid his notes when they had inspections and buried them under a hut at the Orchard Road Camp in Singapore. After the liberation in August 1945 he returned and retrieved his diary. It was this diary which formed the basis of his vivid descriptions of his fellow prisoners and the inhuman conditions which the prisoners of war had to endure.

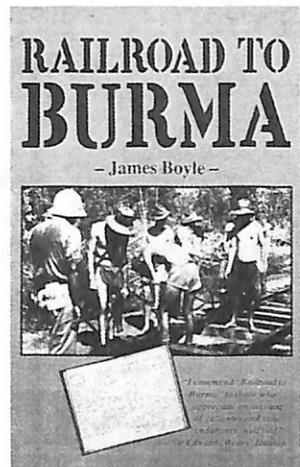
James Boyle gives the reader a clear picture of young Australian soldiers who were used to a certain standard of living but who had to struggle to overcome disease despite the desperate lack of food during their internment. He lists the scanty rations which made their bodies more susceptible to the diseases of the tropics. In their struggle to overcome boredom the prisoners organised lectures, and orations on subjects such as 'International polo', 'Big Game Hunting in India', 'The Australian Test Tour', 'Winston Churchill' etc. They also organised concert parties as the camp was not short on talent. The final chapter describes the survivors feeling when they flew into Darwin and touched down on Australian soil again.

The book includes maps of the Changi Goal area and the Thai-Burma railway. The foreword is written by Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop and I am pleased to support his view.

'I commend *Railway to Burma* to those who appreciate an account of gallantry and stoic endurance, well told.'

BRENDA HENNESSY

Librarian, Veterans' Review Board



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EXPLORATION
& REBELLION.

SEIGE OF TOBRUK 1941-1991

Commemorative Medallion

The Queensland Branch of the Military Historical Society of Australia has issued a medallion to commemorate the 242 days that Tobruk was under seige, **10 April to 7 December 1941.**

Cost \$10.00 including postage to:
Mr D. A. Wright
25 Hobart Avenue
Camp Hill, Qld 4152.

Name:
Address:
.....
.....

THE N.S.W. NORTHERN RIVER LANCERS

Martin Buckley's new book, *The N.S.W. Northern Rivers Lancers*, was released on 15th June 1991.

This new book, although complete in itself, is meant to be a companion volume to *Sword and Lance* as together they cover the complete history of cavalry units of the North Rivers region of New South Wales.

The format is the same as for *Sword and Lance* and with 292 pages containing 400 black and white photographs plus colour pages, diagrams and nominal rolls, it covers the history of the local Light Horse regiments and the 15th Australian Motor Regiment (A.I.F.) as fully as possible.

The book is available for \$40 from Angus and Robertson bookshops at Lismore Square and Grafton or by post for \$45 by forwarding a cheque to Martin Buckley, Northern Rivers N.S.W. Military Historian, 19 Canterbury Chase, Goonellabah, N.S.W. 2480.

THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

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

ORGANISATION

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

SABRETACHE

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

Jan.-March edition mailed last week of March
Apr.-Jun. edition mailed last week of June

July-Sept. edition mailed last week of September
Oct.-Dec. edition mailed last week of December

ADVERTISING

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

Commercial advertising rate is \$150 per full page; \$80 per half page; and \$40 per quarter page. Contract rates applicable at reduced rates. Apply Federal Secretary, P.O. Box 30, Garran, A.C.T. 2605.

Advertising material must reach the Secretary by the following dates:

1 January for January-March edition
1 April for April-June edition

1 July for July-September edition
1 October for October-December edition

QUERIES

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

SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Society publications advertised in *Sabretache* are available from:
Anthony Staunton, P.O. Box 354, Woden, A.C.T. 2606
Orders and remittances should be forwarded to this address.

THE MILITARY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

Please address all correspondence to:

The Federal Secretary, P.O. Box 30, Garran, A.C.T. 2605, Australia.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I/We of
(Name, Rank, etc.) (Address)

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

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*(Strike out non-applicable alternative)

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I/We enclose my our remittance for \$26.00 (Aust.) being annual subscription. due 1st July each year.

