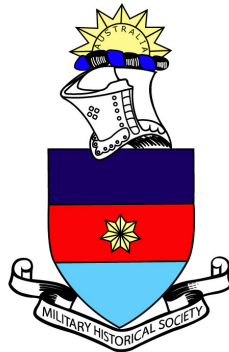


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Sabretache



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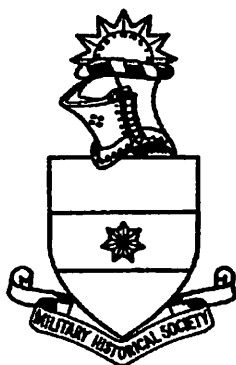
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Contributions in the form of articles, notes, queries or letters are always welcome. Authors of major articles are invited to submit a brief biographical note, and, where possible, submit the text of the article on floppy disk as well as hard copy.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

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The Military Historical Society of Australia

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

Organisation

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

Sabretache

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

Members' notices

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

Queries

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

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The unreliability of the eye witness — the death of Von Richthofen

Gail Gunn

About 11 o'clock on Sunday morning 21 April 1918 on the Somme, not far from the village of Corbie, a few hundred Allies, mostly Australians, observed an event that suddenly changed from being an everyday sight, a dogfight over the trenches, to a celebrity event that the eyewitnesses could dine out on for the rest of their lives. The catalyst was simply the death of cavalry captain Baron Manfred Von Richthofen.

I started by saying that it occurred about 11am on Sunday morning 21 April 1918, because that is about the only fact that nobody has argued about (except some people said it was about 10.45 and some said it was ten past eleven). The eyewitnesses differ on almost every point; who shot him down being the most widely discussed, but there are differing views on where he landed, the extent of his wounds and the condition of his plane. The myths have been further elaborated by shoddy research and "creative" reporting.

The chase

The incident started when Lt WP May, known as "Wop", of the 209th Squadron broke away from a dogfight a few thousand feet up and was pursued down to about 50 feet by a red triplane. Canadian Capt Roy Brown DSC dived on the red plane to protect his friend. Wop May was a newcomer and the experienced ace Roy Brown had told May to avoid combat. May ignored this and dived into a dogfight and found himself in deep trouble, alone with his guns jammed. Von Richthofen dived in for the kill and Brown came to the rescue. May took evasive action and tried to get back behind the British lines.

So we had May flying from east to west, Von Richthofen chasing him and Brown chasing Von Richthofen, and they reach a point near the Bray-Corbie road. The RAF said that they were flying at 500 feet, Brown said that they were flying at 200 feet, and the other observers vary between 400 feet, 150 feet and 40 feet.

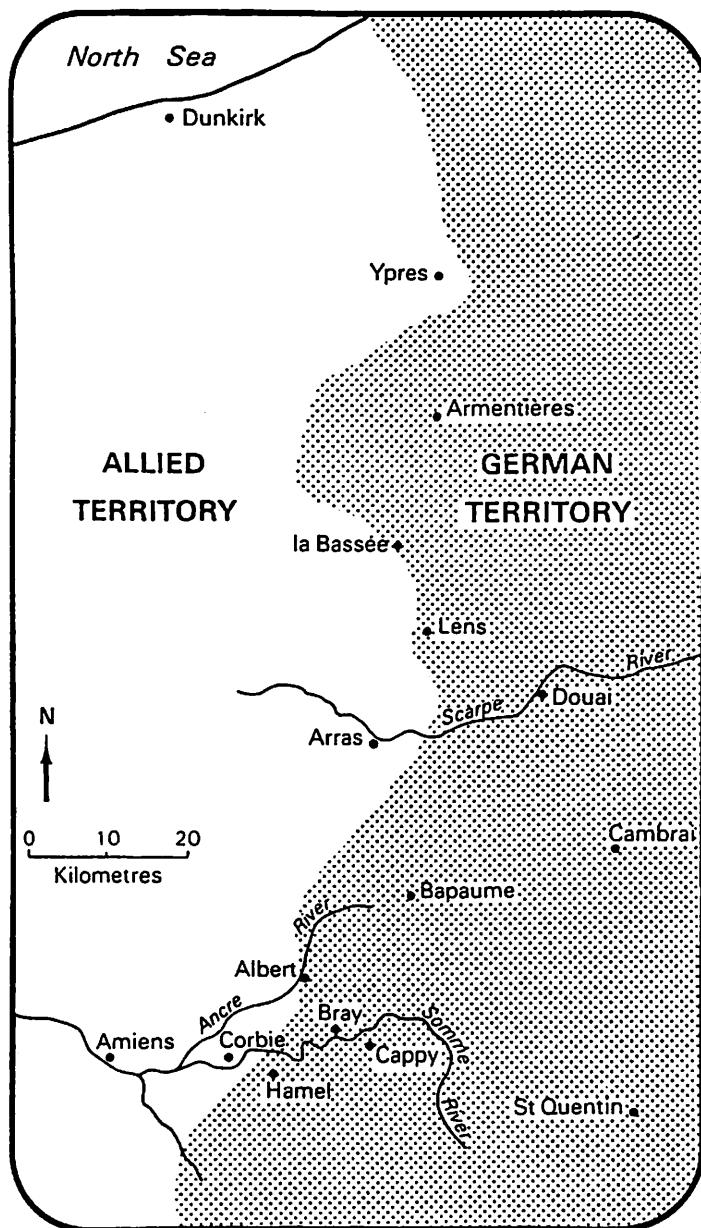
Gunner George Ridgeway MM of the 29 Battery Australian Field Artillery who was on the brickstack near the Bray-Corbie road and had an extensive view, said he saw three planes had broken away from the crowd of machines that were flying several thousand feet up. When the three were several hundred feet from the ground he saw that the first was British, the second German and the third British. The first plane was dodging to escape the second; the third was following above the second at a slightly greater interval. The first then passed out of the picture but the two went on. May disappeared out of the fight. This observation is from a man who had a good vantage point and was not flying at 80 miles an hour with bullets whistling through his hair so he could give the spectacle his full attention.

Lt Wiltshire's recollection was that one German plane was following two British, which was certainly not the case. Lt Payne said that they both taxied along as far as the Albert-Amiens road which is miles away to the west.

The German observers (and there were a lot of German observers) did not say anything about a third plane. Von Richthofen pursued May for a mile more in perfect control of his plane for at

least one minute after Brown abandoned the chase. Brown saw the red triplane go into a dive but did not see him level out and continue flying further west.

Of course by this time every man and his dog on the ground were taking pot shots at the red triplane. So Wop May and Von Richthofen arrived over Sgt Popkin of the 24th Australian Machine Gun Company in tandem, and Popkin had to wait until the risk of hitting the British plane had passed before he could fire.



The front line in north-eastern France, April 1918. Source, "The spectre of the Red Baron", *Journal of the AWM*, No.8, April 1988.

Who shot him?

Sgt Popkin, who was in charge of a Vickers gun, reported on 24 April 1918:

"The German plane banked, turned round and came back towards my gun. As it came towards me I opened fire a second time and observed at once that my fire took effect. The machine swerved, attempted to bank and made for the ground and immediately crashed."

Lt Travers reported that after Popkin fired the first time, "the enemy plane was quite out of control and did a wide circle".

Capt Forsyth said in his diary:

"At the brow of the hill the triplane ran into a direct stream of bullets from a machine gun in amongst a battery. He swept away sideways at once very low, turned sharply as if going to attack the gun and nose-dived to earth."

"There was no third plane within a radius of at least 2000 yards."

A German communiqué stated that he was brought down by gunfire from the ground.

One month later General Rawlinson sent a signal to the 53rd Battery of the 5th Division congratulating them on having brought down the celebrated German aviator.

Lt Brown

Brown's report at the time said:

"I dived on a pure red triplane which was firing on Lt May. I got a long burst into him and he went down vertical and was observed to crash by Lt Mellorish and Lt May."

He subsequently went into tabloid publication and embellished the whole story:

"The stream of bullets tore along the body of the all-red triplane, its occupant turned and looked back; I had a flash of his eyes behind the goggles; then he crumpled, sagged in the cockpit; Von Richthofen was dead [nobody knew who it was at this stage], The triplane staggered, wobbled, stalled, flung over on its nose and went down."

There is a wonderful book which I found in the library by a retired American gentleman and he quoted another publication of Brown's. He said:

"I dove down until I was on his tail then I fired. The bullets tore into his elevator and mutilated the rear end of the airplane. Flames showed where the bullets struck. The pilot turned around and looked back, I saw the glint of his eyes behind the big goggles, then he collapsed in his seat, bullets whistled by him. I ceased firing. It all happened in seconds, faster than one can tell. His airplane shook, tottered, rolled over and plunged down. The reserve trenches of the Australians lay only 300 feet beneath us; it was a short plunge. May saw it, Mellorish saw it and I did as I swung around."

At this time, Brown was suffering from exhaustion, acute indigestion, dysentery, was close to a nervous breakdown and was due to be sent home. The reasons for breaking off the chase is that he was racked with stomach cramps. Brown received a bar to his DFC and the engine of the plane for his efforts.

A little Brown publication called *The Last Battle* describes what happened when he arrived back at the base:

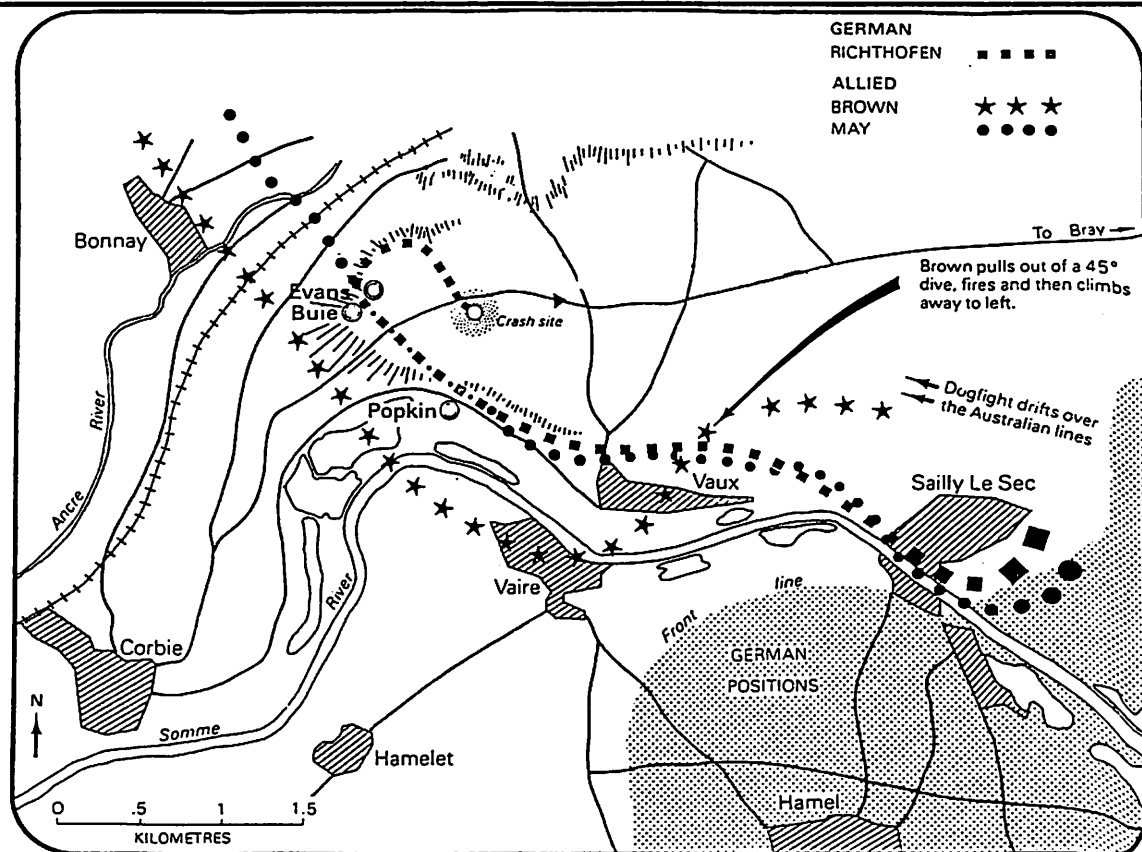
"Ring ring, ring ring, the telephone. The Commandant was on the telephone. Simpsons, our Chief Engineer went to answer, he came back, 'Man, Brownie, get ready for a medal'.

'What for?'

'The old man says that the red flyer was Richthofen.'

I almost fainted. Certainly I had already had a feeling that he was the one, but Richthofen, The Red Baron, Germany's most famous flyer. It was a glorious day in the Squadron."

In November 1935, Capt Brown said he was not prepared to enter into any further controversy ever again.



Details of the engagement in which Manfred von Richthofen was killed, showing gun emplacements manned by Evans, Buie and Popkin, and the flight paths of the aircraft involved. Source, "The spectre of the Red Baron", *Journal of the AWM*, No.8, April 1988.

The landing

Fred Lewis of the 19th Battalion said:

"The plane came down as if in full control but perhaps out of fuel or had engine trouble as he landed so gently, right side up on the left hand side of the road near the brick kiln. One of his wheels was off and part of his undercarriage was torn off."

A secret report at the time said, "The plane was badly smashed."

Another report said, "his plane was not so badly smashed as it would have been presumably if he had lost control higher up".

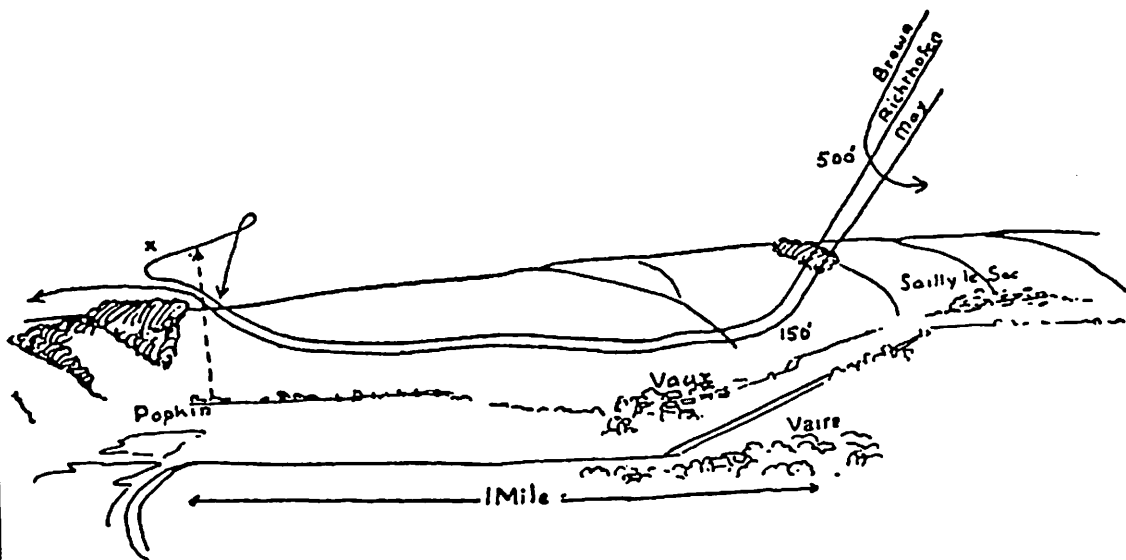
In the *Adelaide Advertiser* of a year or so ago, "In his mind Mr Schumaker, then an infantryman occupying a front line trench, can still see the red Fokker triplane spiralling into the mud and burning up". There was no mud, it did not burn up; and in actual fact Von Richthofen had been in a crash before. He had great presence of mind and he had turned the motor off because one of his huge fears was to come down with the engine going, sparks flying and himself in a ball of flame. The engine was turned off long before it hit the ground. I don't know whether this old gentleman has a good imagination or the reporter has. But that is an example of creative reporting.

Keith Murdoch, who then was a war correspondent and who went on to beget Rupert, said, "the plane smashed to smithereens". The only "smithereens" was after the Australians finished getting "goodies" off it!

The plane was there from 11 o'clock in the morning until dark because as soon as it landed the Germans saw it and the Australians rushed out to souvenir everything that they could and the Germans put a barrage around it so they couldn't get back to the plane.¹

The history of the German 238th Field Artillery Regiment said that the German observers, seeing the rush of men to the crashed plane, said that he was murdered after he landed.

Another German said that they knew he was dead because they did not see him crawl out of the plane.



The broken line shows the direction of Sergeant Popkin's fire at the time when he himself believed he hit Richthofen. X—Point at which Richthofen was fired on by Lewis guns of 53rd Battery.
Source: CEW Bean, *Official History*, Vol. V, p.700

The wounds

Lt Fraser, Brigade Intelligence Officer of the 11th Australian Infantry Brigade, running up with the first wave of sightseers, undid Richthofen's safety belt, had him lifted out and examined his papers and found out who he was. When it was found out who he was the Padre of the 8th Field artillery brigade collected up all the souvenirs (sort of all of them anyway). By this time the propeller was off and the crowd was chased away. Lt Fraser put a guard over the body and the plane.

Vern Elix looked into the cockpit of the crashed plane and saw a bullet wound in the pilot's back but he did not touch the corpse.

¹ At this point in the presentation by the author, a short video was screened, *Where they flew and where they fell*, giving the arguments about where the plane landed and the evidence.

Lt Fraser noted that it was badly cut about the face and apparently shot through the chest and body.

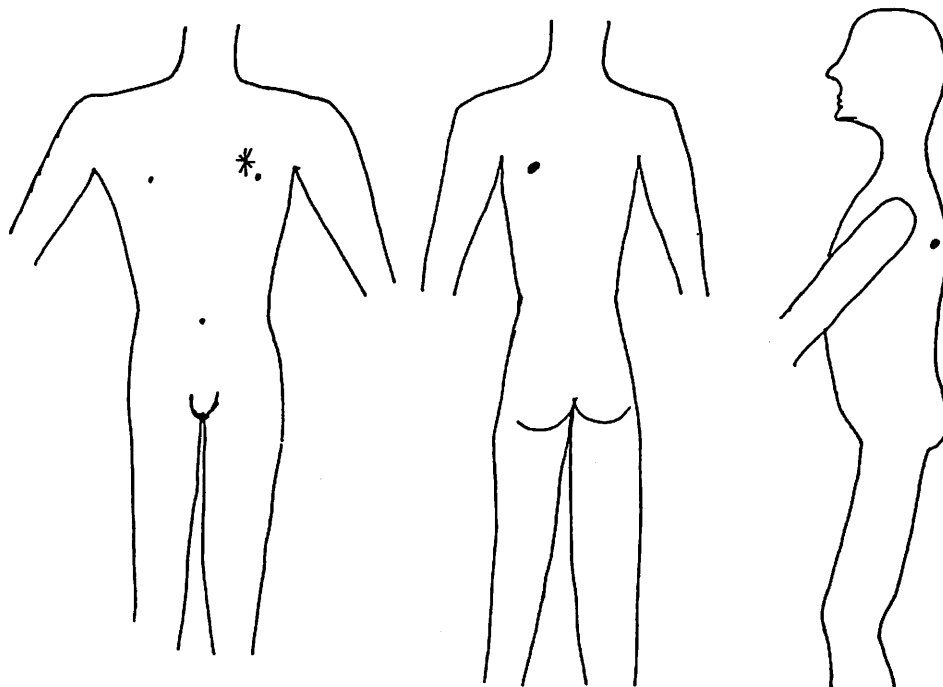
Lt George Travers believed a machine gun bullet had passed from the right side of Richthofen's face near the bottom of the jaw to just behind the right eye.

Cedric Popkin believed that the corpse had been struck by 3 bullets; 1 in the ribs and 2 through the chest, and commented that the pilot had bled freely.

At this point, 20 minutes after the crash, the German artillery laid a barrage on the site and the Australians scattered in all directions back to their trenches. Having established that the corpse was Von Richthofen, the rumours must have travelled like wildfire, decreasing in credulity as they spread.

Having seen the body slumped forward over the controls with blood in its face from the head injury sustained when the plane crash-landed, blood from 1 chest wound trapped in the lap of the corpse, and blood probably having flowed down the instrument controls to drip onto Von Richthofen's right knee, it is not surprising that it was assumed he had many bullet wounds.

The body was left lying beside the plane all day protected by German artillery.



EXIT

ENTRY

Source: author

When a salvage team arrived they decided that it was dangerous to approach the plane until after dark, but in the meantime they crawled to the body and dragged it away using a rope.

Richthofen's body, wrapped in a blanket, was taken to the battery lines and after dark was fetched by a party of No.3 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps, to Poulainville aerodrome.

The first autopsy was carried out at about 11.30 pm in front of about 20 witnesses. Secret reports compiled from evidence that was taken at the enquiry immediately after the crash said,

"There were bullet wounds in the knees, abdomen and chest". Another said there was one bullet in the back. Another said there were bullets in the chest, stomach and legs, while somebody else said, "there were several wounds".

The official report of Colonel Thomas Sinclair, AMS, Consulting Surgeon of the 4th Army BEF in the field, report written on the 22nd April 1918, said,

"We have made a surface examination of the body of Captain Baron Von Richthofen and find that there are only the entrance and exit wounds of 1 rifle bullet on the trunk. The entrance wound is on the right side about the level of the 9th rib which is fractured just in front of the posterior axillary line. The bullet appears to have passed obliquely backwards through the chest striking the spinal column which glanced in a forward direction and issued on the left side of the chest at a level about 2 inches higher than its entrance on the right and in the anterior axillary line.

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

"The body was not opened: these facts were ascertained by probing the surface wounds."

Souveniring

The following are quotes from different diaries:

"A Pioneer engaged in our dugout brought back to the dugout a large portion of propeller and began to saw it up in cross section pieces for distribution." [So much for the sergeant having retrieved everything that was pinched].

"The good Padre who told everybody to return their booty was wasting his time. After the plane was shifted out of the range of German guns it was stripped to almost a shell. Members of the 209 squadron each took a piece of the bus as a memento."

Captain Brown received the engine of the plane as well as a bar to his Distinguished Flying Cross.

The seat ended up in the Canadian Military Institute in Toronto. There is quite a lot of correspondence in the Australian War Memorial between Bean and the Canadian Military Institute trying to find out were there bullet holes, if there were bullet holes of what description, and apparently it has a lot of holes in it which they think could be wood rot or wood worm or all sorts of things, but they have also decided that they are not going to get into any more correspondence about whether the bullet holes come from there upwards or there downwards or sideways.

Corporal EJ McCarthy who was ordered to clean and prepare the body for autopsy souvenired a spent bullet which fell from Von Richthofen's flying jacket when he removed it and then he lost it. Now if this was a murder inquiry I think that gentleman would be in a lot of trouble and there would be demands like "Where did you lose it?", "Do you think you could find it again?" It would be interesting to know if he lost it or whether it went for a goodly sum to a collector who was not passing it on to anybody.

And as it said on the video we have just seen, you needn't feel guilty about him souveniring things because Von Richthofen souvenired from everybody else right from the beginning. He had a room full of pictures and bits of planes.

The burial

There is a book *The Red Baron* by Stanley M. Ulanoff, Lt Col, USAF (Rtd), published in 1969, in which he states:

“At 5 o’clock in the afternoon military detachments gathered near the tent, 12 English soldiers, steel helmets on their heads, marched under the command of an officer and formed an honor guard in front of the tent. Six English flying officers, all Squadron Leaders who had been decorated for encounters with the enemy, stepped into the tent and raised the coffin in which the dead man lay to their shoulders.”

Now there are numerous still photos, there is a moving picture of the burial, which one can peruse at one’s leisure; yet he cannot recognise an Australian uniform. He can’t tell the difference between a felt slouch hat and a tin helmet!

He also states that Von Richthofen was buried in a small war cemetery which is wrong: he was buried in a French civilian cemetery. During the burial several planes both British and German flew low over the cemetery and dropped wreaths.

There was a great controversy in Australia about the elaborate funeral; the practice of burying soldiers wrapped in a blanket had long been abandoned as extravagant and replaced by having bodies buried wrapped in hessian. But this man got a wooden coffin, he got a firing party, he got a vehicle, he got an escort and it was not all appreciated.

After the war he was taken to Fricourt near Albert and buried in a German war cemetery.

In 1925, the body was taken to Germany, his family intending to bury him next to his father and his brother, but the German authorities insisted that he be buried in Berlin. President Von Hindenburg went to the interment in Berlin which shows how importantly he was regarded.

After the fall of the Berlin wall he was then taken to the family estates in the former East Germany, which is where they wanted him to go in the first place.

Von Richthofen’s brother has written that the return of Manfred’s body to Germany was a very emotional event. Everywhere the bells in the towns and the villages sounded, flags dipped, aeroplanes accompanied the train and the wish of the populace was followed in leaving open the doors of the baggage car in which fighter pilots of the old army held a death watch so that the masses of waiting men, women and children standing on the banks of the rail line could at least see the coffin.

There is a vast amount of correspondence in the Australian War Memorial on Von Richthofen of course, because every time someone publishes an article all the old Diggers write in and say, “That’s not true—I was there, I can tell you all these things that happened”, and one of the best, which is one of the more recent, from a man called Fred Johnson of A Company, 19Bn AIF. Sixty years after the end of the war Germany had a silver medal struck bearing the image of the Red Baron. Fred Johnson, who had been in the Guard of Honour at the funeral, obtained one, and in 1979 when he visited Germany he called on Manfred’s nephew in Baden Baden and he said, “Mr Richthofen said that he was very pleased to see me and to know that I was one of the guards of honour at his uncle’s funeral, and how pleased he was to see me wearing the pure silver image of his uncle. Mr Richthofen is the managing director of the mighty casino in Baden Baden and he gave me a free entrance pass. The chap on the door said it was a very uncommon practice”. So the relationship between Australians and Germans who witnessed these things and kept up with their bit of history is still there.

I presented this paper to the SA Branch of the Society once before, and if anybody wants to elaborate on this or who knows more about it than I do feel free. One member quoted a case of a plane which landed despite the fact that the pilot was dead, which makes you rethink Von Richthofen's ability to do a U-turn over the top of Popkin and head off in the other direction. Dr John Bird speculated on how many minutes a person could fly with a bullet in the heart, and the only way you can tell for certain is to actually open the body up and not stick a pencil into the wound to see how far it went.

Originally I thought that if I investigated all of this and put it all down with diagrams and things going off in the one direction I would be able to prove that Australians did shoot him down, but I think that the more you go into it the more you can say "nobody will ever know". Nobody found the bullet and, according to people who know what they are talking about on guns, the bullet that came out of a plane would have been the same as the one that came out of a .303 rifle, so if they had found the bullet it would not have proven anything anyway unless the firer had his name on the bullet.

Had this been a murder investigation it was very badly handled. Instead of saying, "I'm going to put you in gaol for doing this", everybody wanted to take credit for it. Indeed, this whole episode highlights the unreliability of the eye-witness.

Ex-AIF Members of the Royal Flying Corps

George Newbury

During World War 1 a large number of Australians served in the Royal Flying Corps on flying duties. They had come from two sources: those who had found their own way to England and enlisted, and those who had transferred from the AIF as the result of a request originating in 1916 from the British Government.

Background

With the introduction of the Fokker Eindekker with its fixed forward firing machine gun and the devastating affect this had on the slower RFC aircraft, the RFC suffered very high wastage results of both pilots and aircraft. To help offset this loss, in mid-1916 the British Government asked the Australian Government to supply 200 members to be trained as aircrew. They decided upon this course of action because a number of colonials were already serving in the RFC and were proving to be effective pilots. These colonials were either living in England when the war started or paid their own passage to England to enlist. As a result of this request for 200 volunteers, a large number of AIF members stepped forward from both officer and enlisted ranks. These members were officially discharged from the AIF and appointed to the RFC Special Reserve. Officers kept their commission but were appointed as 2nd Lts on transferring and the other ranks were commissioned as 2nd Lts on completion of cadet training.

Service Training

Following their transfer, and training at an Officer Cadet Unit for those who had not held a commission previously, all transferees were posted to a School of Military Aeronautics before being posted to flying units. Of course not all passed the flying training and at least one rejoined the AIF where he was later commissioned. The corps background of those who volunteered to transfer to the RFC is of interest:

Infantry	49	Artillery	30
Light Horse	17	Ambulance	12
Supply	11	Engineers	10
AASC	10	Signals	5
RANBT	2	Pay	3
Unknown	3		

So much for the old rumour that preference was given to horse soldiers because of their co-ordination although most people from this era would have been capable of riding a horse.

Casualties—Flying Accidents

By the end of their flying training and service during World War 1, some 14 of those transferring had been killed, 10 had died in aero accidents, anything from wings coming off to mid-air collisions and another 4 accidentally killed.

Casualties—Combat Related

The horrific flying conditions that prevailed in the air war saw the death of another 24 before the war ended: 18 were killed in air operations, 2 were missing, 1 died as a result of burns, 1 died in Palestine, another in India from disease and another died of wounds. A total of 38 members killed in a space of about 18 months from accidents and combat duties—about 25 percent of the total, which makes flying duties in World War 2 look a little pale in comparison.

Honours and awards

By the end of the war these members had proved their mettle. In flying operations, eleven had qualified as aces (shooting down more than five enemy aircraft). A number of honours had been bestowed on them, namely, DSO and Bar 1, DSO 1, Military Cross 17, DFC 12, AFC 4.

Prisoners of War

Besides the numbers killed as a result of both training and operational flying, another 21 became prisoners of war. Therefore, the total casualty figure from all causes should read 59, almost a third of all those who transferred. Fortunately, all those who were POWs were repatriated after the war ended. One of those who had been shot down fell to the guns of one Capt H Goering who became more famous in a later conflict.

Further Career Details both RAF And RAAF

After the war not all took discharge from the flying services, two who remained in the RAF rose to the rank of Air Vice-Marshal. Two who became members of the RAAF rose to prominence in that service, namely, Air Vice-Marshal Bostock and Air Commodore Brownell.

Other Notable Careers Both Aviation And Civil

Others continued in Civil Aviation, Howell being killed in an attempt to fly to Australia in 1919 in competition with the Smith Brothers. Kingsford-Smith became famous with his trans-Pacific crossing in 1927. Percival became a noted aircraft designer and several others featured in early aviation exploits in Australia. Another went on to become Lord Mayor of Melbourne.

Conclusion

These members of the AIF who decided to transfer to the RFC played an important part in the shaping of both military and civil aviation in both Great Britain and Australia, possibly out of all proportion to the actual numbers of those involved—a fitting tribute to the quality of those who had enlisted in the 1st Australian Imperial Force.

Aliases of the Australian Military Forces 1914-1919

Lt Col Neil C Smith, AM

The military genealogist is often frustrated in the search for records of an Australian soldier simply because the soldier used an assumed name. This paper addresses the subject in the context of World War One, but the matter of course has prevailed throughout Australian military history. I submit at the outset that the incidence of aliases being used is frequently underestimated, and more often difficult to establish. At best there are scant records which purport to record the use of aliases. My recent work, titled 'What's In A Name', attempts to highlight the use of *noms de guerre* and make some inroads into unravelling the mystery associated with assumed names in World War 1.

During several years of extensive research of World War 1 service personnel I have stumbled on a great many aliases. To date I have published a listing of over 3,000 names in alphabetical order, cross referenced by given and assumed names and I find more almost daily. Certainly my listing is far from exhaustive, indeed many, probably the majority of aliases will never be known. In my estimation, upwards of 15,000 Australian World War 1 soldiers employed some sort of alias, and this excludes the wide range of other incorrect personal information advised to the military authorities from the time of medical examination and attestation.

There is readily available evidence in documents such as Casualty Lists, War Graves Registers, War Gratuity registers and embarkation rolls which clearly indicate that the use of aliases was common from the time the first men responded to the call for volunteers in late 1914. Additional evidence can be found in archived files, roll books, letters and so on. Many months before the ANZAC landing at Gallipoli, the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force to New Guinea was despatched for its long running series of operations. Included in the ranks of the AN&MEF were numerous men who served, at least initially, under false names. The ensuing rush of volunteers for service in the Middle East and Europe with the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) resulted in a greater and continuing influx of recruits and re-enlistees using aliases. Even towards the end of the War, many soldiers enlisted under false names for service with the General Service Reinforcements. Perusal of a range of records indicates that the use of aliases was usually accepted as a matter of course and there was rarely any recrimination. Some unit histories like that of the 17th Battalion even compiled separate lists of known aliases in the Battalion after the War. At least two units examined have over 50 known aliases recorded. There is no reason why these two units, the 7th from Victoria and the 45th from NSW should not be considered as the norm. Accepting this, if one considers the size of the AIF and Home service troops, based on 60 infantry battalions plus supporting arms and corps, an extrapolation resulting in the aforementioned figure of 15,000 is reasonable. It is apparent therefore, that a surprising number of men, for reasons of their own, served in the Australian forces under aliases, and, as we shall see, did so for the most part with honour and frequent distinction.

I should say at this point that my work aims to do more than simply highlight the incidence of aliases. It also seeks to introduce a degree of lateral thinking to the mind of the researcher or military genealogist. For instance, an analysis of the names I have identified can suggest a number of approaches to investigation which may well reveal why a soldier adopted an assumed name and even suggest some likely choices for his or her alias.

It is fair to say that a soldier who enlisted under an alias had something to hide, from someone. There may not have been anything unlawful the soldier felt he needed to conceal, but the reason really boils down to one of two motivating needs. First, the perceived requirement to avoid revealing his true identity from the authorities because of some militarily unacceptable reason, or secondly, to conceal his military service for a domestic or social reason. Some case studies may serve to demonstrate this view.

There is little argument that one of Australia's Anzac icons was "The man with the donkey". Private Simpson's short lived but highly acclaimed service at Gallipoli as a medical orderly evacuating wounded to the beach under constant fire is well known. Many don't realise however that the 22 years old ship's fireman was correctly named James Simpson Kirkpatrick. Nicknamed "Scotty" or "Murphy" at Anzac Cove, it was not until after his death on 19 May 1915 that Simpson's true name was revealed. We don't know why Kirkpatrick enlisted under a false name, but it could be because of his seafaring background. Perhaps he had failed to complete some expected service at sea and wanted to avoid detection by merchant navy authorities. Such a reason has been found in other cases. Continuing the maritime themes the case of Edward Boag is interesting. Born in 1900 in either Hobart or London, depending on which of Boag's attestation papers you prefer, young Boag enlisted in the AIF early in the war. His service however was short lived and he was discharged as being under-age. Undeterred, Boag then joined the Royal Australian Navy in 1916 and served with HMAS *Cerberus* and *Encounter* until 1 June 1918 when he deserted. Apparently Boag's real interest lay with the Army as he was quick to re-enlist in Adelaide and was allocated to the 10th Battalion for service in the closing stages of the War. For this enlistment Boag chose the name Edward Redmond, obviously in an attempt to avoid confrontation with the Navy. It seems the end of the War annoyed Boag who had not had the opportunity for any operational soldiering, so he seized the chance for service with a handful of Australians in North Russia in 1919. There is lots of scope for further research on Boag, especially as this man's ardour for military service was rekindled in World War Two. Using once again his given name, Boag served throughout the war as a sergeant in Workshops.

Boag's service is unique in that copies of his various documents have been accessed and are reproduced in my publication. Note that on his application for a service pension Boag reveals all to the Repatriation department. So it is that hundreds of aliases identified in my work have been obtained from post-service records when soldier's have resumed their correct name, but must disclose previous aliases in order to obtain veteran's benefits. The lesson here of course is that if a soldier cannot be found in military records or Defence records, broaden the search to archives of other departments.

Herbert Leggo was one who used an alias to avoid possible confrontation with Maritime authorities. Leggo had joined the RAN in 1914 but deserted some months later. The following year, keen to play his part, he joined the AIF, where his brother was already serving. This time Leggo used his mother's maiden name of Pritchard, a common choice of alias the researcher should bear in mind. One of the more prominent heroes of the AIF, Victoria Cross and Distinguished Conduct Medal winner Maurice Buckley fits the same mould. Discharged from his first enlistment from the venereal disease hospital at Langwarrin Buckley re-enlisted a few months later, in a different state, as Gerald Sexton. The new names stemming from his brother's Christian name and his Mother's maiden name. It was only after his award of the VC, and his Mother's written plea to end the subterfuge that Buckley's real name was recorded, again without fuss or recrimination.

It is not surprising that many men used aliases to conceal their age. As in most conflicts there are those who are either too old or too young to participate. One reads of "men" of 13 years of age enlisting. Here surely is a good reason for the aspiring soldier to minimise the risk of having his age established by using an assumed name. Many men simply lied about their age and no doubt many sympathetic recruiting officers failed to investigate fully the veracity of claims to a potential recruit's age. I found one fellow who enlisted at 45 years of age when in fact he was 57. What is more, he soldiered on for three years in the Middle East with the Light Horse. James Alexander Ridley is another fine example. At age 53 years and 10 months he had already done his share of soldiering. Firstly in the Egyptian campaign, then the Boer War and the British Yeomanry. On coming to Australia at the turn of the century Ridley served again in South Africa with the 2nd NSW Mounted Rifles. Yet on 22 October 1915, Ridley, using only his Christian name James signed up again. He was finally sent home in September due, rather unkindly, to "senility". Note here the tendency for many men to give only part of their full name.

Jack Luthy described himself as a bullock driver from Botany near Sydney and gave as his age 22 years 9 months. Jack, whose real name was John James Luthy served throughout the war and came home in April 1919. It wasn't until after he had returned that Jack's correct name and correct age at enlistment was revealed. He had been a tender 14 years and 10 months at enlistment.

Many men enlisted with only some modification to their own name. James Alexander Ridley seems to have attempted some disguise by dropping his second name. So too did Hector John Rogers. He enlisted as Hector Rogers and as such shouldn't prove too difficult to locate in records. But if a fellow named Smith or Jones tries this tactic, the outcome can be rather different. Similarly many simply reversed their Christian names or reversed their Christian and surnames. Although frequently intentional, on occasions these modifications may have arisen quite innocently due to clerical error combined with a low level of literacy and attestation nervousness on the part of the recruit. After all, how many soldiers really examine their attestation paper for total accuracy. Simpson's sobriquet of "Scotty" or "Murphy" prompts comment on the use of nicknames. Whilst not aliases as such, is it common for family historians to search in vain for official records using nicknames handed down from generation to generation. Similarly many veterans refer to former comrades by nicknames which become misconstrued as given names. Ray "Beery" Lee from the 6th Battalion, Augustus "Gus" Leiterman 1st Battalion and Arthur "Putty" Ledwidge are cases in point. In addition there are a number of Christian names which are always subject to interpretation such as Jack, John, James or Albert, Bert, Bertram and Bertram. Of course never assume that a name beginning "Mac" isn't listed as "Mc" and vice versa.

The family historian 70 years on may not be aware of early family prejudices or internal domestic politics. We find Henry Sandoe using his Step Father's name of Dietze rather than his own. Dietze was an educated man from Marrickville near Sydney when he enlisted with the 1st Battalion in August 1914. Dietze went on to become commissioned, was wounded on Gallipoli and finally killed in action in September 1918. Official records note that the family preferred to use Dietze rather than Sandoe. Of course their wishes must be respected, but beware the researcher. Others like the Kolloosche brothers from Morphetville in South Australia served long and honourably during World War One. It was not until 1920 that the pair changed their names to Dunstan. Perhaps there was some stigma attached to their German sounding name even after the war. Certainly one frequently finds men with German sounding names being changed during World War One. Clearly a great many Schmidts anglicised their name to Smith. Similar examples include Zander to Sander, Arthur Conrad Kaiser who

understandably sought anonymity under the false name of Arthur Ernest Conrad; in like manner Thomas Zoch became John Foster and Willie Karpeney anglicised his name to William Carpaney while many with surnames prefixed by Von dropped that title.

Some men like Major Lionel Henry Lehmaier who served with the AN&MEF and later in France where he was wounded and decorated changed their name by Deed Poll. In Lehmaier the change was to the more simplified version of Lemaire. Bernard Thomas Heinze changed his name to Bernard Thomas Greenwell-Haines during the War. After the war he resumed, legally, his correct name. Heinze, who was commissioned with the Artillery, was later knighted for service to the music world. Notoriety and the use of aliases seem to have been common bed fellows. The Honourable Kennedy Edward Worrell Harris, MLC enlisted rather humbly as Edward Harris with the 25th Battalion in 1915. I have found a number of instances which indicate that soldiers serving under an assumed name frequently had a change of heart and revealed their correct name whilst serving. Usually this meant the soldier would complete a Statutory Declaration and records would be adjusted accordingly without fuss. George Hurley, a professional jockey from Hamilton in Victoria served with the 7th Battalion and was Mentioned In Despatches. In April 1917 Hurley reverted to his true name of Herlihy and sadly was killed in action some months later. It is likely that many such occurrences were motivated by a desire not to be "lost" in the event of death. Although partly conjecture, many men enlisted using a false name but when the likelihood of return to their loved ones began to fade, they chose to reveal their true identity so that kith and kin would be advised of their fate.

With the name Holdorf, it would not have been surprising to find Lieutenant Colonel Charles John Holdorf anglicising his name prior to enlisting with the AIF. However the ageing Holdorf, born in Sydney in 1869, with extensive militia service and who commanded the 54th Battalion in 1916, did not change his name to Holdff until after the war. Another battalion commander had an even more intriguing background. Charles Melville Macnaughton was a Sydney solicitor born in 1879. In August 1914 Macnaughton was appointed Major with the 4th Battalion and commanded the battalion on Gallipoli. His appointment was terminated in 1916 and he was awarded the Order of the companion of St Michael and St George. A puzzle yet to be solved occurred in September 1916 when Macnaughton re-enlisted with the 9th Battalion as a Private soldier under the name of Ciam MacMelville.

It is worthwhile stressing the point made earlier that the employment of an alias or tendering of other false information should not be construed as something bad. With few exceptions the soldiers known to have used an alias served honourably. Only a few cases of unsatisfactory service by such men have been noted. These include Privates Khyat and Harrison who were found guilty of desertion in 1918 and sentenced to periods of penal servitude. The fact that they used false names is considered to be purely coincidental. On the other hand James Morris Harvey clearly accepted the fact that he had deserted from the 26th Battalion prior to embarkation in 1915 and later re-enlisted with the Field Artillery under the name of Morris Harvey. Donald Henderson alias Hugh McNeil is another case in point who had three enlistments, one of which culminated in desertion. George Henry Proudman is another example of a man who enlisted under a false name, in this case George Lynch. Note again the reluctance to do away with the entire correct name. Barely seventeen years of age Proudman enlisted in Sydney in March 1915 and no doubt used the false name to avoid repercussions from his family or even the Army had his true age been revealed. Proudman resumed his correct name later during the war whilst serving with the 17th Battalion. After the war he became a most successful accountant and was commissioned during the 2nd World War and rose to become Commanding Officer of the 2nd and 3rd Ordnance Port detachments in the South West Pacific area. This man's fine record as a soldier and his professional life, which

saw him become Registrar of the Association of Cost Accountants resulted in his entry in the *Who's Who* of the 1960s. Despite his use of an alias there is no denying the honourable and exemplary service of George Proudman

Mention of World War 2 prompts the comment that aliases were used by Australians in that conflict also, albeit on a reduced scale. Without straying too far from the focus of this paper a twist to the use of aliases in World War One occurs with Albert Baker, a young labourer from Pyrmont in Sydney who served with the Light Horse in World War One. In 1940, Baker enlisted again in the AIF as NX22933 Edward Leslie Barker and, just to confuse the researcher further it seems, recorded his next of kin as Mrs B. Jenkins.

Many men using aliases were decorated. As an aside New Zealander Richard Charles Travis of the Otago Rifles is probably the most highly decorated Colonial soldier to use an assumed name. As Richard Savage this man won the Victoria Cross, Distinguished Conduct Medal, Military Medal and Belgian Croix De Guerre before being killed in action in July 1918. Even British two time winner of the Victoria Cross Captain Arthur Leake presents the researcher with some problems having been listed variously as Arthur Leake and Arthur Martin-Leake. Loosely associated with the subject of aliases is the matter of impersonation as exemplified by one Donald MacDonald from Wahroonga who impersonated Colonel T W MacDonald a Canadian holder of the Victoria Cross and Distinguished Service Order. To complicate matters further, about 1939 MacDonald is also alleged to have claimed he was a Victoria Cross winner who had used the alias of Evans.

Donald MacKechnie seems to be another who impersonated a Victoria Cross winner for a considerable time. MacKechnie was born in Scotland in 1878 and the outbreak of war found him as a Permanent Military Force Sergeant in Melbourne wearing the ribbons of the South African War and a Victoria Cross. MacKechnie's honour was reflected in routine references to him and he always signed his name "MacKechnie VC". Interestingly, research by the Official Historian describes the man as an "old soldier" who was usually intoxicated. In any event MacKechnie was quick to enlist in the AIF and sailed with the 7th Battalion in 1914. He was wounded on 25 April 1915 at Gallipoli and evacuated. The ensuing Casualty List Number 298 substantiated his apparent award of the Victoria Cross and listed him accordingly. Despite this, MacKechnie's "VC" was clearly a sham, as only one man of that name has ever won the award, and that was in 1857!

My research reveals that it was common for a soldier to re-enlist under a false name. Frequently it is likely that the soldier may have already served, with or without distinction, had been discharged as medically unfit or for some aspect of unsatisfactory service. Undaunted or perhaps ashamed of their earlier service these men were determined to make amends and joined up again under a different name. John Henry McDarra, a letter carrier from Lindfield, Sydney typifies this category with initial service under his real name in the 6th Light Horse Regiment. Within a year of returning from overseas and discharge, McDarra enlisted again under the name of John Thomas McDarra and served with the 14th Light Horse Regiment in the Middle East.

John James Collins had a background in the theatre. His talents in the entertaining arena resulted in him becoming a member of the 4th Division concert Party known as the "Magpies". After the war he rose to the position of Manager of Sydney's State Theatre. Perhaps it was with thoughts of theatre lights and greasepaint in his mind that Collins enlisted for the greatest play in his life in Perth in 1915 as James Jones. At least two men used well known stage names in World War 1. Yorkshireman Arthur Boorman was the first. Conscious of his German sounding name Boorman enlisted under his stage name of Arthur Riscoe which he was

accustomed to using as a concert artist in Brisbane. He was later awarded the Military Cross for gallantry near the Proyart-Bray Road in 1918. The second was W F Cranswick who served as a Captain under his stage name of Wildred Hilary.

A cautionary note on the use of hyphenated names. Although I have published only a selection of examples the researcher must always be conscious of the likelihood of a soldier using a hyphenated name circa World War One. Doctor and Lieutenant Colonel Alan Worlsey Holmes A Court typifies this group. This fellow may be found listed variously as A Courtt A'Court and Holmes-A'Court. Captain C B D Butcher is another example and can be found as Captain C B Deane-Butcher. Frequently these anomalies were the result of clerical errors and assumptions with no intention to conceal true identification. Nonetheless, the researcher can be baffled by such interpretations and, when searching alphabetically for someone, needs to recognise the possibilities.

Exasperation has been identified as a motivating factor for some men to change their names in the military. Perhaps Whittaker John William Brique had grown tired of people spelling his name 'Brick' and found life simpler by adopting the latter spelling. Perhaps he did not even bother to argue with the recruiting clerk or attempt to correct his error. After all, there was much more important work to be done. This is another lesson for the researcher. If a soldier can't be traced by his correctly spelled name, then try searching for him using names which sounds like the correct name. Certainly when Alexander McPhie was enlisted the recruiting staff simply spelled his name incorrectly as McPhee. Some years later McPhie casually explained that he did not 'take the trouble to have it rectified'. Take Australian aborigine Kenny Louri from Maclean, NSW. Given the difficulties encountered by Aborigines who wished to serve in the military forces almost eighty years ago, perhaps Louri's passage through the recruiting selection criteria was adopted by using the name John McKenzie Laurie.

So I must conclude my analysis of aliases in World War 1. With luck your missing soldier will be among those I have identified. If not, don't give up. Rather than dismiss the absence of a soldier's name on official or other records due to another annoying instance of error or omission, it should be borne in mind that the searcher may be looking for the wrong name. In such circumstances consider possible reasons why the soldier may have used an alias. Consider too the potential changes he may have made to his name and try other records, especially those raised after his military service. A little lateral thinking in these areas can often produce results.

The Military Board Proceedings 1905-76

H J Zwillenberg

The Military Board of Australia was established on 12 January 1905.¹ Prior to that date Australia had a General Officer Commanding in the person of Sir Edward Hutton whose autocratic rule and general attitude caused the government of the day and in particular the Minister of Defence, T T Ewing some concern. Australia at that time also lacked a General Staff and its functions were more or less carried out by an Intelligence Department.²

There was, however another aspect, spelled out in a book by J Mordike, *An Army for a Nation*. The Imperial tendencies of the senior Australian officers saw the Australian army as part of a vast Imperial defence organisation trained and geared for fighting in the Northern hemisphere. What went on under the guise of planning for local defence of Australia as a self-governing dominion, was in fact directed towards the defence of the British Empire as a whole.³ Towards the end of the nineteenth century Britain had begun to smart under the budgetary burden of all aspects of her defence commitments particularly of the need to maintain the two-power standard of the Royal Navy. Complementary with this was the requirement for the Army to ensure the military capability of upholding the balance of power on the European continent, particularly in the light of the power blocks that began to emerge after the unifications of Germany and Italy. Also, the recruit material offering for military service in England proved to be largely unsatisfactory due to malnutrition and other causes related to the industrialisation of England. The solution was seen in the raising of an Imperial Army, uniformly organised, trained and equipped, consisting of Empire contingents and commanded by the Imperial General Staff. This plan was pushed by the senior British service and political officers as well as by some of the leading public figures in Australia. Particularly active in this respect were the senior officers sent to Australia to assist in the defence planning of the emerging nation, beginning with Edwards in the eighties and ending with Kitchener in 1909-1910. Imperial military planning in Australia commenced in earnest in or about 1911 under the control of the "Imperial General Staff - Australian Section", in Melbourne culminating in the dispatch in 1914 of fully equipped Australia troops six weeks after Australia found herself involved in a European war. Thus the day Australian soldiers stormed the beaches at Gallipoli was not the day the country became a nation but rather the day Australia became irrevocably committed to the framework of Imperial defence.⁴

The planning recommended by the English senior officers was ideal from an Imperial point of view but quite inappropriate for the defence of the Australian continent which required a high degree of strategic mobility and the means of rapid concentration of the militia units. As it was, their wide dispersion particularly that of the command function made training at higher levels virtually impossible.⁵

¹ Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No.1, 7 January 1905, p.11

² Coulthard-Clark, C R, "The Citizen General Staff", *Sabretache*, Military Historical Society of Australia, 1976.

³ Mordike, J. *An Army for a Nation*. Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1992

⁴ Ibid

⁵ *The Argus*, 5 April 1911, p.12

Thus the view that British and Australian defence interests were identical and Mordike goes so far as to suggest that senior British military and political personalities "plotted" to draw Australia irrevocably into the British military orbit. It would be hard to deny that the military experts sent out to Australia had British military needs foremost in their minds when recommending military measures to the Government of Australia. On the other hand, Mordike might be criticised for going too far in impinging underhand methods and what amounts to almost treasonable motives. These officers were consultants in the modern meaning of the term and they based their recommendations on their own experience and personal viewpoints. With one or two exceptions Australia had at that time not been able to produce or accumulate any comprehensive and worthwhile strategic experience at the senior military level.

Hutton's sometimes stormy period of command from 1902 to 1904 and his departure was followed by a new system of military administration copied from Great Britain where the adoption of the Escher report led to the abolition of the post of Commander-in-Chief in favour of an Army Council and a General Staff. Thus the Australian Government established on 12 January 1905 the Military Board of Administration, consisting of a President, usually the Minister of Defence, as First Member, the Chief of Intelligence, then the Quartermaster General and the Financial Member, a Commonwealth Public Servant. The first senior member as Lt-Col W T Bridges, who was responsible for two quite distinct functions: training of the military forces commonwealth wide; and operational aspects including intelligence. By and large the Board held little command authority and its composition varied. Initially consisting of only three members not counting the Board's secretary, by 1919 the membership had doubled. The functions of the Board were seen in a different light by different senior officers, for instance General Monash, then in command of the Fourth Infantry Brigade, AIF refused to take orders from the senior Australian officer in the Middle East, considering his line of accountability going straight to the Military Board.

In its early history the Board proved to be a stormy petrel, particularly from the British point of view. This situation pertained up to the seventies.⁶ While there was a commander-in-chief, usually of English background, there was no difficulty in carrying the Imperialist influence, but with the President of the Board being the Minister whose first accountability was to the Australian Parliament the Imperial General Staff lost control over its Australian Section. There was another link, through the Inspector General, but that is another story. But there can be no doubt that Australian politicians prior to 1914 with a few exceptions saw the Board as a means of stripping power from the senior military authorities and imposing tight civilian control. This ensured a greater degree of national defence planning as distinct from the Australian army becoming a cog in the Imperial defence schemes. The Board was eventually abolished in 1976.⁷

There are two series of Military Board Proceedings. The historical Series (A2657), consists of two volumes, each about 12cm thick, and deals with isolated topics only. For instance, the appointment of a commander-in-chief early in 1901 takes about one half of the first volume and there were only two personalities under consideration, Sir R Poole Carew and Sir Edward Hutton. The crux of the whole problem in making an appointment was, initially, the very low salary of £2100 offered which the first contestant, Carew, declined and which Hutton accepted, possibly because he really had no option if he wanted to be gainfully employed. Another topic forming part of the first volume of the historical proceedings are the deliberations which led to

⁶ *The Age*, 18 March 1974

⁷ *Australian Army*, 5 February 1976

the Defence Bill 1904, with the question of compulsory overseas service taking up the bulk of the written proceedings and the establishment of the Board.

The main series (2653) consists of close on to 200 volumes from about 1906 onwards until a few years ago when the Military Board was abolished. The records are composed of the proceedings of the Board in serial order. Each volume has an index, alphabetical by topic, referring to the agenda number or to the proceedings number of related series such as the series marked P&S (Promotion and Selection of Officers) or WN (without notice). It also contains a numerical listing in ascending order of the agenda numbers. The P&S Committee had the first cut at the recommendations received from an individual military district, or a school, or indeed from any source authorised to make such a recommendation. The P&S Committee usually consisting of the CGS and the AG, recommended appropriate action to the full Board (CGS, AG, QMG, Financial Member (Public Servant) and Secretary to the Board. Often the submission contained a full case history of the personality concerned, dissenting views, etc. All this took up about two pages. The Proceedings were signed by all present and forwarded to the President, who was invariably the Minister of Defence, although very rarely present. Also, the Minister seldom dissented. So it was in fact the CGS whose voice carried the day.

While the P&S Proceedings were very short—it was unusual for the P&S Proceedings to exceed two pages—the main proceedings could take up two or three centimetres. They were hard to follow, because of the lack of uniform filing order, but in general, the first paper to be perused was the original submission with attachments initiated by every member of the Board. This could be quite voluminous as the example of the deliberations of the applicability of the Army Act shows. The submissions were initialled by every member of the Board. The recommendations by the Board would be signed by all members and a short submission sheet forwarded to the Minister. The latter minuted his approval or otherwise, although disallowance of a submission was usually restricted to involving budgetary considerations. Similar procedures were followed in the WN records but they were not nearly as formal, because they were often just last minute submissions. Prior to 1938 they were rare but they occurred more and more frequently as the war drew nearer and sudden decisions became necessary.

By and large, the matters dealt with by the Board had largely to do with financial implications often of a trivial nature—the loss of some artillery saddlery in 1938 is an example. The questions of accommodation in Darwin loomed very largely in the deliberations of the Board in 1939. The Board devoted considerable time to legislative aspects of the army (amendments of rules and regulations and to the not infrequent changes in the promotion examinations procedures). Strategic matters and actual defence concerns were rarely if ever discussed, that was left to the Defence Council, which in 1939 became the War Cabinet.

The Adelaide Biennial Conference of the Military Historical Society of Australia

Gail Gunn

Two and a half years in preparation, two and a half days in duration. The Biennial Conference of the Military Historical Society of Australia was held in Adelaide for the first time since the South Australian Branch was formed in 1966. The choice of venue was inspiring; The Armoury Gallery of the South Australian Museum. The building was constructed in the mid-1850s to house the arms and equipment of the colony's military and police forces and is believed to be the oldest military building in Adelaide. The upstairs has been remodelled for use as a conference centre without losing any of its original character. This delightful old building was eminently suitable for the few fine exhibits of militaria and ephemera displayed by delegates.

Over the course of the two and a half years of planning, all of the SA Branch members got behind the commitment and came up with not only a great venue but also a varied program and overall a very successful function. In conjunction with the Conference, Federal Council ran a Branch Presidents' Forum with the aims of discussing the future directions of the Society and getting some direct feedback on the ideas and expectations of the Branches. By Council sponsoring the travel arrangements of the Branch Presidents, the Conference had several more attendees than would otherwise have been the case, and the Society benefited by the very positive results that came out of the Forum. The forum was held over a working lunch in the Officers' Mess of Defence Centre Adelaide.

The Conference was called to order only about five minutes late, with the SA Branch President, Sqn Ldr George Newbury extending a warm welcome to all present and the Conference Convenor, Tony Harris, giving a little of the history of the venue and explaining how the Conference would proceed.

We were delighted to have Col Ray Stanley OBE (R) formally open the Conference, following which an interesting and diverse collection of speakers presented papers starting with Mrs Jan Ruff O'Hearne who spoke on her experiences as a "comfort prisoner" of the Japanese; Sqn Ldr George Newbury on ex-AIF members of the Royal Flying Corps 1917-18; Gail Gunn on The Unreliability of the Eye Witness — The Death of Von Richthofen; Peter Nemaric on King Edward's Horse, King's Overseas Dominions Regiment; Brad Manera — Outside the Wire, Teaching Australia's Vietnam War and Lt Col Neil Smith AM — What's in a Name; Aliases of the AMF 1914-19.

Time was allocated early in the Conference for a session called "Research in Progress" where the researchers amongst us could talk about their particular project or sphere of interest. This was a great success for several reasons. Firstly, the speakers gleaned valuable tidbits of information over the rest of the conference and for several weeks afterwards when letters arrived with more information. But probably the most valuable function of this session was that it served as a good ice breaker. People felt free to walk up to someone they hadn't spoken to before, introduce themselves and share knowledge.



PRESIDENTS MEETING KESWICK

(L to R)- Peter Sinfield (Federal Secretary); Clam Sargent (Federal Vice President);
Dick Cooper (Gulong); Don Campbell (Albury- Wodonga);
Absent: Tom Roberts (Federal President - the photographer!);

Another interesting part of the program was the discussion groups where delegates could, under the supervision of a group leader, discuss a nominated subject. There were three groups, Military Research, Medals and the Australian Light Horse. It was difficult for some to choose which group they would attend, being interested in all three subjects. This perhaps is a segment that could be expanded or refined at future Conferences.

The official dinner at the South Australian Police Club on Saturday night was a very pleasant and relaxed way of winding up a busy first day, enhanced by those gentlemen in mess dress who looked quite splendid.

On Sunday, following the Discussion Groups, there was a bus trip to Historic Fort Glanville at Semaphore, probably the least altered fort in the whole of Australia; a fine example of colonial military architecture and superbly restored and revitalised, being essentially a living history museum. Our party was entertained with a brief re-enactment firing a very rare 2 pdr hexagonal bore Whitworth muzzle loading cannon, and a guided tour followed by tea and biscuits in the visitor centre. This proved to be an extremely popular outing, with much animated discussion on the bus back to the Armoury (the Western Australian delegates were heard to mutter plans to dig themselves a fort in the sand back home!).

Sunday evening was given over to a very casual social get-together in the Armoury Gallery; an opportunity to do a little horse trading, brag about one's favourite collection item (or the one that got away), or enjoy a cool libation or hot cup of tea with the bottomless supply of nibbles. Eating was given a high priority. A small army of little soldier ants worked away in kitchens all over Adelaide to supply home made biscuits, cakes, curry and assorted delicacies. A second corps of soldier ants attacked the washing up and there was some serious bonding over wet tea towels in the kitchen.



BARRACKS, ADELAIDE 9 JUNE 1996

Robbie Dalton (victoria); Peter Epps (WA); George Newbury (SA); our hostess; Tony Rudd (President - elect, SA); Don Wright (Queensland) Brad Manera (Vice - President ACT).

The final day of the Conference was every bit as interesting as the previous two days. There was only one formal presentation and the formal farewells. The final session was a casual open discussion which included watching the Geelong Branch's home videos of their re-enactment group.

It was generally agreed that the highlight of the Conference was without a doubt the talk by Jan Ruff O'Hearne. She received a spontaneous standing ovation at the end of her talk and nobody envied George Newbury's job of having to thank her. He achieved what few people could do, talk through a lump in his throat. Jan was more than an ordinary person who found herself in extraordinary circumstances; I think she was an extraordinary person to start with, certainly exceptionally beautiful as a young woman. She is now a very warm, dignified lady.

A postscript readers might be interested in: we decided that as Jan was leaving to go to England and Holland to launch her book two days after the conference, buying her a bunch of flowers to die in the house while she was away was not a good idea. She had started her talk by showing us a handkerchief that had been thrust at her by a POW inmate as she was removed from her camp by the Japanese. This inspired us to buy a handkerchief and have it signed by everybody who was there on Sunday night. On Monday after the Conference I took the handkerchief to her home and she was very touched. Jan gave me a copy of her book which I read on Monday night. In her book she says that the "opening night" of the brothel the Japanese festooned the girls' bedrooms with flowers which they all promptly threw out. Since then Jan has discouraged people giving her flowers because they have such bad memories for her. Somewhere there is a guiding soul who tells you to do the right thing for the wrong reason.

We are confident that the South Australian Branch has kept up the high standard that has been set by previous Conferences and look forward to renewing old friendships in Melbourne in two years time.

Hands Up! Hands Up! You Karkee Devils! The Vaal River Piquet — Four West Australians, Prisoners of the Boers

John P Sweetman

Hands Up! Hands Up! You Karkee Devils! With these words, four men of the First West Australian Mounted Infantry, went into captivity on 26 May 1900.¹ This scene was not unusual for the time, with men from the British Isles and the Dominions being captured all over the veldt by their Boer foes. Yet, from a Western Australian point of view this Boer capture of four West Australians, presents a real insight into the actual composition of the first West Australian unit raised for service in South Africa. Of this unit of five officers and 125 other ranks only 16 of its members were able to claim Western Australia as their birthplace.

On 26 May 1900, just after crossing of the Vaal River at Drietontein, a piquet of four men was surrounded by Boers and forced to surrender without firing a shot. The actual capture and subsequent events were described by Private A Bedwell, one of the men captured, in a letter to his father:

Kroonstadt

June 23rd 1900

My Dear Father.

You will no doubt have heard before this, that I was taken prisoner by the Boers. I was taken on the 26th of May, just after crossing the Vaal River.

I was out on picket with three of our men, when we were surrounded by the Boers.

I was out on the furthest post and I came back to No.1 Post to tell our Corporal that we were surrounded, when, just as I rode round the corner of the kraal, the Boers jumped out "Hands up! Hands up! you Karkee Devils!"

We were hurried away to the nearest railway station and sent to Pretoria, and a lively time we had. Some stations we came to, they wanted to shoot us as they have a great down on the volunteers.

We stayed at Pretoria a few days and were then sent up to Waterfal (sic)² where we joined the rest of our prisoners which numbered about 4,000.³ All the Australians there were glad to see us as they were represented by every colony bar West Australia.

We were the last prisoners to come in and we were able to give the others all the latest news.

¹ In *Records of Australian Contingents to the War in South Africa 1899-1902* by Lt-Col F L Murray. This date is incorrectly given at pp.399-402 as 29 May 1900.

² This is how Bedwell and possibly others spelt Waterval.

³ Murray gives this number as "some 3,000 prisoners all together": Murray, *Ibid* p.9

Some of them, had been prisoners 6 and 7 months so the morning we heard the Boer out-posts fire a volley and then retire the prisoners nearly went mad and when the Boer Commandant went out with a white flag they started to climb over the Barb wire network.

Trooper Nicholson of the Scots Greys was the first man and his sword was smeared with Boer blood as soon as the Boer flag was hauled down the Boers started to shell us they killed fourteen one shell dropped right into the hospital. It was a sight worth seeing to see them dropping over the veldt carrying blankets pots, pans of every description and shells dropping amongst them. two men were, killed about ten yards in front of one.

We have been sent down here to get remounts and refitted. It is bitterly cold lying out without tents or oil sheets and you wake up in the morning with your blankets stiff with frost, pneumonia is very bad amongst us.

There would be great rejoicing all over the world at the fall of Pretoria. Our column under Colonel De Lisle was first into the town we had one of our men killed.⁴

Lord Roberts took one fort and with that put the others out of action.

I think by the time you receive this we will know when we are going home.

The Boers captured one of our trains with twenty tons of mail and destroyed them all So we have not had any letters since we left Bloemfontein.

Dear Father. I must now draw to a close trusting you are all well.

I remain

Your affect. Son

A Bedwell.

PS I pricked my hand with barb wire getting away from Waterfal (sic) and have just been to the hospital and had it lanced twice.⁵

This letter was received on 20 July 1900 by Mr H F Bedwell, of Rushworth Victoria from his youngest son who was serving as No.50 Private Alexander Bedwell, First West Australian

⁴ This unknown soldier must have been British as Colonel De Lisle's column which was the 2nd Mounted Infantry Corps was made up of the 6th Mounted Infantry Battalion (which comprised of the following Mounted Infantry Companies:

2nd Bedfordshire

1st Essex

1st Gordon Highlanders

1st Welsh

2nd Wiltshire

New South Wales Lancers

1st West Australian Mounted Infantry.

As neither of the last two units had any casualties noted on their nominal rolls for that- date it must be assumed that the dead soldier was from one of the British units.

⁵ This is confirmed by the following extract of a report by Major G L Lee New South Wales Lancers which appears in Murray at page 9.

The following day 6th June we went to "Waterval" and released the British prisoners, or rather, the prisoners released themselves by breaking out on the arrival of our advanced scouts.

This report also shows the incorrectness of Murray's wording in regard to how and when the West Australians were to rejoin their comrades as "recaptured" is disproved by the above, as is also the date which he gives as 7 June.

Mounted Infantry. His father was aware of his capture, having received a telegram advising him:

Your son missing Driefontein twenty sixth instant believed to be taken unwounded will wire any further reports that may come to hand.

The telegram was sent on 31 May 1900 and signed by Major J A Campbell, the Commandant, West Australian Local Forces.

Bedwell's father was to learn of his son's freedom by the letter of 23 June but official confirmation of this fact was not made until the receipt of a letter from Major Campbell on 9 August 1900 which said:⁶

I have the honour by direction to inform you that your Son Alexander of the first WA Contingent who was taken prisoner on May the 26th was recaptured when Pretoria was taken on July 5th.

The four men comprising the captured picquet from the 1st West Australian Mounted Infantry (1st WAMI) were: No.50 Private Alexander Bedwell, No.59 Private Arthur Green, No.7, Private Adam Mountjoy, and No.60, Corporal John Edwin Tratham.

After their escape, the four West Australians rejoined their unit and the fight that had brought them to South Africa, although one of their number would be invalided home three months later.

No.50, Private Alexander Bedwell

His full name was William Alexander Bedwell but he preferred to be known as Alexander and had enlisted as such. He was aged 27 years having been born at Rushworth, Victoria and was a butcher by occupation. He had previous military service, consisting of 12 months in the Victorian Naval Brigade.

On 13 December 1900, he departed from Cape Town aboard the transport *Orient* and arrived in Albany, Western Australia on the 29 December 1900. Bedwell probably remained on the *Orient* and continued to Melbourne to visit his family since the original photo of him in his uniform was taken in a Melbourne photographic studio. His date of arrival back in Western Australia is unknown. However, he was back in time to be discharged from the contingent on 29 March 1901 along with the other men who had returned aboard the *Orient*.

Following his discharge he joined the West Australian Police Force as a Probationary Constable in Perth on 10 June 1901 and was given the number 685. On his application form to join the Police Force he gave the following details:

Date of Birth:	13 January 1873
Place of Birth:	Victoria
Height:	5ft 10ins
Eyes:	Dark
Hair:	Dark
Complexion:	Dark

⁶ This letter which was sent in August, also continues to give the impression that the prisoners were "recaptured" rather than had escaped. In addition, it gives the date as 5 July and not the correct date of 6 June.

Marital Status: Married. (He had been married at time of his joining the 1st WAMI but as the requirement was for single men he did not disclose this fact.)

Occupation: Contractor. (As it had only been 8. months since his discharge this may have been just a fill-in job to support his family whilst waiting for his police force application to be accepted.)

Religion: Church of England.

He was promoted to 2nd Class Constable on 1 January 1902. Bedwell transferred to Newcastle (Toodyay) on 18 November 1902 and to Northam on 9 November 1903. He resigned from the Police on 4 May 1904 and took up farming at Narrogin.

Bedwell applied to join the AIF at Narrogin on 12 February 1917 and was accepted provisionally. He was sent to Blackboy Hill Camp the next day, where after further medical examinations he was accepted into the AIF and given the rank of Private and the number 7829.

On his AIF enlistment application he gave the following details:

Age:	44 years 1 month.
Birthplace:	Rushworth, Victoria.
Occupation:	Farmer.
Marital Status:	Married.
Religion:	Church of England.
Place of Enlistment:	Narrogin, Western Australia.
Next of Kin:	Mrs Annie Bedwell (wife), Narrogin, Western Australia
Previous Service:	1 year 169 days, Boer War.
Height:	5ft 8¾in.
Weight:	172 lbs.
Chest Measurement:	36-40 in.
Complexion:	Dark.
Eyes:	Grey.
Hair:	Dark, going Grey.
Distinctive Marks:	2 Scars (Vaccination), left Arm. Stiff little fingers Left Hand.
Will lodged with:	B J Kilpatrick, East Narrogin, Western Australia.

After marching into camp he was posted to D3 Depot Company on 5 March 1917 and trained with this unit until he transferred to 22 Depot Company on 21 April 1917 and continued training until posted to the 26th Reinforcements to the 11th Battalion on 7 June 1917.

Bedwell embarked aboard HMAT (His Majesty's Australian Transport) A30 Borda at Fremantle, on 29 June 1917. He disembarked in Plymouth, England on 25 August 1917 and was marched into camp at Durrington, where he was posted to the 3rd Training Battalion. He transferred to the 2nd Training Battalion, Sutton Veny, 7 November 1917.

On 30 January 1918, Bedwell was admitted to the Military Hospital at Sutton Verry, with a fractured metacarpal bone in his right thumb. He was discharged to 2nd Training Battalion on 4 February 1918. He transferred to Cookery School at Tidworth, 24 February 1918 and back to 2nd Training Battalions 30 March 1918. Bedwell transferred to 1st Training Battalion on 25 April 1918 and was then transferred to the Pioneer Training Battalion, Sutton Verry, on the same day.

He was transferred to No. 9 Convalescent Depot in Weymouth on 27 May 1918. On 4 June 1919, he was charged with "Failing to salute an Officer in Weymouth on 1-6-1919". His punishment was "Award — admonished by Major H D A D Burrowes".

Bedwell transferred to the 1st Training Battalion, Sutton Veny, on 14 June 1918 and sent on a course of instruction in graduated training and organised games and qualified to act as instructor during voyage to Australia. He was invalided back to Australia aboard Hired Transport (HT) D19 *Carpentaria* on 27 September 1918 due to overage and rheumatism. He was discharged from the AIF after 457 days service on 30 October 1918.

Bedwell died at the age of 74 and was cremated at Karrakatta Cemetery on 28 May 1948. He was awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal with clasps; Johannesburg, Cape Colony and Orange Free State. For World War One he received the British War Medal.

No.59, Private Arthur Green

Arthur Green was born in Tamworth, Staffordshire, England in 1877. He was at aged 21 years and 7 months and stated his occupation was a Station Hand. He had previous military service, consisting of two years in the Geraldton Rifle Volunteers and at the time of enlisting, was a Private with the number 227.⁷

While he was one of the original volunteers for the contingent, his name was not among the initial 125 men selected for the unit. He was, however, selected to train with the unit as a possible replacement if required. The wisdom of selecting more than the required 125 men proved to have been a very wise decision. Eight of those originally selected were replaced by these reserves before the contingent left for Albany. Along with the other three escapees he returned to the war until falling sick. Invalided back to Australia aboard the SS *Ninevah* arriving on 24 September 1900. He returned to Geraldton in October, where he was welcomed back at a Civic Reception given in his honour.

Green then joined the 5th West Australian Mounted Infantry and was given the rank of Sergeant and the number 298. He departed with his unit for South Africa aboard the *Devon* on 6 March 1901 and arrived at Durban on 28 March. He served in this unit until 7 December 1901 when following completion of his period of service he was discharged at Green Point. His certificate of discharge from the 5th WAMI states:

Age:	23 years.
Height:	5ft 9in.
Complexion:	Fair.
Eyes:	Grey
Hair:	Brown.
Conduct:	Very Good.

Following his discharge from the 5th WAMI he remained in South Africa joining as Head Scout, on 22 January 1902, the Field Intelligence Department (FID) in the Southern Districts of Cape Colony. On 27 June 1902 he was discharged from the FID, the war having ended. His character while serving with the FID was graded as "Excellent".

Soon after the war ended he returned to Geraldton and resumed his life. Green married in 1908. He was an active member of the Mount Magnet Council for many years and a prominent businessman being at times licensee of various hotels; the Club Hotel. Meekatharra Hotel and

⁷ Had qualified as a "Trained Soldier" on 22 March 1899 having joined the unit 18 months previously.

the Freemasons Hotel. He was also a member of Loyal John Shipton Lodge (MUDFC) and of the Returned Services League.

In 1930, Green purchased a property named Narra-Tarra, a sheep station in the Geraldton area, which he worked until his retirement. After his retirement, he lived in Bassendean for many years and died at the age of 89 in hospital at Midland on 9 June 1966. Following his cremation at Karrakatta Cemetery on 13 June 1966, his ashes were interned in J section of the Garden of Remembrance. Green had been awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal with clasps Johannesburg, Cape Colony and Orange Free State, and the Kings South Africa Medal with clasps South Africa 1901 and South Africa 1902.⁸

No.7, Private Adam Mountjoy

Adam Mountjoy was born in Albion Town, Western Australia, 5 September 1869. He enlisted aged 33 years and 1 month and stated his occupation as farmer.⁹ He had previous military service, consisting of 16 years in the Guildford Rifle Volunteers (GuRV) and at the time of enlisting was a Sergeant with the number 9.¹⁰

On 13 December 1900 he departed from Cape Town aboard the transport *Orient* and arrived in Albany on 29 December. He was discharged from the contingent on 29 March 1901. He rejoined the GuVR and although given his old rank of Sergeant, was given the new number 3.

Mountjoy participated in the Flemming Cup for Musketry of 1900-1901 in which he was placed 10th with a score of 59. He was selected to join the Veterans' (Returned from South Africa) section of the Mounted Infantry detachment of the contingent that represented Western Australia at the official opening of the Federal Parliament in Melbourne in May 1901.

By Routine Order No.240 of 17 of October 1904, Mountjoy was dismissed from the service (Commonwealth Military Forces) for: "Absence without Leave from the Inspection by General Officer Commanding on 3rd August 1904". The severity of the punishment given to Adam Mountjoy makes one wonder if he thought his 21 years of military service to his State had counted for nothing. Perhaps a reduction in rank may have been punishment enough for this long-serving volunteer.

Despite what had happened in 1904, when the call for men to once again go to war came, Adam Mountjoy answered the call. He applied to join the AIF on 12 July 1915 at Blackboy Hill Camp and was provisionally accepted. He gave the following details:

Age:	45 years, 7 months.
Birthplace:	Albion Town, Western Australia.
Occupation:	Carpenter, Millar's Timber Yard, Westonia, WA.
Marital Status:	Single.
Religion:	Church of England.

⁸ He was the only Western Australian to be awarded this particular combination of clasps, due to having been a prisoner and then having served in the 5th WAMI and the FID.

⁹ Albion Town was the name given to a parcel of land in the Upper Swan owned by a William Heares Smithers. He had built a hotel in, Fremantle in the early 1830s and called it the Albion Hotel and used this name for his property which is today a vineyard. (Trevor Tuckfield, "Early Colonial Taverns and Inns, Early days", *Journal of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society*, Vol. VII, Part III, 1971, p.80.

¹⁰ He joined the GuRV on 1 March 1883 and listed the following details.

Age:	17 years.
Height:	5ft 9in.
Occupation:	Carpenter

Next of Kin: Charles Mountjoy, (Father), Middle Swan, WA.
Previous Service: Guildford Rifle volunteers.
Boer War 1899-1901
11th Australian Infantry Regiment (Militia).
Height: 5ft 9in.
Weight: 154 lbs.
Chest Measurement: 34-36 in.
Complexion: Fair.
Eyes: Blue.
Hair: Brown.
Distinctive Marks: Nil.

After final acceptance into the AIF on 31 July 1915 he was posted to the 11th Reinforcements to the 11th Battalion with the rank of Private and the number 3520. He embarked for the Middle East aboard the transport HMAT A38 *Ulysses* at Fremantle with the rank of Acting Corporal, on 2 November 1915.

On joining the battalion, at Habieta on 2 March 1916, he was posted to D Company and reverted to the rank of Private as was usual with reinforcements.

Mountjoy embarked with 11th Battalion on 22 March 1916 aboard the *Corsican* at Alexandria to join the British Expeditionary Force in France. The battalion disembarked at Marseilles on 5 April 1916. He served on the Western Front until being admitted to Hospital with Rheumatism on 13 April 1916. He continued to require medical treatment for this illness and after being treated at several hospitals in France, it was decided to invalid him to England.

Mountjoy departed Boulogne on 15 May 1916 and was admitted to Woodcote Park Hospital, Epsom. He was discharged as "Classified - A Medically Fit" to No.1 Convalescent Depot on 24 August 1916 and transferred to No.3 Training Battalion on 26 August 1916. He embarked at Southampton on 30 July 1917 to rejoin his unit in France. After arriving, at Havre, he was posted to No.1 Australian Divisional Base Depot on 31 July 1917. He rejoined the 11th Battalion on 17 August 1917 and served until 16 December 1917, when he was hospitalised with debility. He was discharged and returned to duty on 26 December 1917.

Mountjoy returned to England on leave and was admitted to the Military Hospital in York on 5 August 1918. He was discharged, as fit, to Littlemore Camp on 6 September 1918. He did not return to the Front as he was admitted to Salisbury Road Hospital in Plymouth as "Dangerously ill with Broncho Pneumonia", having been admitted to hospital at Devonport with "Influenza" on 21 October 1918. The Hospital reported to his father that he was "slightly improved and removed from Dangerously Ill List" on 26 November but the date he was discharged from hospital is unknown. He was admitted to the 1st Australian General Hospital on 16 January 1919 and was discharged to No.2 Convalescent Depot on 23 January 1919.

Mountjoy was invalided to Australia with pneumonia aboard HT *Eufipides* on 3 March 1919. He arrived in Australia on 10 April and was discharged from the AIF after 1256 days service on 17 June 1919. Mountjoy died at the age of 79 at Lemos Hospital, Shenton Park on 9 September 1948. The causes of death were stated to be:

- A. Broncho Pneumonia.
- B. Arteriosclerosis.

He was buried in St. Mary's Anglican Church graveyard in Middle Swan where his headstone only gives testimony to his World War One service. He was awarded the Queen's South Africa

Medal with clasps Johannesburg, Cape Colony and Orange Free State. For World War One he received the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

No.60, Corporal John Edwin Tratham

John Edwin Tratham was born in South Australia, enlisted at aged 22 years 4 months, and listed his occupation as Secretary. He had previous military service consisting of 2 years in the South Australian Infantry and then 12 months in the South Australian Garrison Artillery. He enlisted in the contingent as a Private and was promoted to Lance-Corporal prior to departure for South Africa.

Tratham was a participant at the Battle of West Australia Hill on 9 February 1900 and was one of five messengers sent by Major Moor to obtain permission to retire from their position doing so under heavy and accurate Boer rifle fire.¹¹

Tratham was specially Mentioned by Commanding Officer in Despatches (*London Gazette*, 25 February 1900) for his gallantry at West Australia Hill. He was promoted Corporal on 17 March 1900. At 3 am on 16 August 1900 Corporal Tratham along with another unnamed scout rode through the Boer lines around the trapped garrison at the Elands Rivet. They had ridden ahead of the main force to advise the defenders of the approaching relief force which arrived about four hours later.¹²

On 13 December 1900 he departed from Cape Town aboard the transport *Orient* and arrived in Albany on the 29 December. He was discharged from the contingent as a Sergeant on 29 March 1901. No further mention is made of him in military records so he may have left the state after his discharge as today the surname of Tratham does not appear in the Perth Telephone directory or in the burial records of the Karrakatta or Fremantle cemeteries. He was awarded the Queen's South Africa Medal with clasps, Johannesburg, Cape Colony and Orange Free State.

¹¹ Although the Western Australians had met their Boer foe in a skirmish two days previously this was to be the first major action that involving West Australians. In the action the first West Australian soldier would lose his life and five of the defenders would be Mentioned in Despatches.

¹² R L Wallace, *The Australians at the Boer War*, Canberra, 1976, p.270.

Captain Morris Glanville Fielding MC, the King's Colonials

Peter Nemaric

Capt Morris Glanville Fielding MC served with distinction during the Great War in the King Edward's Horse and the Oxford and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry. Born in Sydney on 30 June 1892, he attended Fort Street and later The Kings School Parramatta. He was awarded the senior classical prize in 1910 and a year later was again awarded recognition at the Broughton and Forrest Exhibition of 1911 and given a scholarship to Oxford.

From 1911 to 1914, he attended Merton College at Oxford and, on 2 January 1912, like many of his fellow scholars, he joined the university squadron of the King Edward's Horse. He was also keen on sport and captained the 2nd 15 and 2nd 11. When at Oxford he stroked his college 8 boat—Merton College.

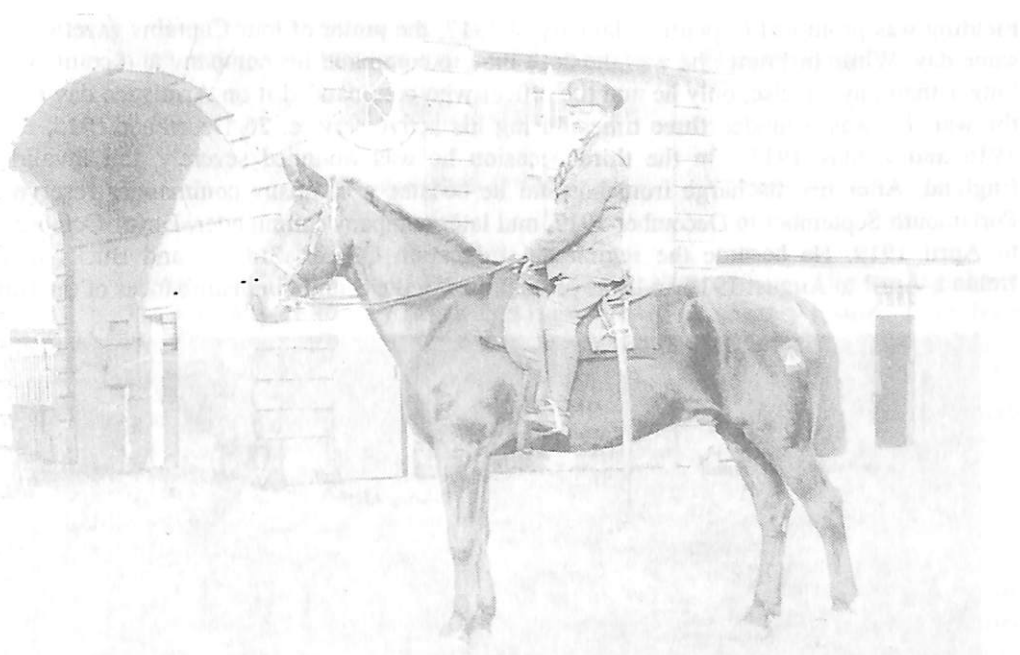
Fielding took his BA degree "in absentia" in 1915 and his MA in 1918. He was mobilised with his regiment at the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 and, by February 1915, he was promoted to Cpl in the 2nd troop C squadron. Initially the KEH was broken up into three squadrons for service in France, C squadron and Regt HQ being attached to the British 47th Division arrived at Le Havre in April 1915. Fielding's first taste of action was when his 2nd troop, together with the 3rd troop, were ordered into the Divisional reserve for the attack that took place at Festbert in May 1915. From here, the Division moved south and took over the line from the French at Hesdigneul, and held the trenches from which the Loos attack was later launched. In August the Division was pulled out of the line to prepare the ground for this great attack.

On 24 September, the squadron was moved to the plain between Noeux les Mines and Les Brebis preparing for the attack on Loos the following day. At dawn on 25 September, the infantry advanced. It was intended that the C squadron KEH in conjunction with two other squadrons of divisional cavalry would join a cavalry division ready to exploit any gap created by the infantry advance. The orders for the advance were given but never followed through as no gap existed in the advanced line.

From late October to November the squadron was employed in the construction of the Lens Road Redoubt. In the unit History of the King Edward's Horse by Colonel Lionel James he writes, "As soon as the enemy became aware that work was being done at this point he began systematic shelling, however owing to his regular habits, it was easy for the party to avoid casualties, he sent over five rounds battery fire at fifteen minute intervals so that the officer in charge of the digging party ordered his men under cover at the fourteenth minute, counted the bursts and then carried on work for another fourteen minutes." The Division was withdrawn to the rear for a well earned rest in mid November.

In January 1916, Fielding was given a commission for distinguished service in the field.

In March of 1916 as Temp 2nd Lieutenant, Fielding joined the 2nd Battalion of the Oxford and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, the old 52nd Light Infantry.



2nd Troop, C Squadron KEH, Watford, England, 3 February 1915: "The photo was taken just inside of the second of three arches at the entry of the stables where we live. The sword is at the carry or salute and I am in drill not marching order."

Beaumont Hamel, November 1916

The battle for the Somme raged incessantly in 1916, culminating in the capture of Beaumont Hamel on November 13. It was significant as, with winter approaching, it effectively marked the end of the Somme battles of that year.

In the early hours of November 11, the allies began a bombardment, which continued until the attack on Beaumont Hamel where the barrage was used to cover the advancing troops.

For the 52nd, the objective was to attack and capture the Serre Position and Puisieux Trench, and to push eastward to assist the II Corps in its attack from south of the River Ancre. The advance was to be in small columns of half-platoons at a steady walk and close behind the barrage. Zero hour was at 0535 hrs November 13. The regiment advanced in four waves, each of company strength and thick mist was making the operation more difficult. Due to the difficulties, the wrong trench was assaulted and until the front was stabilised and the line straightened the regiment was unable to locate any of their own troops on either flank. In the main the attack was carried by intense trench fighting and bombing of dugouts. By the end of the battle, the casualties of the regiment amounted to 13 officers killed wounded or missing, and of the other ranks, 10 were killed, 149 wounded and 76 missing.

For his gallantry in action at Beaumont Hamel Fielding was awarded the Military Cross. The citation was published in the *London Gazette* on 13 February 1917 at page 1541.

Temp 2nd Lieut MORRIS GLANVILLE FIELDING Ox & Bucks LI

For conspicuous gallantry in action. He assumed command of his company and organised the left flank defence, worked untiringly, and sent in most valuable information. He set a splendid example of coolness and courage throughout.

Fielding was promoted Captain in January of 1917, the junior of four Captains gazetted on the same day. While in France he was the 26th man to command his company and commanded it longer than anyone else, only he and the officer who commanded it on Armistice day survived the war. He was wounded three times during his active service: 26 December 1915, 31 July 1916 and 2 May 1917. On the third occasion he was wounded severely and invalided to England. After his discharge from hospital he became a company commander reserve unit, Portsmouth September to December 1917, and later company commander, Dover October 1918 to April 1919. He became the regimental Education Officer, 3rd Ox and Bucks in Cork Ireland, April to August 1919 and was present during the Sinn Fein disturbances of the time.



BEF October 5, 1916. M G Fielding front row 3rd from left. "This is a group of the Coy officers and NCOs. They are all here except the Coy commander, who took over when we were all knocked out. In this one too you can just see the bullet marks on my left eye and ear."

Owing to his wounds, Fielding was invalided from the service and returned to Australia. He was ordained in December 1919 and was curate to his father, the Rev S G Fielding at St Matthias Paddington, the Garrison Church, for five years. He was appointed rector of St Aidan's, Loungueville in January 1924 and retired in July 1954. He had poor health caused by his experiences in World War I and was blind for the last 18 months of his life. He died in Sydney on 27 November 1972.

Regi Adsumas Coloni

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Colonel Lionel James (1923) *The History of The King Edward's Horse*, Sifton.Praed & Co.

Private papers and photos of M G Fielding—P Nematic.

Special Thanks

In memory of Ruth Fielding, sister of Morris Glanville Fielding.

Spono Mort, Ginger Sandford, Rabbit Binnie and Biff Fielding

The experiences of a “Comfort Prisoner” of the Japanese

Jan Ruff O’Hearne

I am very honoured and very pleased to be talking to you this morning. History has always been my favourite subject and my family has been steeped in military history. I can boast two generals in our family, one in the Dutch army, my brother, and one in the French army. I think we celebrated last year the 50th anniversary of the end of the war and it is very good that we have been listening to some of the stories of the women because the women certainly fought their wars also, and the story that I am about to tell you this morning really changed and made world history because it was something the world knew nothing about.

I have got here a handkerchief, and really my story is of this handkerchief. The handkerchief has got a date the 26th February, 1944 and on it are seven names. My name is on it, Jan O’Hearne. Seven of what the Japanese called “Comfort Women”. Now I have been hiding this handkerchief in my wardrobe for 50 years. I didn’t want anybody to ever find it. I was terrified in case my daughters would find the handkerchief and ask me “Mum, what do the names on this handkerchief mean?” because I did not want anybody to know what the Japanese military did to me during the war.

The shame was too great, but in 1992 it was seeing the Korean “comfort women” appear on television that made me suddenly decide to talk also. We had this one sacred bond between all of us. There were 200,000 “comfort women” altogether. Nobody wanted to talk about it and then Kim Hak Sun, a Korean “comfort woman”, she had no family left, all her family had died, she was the only one left and she suddenly thought, “I have nothing to lose any more, I am going to speak out, I am going to ask the Japanese Government for an apology”. And when she spoke out a group of other Korean “comfort women” gathered around her and I watched on television in 1992 these women pleading with the Japanese Government for an apology and for compensation and I cried when I watched them. I wanted to put my arms around them and then I said, well this happened to me too. I should back up these Asian “comfort women”. I should be there with them because the world wasn’t listening to them because they were only Asian women.

Then I had a letter from Holland from the Foundation of Japanese Honorary Debts. This is a foundation in Holland that is also trying to get an apology and compensation from Japan. They were looking for a witness to speak out at the International Public Hearing of Japanese War Crimes in Tokyo on 9 and 10 December 1992. A woman on that foundation had seen me being taken out of the camp, she knew what had happened to me and she wanted me to be that witness. This was a very hard decision for me to make, but then the war in Bosnia had broken out and I saw that again women were being raped in war as if it was a natural thing, that in wars women can be raped, it’s part of war, it’s a reward for the soldiers, and I thought, “This isn’t just something that happened 50 years ago, it is happening again and again. Something should be done about it”, and I decided to speak out and be that witness and go to Tokyo and put my story next to the story of the Korean “comfort women”.

To be able to do that of course I had to first tell my family, my daughters, my friends. I had to tell them why I was going to Tokyo and this was the hardest thing—to break that silence and to tell them this very dark secret that I had kept all these years. But once I had made the

decision, things have been going well and the story that I told in Tokyo is really the story that I am about to tell you now.

I was born in 1923 in what was then called the Dutch East Indies, which is now Indonesia and I had a wonderful childhood growing up in Java. It was really an idyllic place to live and my childhood has given me my most precious memories. And then of course the war broke out.

First the war in Europe and we thought we were so safe in Java, the war would never come to the Dutch East Indies. Then Pearl Harbor fell on 6 December 1941, and suddenly the war became closer. Soon after Pearl Harbor, the Philippines fell to the Japanese, the next one was Singapore, in February 1942, and we realised then that if Singapore had fallen we could not stop the Japanese in Java either and on 1 March 1942, the Japanese landed on Java and the Dutch put up a very brave fight. My father was 48 years old at the time and even he had to join the army. They fought but on 8 March 1942 surrendered to Japan. I shall never forget that day.

It wasn't long after that the Japanese put all the Dutch citizens in POW camps. All the military were put in POW camps for the men, but all the thousands upon thousands of Dutch women and children were all put into prison camps too. What they thought we could do I don't know.

One day a truck arrived at our house. Japanese military jumped off the truck and we were told to pack a small suitcase and a mattress and we were loaded like sheep onto this truck and we were all driven away to prison camps. Our prison camp was in Ambarawa in central Java not very far away from the Capital of central Java, Bandoengan, the place where I was born. The prison camp was an old army barrack. It was disused and condemned, perhaps designed for about 200 soldiers. Now 3,000 women and children were crammed into the compound. We have all heard the stories about prison camps, mainly we have heard the stories from Changi and from the men's prison camps. The women's prison camps were just as bad. It was perhaps worse because the women had babies, some babies were even born in camp, they couldn't feed them because of the bad food and the babies would die.

I don't have to tell you the stories of the prison camps. These barracks; the roofs were leaking, we had to sleep on the floor, there were old bunks there, but we couldn't use them because they were full of bugs and lice that were literally eating us away at night. There were rats all over the place that would crawl over you and nibble your toes at night. The sanitation was so terrible, can you imagine all those people! The sewerage was overflowing all the time. We had to empty this by hand, with buckets. We had dysentery, malaria, all sorts of diseases, bad food, you know what happened in prison camps. Thousands upon thousands of women and children died in these camps.

I was 3½ years altogether in a Japanese POW camp, but it was on 26 February in 1944 on 26 February that an army truck suddenly arrived at our camp with high ranking military. When the military came to our camp it was usually for inspections because they were always inspecting us to see whether we still had valuables or jewellery or money and we had to go into the compound and stand there for hours in the sun while they would inspect our barracks. We thought at first it was just yet another inspection.

But there was great consternation, we knew that they were very high up military because of all the bowing and scraping of all the camp commandants. Then the order came that all young girls from 17 years and up had to line up in the compound. Now we were immediately very suspicious of that and we tried to find out why was it to be only the young girls. But we had to do what we were told. Some of us girls were so terrified that we tried to hide. Eventually there we were, all lined up in the compound and they didn't want to tell us the reason why we had to line up because we were so suspicious. The mothers all protested and our camp head said that

there was no reason why this should happen. But there we stood, all the young girls in a big line up. You just had to do as you were told, because they had the guns. And then they came.

We could see them coming up towards us these high ranking Japanese military and they started to inspect the line of young girls and we didn't like the look of this, the way they looked us up and down. They looked at our legs and at our figures and lifted up our chins and we just stood with our heads down. We were too scared, too terrified to look up. Up and down they paced, up and down they paced, and we just stood there terrified. What was going to happen with us, why were we standing here, were we going to be sent away, where were they going to send us? We were absolutely terrified and trembling and then some girls were told that they could go back to their mothers who were anxiously waiting behind, so some girls went back to their mothers' arms and there was still a long line left.

And again the inspection, up and down, up and down, laughing, sneering, touching us, and we got more terrified every moment. Again some girls were told to go back, and this selection process kept going on until in the end there were only 10 girls left standing and I was one of those 10. I wished at that moment that I was ugly and unattractive and that the Japanese hadn't picked me. But there we stood, terrified. I remember, we automatically clasped and grabbed each other's hands and we just stood there terrified and then we were told that we had to pack a small suitcase quickly, a small bag, because we were going to be taken away out of the camp in the waiting truck.

When this order came to us through the Japanese interpreter we had in the camp, the whole camp protested, they said these girls are not going to be taken away, the girls are not going, the mothers were fighting the Japanese. Our camp head did all she could. They did everything they could but you can do nothing if you are just women and children and they have the guns.

The Japanese took us to our barracks and they watched us while we packed a few belongings in a case. I remember packing this little case. The first things I put in this case were my rosary beads, a crucifix, a prayer book, my bible. Somehow to me at that moment they seemed to be the most important things, whatever would happen to me they would be my strength. I threw in a few clothes and we were all taken by the guards to the gate and all the women tried to give us little gifts or little things and this is when one woman gave me a white handkerchief, just a white handkerchief, which I later asked these girls to write their names on.

We were then taken on this truck to Semarang from Ambarara. The camp at Ambarara was about 47 km from Semarang and I knew the road very well. In Semarang there is a hillside, very similar to the Adelaide Hills, where there were very nice Dutch old Colonial homes. The trucks stopped in front of one of these large beautiful homes and we were told to get out. Seven girls had to go out and the others drove back to some other place. When we were ushered into this house we immediately felt very fearful.

The house was totally surrounded by barbed wire and fencing so there was no way that we could ever escape and that first day I remember, we were all given our own bedroom and the next day we were told why we were actually in this place. A high ranking Japanese officer told us that we were now in this house for the sexual pleasure of the Japanese. Communication with the Japanese was always very difficult because we didn't speak their language, they didn't speak our language. Some of the high ranking officers would know a little bit of English, some had picked up the local Indonesian language, so it was with a bit of mixture of both languages and interpreters, we were told we were there actually in a brothel for the military.

Well, it was just as if the whole world was collapsing from under our feet. We protested, we said that we would never do this and that they had no right to do it. It was against the Geneva

convention, they couldn't do this because it was against our will. We were taken by force out of our camp and brought here so they had no right to do it. They just laughed, they just laughed at us. Then gradually we saw that the whole place was geared up to function as a brothel. We were told to all sleep in our own bedrooms that first night, but of course we didn't, we all slept together in one big bed, we were so terrified.

The next morning our photographs were taken and photographs were pinned on the front verandah which was a reception area for the military to come and pick the girl of their choice. Flowers arrived for our bedrooms and we just threw them out and put them in the back garden. All sorts of strange objects appeared in the bathroom, we hadn't got a clue what they were.

We were very innocent, my generation. I knew nothing about sex. We were all virgins and for this then to happen to a young girl, when you are a virgin, can you imagine how terrified we were? We were trying to find out from one another something about what would happen to us; what to expect.

And then the opening night arrived. I shall never forget to my dying day, I shall never forget the fear and that fear has been with me actually, all my life, that fear of that first opening night and all the nights that followed. We were all told to go to our own bedrooms, but we refused. We all gathered together in the dining room and sat around the dining room table and we heard the military arrive, we heard all their excitement and their laughing and the treading of the boots, all the excitement of opening night and there we stood, huddled around this dining room table absolutely terrified with fear. I thought the only thing I could do was to say some prayers and I led the girls in some prayers and I read from my bible and as we were praying there like that they came.

One by one the girls were taken away and dragged to their bedrooms. I can remember hearing the screaming coming from the bedrooms and when four girls had been taken away like that I thought I must try and hide, and I hid under the dining room table. I remember seeing this big Japanese officer standing in front of me from under the table I could see his boots and of course he spotted me under the table and he dragged me out from under the table and I had always been very strong and I fought. I fought this man and kicked him and scratched him and he dragged me to my bedroom and I fought and I fought, and he was I think, just enjoying it because I just kept on fighting. I said, "You have no right to do this, I am here against my will." I tried to explain to him that I was here against my will, you can't do this, but he just laughed and because I refused to give myself to him he said that he would kill me.

He said, "I can kill you". He took out his Samurai Sword, it was a beautiful sword because he was a high ranking officer, and he started threatening me with his sword. He said, "I can kill you". I said, "I don't mind, you can kill me, I would rather die than give myself to you". He threatened me with the sword and I said, "Can I just say some prayers before you kill me." So I went on my knees and I said some prayers, and while I was praying, he of course had never any intentions of killing me. He got hold of me and threw me on the bed and started to undress himself and then I knew that he had never any intentions of killing me because I would have been no good to him dead.

He played with me like a cat with a mouse, running his sword over my naked body all the time, just like that, just playing with me, and the fear, the fear I just can't describe, it was just like electric currents going right through my body. I was numb with fear, eaten away with fear and no matter how much I fought him he raped me. When he had finished I was in total shock. When he left the room I felt I just wanted to go to the bathroom. I wanted to wash it all away, all the shame, all this dirt, wash it away, just wash it away.

I went to the bathroom and when I was in the bathroom I found all the other girls were there too. We were all standing there. We had all been raped, all trying to wash away the shame and the dirt and the hurt. What were we to do now, where could I go, where could we go? We didn't know what to do, where could we hide, we couldn't go back to the dining room or the bedrooms or anything, so we all tried to hide in different places. I tried to hide in a little room on the verandah and I sat there and my heart was just pounding and pounding and I thought "Oh God, don't let them find me, don't let them find me, I can't go through this again, don't let it happen again."

But of course eventually I was found. I was dragged to the bedroom again and the terror started all over again and this went on all night. I remember the next morning, us seven girls gathering together in the early hours of the morning and asking each other how many times each one was raped and I remember how we were crying for our lost virginity and this from now on was going to happen day after day, night after night.

We were supposed to be safe in the day time, but there were always Japanese coming in and out of the house. The house was never a private place. So often we were raped in the day time as well.

Then a doctor came on the scene and I thought, well a doctor, he is a man of high morals, I can explain to him that we are here against our will, that they have no right to do this to us, and this is what I did every time there was a high ranking military man coming. I tried to explain, but even this doctor had no pity on us whatsoever. In fact when I was in the room complaining to him, he wasn't really listening, he was just looking me up and down, up and down and all of a sudden he got up and he tried to grab me and I dashed out of the room. I went into the back garden where there was a chicken pen and tried to hide in the chicken pen, but he followed me right into the chicken pen and dragged me out of there and raped me and every time, every week when the doctor came for visits, every time, as if it was part of the routine, the doctor raped me first.

These visits of the doctor were as humiliating and as terrible as were the rapes, because the examination room, they removed the door, the windows were left open, and the Japanese were actually asked to watch while the girls were being examined. So can you imagine the humiliation that we endured.

At one stage I cut off all my hair, I got a pair of scissors and cut my hair really short to the scalp. I thought if I made myself look as bald as possible and looked absolutely terrible nobody would want me now. It didn't make any difference. They didn't care about the head, it was just the body they wanted. I tried to hide in different places, I hid in trees, I hid everywhere, I was always found.

Then I found I was pregnant. The Japanese were supposed to wear protection, but often they didn't do this, so there was always a chance of picking up a venereal disease or falling pregnant, so this is what happened to me. I thought I had missed a period and I thought I was pregnant, so I talked it over with the girls and they said, well, tell the woman guard. We had a woman guard there as well, and we thought that when she appeared on the scene that we would have at least one person who would be sympathetic towards us. But not this female. She was hard as nails, like all the others. I told her that I was pregnant, I thought perhaps they would send me back to the camp to my mother, but it was not to be. All she did she produced a bottle of tablets. She said, "Take these tablets, they will do the trick." I refused to take the tablets because I could not kill a foetus, not even this one. I thought by killing a foetus I was committing a mortal sin, it was wrong to do it, and I refused to take them. They were

eventually forced down my throat and shortly after I miscarried and life went on there as if nothing had happened.

One of the girls tried to commit suicide. I found her lying on the floor of her bedroom with her wrists cut.

We were there four months and totally exhausted, when one day we were told we had to come to the office because we were going to be taken away and we were terrified. Where were we going? Were we going to a worse place because they were always threatening us that we could be taken to another brothel where conditions were worse and because I was always fighting the Japanese. Every Japanese that tried to rape me I fought. I never, never just let them take me and I was very strong and I injured many Japanese I kicked them in the right places. I did everything I could, I really injured a lot of Japanese and they were getting very cross with me, very impatient with me.

I was beaten so many times because they didn't want me to fight and I was beaten every time. I didn't mind the beatings. I couldn't give myself to them. Because of my constant fighting they had often threatened me that they would send me down town to a brothel with native girls where conditions were much worse where I would have to work all day and all night and this threat was held over my head all the time.

When we were called, they said that we had to pack a few things, we were going to be taken away again. We thought, "My God where are we going now?" We were told to get our things together and we would be put on a train but we didn't know where we were going. We were on a two day train journey, all the blinds were closed and we were just terrified, not knowing where we were going.

Eventually after two days and two nights, we ended up in West Java in another camp, not a prison camp. This camp was in Bogor in West Java and in this camp we were actually reunited with our mothers and family. My mother and my two young sisters who were with me in camp also did that long train journey and we were there reunited. We never knew the reason why suddenly the brothels were closed, what the pressure was that had closed them. I remember embracing my mother for the first time and to feel the safety of her arms again and it was absolutely wonderful. I think the mothers always had the fear that they sort of knew what had happened to us.

I couldn't talk about it for the first night, I remember that first night laying there with my mother on our small mattress and I was just lying in a safety of the hollow of her arms and she was just stroking her hands over my bald head and just stroking me until I fell asleep and I didn't have to tell her anything. She knew. The next day I told her what had happened to me and so did the other girls and the mothers just couldn't cope. It was just too much for the mothers to cope with this, this had happened to their daughters, and we could never speak about it to our mothers again. All the girls were the same. When we were together we could still talk with one another, but we couldn't talk about it any more and the silence really started there and then.

This new camp was exclusively for girls who had been put into the military brothels. We were all there with our mothers and families—in my case, my mother and 2 sisters. The Japanese told us that if we were to tell anybody what happened to us, what they had done to us, they would not only kill us but kill our family members too. So the silence was really forced upon us straight away. It was a camp of misery.

We were there in this camp for a couple of months and then we were transferred to what is now called Djakarta, what was then called Batavia. We were taken to Batavia and we were put into yet another camp, in a huge women and children's prison camp. We girls were kept separate with our mothers. We were in a camp within a camp. Our section was all fenced off and boarded off. We were to have no connection with the big camp whatsoever. So the other women in the camp there became suspicious. They thought we were voluntary whores. They called us whores. They had heard rumours and they used to throw little messages over the fence and letters tied to a stone over the fence and they called to us through the wire, we were called Japanese whores. And this is a terrible thing to live with.

The conditions in camp in Batavia were worse than ever because the war was sort of dragging on and dragging on and they had less and less food for us. We were absolutely at starvation diet. People were dying every day. We ate anything at this stage, anything that wouldn't kill us. We ate grass, we ate rats, I ate the camp commandant's cat. I killed him one day and we ate the cat; we ate snails, but the snails gave us throat trouble so we couldn't eat them. In fact now I see weeds growing in my garden and I smile at them and I don't want to pull them because those weeds kept me alive in Java because they grew in Java too, those weeds with the juicy stems.

So conditions were really very bad at that stage. My mother was already put in a little room for the dying because they thought she was the next one to die and all of a sudden I remember planes going over the camp and they threw leaflets and we all tried to pick them up. They were allied planes. It was amazing for us to suddenly realise that these planes didn't have the red spot on them. These leaflets said, "Be courageous, the war will soon finish", and it was a bit later again that the bombing of Hiroshima took place on 6 August, that the war came to an end. But it wasn't until 15 August that for us in Java the war ended and the prison camp gates were open and it was the official surrender of the Japanese Army on 15 August.

We had nowhere to go we had to just stay in camp because all our houses had been destroyed, ransacked or looted. So for our own safety we had to stay together in camp until we could make arrangements to return to Holland. As you know, at that time the Indonesian Freedom Fighters wanted independence from the Dutch for Indonesia. It was therefore a very dangerous time because the Indonesians didn't want the Dutch back again.

Here they were, all these Dutch people together, thousands and thousands of them in these camps, "let's just kill them all off" and get rid of them this way. And that's just what happened. At night the Indonesian Freedom Fighters would jump over the gates and they would attack the camps and they would kill us with knives or whatever they had, throw hand grenades, but usually they just knifed us to death and I have seen hundreds and hundreds of my friends who had survived 3 hard years in prison camps, only to be killed by Indonesian Freedom Fighters at the end. It was really a miracle that my family came through all safe.

The situation got so terrible that the Allies thought they had to do something to save us all from being massacred. The nearest troops to Java at the time were British troops in Singapore, the 23rd Indian Division. They were there waiting to be sent back to England. My future husband was with them, he went through the Burma campaign with the Indian Divisions and they were the nearest at that time to Java so there were these poor British men thinking they were going home, instead they were sent to Java to rescue the Dutch women and children Prisoners of War in all these camps.

I shall never forget the wonderful feeling when we saw the British troops with the Indians and the Gurkhas, they looked real fierce with their Turbans and they put machine guns at the

corner of the camp and we felt safe again because the British troops were there to protect us. We still had to stay in the camp because it was too dangerous to leave and it was actually during this period that I met Tom Ruff.

I wanted to visit my mother who by that time had been taken to hospital outside the camp and to make this visit to her I had to make a 20 minute walk and it was very dangerous because I could be killed on the way, but I still did it. So when Tom saw that I was taking this chance he said I will take you in my jeep, so he used to take me in his jeep with a lot of soldiers sitting by the side ready with the gun, because there were always snipers and shooting going on, and this is how I met my husband. It was a real war romance.

I would just like to tell you now about my going to Japan, because I married Tom and he took me to England. I lived in England for 14 years before we came out to Australia in 1960. Tom died last year. When I was asked by the Dutch Foundation in Holland to go to Tokyo to speak out on this hearing on Japanese war crimes. I had told my daughters the secret of what had happened to me during the war, one daughter decided to come with me with her husband, she said, "Mum, I will come with you to Japan, you are not going on your own."

When I went to Japan I took with me a wreath of forgiveness. I made a wreath out of Australian wild flowers and I carried this wreath to Tokyo with me to let the Japanese people know that I didn't come with hate and anger in my heart, but only with forgiveness. I have learned that you cannot live a life and get on with your life if you fill it with hate and anger. You've got to be able to forgive because only in forgiveness can healing be found, so I took this wreath with me.

The hearing in Tokyo was really an amazing experience because I was received very well by the Japanese people and by the younger generation of Japanese. The younger generation want to know the truth, they want to know their history of World War 2. They have never been told anything about their own history and this was for the first time they were going to hear about the atrocities because it was not only "comfort women" who spoke out but also some of the men who had been in forced labour camps and in prison camps.

There were "comfort women" there from Korea, north and south, Taiwan, China, from the Philippines and from the Dutch girls from Indonesia. I was representing the Dutch girls.

When I heard the Korean "comfort women" speak out I couldn't sleep for a month afterwards. They suffered even more than I did. They used to take the Korean women right up to the battle front and if the troops had to retreat they used to shoot the women, kill them off because they couldn't take them with them in a hurry, and they used to shoot them, preferably through the vagina. When I heard the stories and saw the marks on their bodies of what the Japanese did to them my heart went out to them.

When I met them and we embraced, to me it was the most healing time of my life to be able to embrace these women because only they understood what we suffered.

I had one day left on the Friday after the hearing was over and that Friday I decided to visit the tomb of the unknown Japanese soldier which is situated in a beautiful park in Tokyo. The parks in Tokyo are all beautiful, all the trees and flowers and everything and I had told the Japanese that I wanted to lay my wreath on this tomb as a sign of forgiveness and the media had spread this news and there were hundreds of people turned up various peace groups and environmental groups, young people, all sorts of groups there were turned up to be there.

They were all pleased that I had spoken out and they respected that, but the most amazing thing that turned out that morning was a bus load of Japanese military. Here they came a

whole bus load of ex-Japanese military soldiers and they came there that morning to shake my hand. They shook my hand, they gave me presents, they gave me flowers and books and they came there and said they were sorry. This was a group of soldiers who had been formed, they were anti-war, they called themselves Japanese Peace Groups, groups to ensure that these things will never happen again, that's what they said to me, "We are a peace group to make sure these things will never happen again", and when they came, that was when the healing took place.

I was looking at them and I felt, well, one of these could have raped me, but then to be able to shake their hands and to show them I had forgiven them, that was for me a wonderful healing and although the war finished and all these things happened 50 years ago. The terrible thing is, just because the war finished, the pain didn't finish for me.

When the war was over I had no counselling, no help from anybody, I just had to get on with my life as if nothing had happened.

After I had spoken out, I met the other Dutch "comfort girls" and some of my friends who were in the brothel with me, we had a reunion in Holland. Because I spoke out, some of them came forward and it was very interesting to see how life had treated these girls. None of them had ever been able to really cope with the sexual part of married life. A lot of their marriages had broken up in divorce. I was very lucky because I had a wonderful husband, he was very patient with me, but a lot of these girls marriages ended up in divorce. The pain has never stopped. The after effects of what happened to me is with me for the rest of my life. Sometimes at night when I see it is getting dark, sometimes this feeling of fear still comes over me, when I see it watching, because to me when it gets dark it means I'm getting raped all night. So these sort of things, just going to bed and just lying in bed, brings back memories and I will have to cope with these things all my life.

Now the Japanese "comfort women", as you read in the paper, again it's come up in the news—they are still waiting for Japan to give them an official apology from the Government, and Mr Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, is now supposed to officially send them an apology from the Government to the women. So I only hope that this is going to happen because these women, including myself, need this apology, just to give us back our dignity.

I have written a book, *50 Years of Silence*, which is my autobiography. The first edition has sold out; it sold over 10,000 copies and is now going into second print. Some copies are still available, but it is coming out in a second edition. It has now come out in Singapore and it is being translated into French. It is also coming out in England in June and on Tuesday [11 July 1996] I am going to England and Holland to meet up with my friends once again. The book is going to be launched in England and I will be speaking on the BBC on 18 June in London. So there is my story, and I am glad that some of these women's stories are being told and I thank you for listening.

Fortress Guernsey

The sounds of battle rang out, recently, over the Channel Island of Guernsey as French soldiers of the 45eme Regiment de Ligne made a surprise attack on one of the loopholed towers constructed at the end of the 18th century to defend the island's vulnerable coastline. Once again the Redcoats triumphed; the invaders were repulsed—and a large crowd of holidaymakers thoroughly enjoyed this example of "Living history", specially staged by members of the Napoleonic Society to mark the opening of the attractively refurbished Tower as part of the developing 'Fortress Guernsey' project.

Rousse Tower, which overlooks picturesque Grand Havre Bay, is the most recent addition to the project's range of fortifications which provides graphic interpretation of the island's defences through the ages. It is one of 15 granite towers constructed in 1778-1779 when France, having declared its support for the American colonists in their struggle for independence, offered a real threat to the Channel islands.



While the "jewel" of these fortifications is undoubtedly Castle Cornet, on which construction work started in 1204 and which was extended considerably in the latter half of the 16th century, others which already attract substantial numbers of visitors include Fort Grey, a 19th century Martello Tower, now a shipwreck museum; a German 10.5 cm Casemate Gun in its bunker and a Direction-finding Tower, these two both relics of the occupation of Guernsey during the Second World War, and now meticulously restored by a local specialist society.

Guernsey offers evidence of periods of military activity ranging from the late Neolithic to World War 2. For anyone with an interest in military architecture of all periods and its related history, the island of Guernsey is well worth a visit.

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Notes from the Editor on contributions to *Sabretache*

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

Typewritten submissions are preferred. Material should be double spaced with a margin. If your article is prepared on a computer please send a copy on either a 3.5" or 5.25" disk (together with a paper copy).

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

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

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

Articles, preferably, should be in the range of 2,000-2,500 words (approx 4 typeset pages) or 5,000-7,000 words (approx 10 typeset pages) for major feature articles.

Articles should be submitted in accordance with the time limits indicated on page 2. Recently, lateness in receiving articles has meant that the Journal has been delayed in publication. Nevertheless, where an article is of particular importance, but is received late, the Editor will endeavour to publish the article if possible and space permitting.

Elizabeth Topperwien
Editor



Application for Membership

I/*We
(Name/Rank etc.)

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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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