

CASCABEL

Journal of the

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION
(VICTORIA) INCORPORATED

ABN 22 850 898 908



Number 100

Published Quarterly in
Victoria Australia

July 2009



A view of the Tsar Pushka, showing its massive bore and cannonballs,
and the Lion's head cast into the carriage.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Article	Pages
Assn Contacts, Conditions & Copyright .	3
The President Writes .	5
Membership Report .	6
Notice of Annual General Meeting	7
Editor's Scratchings	8
Rowell, Sir Sydney Fairbairn (1894 - 1975)	9
A Paper from the 2001 Chief of Army's Military History Conference	14
The Menin Gate Inauguration Ceremony - Sunday 24th July, 1927	23
2/ 8 Field Regiment .	25
HMAS Tobruk.	26
Major General Cyril Albert Clowes, CBE, DSO, MC	30
RAA Association(Vic) Inc Corp Shop.	31
Some Other Military Reflections .	32
Parade Card .	35
Changing your address? See cut-out proforma .	36

Current Postal Addresses

All mail for **the Association**, except matters concerning Cascabel, should be addressed to:

The Secretary
 RAA Association (Vic) Inc.
 8 Alfada Street
 Caulfield South Vic. 3167

All mail for the Editor of Cascabel, including articles and letters submitted for publication, should be sent direct to....

Alan Halbish
 115 Kearney Drive
 Aspendale Gardens Vic 3195
 (H) 9587 1676
 ahalbish@netspace.net.au

CASCABEL

Journal of the

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION
(VICTORIA) INCORPORATED

ABN 22 850 898 908



FOUNDED:

First AGM April 1978
First Cascabel July 1983

COL COMMANDANT:

BRIG N Graham

PATRONS and VICE PATRONS: 1978

Patron: LT GEN The Hon Sir Edmund
Herring

KCMG, KBE, DSO, MC, ED

Vice Patron: BRIG Sir William Hall KBE,
DSO, ED

1982

Patron: BRIG Sir William Hall KBE, DSO,
ED

Vice Patron: MAJGEN N. A. Vickery CBE,
MC, ED

1999

Patron: BRIG K. V. Rossi AM, OBE, RFD,
ED

Vice Patron: MAJ GEN J. D. Stevenson AO,
CBE

2008

Patron: BRIG K. V. Rossi AM, OBE, RFD,
ED

Vice Patron:

PRESIDENTS:

1978 MAJGEN N. A. Vickery CBE, MC, ED

1979 MAJGEN J. M. McNeill OA, OBE, ED

1981 COL A. (Sandy) Mair ED

1984 MAJ P. S. (Norman) Whitelaw ED

1988 BRIG K. V. Rossi AM, OBE, RFD, ED

1991 MAJ M. Taggart RFD, ED

2004 MAJ N Hamer RFD

JOURNAL NAME:

CASCABEL - Spanish - Origin as small bell
or Campanilla (pro: Kaskebell), spherical bell,
knob like projection.

CASCABLE - English spelling.

ARTILLERY USE:

After 1800 AD, it became adjustable. The breech is closed in large calibres by a CASCABEL(E) screw, which is a solid block of forged wrought iron, screwed into the breach coil until it pressed against the end of the steel tube. In the smaller calibres, the A bore tube is carried through to form the CASCABEL(E)

[Ref: "Text Book on Fortification Etc", Royal Military College, Sandhurst, by COL G. Philips, RE, 4th Ed, Ch-1, P9, para 28,1884].

[Source: COL Alan Mason, Vic, May 1993].

CASCABEL HISTORY:

The name was put forward by the first editor, LTCOL Rob Gaw, and accepted because of its unique and obvious Artillery connection.

ASSOC LOGO:

Our Assoc Logo is the 1800 AD 9 Pdr Waterloo Field Gun. Copy is taken from Device, Badge and Motto of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, as approved in 1833, by HM King William IV.

LAPEL BADGE:

Copy of the left arm brass gilded gun once worn by GUN SGTS above the chevrons on each arm. Brassards worn by IGs at North Head were embroidered with this insignia. Selected by MAJ Warren Barnard, 1984 Assoc Committee.

**RAA Association (VIC) Inc
Committee**

President: MAJ Neil Hamer RFD
9702 2100
Vice President: Lt Col. Jason Cooke
Phone: 9705 1155
Immediate Past President:
MAJ Merv Taggart RFD, ED
Phone: 9598 8452
Secretary: Rachel Decker
Phone 9578 5205
Assistant Secretary: MAJ Robin Smith RFD
Phone: 9435 6352
Treasurer: SSGT Reg Morrell
Phone: 9562 9552

Members:

CAPT. Peter Wertheimer OAM,RFD
LT. Tom Mc Lean
WO2 Lionel Foster
SSGT Brian Cleeman
BDR Lindsay Pritchard

Cascabel Editor:

Representatives: WO2 Lionel Foster
(10 Mdm Regt Assn)

Honorary

Auditor: Major David J Osborne
Shepard Webster & O'Neill Pty Ltd

Curator: **MUSEUM TRUST**
SSGT Brian Cleeman
9560 7116

VIC REGT CONTACTS

2/10 Fd Regt 9526 4222
8 Chapel St
St Kilda

22 Fd Bty 8710 2407
65 Princes Hwy
Dandenong South

38 Fd Bty 5221 7666
Myers St
Geelong

38 Fd Bty 5231 2056
Queen St
Colac

CONTENTS AND SUBMISSIONS

The contents of CASCABEL Journal are determined by the editor. Articles or opinions of authors & contributors are their own, and do not necessarily represent or reflect the official position of the RAA Assn (Vic) Inc, Australian Army, the committee, the editor, staff or agents.

Article style, clarity and conciseness remain the responsibility of the article owner or author.

Submissions for the **October 2009** issue are required no later than **1st September 2009** unless otherwise arranged with the Editor.

**COPYRIGHT (C)
RAA Association (Vic) Inc -2000
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
ISSN 1322-6282
MEMBERS & KINDRED
ORGANISATIONS ADF &
ACCREDITED RESEARCH:**

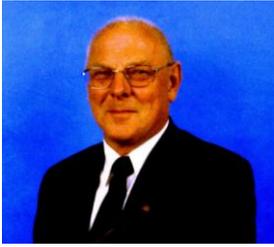
Only Members, Kindred Organisations, ADF and accredited researchers, may copy without prior approval, ORIGINAL articles or items of interest, within this Journal, if the source and author are acknowledged. Based on goodwill.

Where the word "Copyright" or "(C)" appear with an article or where the material has been reproduced from a designated source, permission to copy should be sought from the Author or Source given.

**COMMERCIAL USE/PRODUCTS &
BOOKS**

Apart from members/kindred organisations/ ADF and accredited research, no part of CASCABEL is to be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying or recording by any storage or retrieval system without written permission from the RAA Assn (Vic) Inc, the authors or the referenced source.

Reproduction in any manner in whole or part in English or any other language is prohibited.



The President Writes

As I am sure that you have noticed, we have a change in Editor for our magazine. Bdr Lindsay Pritchard indicated that he would not be able to continue in this position due to a change in his employment and relocation to Clunes. Lindsay has done a really excellent job during his time as Editor and we cannot thank him enough for his dedication to the task.

In response to my plea for a new editor, WO2 Alan Halbish has offered to take on the role. I am sure that Alan will bring his own style to the magazine, as past editors have done. We enthusiastically and gratefully welcome Alan into this position.

Congratulations are offered to Brig Doug Perry on the award of an OAM in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. It is very pleasing to see that recognition for service.

Sunday 5th July was again marked as Reserve Forces Day throughout Australia. A march was held along St Kilda Road to the Shrine. As I mentioned last year, the lack of attendance by serving reservists – for whatever “very good reason” – seems to me to make the day more than a little bit of a nonsense. I stress that this my opinion, not that of the Association, and I have probably expressed it often enough in the past. Enough said.

By the time you get this issue of *Cascabel* the Gunner Dinner will be done and dusted. Numbers are down again this year, with little or no support coming from expected areas. Serious consideration will have to be given as to whether we should continue with this function in this format, or whether an alternative should be considered. Suggestions welcome - PLEASE.

I look forward to seeing you at the next Association Function.

Regards to all

Neil Hamer

MAJ (R)



Membership Report July 2009

Current Membership as at 17 Mar 09

Life Members	205	(204)
Annual Members	46	(50)
Senior Annual Members	21	(19)
Affiliates	35	(35)
Others (CO/CI, Messes, etc.)	12	(12)
Libraries	5	(5)
RSL's	<u>1</u>	<u>(1)</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>325</u>	<u>(326)</u>

These numbers include 15 Annual Members who have yet to renew their membership for 2009/2010.

Vale

It is with regret that we note the passing of Bdr David Leonard Abbott on the 3rd March 2009. Bdr Abbott joined the Association in 2005 as an Annual Member.

He was enlisted in 14 NSTB in 1954 and was posted to 22 Fd Regt (SP). Bdr Abbott was awarded the ANSM and the ADM.

He served as President of the NSAA Shepparton District Sub-branch, and as a civilian volunteer with the Australian Air Force Cadets.

The usual reminder about the **proforma** on the **last page below the Parade Card**. If you have not already done so, it would be appreciated if you would provide the information requested so that our files can be kept up to date. This proforma should also be used to notify us of any changes in the future. It would also help if you could provide any information about your occupation, achievements and other service to the community.

Would you also please let me know if you have been awarded an ADM.



Neil Hamer

Contact: Telephone: 9702 2100

MAJ (R)

0419 533 067

Membership Co-ordinator

Email: nhamer@bigpond.net.au

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2009

The Annual General Meeting of the Royal Australian Artillery Association

Will be held on Thursday 5th November 2009 at 1930 hrs
at the Caulfield RSL

2 St Georges Road Elsternwick

(Melways 67 G.2 3.5)

The bistro will be open to RAA Assoc members at 1745 hrs
for a pre-meeting meal.

Bookings are essential and may be made by contacting
SSgt Reg Morrell on 9562 9552 by 30th October 2009.

NOMINATION FORM

To reach the secretary, Mrs Rachel Decker 8 Alfada Street CAULFIELD SOUTH VIC 3167

Not later than Wednesday 28th October 2009

Nominate: _____ for the position of

Nominee: _____ Signature: _____

Proposer: _____ Signature: _____

Seconder: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Your new Editor's Scratchings

I wish to thank Bdr Lindsay Pritchard for the sterling work he has produced as Editor of Cascabel. He commenced with issue No. 74, way back in January, 2003 & concluded with issue 99 in April, 2009. Pity you couldn't break the ton, Lindsay.

My tasks for this issue have been made much easier, as Lindsay had produced most of the articles & his research has been invaluable. Thanks Lindsay. However, should any complaints arise from any section, it is my responsibility and any communication should be directed to me.

I am a retired school teacher of some 33 years of 'slavery'. As a Cabinet Maker by trade, I joined the Education Department in February 1972 as a Woodwork Instructor & was posted to Blackburn Technical School. 1974 saw me at Noble Park Technical College until end of 1993. We amalgamated (thanks Mr. Kennett) with the local High School where I stayed until retirement in July, 2005.

I was fortunate to become involved with computing in the late 80's – Macs then IBM – as I was able to diversify my teaching by taking some junior IT classes. As I gained more experience, I became Head Of Technology Studies & was teaching IT classes from Yr. 7 to Yr. 11 inclusive until my retirement.

My Army Reserve career commenced in 1965 when I enlisted in 3 Bty, 2 Fd Regt at Landcox St. Brighton. My first posting was as a driver, graduating to Tpt Bdr. Thanks to the influence of WO2 (as he was then) Joe Monahan, I was posted as a Bdr No 1 on the 25 Pdrs. Yes, it was a steep learning curve.

Promoted to Sgt & served on the guns then back to Tpt. Some time later I was promoted to SSgt & posted as Bty Guide. Further promotion to WO2 saw me posted as Bty Guide then BSM in various depots, my final posting in Artillery being as Ares Chief Clerk at Batman Ave.

I served at the following depots, either in 2 Fd Regt or 2/15 Fd Regt as we became. Landcox St, Batman Ave, Dandenong, Frankston & Baxter. I left the Regt to spend my final 3 yrs with 3 Trg Gp, O R Trg Wing, Puckapunyal where I had previously attended many recruit and promotion courses as an instructor.

I trust that I can continue with the fine work Lindsay has done. He has asked in the past for members to submit articles for publication, however the response has been scant. I, too am making the same plea as I wish to include articles that you want to read. At least point me in the right direction and I will endeavour to do the research and publish for you. All articles to be in Microsoft Word .doc or .docx format, please.

Alan Halbish

WO2 (Rtd).

Editor

Rowell, Sir Sydney Fairbairn (1894 - 1975)

Born: 15 December 1894, Lockleys, South Australia, Australia

Died: 12 April 1975, South Yarra, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Cultural Heritage: English

Occupation: Army officer, auto biographer/memoirist



Sir Sydney Fairbairn Rowell (1894 - 1975), by unknown photographer, 1942, courtesy of Australian War Memorial. 013174

Image Details

ROWELL, Sir SYDNEY FAIRBAIRN (1894-1975), army officer, was born on 15 December 1894 at Lockleys, South Australia, fourth son of James Rowell, an English-born soldier and orchardist, and his Australian-born second wife Zella Jane, née Williams. Syd acted as 'unofficial batman' to his father, who was colonel commanding (1907-11) the South Australian Brigade. Educated at Adelaide High School, he was one of the first cadets to enter the Royal Military College, Duntroon, Federal Capital Territory, in 1911. He and his classmates were commissioned on 14 August 1914 and allotted to units of the Australian Imperial Force. Rowell succeeded in transferring to the 3rd Light Horse Regiment, commanded by his cousin F. M. Rowell.

Misfortune dogged Rowell's career in the A.I.F. After pneumonia prevented him from sailing with his regiment in November, he joined it in Egypt, but broke his leg in February 1915 when his horse fell during training. He did not reach Gallipoli until 12 May. Soon in a hospital in Malta, he managed to return to Gallipoli in August and to command a squadron. In September he was made adjutant. Suffering from typhoid fever, he was evacuated to Egypt in November and thence to Australia.

While his Duntroon friends gained experience, promotion and decorations, he taught at an officers' training school at Duntroon until June 1917 before filling a staff post in Adelaide. At the Chalmers Church, North Terrace, on 20 August 1919 he married with Presbyterian forms Blanche May Murison, a nurse.

Rowell sailed for England in 1924 to attend the Staff College, Camberley. His two years there were a rewarding experience, and he was promoted major (January 1926). A five-year posting to Perth on his return was endured in the midst of the Depression and the strains imposed on the army by the suspension of compulsory training in 1929. Furthermore, he did not obtain two appointments for which he believed he was well qualified. He expressed his discontent to (Sir) Julius Bruche, the visiting chief of the General Staff, and was transferred to Army Headquarters, Melbourne, in 1932.

In the Directorate of Military Operations and Intelligence, Rowell worked with some of the ablest officers of the day—(Sir) John Lavarack, H. D. Wynter and (Sir) Vernon Sturdee. With Sturdee he formed 'the most profitable partnership' in his career. After a year at the headquarters of a Militia division, he was sent to England in 1935 on exchange as operations staff officer of the 44th Division, Territorial Army. He made a powerful impression on his superior, Major General J. R. Minshull-Ford, who considered him 'undoubtedly a Commander', and on the chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field Marshal Sir Cyril Deverell, who recommended him for the Imperial Defence College. In January 1937 Lieutenant Colonel Rowell joined that college; there one of his friends was W. J. (Viscount) Slim.

Returning to Melbourne in 1938, Rowell briefly became director of military operations and intelligence until selected by Lieutenant General E. K. Squires, the newly appointed inspector general, as his staff officer. They visited almost every army station and establishment in Australia, and between them developed an 'elder and younger brother' relationship. That year Rowell was appointed O.B.E. After Squires was made acting C.G.S. in May 1939, Rowell had little inspectorial work until the outbreak of war with Germany. In October 1939 Sir Thomas Blamey appointed him chief of staff of the 6th Division, A.I.F. When the government decided to form a corps in February 1940, Blamey was given the command. He took Rowell with him as brigadier, general staff.

Blamey and Rowell prepared I Corps for operations in the Middle East, completing the force's structure and forming a sound relationship with the British army. Rowell soon found that Blamey's dual role as corps commander and commander of the A.I.F. presented problems. He wanted to train the corps headquarters for battle, but could not persuade Blamey to establish an A.I.F. administrative headquarters to free them both to concentrate on this task. For his staff work Rowell was appointed C.B.E. (1941).

The tragic campaign in Greece was an exhausting experience for all commanders and staffs, but for Rowell it was something more. The short fighting withdrawal of April 1941, carried out with minimal air support and against overwhelming German forces, convinced him that Blamey was 'quite incompetent as a field commander in modern war'. He recalled sharp differences at critical times and Blamey's poor judgement on certain occasions. Moreover, he had lost his respect for Blamey as a man since their arrival in Palestine. For his part, Blamey wrote: 'Rowell has very great ability; is quick in decision and sound in judgement. There can be no question of his personal courage, but he lacks the reserves of nervous energy over a period of long strain'. The last point may be accounted for by Rowell's having to cope with a commander whom he believed to be failing amid the ceaseless tactical emergencies of the withdrawal in Greece. Back in Palestine, Rowell wrote to Sturdee that he would never again serve in the field under Blamey. He was twice mentioned in dispatches and awarded the Greek Military Cross.

On their return from Greece, Blamey moved immediately to Cairo as deputy to the commander-in-chief, General (Earl) Wavell, leaving Rowell to rebuild the corps headquarters in Palestine. When Rowell learned of the 7th Division's role in the projected invasion of Syria, a country held by the Vichy French, he tried to ensure that the operation should fall under the direction of the Australian

corps rather than that of General (Baron) Wilson in Jerusalem. Blamey, however, was not interested. That Blamey later changed his mind, giving Lavarack the command, was surprising. A difficult but brief campaign ended with the surrender of the Vichy forces on 12 July 1941; Rowell had the satisfaction of having again produced 'a smooth-running operational headquarters'. Urgently wanted in Melbourne by the C.G.S., Sturdee, as his deputy, he left by air early in August.

In Australia, Rowell faced the situation in which war with Japan was approaching, but the means of defence were lacking. He was able to bring a degree of order into the General Staff, and to limit access to Sturdee's office so that the C.G.S. could concentrate on major issues. He also played a vigorous part in quelling the so-called 'revolt of the generals' in which some senior officers proposed the retirement of all commanders over the age of 50 and the appointment of (Sir) Horace Robertson as commander-in-chief.

Soon after Blamey reached Melbourne on 26 March 1942, he gave command of the new I Corps to Rowell, saying that he had earned it. Rowell became a temporary lieutenant general responsible for the defence of southern Queensland. The Japanese had already landed in New Guinea, but their major seaborne operation aimed at Port Moresby was turned back in the battle of the Coral Sea (5-8 May). Rowell and others were amazed when a Militia brigade was sent to reinforce Port Moresby on 15 May, leaving the battle-hardened 7th Division near Brisbane. In his memoirs Rowell called the decision a 'cardinal error'. He was dispatched north in July to command New Guinea Force; elements of 7th Division under A. S. Allen were to follow him.

Rowell took hold of a dangerous situation. The Japanese navy controlled the Solomon Sea and the enemy air force was aggressive. In Papua, Kokoda and its airfield were already lost, and Japanese ground forces were pushing south along the Kokoda Track against partly trained militiamen. Rowell was responsible for the defence of Port Moresby, for holding the Track and for recapturing Kokoda. In addition to the soldiers engaged in these operations, he also commanded the independent companies based on Wau and the force under C. A. Clowes which protected new airfields at Milne Bay. He could and did visit Clowes by aeroplane, but the brigades on the Track could only be reached on foot after a five-day slog, which he judged was impracticable. Learning that only about 10 per cent of the supplies and ammunition dropped by air was being recovered, he placed the 7th Division on the defensive until stocks for an offensive could be accumulated.

An unwanted burden came through interference by the American supreme commander of the South-West Pacific Area, General Douglas MacArthur, who was based in Brisbane, and who sent tactical instructions (some of them fatuous) to Clowes during the battle for Milne Bay. On 12 September 1942 Blamey arrived on a two-day visit, which passed off smoothly. In a national broadcast he expressed his confidence in the outcome in New Guinea and in Rowell. Yet, nine days later Blamey was back at Rowell's headquarters in an atmosphere of crisis. This second visit arose from MacArthur's advice to Prime Minister John Curtin that Blamey should be sent to New Guinea to 'energize the situation' and 'to save himself'. Blamey did not argue, but he did send a letter explaining his imminent arrival and hoping that Rowell would 'not think that it implies any lack of confidence in yourself'. To Rowell it did. Blamey was still the man whom he despised and considered incompetent as a field commander. He was not prepared to become his chief of staff when the tide of his battle on the Track was turning. In three 'brawls' Rowell displayed his 'personal animus' towards Blamey. On 28 September Blamey dismissed Rowell, who left that night for Brisbane.

Following interviews with MacArthur and Curtin, Rowell withdrew on leave to his home and garden. Blamey continued to pursue him, demanding that he be reduced to his substantive rank of colonel. Rowell made it clear that he would not accept this, and warned F. M. Forde, the minister for the army, that the affair might become 'a first-class political row'. After Rowell wrote to (Sir) Robert Menzies about the wretched business, the matter was raised in the Advisory War Council and the War Cabinet. Curtin then told Blamey to find an appointment for Rowell as a major general. He was banished to Cairo as commander of A.I.F. Details and as Australian liaison officer at General Headquarters, Middle East.

In February 1943 Rowell began his exile, discovering that he was not expected, and that he had neither accommodation nor instructions. He found friends at G.H.Q., and in the home of R. G. (Baron) Casey who was British minister of state. Rowell had a high sounding title, but his post was a sinecure, leaving him free to be useful in his own way. He made himself a conduit for information about operations in the Middle East and the war in the Pacific, and sent weekly reports to Army Headquarters in Australia. He visited allied headquarters in Algiers, and worked briefly in Delhi. Cairo and his travels freed his mind from bitterness, and helped to put the painful past behind him. Thanks largely to Casey, he spent the last two years of the war as director of tactical investigation at the War Office, London. Again among friends, he enjoyed the stimulus of working on top-level committees. As preparations for the invasion of France dominated the military scene early in 1944, Rowell focused his work on battle problems that could be expected in the near future. He served in the War Office until the end of 1945 and was appointed C.B. (1946).

Seeking an appointment in the Australian army, Rowell wrote to Prime Minister J. B. Chifley. When Chifley later saw him in Canberra, his comment on the affair with Blamey was: 'I hate bloody injustice'. In March 1946 Sturdee became C.G.S. in the post-Blamey army, on condition that Rowell be made vice-chief and his rank restored. The two lieutenant generals set out to build a better army, based on a small regular force with a reorganized Militia as the reserve. Such a fundamental change required developments in the structure upon which the army rested—the production of officers, schools, accommodation and administrative services. It was Rowell who presented the case for the army in 1947 and it was accepted, but recruitment was to be on a voluntary basis without improvements in pay and conditions of service. So continual were the attacks on the army within and outside parliament—and from Blamey—that Rowell was moved to answer them in a public address in April 1949.

While Sturdee was abroad that year, miners went on strike on the New South Wales coalfields. The government ordered the army to cut coal and the railwaymen agreed to transport it. Rowell travelled to Sydney to handle the political problems so that soldiers under Lieutenant General (Sir) Frank Berryman could concentrate on coal-mining. Rowell was aware of the delicacy of the situation. His wise advice to the government against proposals to have the troops paid miners' award rates was accepted, as was that on the provision of beer for them.

In April 1950 Rowell succeeded Sturdee as C.G.S., a significant event in the army's history inasmuch as he was the first Duntroon graduate to hold the post. As the senior of the service chiefs, he was also chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. Becoming C.G.S. during the Cold War, he was faced with the introduction of national service at a time when the new Australian Regular Army was in its infancy, short of everything and yet maintaining a force in the Korean War. The need to see the army at home and abroad, and to attend major conferences, imposed a heavy burden of travel. In 1953 he was appointed K.B.E. On 14 December 1954, the day before his retirement, he took the graduation parade at Duntroon, where he had begun as a cadet 43 years earlier. His wheel had come full circle.

Sir Sydney's first year of retirement in Melbourne was not without difficulty after the pressures of high office, but he turned to his garden, cricket, horse-racing, *The Times* crossword puzzle and reading. Directorships began to be offered—Elder, Smith & Co. Ltd in 1954 and the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation in 1956 (chairman 1957-68). In 1958-68 he was chairman of the Australian Boy Scouts' Association and a member of the Rhodes Scholarships Selection Committee for Victoria. He was offered, but declined, the post of Australian consul-general in New York. In 1959 he led the delegation from the Australian Institute of International Affairs to a conference in New Zealand on Commonwealth relations. He was urged by historians and colleagues 'to put on paper some recollections of my army life'. The result was *Full Circle* (Melbourne, 1974). Written with 'modesty and a good deal of charm', the book showed 'dignity and restraint in dealing with his final crisis with Blamey'.

Rowell kept the same lean, trim figure all his life. He continued to be active, but the strain of his wife's illness sapped his strength. He died on 12 April 1975 at his South Yarra home, twelve days before Lady Rowell, and was cremated. Their daughter survived them. (Sir) Ivor Hele's portrait of Rowell is held by the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

Select Bibliography

G. Long, *To Benghazi* (Canb, 1952); G. Long, *Greece, Crete and Syria* (Canb, 1953); D. McCarthy, *South-West Pacific Area—First Year* (Canb, 1959); J. Hetherington, *Blamey* (Canb, 1973); D. M. Horner (ed), *The Commanders* (Syd, 1984); D. M. Horner, *Blamey* (Syd, 1998); Rowell papers (Australian War Memorial).

More on the resources

Author: A. J. Hill

Print Publication Details: A. J. Hill, 'Rowell, Sir Sydney Fairbairn (1894 - 1975)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 16, Melbourne University Press, 2002, pp 138-141.

Reprinted from the Australian National University Australian Dictionary of Biography website

<http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A160167b.htm>

**A CENTURY OF SERVICE:
100 YEARS OF THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY
ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF ARMY HISTORY**

David Horner

A Paper from the
2001 Chief of Army's Military History Conference

There is a close and reciprocal relationship between armies and their histories that is not matched by other professions. Of course one can easily have an Army without having a written history of it. But consciously or unconsciously, armies draw their doctrine, organisations, training and ethos from past experience. And even if there is no detailed written history, ideas about doctrine, structure, training and ethos are drawn from collective and institutional memory. Anyone who has served in the Army will know that activities such as drill on the parade ground have their origin in the drill manoeuvres for the battlefields two centuries ago. History provides the spirit of armies and they cannot fight without it.

Soldiers, and particularly army commanders, know how much they rely on past experience. Field Marshal Helmuth von Moltke asserted that military history was 'the most effective means of teaching war during peace'¹. But armies have not always treated history objectively. Sir Basil Liddell Hart noted that '[t]he discovery of uncomfortable facts had never been encouraged in armies, who treated their history as a sentimental treasure rather than a field of scientific research'.²

Military history is written not just to prepare armies for the next war or the next battle. Military history is important in the wider, non-military community, for it fulfils in society the same function as general history. Major General J.F.C. Fuller pondered the role of military history in society and concluded that, 'as it is not subalterns or generals who make wars, but governments and nations, unless the people as a whole have some understanding of what war meant in the past ages, their opinions on war today will be purely alchemical'.³

This year's celebrations marking 100 years since Federation are also a celebration of the value of history, and demonstrate implicitly why it needs to be told well, with sensitivity to the past, and with understanding of what it means for the present and future. Likewise, the centenary of the formation of the Australian Army is also an occasion to reflect on how it has developed in that time, and what place it has in the future. The tools for that reflection are the 100 years of writing about the Australian Army.

Military history is one of the great intellectual disciplines, one that has produced many classic works of literature. These tell of the rise and fall of empires. They describe the powerful emotions of courage and cowardice. They recall the tragedies, and record the triumphs of the human spirit. They not only describe what happened and tell us why, but also bring alive the human drama.

Most of you will be aware of some of these great books, such as Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian Wars*. Many of you will also recall that in the aftermath of the humiliation of the Vietnam War, the military colleges in the United States required their officers to study Carl von Clausewitz's *On War* in order to formulate new doctrine to govern the conduct of war. Clausewitz's work is not, strictly speaking, military history, though his analysis draws on several centuries' worth of historical examples. Significantly, the forerunner of this requirement was the decision of the United States Naval War College in 1972 to put Thucydides onto its own curriculum. This history of a series of ancient wars waged by a single people was deemed the best tool for rediscovering conventional warfare and re-learning its fundamental premises, within the larger context of strategy.⁴ Thus even ancient history has played a central role in preparing armed forces for future wars.

Military history and Army history are not the same thing. In Australia we have three military services. But Australia's military history has been dominated by the experiences of our Army. The achievements of Australian soldiers since the Gallipoli landing in 1915 have come to express in a special way what it means to be Australian. To most Australians, the Army—perhaps more so than the other Services—embodies the Anzac spirit.

It is often said that war, in which the Army has played the dominant role, has been a defining experience for Australia. The Australian Army was engaged in military operations or had forces stationed overseas for thirty-eight of its first seventy years. And the Australian Army has had its fair share of combat and, of course casualties—almost 60,000 killed in the First World War, and over 20,000 in the Second World War. We also lost almost 500 soldiers in Vietnam.

March 2001 is a significant milestone for reasons that go beyond the centenary. On 2 March 1971 an Australian infantry company stopped for the night among scattered jungle and bamboo clumps, just back from a paddy field in Phuoc Tuy Province. It was warm, humid and still with a half-moon light. An attack on the position by a Viet Cong sapper reconnaissance company that night brought the death of the last Australian Duntroon graduate to die in action.⁵ Later in the year we lost the last National Servicemen in action.

Despite the Army's operational deployments over the past ten years, it is thirty years since an Australian soldier was killed by enemy action. How much is the history of the Army in its first seventy years, with its many wars, different from that in its last 30 years of peace?

The written history of the Australian Army has provided Australia with some of its own great works of literature. Indeed there is probably no other institution that has had more written about it. In 1996 the late Syd Trigellis-Smith, Sergio Zampatti and Max Parsons published *Shaping History: A Bibliography of Australian Army Unit Histories including army formations, establishments, associated organisations and a selection of campaign and area studies*.⁶ This bibliography lists 873 books about the Australian Army, and if the bibliography been published in 2001 the number would have passed 1000 books. Some of these are about some pretty esoteric stuff. One that really caught my eye was *Tassie's Fighting Pay Corps 1916-1991: 75 Years of Tasmanian History with the Royal Australian Pay Corps*, published in 1995. This is the first of a proposed six-volume history, a volume for each state. The bibliography did not cover biographies, autobiographies or personal reminiscences, and these surely must match the unit histories in number. We might laugh about the Pay Corps, but the stories of its members have just as legitimate a place in the Army's story as those of any other component of the Australian Army. Instead, we might look at such a work, and ask whether there is a distinctly Australian way of writing about war.

Before the First World War there was certainly no military history tradition in Australia. Like many other things, we drew our tradition from Britain, or more generally, from Europe. For the general reader there were tales of Empire, while specialists might read about the technicalities of the American Civil War or the Franco-Prussian War. The Australian colonists had had little experience of war, except perhaps the war with the Aboriginal population, and most white Australians did not count that as war.

The scale of action and the magnitude of injury and loss of life in the First World War demanded a new and different form of telling. The Australian official historian, C.E.W. Bean, came to his task familiar with the style of what was then traditional military history. But his unique approach to his history grew out of his personal experiences and his desire to tell his countrymen what their sons had achieved on the world stage—as individuals, as Australians and as the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). Bean accompanied the AIF throughout the war, witnessed many of the battles, knew most of the major people of the AIF, and recorded interviews with the participants.

Bean wrote six of the eight AIF volumes, the first of which was published in 1921 and the last in 1942. The official history provides a remarkably detailed account of the First AIF and is especially praiseworthy because Bean created the archive on which his books were drawn. It is both a memorial to those Bean called the 'great hearted men' who served, and a brilliant piece of history writing.⁷ It is a record of service in that Bean set out to describe every action in which Australian soldiers were involved. Although the Bean volumes set the standard for Australian history writing, the volumes produced other outcomes. They confirmed the impression that the history of the AIF was really the history of the Army. This idea was to dominate Australian thinking about the Army for a generation.

The Army did little to change this impression. Some senior permanent officers, such as Brigadier General Blamey, seemed to disregard Bean's efforts, believing that the Official History was too detailed to be widely read, and that it was not particularly valuable to the military profession. On the latter score Blamey was wrong, but Bean needed to be looked upon almost as a primary resource, to be mined for relevant lessons, guidance and understanding. And there were few historians or Army officers that were inclined either to mine Bean, or to write their own accounts of how the Army was developing as an institution. There was no attempt actually to analyse Australia's operations during the war and to draw relevant conclusions about command, training, doctrine or technology. It is certainly true that Blamey, and other permanent officers such as White, Wynter and Sturdee, drew conclusions from their own experiences about the command of Australian forces in the First World War and they applied those lessons in the Second World War. But neither they nor others wrote much about it. Writing in 1934, Liddell Hart observed that military history had 'been left largely to soldiers, with unfortunate results'.⁸ This was not the case in Australia between the wars when soldiers failed to contribute to military history.

One regular army officer who did not fit this mould was Lieutenant Colonel Horace Robertson who published history articles in several British military journals. His pamphlet *The First Forty Days* was written to support military history instruction at Duntroon and after the Second World War was published for wider circulation.⁹ Because Bean created the archive, other scholars were reluctant to tackle the war, believing that the story had already been told. And the volumes provided the underpinning for the Anzac legend that has become part of Australian life and character every since.

During the inter-war period other books were written about the Australian Army in the First World War, but they were either personal accounts, such as *The Desert Column* by Ion Idriess (1932), or unit histories written by former unit members.¹⁰ These works too seemed to be designed to support the Anzac legend of mateship and sacrifice. No attempt was made to place Australia's war experience in the context of Australian history, although to be fair, there were few books about Australian history, especially history since Federation.

One exception to the numerous books on the AIF was *Garrison Gunners*, by 'Fronsac' (1929), which described the role of coast defence gunners in Australia during the First World War.¹¹ It was one of the many reminders that there was more to Army service than service in the AIF. Another important contribution was a long report on the Army's activities between 1929 and 1939 by Lieutenant General Sir Carl Jess, who had been Adjutant General before the Second World War. In his preface Jess wrote: Whilst actual methods of warfare may change, it can be assumed that the future of the Australian peace-time Army will include similar cycles of trials and tribulations as in the past, so that a record of this nature should provide ready solutions to many problems which otherwise could only be solved by again reverting to trial and error.¹²

The historiography of the Australian Army after the Second World War differed from that after the First in several ways. After the outbreak of the Second World War the Army established a section to collect and organise historical material. But the official historians did not work for the Services. The historical sections became little more than archive offices and lacked the expertise to write history. The comprehensive nature of the official histories seemed to obviate the need for more historical writing. One concession to history was the series of yearbooks produced for the Army from 1941 to 1950.¹³ Although these generally contained personal interest articles, they also had articles describing the course of the war and, in the post-war editions, other military history articles. For example, *Stand Easy*, the 1945 edition, had seven articles on the operations from Bougainville to Borneo. The 1946 edition of *As You Were* carried an article on 'The Occupation Force in Japan'. There were also a few Public Relations booklets such as *Reconquest*, by Captain V.E. Acott, describing the Lae-Markham operation.¹⁴

The official history of Australia in the Second World War ran to twenty-two volumes, seven of which were devoted to the Army. The general editor, Gavin Long, wrote three of them. Just as the soldiers of the Second AIF saw themselves as inheriting the mantle of the First AIF, after the Second World War Australian military historians seemed to rely on the tradition established by Bean. Like the First World War volumes, the Second World War volumes tried to record every action in which Australian soldiers were involved. In some ways they go further towards telling the story of the Australian Army than the First World War official history. The changes in the nature of the war meant that Long and his fellow authors had to devote more space to issues of strategy, higher command and allied cooperation. Furthermore, the story did not just have to cover the Second AIF but also the militia forces that fought in the South-West Pacific Area. The civil volumes of the official history series, those covering the government and the people, the economy, and science and technology, were recognition that the war touched all parts of Australian society. More than in the inter war period, the Second World War resulted in the publication of personal memoirs, ranging from the memoirs of generals such as H. Gordon Bennett (1944), to the experiences of soldiers such as Peter Ryan's *Fear Drive My Feet* (1959).¹⁵ There were, of course, many unit histories. But unlike the earlier period, there were also books by journalists and war correspondents, which analysed campaigns and discussed important episodes in Army history. These included *Tobruk* by Chester Wilmot (1944), *Green Armour*, by Osmar White (1945), and *Retreat from Kokoda*, by Raymond Paull (1958).¹⁶

The official histories of Australia's involvement in the Korean War, in the Malayan Emergency, Confrontation and Vietnam never had the same impact on Australian military history as the earlier official histories. In the first place, the time gap between their publication and the end of the wars was much greater. The first volume of the First World War series appeared just three years after the end of the war. The first of the Second World War volumes appeared seven years after the end of the war. The first Korean War volume appeared 28 years later, and the first of the Vietnam volumes, 20 years later.

But the main reason for the reduction in the impact of the volumes was the blossoming of other military history writing in the 1970s. Part of the impetus came from within the Army. During the 1950s and 1960s there had been a limited attempt to foster military history through officer promotion examinations. To support those examinations, the editor of the *Australian Army Journal*, Lieutenant Colonel Eustice Graham Keogh, wrote numerous military history articles. He followed this with the publication between 1953 and 1965 of six campaign study books that are still quite valuable as overall accounts of the campaigns.¹⁷

Despite the good work of Keogh, it was not until the 1960s that considered military history articles started to appear in the *Journal*. Perhaps this was because of the encouragement of the new editor, A.J. Sweeting, who had taken over from Keogh in 1965. But even then there were very few articles by serving regular officers. There were several good reminiscences of the Second World War and two important articles by Generals Rowell and Beavis on wartime chiefs of staff, Sturdee and Northcott. Nevertheless, during this period the Army made no serious effort to encourage the writing of military history.

Although history had to be studied for promotion examinations, there was no incentive for officers to think more deeply about historical issues. Perhaps, however, as a result of the introduction of university level academic courses at the service officer colleges during the 1960s, it was realised that studying history was part of a broader educative process. Military history might provide important insight for policy-makers.

And as Australian defence policy moved towards self reliance it became necessary to understand the peculiar nature of the Australian defence problem. One *Army Journal* article in 1966, by Captain Robert O'Neill, was the forerunner of a new attitude to military history.¹⁸ As a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University in the early 1960s he studied military history and published a highly regarded book on the German Army and the Nazi Party.¹⁹ He later served in Vietnam and his book on 5 RAR, *Vietnam Task*, was one of the few histories of units in Vietnam, until recent years, to make a real contribution to military history.²⁰ The other Vietnam unit histories, written at the time by unit members, vary in quality, from a mere chronology in some cases to a picture book in others.

The real drive for writing military history within the Army came in the 1970s with the appearance of officers who had received academic training as historians. This began in 1964 with the introduction of degree-level courses at Duntroon, where lecturers such as Alec Hill and Professor Len Turner were important influences on the cadets who now studied military history as a proper academic discipline.

During the 1970s several Duntroon graduates continued postgraduate studies in history, and by the mid 1980s half a dozen or more Army officers had post-graduate degrees in history. Officers who had academic military history books published while still serving in the Army in the decade from 1979 to 1989 include John Blaxland, Bob Breen, Chris Coulthard-Clark, Bob Hall and Peter Pedersen. These books were read widely throughout the Army and indeed were well accepted by the public.²¹

During the 1970s and 1980s there were very few historians who were actually paid by the Army to write books. Apart from Keogh, who was really the editor of the *Army Journal*, the first Army historian was Brigadier Maurice Austin, appointed about 1970, who wrote a book on the Army in Australia between 1840 and 1850.²² Ian McNeill later joined the military history section and he wrote a book on the Training Team in Vietnam.²³ In due course, John Mordike succeeded McNeill, and his valuable study of the Army before the First World War was published in 1992.²⁴

The development of military history in the Australian Army in the 1970s mirrored that in the wider academic community. It has sometimes been claimed that the Vietnam War made the study of military history unfashionable in the universities, and there is some truth in that claim. But an objective assessment shows that in the 1970s more books on Australian military history were published than in the previous seventy years. Several reasons might be proposed for the academic community's discovery of military history. First, there was a developing interest in Australian history more generally. Second, the archival records that had been used exclusively by the official historians were opened to the public. Third, the Vietnam War brought home to slay the vital point that military affairs in a democracy, especially decisions to commit troops to overseas operations, were matters that concerned the whole population and deserved close examination. In short the old aphorism that 'war is too important to be left to the generals' was given a new twist. Military history was too important to be left solely in the hands of someone like Bean or his successors, or in the hands of those who had served in action.

Dr Michael McKernan, a former Deputy Director of the Australian War Memorial, suggests that the academic histories that appeared in the 1970s fell into three categories: 'a social-democratic model inherited from Charles Bean; a "war and society" approach, derived from mainstream Australian social history; and a technical-analytical model, derived from an international perspective, dependent for its inspiration on contemporary work in America and Europe'.²⁵ McKernan rightly points to Bill Gammage's *The Broken Years* (1974) as the seminal work in the social-democratic model. Gammage deliberately avoided military analysis and considerations of command and strategy. Years later he spoke at a Chief of the Army's conference on the role that the Army played in shaping Australia as a nation before 1939.²⁶ He dismayed many of those attending the conference when he argued that the Army's role was slight. For Gammage, the First AIF was not part of the Australian Army-nor did he see his book as 'a military history of the First AIF'.²⁷ Both views are open to challenge.

By any definition of an army, the First AIF was part of the Australian Army. The particular conditions for service in the AIF reflected the wishes of the Australian people. The volunteer citizen soldiers who landed at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 represented the nation in uniform. But the compulsorily enlisted militiamen who fought on the Kokoda Trail, the volunteer regulars who served in the Malayan Emergency, and the national servicemen in Vietnam, also represented the nation in uniform. In many ways, once you are in the Army, it does not matter how you were enlisted. You still have to obey orders, including those that lead to your death. As for military history, Gammage's brilliant book made a huge contribution to Australian military history. It led to other more popular books such as Patsy Adam-Smith's *The Anzacs* (1978), and to films and television serials.²⁸ In 1987 John Barrett published *We Were There*, a study of the experiences of Australian soldiers in the Second World War, and more recently Mark Johnston, in *At the Front Line* (1996), has also looked at the experiences of Australian soldiers.²⁹

McKernan attributes his second category, the 'war and society' school, to the influence of Lloyd Robson at Melbourne University, whose study of the recruitment of the First AIF appeared in 1970.³⁰ Books that fall into this category have attempted to place Australia's experience of war in the context of society at large. Significantly, the authors in this school usually come from non-military academic backgrounds, and thus present insights which military writers might overlook, or deliberately avoid. For example in *Gull Force* (1988), a study of the Australian force captured on Ambon, Joan Beaumont focuses on the social dynamics of the group.³¹ The increased role of non-military academics has been one of the most important developments in giving life to Australian military history.

McKernan's third category, the technical-analytic model, grew out of an attempt to analyse military campaigns in a way that reflected the military history traditions of America and Europe. In a sense it was a rejection of Bean's social-democratic style. Not surprisingly the authors came from within the Army and from those with close connections to the Army, Duntroon or the Defence Academy. John Robertson, for example, a lecturer at both Duntroon and the Defence Academy, never served in the Army, but his books on the Second World War and on Anzac have a great deal of astute analysis.³²

While McKernan's categories provide a useful starting point for an analysis of the development of military history in the past thirty years, the approach can be too confining. The story is more complex. Military history works include biographies, campaign studies, war and society studies, the human face of war, corps histories, unit histories, and personal memoirs.

Let us look at biographies as an example. Sixteen years ago I presented a paper on Australian military biographies and said that the following questions demanded answers: Did General Monash fail at Gallipoli? What was his contribution to success on the Western Front? Did General Blamey act correctly in failing to advise the government about the Greek expedition? Should he have sacked General Rowell? Was Australia well served by his arguments with politicians and other generals? Was he right to direct offensive operations in Bougainville? Did General Gordon Bennett fail at Muar River and on Singapore Island? Should he have escaped from Singapore? Did he unnecessarily antagonise the British? Should General Lavarack have bypassed Merjayoun in Syria? How good was his advice to the government when he was on Java? Was General Sturdee's strategy for the defence of Australia early in 1942 correct? Was General Morshead right to order the counter attack of the 2/48th Battalion at Tobruk? Could General Allen have gone faster on the Kokoda Trail? To what extent was Herring responsible for the poor command relationships with the Americans at Salamaua? Sixteen years later I can report that most of my questions have now been answered.

Before the Second World War there were only two military biographies or autobiographies, Monash's *The Australian Victories in France in 1918* (1920) and General Gordon's *Chronicles of a Gay Gordon* (1921).³³ The overwhelming number of Australian military biographies has been written since the Second World War. In that time, by a quick count, there have been some 47 biographies or autobiographies of major Australian Army people. In the 1950s there were three biographies. In the 1960s there were two autobiographies. But in the 1970s there were eleven books, ten in the 1980s, sixteen in the 1990s, and five in 2000 alone.³⁴ Some of these works, for example, the biographies of VC winners such as Jacka, Derrick and Cutler, or of medical doctors such as 'Weary' Dunlop, are in the Bean social-democratic model of building up the Anzac legend.³⁵ Serle's biography of Monash seeks to place him in Australian society while looking at him as both a man and as a military commander. Pedersen's biography of Monash is clearly in the category of military analysis, as is Lodge's study of Gordon Bennett and Hill's of Chauvel. Jeffrey Grey's biography of Horace Robertson tries to place his subject in the context of the development of the Staff Corps. Chris Coulthard Clark's biography of Gordon Legge looks at the issue of Australian nationalism.³⁶

The types of questions I posed above about commanders could be applied equally to campaigns and to issues concerning policy and strategy. Some of the campaign studies, such as my book on the New Guinea campaign, or John Coates's account of the 9th Division at Finschhafen fall in the analytical school.³⁷ But others cross the boundaries to include aspects of the social-democratic or war and society schools. Examples might include Peter Charlton's account of Pozieres, Peter Stanley's *Tarakan* and Peter Brune's *Those Ragged Bloody Heroes*.³⁸

The publication of unit histories by former unit members has continued apace, fuelled by the retirement of many old soldiers who at last were able to devote time to the task, and also by the proliferation of personal computers. Several unit histories, including Margaret Barter's carefully researched *Far Above Battle*, explored wider issues and might just as easily be included among the 'war and society' studies.³⁹ More important to the study of the Australian Army as an institution was the publication of corps histories. Key histories included those of Armour, Engineers, the Special Air Service Regiment, the Royal Australian Regiment, and Artillery. Of a similar nature are the institutional histories covering Duntroon and Portsea. Although the later official histories lacked the impact of the earlier volumes, they were, nonetheless, highly impressive pieces of scholarship. The official history of *Australia in the Korean War* by Robert O'Neill provides both a detailed account of the Army's role on that war, as well as the diplomatic background to its employment and the impact on the wider Army.⁴⁰

The eight-volume *Official History of Australia's Involvement in South East Asian Conflicts 1948-1975*, edited by Peter Edwards, makes a major contribution to our understanding of how the Army developed during this period, and its operational experience in Malaya, Borneo and South Vietnam. From the Army's point of view the most important volume is Ian McNeill's outstanding *To Long Tan* published in 1993, but publication of his second volume covering Army operations in Vietnam from 1967 to 1972 has been delayed following his death in 1998.⁴¹ Unlike the earlier official histories, the South East Asia volumes have deliberately rejected the idea of describing every military action.

These books together comprise an impressive base for the understanding of the history of the Australian Army over 100 years. But there are still areas that need further research. These might include: tactical doctrine; operational logistics; the Army between the wars; the sociology of the Army and its officer corps; the relationship between the Army and the government; army training; and the development and role of the office of the Chief of Army and its predecessors. Some of these subjects have been explored in academic theses but have never been published.

The last seven years has seen something of a renaissance in Army history. In 1992, in a return to the days of Keogh, Army Training Command commissioned specific historical studies and Lieutenant Colonel Bob Breen wrote two useful books on the battles of Maryang San and Kapyong.⁴² Training Command also produced an excellent video on the Kokoda campaign, followed by videos on the battle of Hamel and on the Syrian campaign, both of which spawned books.

From Breen's experience with Training Command came the appointment of an operational historian in Land Headquarters. In due course Breen published his account of 1 RAR in Somalia.⁴³ Breen's book raises important questions about Army history in terms of how lessons, and especially shortcomings, are to be analysed for future use. It is extremely difficult to write a critical account soon after an event, especially when the author is beholden to the organisation for the opportunity to visit the battle area, and also to the organisation for his future employment. To Breen's credit, he went about as far as he could with his Somalia story. But how much can a book published in 2001 tell the full story of INTERFET in East Timor, when we still have Australian forces there and when relations with Indonesia are still fragile?⁴⁴

While Training Command has been important, the driving force behind Army history has been the Army History Unit that was formed in the mid 1990s. Administered by the unit, the Army history grants scheme has encouraged the writing of Army history and has assisted with the publication of numerous books and articles. And the Army history publications program has resulted in the publication of a further twenty books in the last five years with more in the pipeline.

The key issue for the historian is sources. The Australian War Memorial is the first place one goes when researching any of the Army's military operations. Just as Charles Bean set the standard for a distinctly Australian style of military history writing, the Australian War Memorial contains a distinctly Australian archive for the study of Australian military history. There historians find the essential building blocks for their work. These begin with the war diaries or commanders' diaries that give a day-by-day running account of the unit or headquarters. Attention is then given to the official records that originated in the large headquarters including Army headquarters. The War Memorial also has records donated by individuals, including letters and diaries. But historians of the Army's peacetime activities often cannot call upon these resources. When Dr Albert Palazzo began writing the history of the Royal Australian Corps of Transport he found that the files were almost non-existent.⁴⁵ The Army needs to give more attention to recording its peacetime history and to preserving its record of peacetime activities.

With operational history there are usually more records than for peacetime activities, but there is always a danger in becoming a prisoner of the files, especially the war diaries. In his excellent book about 8 RAR in Vietnam, Bob Hall complained that many of the unit histories of the Vietnam War were merely chronological accounts based on operations' logs and commanders' diaries. He wrote: Though particular incidents scream for a digression that would provide context or deeper analysis, the authors find it impossible to escape the tyranny of chronology- This approach may form a useful record for those who served with the battalion and whose memories provide the context, but it fails to explain to a broader readership what infantry operations in Vietnam were really like. The personal dimension is often overlooked.⁴⁶

He continues that history should not be a memorial, but contain critical and fearless evaluation. An attempt must be made to confront reality because, no matter how depressing or negative this may be, it is the first step towards coming to terms with it'.

This view is both right and wrong. Critical analyses are essential to military history. But there is no one model of military history and the various styles all have their purposes. The first step in history is to determine, as much as possible, what happened. Only then can the analysis follow. And of course the members of each battalion want their history—their memorial to one of the formative periods of their lives and of their part in history. It is beyond dispute, however, that military history is about people, and the personal dimension must exist alongside evaluation and analysis.

What are the challenges facing the military historian today? One challenge is the proliferation of second-rate military history books—especially memoirs—published either by small niche publishers or by the authors themselves. There is always the danger of the bad driving out the good. Yet while many of these works are mediocre in terms of scholarship, style and balance, and generally deal with issues of limited interest, they often hide nuggets of valuable information. The military historian must be aware of these sub-standard works but not be lured into them simply because there is a market and a willing publisher.

As always, the problem of sources remains, compounded now by the multiplication of the means of transmitting information—written orders, telephone, radio, facsimile, email and intranet. Can we be sure that all the orders issued by these means will be preserved? There is also the problem of the demands of immediacy—to gather military lessons and to win the struggle for public opinion. Perhaps this means that there is an even greater need than in the past for the Army to employ in-house historians. But will the Army be willing to put more resources into training and employing historians? In future almost all of the Army's operations will be conducted on a joint basis. At the moment, the Army's history is being driven by the Army History Unit or by one of the Army's commands. But in future, to provide a clear and useful picture the story will have to be told from a joint perspective. Will we see the demise of Army history, to be replaced by ADF history? Or do we go further? Do we include the work of other government agencies as well as non-government organisations?

Over a period of 100 years Australia had developed a distinct approach to the study of military history. Most of its components are not unique to Australia—it is the mix and the emphasis that is different. We have seen both a diversification of styles and approaches to army history, and a blending of McKernan's categories to produce histories with various layers of technical analysis and social commentary. The stories that these histories tell about the Australian Army together give us our special history. What then does the history of the Australian Army tell us about the Australian Army? Let me try to summarise that history in a few paragraphs.

Although Australia was only a small country on the world stage, in two world wars it played key roles in several campaigns that had a major influence over the outcome of the war. On the Western Front in the First World War the Australian Army met and defeated the enemy's main army in the decisive theatre. In the Second World War, at Tobruk, it became the first army to defeat a German blitzkrieg-style attack. As the Army of a democracy it has fought in wars in which Australia was under direct threat, but also in wars and campaigns when the direct threat to Australia was not so clear. As well as the world wars it has fought in limited wars, counter-insurgencies and low-level conflicts. It has taken part in peace enforcement, peacekeeping and in humanitarian operations.

The Army has experienced disastrous campaigns and defeats, as well as great victories. It fought determined defensive battles, and pulled off some remarkable attacks. It captured hundreds of thousands of prisoners, but had thousands of its own members captured. It also had its tragic mistakes, such as at the Nek, Fromelles, Parit Sulong and Ruin Ridge. And we need to acknowledge that it has had its disgraces, such as Wilmansrust, the Wassa riots, the 1918 mutinies, the massacre at Surafend and incidents before the Singapore surrender. Initially the Army made its name with light horse operations, and then gained renown for infantry operations. But despite the light horse tradition, the Army has never conducted armoured manoeuvre operations. The Army developed expertise in jungle warfare, and also in counter-insurgency operations. Its experience of amphibious warfare extends from Gallipoli to East Timor. Its experience of cooperation with the Air Force runs from Hamel to East Timor. A feature of its operations has been its heavy involvement in coalition operations. Indeed it is hard to think of an Australian Army campaign in which Allied forces have not been involved.

A popular image of the Australian Army on operations is one of dashing, reckless soldiers, buoyed by mateship, led by natural citizen officers, achieving great victories by seizing the moment. Since the middle of the First World War the record is more prosaic. Careful planning, usually by trained staff officers, plus a desire to minimise casualties have marked Australian operations. In short, while Australia has a tradition of citizen soldiers, it also has a well-deserved reputation for professionalism. All this has been achieved by a democracy with a small population and a limited economy.

As an institution, the Australian Army has been based on part-time volunteers, on compulsorily enlisted part-time soldiers, and on volunteer full-time professionals. It has endured, or enjoyed, long years of peace, but in the middle of the century spent almost thirty years on continuous operations it has been decimated, abused and starved by politicians. It has also been satiated with more personnel than it could usefully employ. The members of the Australian Army have at times held a central place in Australian society and in the hearts of its people. At other times they have been ignored, ostracised and even despised merely for carrying out the directions of the elected government. Through all this, the Australian Army has had little involvement in aid to the civil power, has never interfered in government, and has never oppressed the Australian people.

This is the record that shines through 100 years of Army history. It is a record told in hundreds of books, by hundreds of authors, in academic tomes, in personal memoirs, in emotive memorials to the Anzac legend, and in dry combat analyses. It is a story in which every Australian can take pride.

Endnotes

David Horner acknowledges the assistance of Carla Anne Schmidt of Yale University in preparing this essay.

1. Quoted in Robert Heintz Jr, *Dictionary of Military and Naval Quotations* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1966), 148.
2. Quoted in Peter G Tsouras, *Warriors' Words: A Quotation Book* (London: Cassell Arms and Armour, 1992), 201.
3. Quoted in Heintz, *Dictionary of Military and Naval Quotations*, 149.
4. Harry G Summers, Jr, *On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War* (New York: Dell, 1992). 78- 83.
5. CJ Clarke (ed), *Yours Faithfully, A Record of Service of the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment in Australia and South Vietnam, 16 February 1971-16 October 1971* (Sydney: Printcraft Press, 1972), 29.
6. Syd Trigellis-Smith, Sergio Zampatti and Max Parsons, *Shaping History A Bibliography of Australian Army Unit Histories, including army formations, establishments, associated organisations and a selection of campaign and area studies* (Melbourne: published by the authors, 1996).
7. C.E.W. Bean, *The Australian Imperial Force in France During the Allied Offensive, 1918*, vol vi of *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1942), 1096.
8. B.H Liddell Hart, *Thoughts on War* (London: Faber and Faber, 1944). 143.
9. Lieutenant Colonel H.C.H. Robertson, *The First Forty Days: 1914* (Melbourne Department of the Army. 1950).
10. Ion Idriess, *The Desert Column: Leaves from the Diary of an Australian Trooper in Gallipoli, Sinai and Palestine* (Sydney; Angus & Robertson. 1932).
11. Fronsac, *Garrison Gunners* (Tamworth: Tamworth Newspaper Co, 1929).
12. Lieutenant General Sir Carl Jess, 'Report on the Activities of The Australian Military Forces 1929- 1939'.
13. *Active Service, with Australia in the Middle East* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial for the Military History and Information Section, 1941); *Soldiering On, the Australian Army at Home and Overseas* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1942), *Khaki and Green, with the Australian Army at Home and Overseas*, (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1943), *Jungle Warfare, with the Australian Army in the South-West Pacific* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1944); *Stand Easy, after the Defeat of Japan* (Canberra Australian War Memorial, 1945); succeeding issues of *As You Were* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949. 1950).
14. Captain V E Acott, *Reconquest: an official record of the Australian Army's successes in the offensives against Lac, Finschhafen, Markham and Ramu Valleys* (Melbourne: Director General of Public Relations, 1944).
15. H. Gordon Bennett, *Why Singapore Fell* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1944); Peter Ryan, *Fear Drive My Feet* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1959).
16. Chester Wilmot, *Tobruk* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1944), Osmar White, *Green Armour* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1945), Raymond Paul, *Retreat from Kokoda* (Melbourne: Heinemann, 1958).
17. Colonel E.G. Keogh, *Shenandoah 1861-62* (Melbourne Wilke and Co, 1954); Suez to Aleppo, *The River in the Desert, Middle East 1939-43* and *Malaya 1941-42*, all published by Wilke and Co, Melbourne, in 1955, 1955, 1959 and 1962 respectively, and *South-West Pacific 1941-45* (Melbourne: Grayflower, 1965).
18. Captain R.J. O'Neill, 'Doctrine and Training in the German Army 1919-1939', *Australian Army Journal*, February 1966.
19. Robert O'Neill, *The German Army and the Nazi Party* (London: Cassell, 1966).
20. Robert O'Neill, *Vietnam Task: The 5th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, 1966/7* (Melbourne: Cassell, 1968) Professor O'Neill was Chichele Professor of the History of War at Oxford University from 1987 to 2001.
21. John Blaxland, *Organising an Army: The Australian Experience 1957-1965* (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, Australian National University, 1989); Bob Breen, *First to Fight: Australian Diggers, NZ Kiwis and US Paratroopers in Vietnam, 1965-66* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988); CD Coullhard-Clark, *A Heritage of Spirit: A biography of Major-General Sir William Throsby Bridges* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1979); Bob Hall, *The Black Diggers: Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in the Second World War* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989); P.A. Pedersen, Monash as Military Commander (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1985). Some of these officers have since written additional books.
22. M. Austin, *The Army in Australia 1840-50* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1979).
23. Ian McNeill, *The Team: Australian Army Advisers in Vietnam 1962-1972* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1984).
24. John Mordike, *An Army For a Nation: A history of Australian military developments 1880-1914* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1992).
25. Michael McKernan, 'Military History', in Graeme Davison, John Hirst and Stuart MacIntyre (eds), *The Oxford Companion to Australian History* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1998), 429.
26. Bill Gammage, 'The Role of the Army in Shaping the Australian Nation to 1939', in David Horner (ed), *Armies and Nation-Building: Past Experiences—Future Prospects* (Canberra: Strategic and Defence Studies Centre. Australian National University, 1995).
27. Bill Gammage, *The Broken Years: Australian Soldiers in the Great War* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1974), xiii.
28. Patsy Adam-Smith, *The Anzacs* (Melbourne: Nelson, 1978).
29. John Barrett, *We Were There: Australian Soldiers of World War II Tell Their Stories* (Melbourne: Viking, 1987); Mark Johnston, *At The Front Line: Experiences of Australian Soldiers in World War II* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
30. L.L Robson, *The First AIF, A Study of its Recruitment 1914-1918* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1970).
31. Joan Beaumont, *Gull Force: Survival and Leadership in Captivity 1941-1945* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988).

32. John Robertson, *Australia at war 1939-1945* (Melbourne; William Heinemann, 1981); Anzac and Empire: *The Tragedy and Glory of Gallipoli* (Melbourne. Hamlyn, 1990). 33. Sir John Monash, *The Australian Victories in France in 1918* (Melbourne; Lothian, 1920), *J.M. Gordon, Chronicles of a Gay Gordon* (London: Cassell, 1921).
34. Subjects of biographies or autobiographies of Army people published in the 1950s: Blamey, Bridges/ White, Savage; 1960s: Drake-Brockman, Bennett; 1970s: Morris, Blamey, Monash, Rowell, Mackay, Morshead, Coates, Chauvel, Dougherty, Stretton, Bridges; 1980s: Blamey, Herring, Monash, Derrick, Bean, Gallagher, Monash, Legge, Blow, Jacka; 1990s: Cousins, Essex-Clark, O'Brien, Vasey, Robertson, Green, Dunlop, Simpson, Payne, Vial, Wyett, Rylie, Lavarack, White, Potts, Blamey; 2000: Honner, Gellibrand, Howse, Rogers, Howse.
35. Ian Grant, *Jacka VC, Australia's Finest Fighting Soldier* (Melbourne: Macmillan and the Australian War Memorial, 1989), Murray Farquar, *Derrick VC* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1982); Colleen McCullough, *Roden Cutler, VC, The Biography* (Sydney: Random House, 1998); Sue Ebury, *Weary, The Life of Sir Edward Dunlop* (Ringwood: Viking, 1994).
36. Geoffrey Serle, *John Monash: A Biography* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press. 1982); P.A. Pedersen, *Monash as Military Commander* (Melbourne Melbourne University Press, 1985); Brett Lodge, *Lavarack: Rival General* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1998); A.J. Hill, *Chauvel of the Light Horse A Biography of General Sir Harry Chauvel* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1978); Jeffrey Grey, *Australian Brass The Career of Lieutenant General Sir Horace Robertson* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992); C D Coulthard-Clark, *No Australian Need Apply: The Troubled Career of Lieutenant-General Gordon Legge* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin. 1988).
37. D M . Horner, *Crisis of Command: Australian Generalship and the Japanese Threat, 1941-1943* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1978); John Coates, *Bravery Above Blunder: The 9th Australian Division at Finschhafen, Sattelberg, and Sio* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1999).
38. Peter Charlton, *Pozieres 1916: Australians on the Somme* (Sydney: Methuen Haynes, 1986); Peter Stanley, *Tarakan, An Australian Tragedy* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1997); Peter Brune, *Those Ragged Bloody Heroes: From The Kokoda Trail to Gona Beach 1942* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1991).
39. Margaret Barter, *Far Above Battle, The Experience and Memory of Australian Soldiers in War, 1939- 1945* (Sydney; Allen & Unwin. 1994).
40. Robert O'Neill, *Australia in the Korean War, Volume I, Strategy and Diplomacy; Volume II, Combat Operations* (Canberra; Australian War Memorial and Australian Government Publishing Service, 1981 and 1985).
41. Ian McNeill, *To Long Tan: The Australian Army and the Vietnam War 1950-1966* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin in association with the Australian War Memorial, 1993).
42. Lieutenant Colonel Bob Breen (ed), *The Battle of Maryang San. 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, Korea, 2-8 October 1951* (Sydney: Headquarters Training Command, 1991), and Lieutenant Colonel Bob Breen, *The Battle of Kapyong: 3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, Korea, 23-24 April 1951* (Sydney: Headquarters Training Command, 1992).
44. Bob Breen, *Mission Accomplished: East Timor* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2001).
45. Albert Palazzo, 'Researching the Modern Army; The Royal Australian Corps of Transport', *Australian Army Journal*, issue 2000.
46. Robert A. Hall, *Combat Battalion: The Eighth Battalion in Vietnam* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2000), xvii, xviii.

Reprinted from the Army Historical Unit Website Conference page.

http://www.defence.gov.au/Army/AHU/docs/A_Century_of_Service_Horner.pdf

The Menin Gate Inauguration Ceremony - Sunday 24th July, 1927



The Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing was inaugurated on Sunday 24 July, 1927 by **Field Marshal Lord Plumer**.

General Charles Harington, a colleague and close friend of **Field Marshal Plumer**, wrote about the occasion in his book entitled "Plumer of Messines". He described a long procession of relatives winding their way through the Grande Place (the Market Square, now called the Grote Markt in Flemish). They were making their way to the newly built Menin Gate Memorial to take their places on the eastern side of the Gate. Flagpoles on the rebuilt buildings around the famous square were hung with black flags.

Following on from the Town Hall the official dignitaries included **Albert, King of the Belgians**, Field Marshal Lord Plumer and **General Foch** of France. Hundreds of local inhabitants, veterans of 1914-1918 and relatives of the fallen British and Commonwealth troops were gathered in the Grand Place and along the route to the Menin Gate.

On the roadway which crosses the moat at the eastern entrance of the memorial there was seating facing the memorial for about 160 official guests and military representatives. On both sides of the seating area contingents from the Belgian and British Armies were on parade, together with British and Belgian military bands. A wooden platform for those giving the speeches was positioned just in front of the eastern arch of the memorial. Veterans of the Great War wearing civilian clothes and carrying wreaths were gathered on the pavement under the memorial's central arch.





Crowds were standing on the ramparts either side of the memorial and along the road opposite the memorial on the eastern side of the moat. Several hundred veterans and relatives were crowded into the street leading to the memorial from the Menin Road. Individuals were in every open window of the newly built houses overlooking the memorial. Press photographers stood on walls or ladders to get a good vantage point. Loudspeakers were set up to enable everyone to hear the ceremony even in the Grande Place. Millions were also listening to the ceremony which was broadcast on the wireless in Britain.

Recalling the speech given by Lord Plumer as he officially unveiled the memorial, General Harington commented in his book "Plumer of Messines" about

Plumer's natural ability for public speaking. Harington considered that Plumer's speech at the Menin Gate was perhaps his greatest effort and that it must have been a supreme moment in his life. Plumer was standing on the spot where countless British soldiers had passed through the gateway from Ypres on their last march to the front line. Both Plumer and Harington had witnessed the town of Ypres being smashed to pieces.

Harington wrote:

"I am sure he was thinking, as we were, of all those Brigade and Battalion Headquarters which he used to visit living in burrows under those ramparts, of the casualties incurred nightly by the endless stream of transport men, their horses and mules - on their nightmare journeys through that Menin Gate, the star shells, the crackling rifle fire, shell bursts, plunging horses and dogged Infantrymen. Each gateway a bottle-neck, registered to an inch by the enemy guns. Every man and animal had to run the gauntlet both going in and coming out. The Cloth Hall of world fame. The Cathedral. The Convent. The old Water Tower leaning over like Pisa, and every other building all in ruins, the old swans still swimming in the moat."

CAMBRIDGESHIRE REGIMENT	
CAPTAIN	PRIVATE
JONAS F. C.	CRANN G. H.
LIEUTENANT	CROSS G. H.
SAUNDERS E. W.	DENT B. R.
SECOND LIEUT.	DE PLEDGE J. A.
MUIRHEAD A. H.	DUNNETT C. J.
COY. SGT. MAJOR	EAST J.
PULL H.	EDIS J. W.
SERJEANT	FLACK M.
BODGER W. S.	FREEMAN E.
PURELL J. W.	GRAY A. J.
LANCE SERJEANT	GUTTERIDGE H.
MILLER S.	HADNAM F. R.
CORPORAL	HALL H.
WHITEMAN G. M.	HARVEY E.
	HILLS L. A.
	ISON H.
	KERSTON E. A.
	LLOYD E. A.
	LUCK L. F.
	MALKIN R.

According to Harington the most moving part of Lord Plumer's speech was his attempt to give some comfort to the parents and relatives at the ceremony of the missing soldiers of the Ypres battlefields. Facing the Ypres Salient his words were:

"...One of the most tragic features of the Great War was the number of casualties reported as 'Missing, believed killed'. To their relatives there must have been added to their grief a tinge of bitterness and a loved ones' bodies and give them reverent burial. That feeling no longer exists; it ceased to exist when the conditions under which the fighting was being carried out were realized.

But when peace came and the last ray of hope had been extinguished the void seemed deeper and the outlook more forlorn for those who had no grave to visit, no place where they could lay tokens of loving remembrance. It was resolved that here at Ypres, where so many of the 'Missing' are known to have fallen, there should be erected a memorial worthy of them which should give expression to the nation's gratitude for their sacrifice and its sympathy with those who mourned them. A memorial has been erected which, in its simple grandeur, fulfils this object, and now it can be said of each one in whose honour we are assembled here today:

'He is not missing; he is here'.

At the end of the service buglers of the Somerset Light Infantry sounded the Last Post and pipers of the Scots Guards, standing on the ramparts, played a lament.

Acknowledgements

Plumer of Messines, by General Sir Charles Harington, GCB, GBE

Photograph of Field Marshal Lord Plumer courtesy of Great War Primary Document Archive:
Photos of the Great War

Reprinted From The Great War UK Website

<http://www.greatwar.co.uk/ypres-salient/memorial-menin-gate-.htm>

The 2/8th Australian Field Regiment Association Website

The 2/8th Australian Field Regiment Association, a member of RAA Vic have recently launched a web site. The 2/8th Field Regiment fought during WW2 in the Middle East and Borneo.

The web site went live on 8 March 2009.

The site has pages devoted to the history of the unit, its men, gallery of images during war and peace, association contacts, and history of the association.

The page devoted to the men has a Roll of Honour, commanding officers, and information on officers and men.

In the menus for officers there are 109 individual photo pictures. In the menus for men there are 14 individual photo pictures. The total number of images is 209.

There are 24 profiles of men from the Regiment. As members send in new material the web site will be updated.

See <http://www.2nd8thausfieldregtassoc.org.au>

Member Peter Evans of RAA Vic is the web consultant and web master for the association.

HMAS TOBRUK (I)

HMAS Tobruk (I) Statistics



HMAS Tobruk (I)

Type	Battle Class Destroyer
Laid down	5 August 1946
Launched	20 December 1947 by Mrs Riordan, wife of the Minister for the Navy
Builder	Cockatoo Docks and Engineering Co Pty Ltd, Sydney
Commissioned	8 May 1950
Displacement	2,436 tons (standard) 3,450 tons (full load)
Length	379 feet (overall)
Beam	41 feet12.497 m 1,249.68 cm 0.0125 km 0.00777 mi 492 in

Draught	12 feet 9 inches
Armament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 x 4.5-inch guns • 12 x 40mm Bofors anti-aircraft guns • 10 x 21-inch torpedo tubes • Squid triple-barrelled depth charge mortar
Main Machinery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parsons geared turbines
Horsepower	50,000
Speed	35 knots 18.006 m/s 64.82 km/h 0.018 km/s 3,544.402 ft/min 59.073 ft/s (designed) 31 knots (sea speed)
Complement	290

HMAS TOBRUK commissioned at Sydney on 8 May 1950 under the command of CMDR Thomas K. Morrison OBE DSC RAN.

TOBRUK spent the first fifteen months of her career working up and exercising in Australian waters.

In August 1951 she proceeded to Japan to join the United Nations naval forces for Korean War operations. Under the command of CMDR Richard Peek RAN, TOBRUK began active operational duty in the Korean theatre on 3 October 1951 when she reported for duty on the screen of Commander Task Element 95.11 (USS RENDOVA) with HMC Ships ATHABASKAN and SIOUX in company.

From this time until the destroyer returned to Sasebo on 18 October she remained on the screen of the American carrier, except for one day with Task Element 95.19, a group specially formed for combined air and bombardment strikes against the east coast sector.

The screen protecting RENDOVA usually consisted of three ships with occasionally a fourth. During the period, in addition to TOBRUK, it comprised HMC Ships ATHABASKAN, SIOUX and CAYUGA, HM Ships COMUS and CONCORD and US Ships PHILLIP, NICHOLAS, HANNA and NAIFEH.

TOBRUK began her second patrol, still screening RENDOVA, on 26 October and remained with the carrier during daily flying operations until 4 November when the two ships plus HMS COCKADE proceeded for Sasebo.

On 8 November TOBRUK began her third patrol, the venue changing to the east coast where she spent 12 days as one of a bombarding group (Task Group 95.2) attacking enemy points between Songjin and Chongjin. The highlight of the operation was the complete destruction of a southbound freight train during the middle watch of 18 November. On several occasions trains after being hit had escaped but on this occasion derailment enabled TOBRUK to complete the destruction with 4.5-inch fire. One hundred and sixteen targets were engaged during the course of the operation and 1,200 rounds of 4.5-inch ammunition were expended.



HMAS Tobruk, one of the two "Battle" Class destroyers to serve in Korea.

On 19 November TOBRUK joined Commander Task Group 95.8 (HMS BELFAST) for a combined two day air and sea strike on Hungnam. The air element was provided by the carrier HMAS *Sydney* (III) after the bombardment group of BELFAST, VAN GALEN and TOBRUK had suppressed anti-aircraft batteries ashore. The Australian destroyer fired 321 rounds of 4.5-inch ammunition. On 21 November TOBRUK returned to Kure.

On 28 November TOBRUK began her fourth patrol and her third as one of the screen in support of the American carrier RENDOVA. This patrol, which eventually lengthened into 26 days, covered three sections as screen to RENDOVA and *Sydney* (III) and as a unit of Task Element 95.12, being the West Coast Bombardment Force.

The period as screen to RENDOVA ceased on 6 December when TOBRUK proceeded to operate independently off Paengyong Do. It was RENDOVA's last patrol of the war. On 7 December the destroyer joined *Sydney* (III) and operated with her until 17 December. On 15 December TOBRUK anchored for the first time in 106 days and some 30,000 miles of steaming.

The third and final phase of the patrol, from 17 to 20 December, was spent attached to Task Element 95.12 (HM Ships CEYLON and CONSTANCE and US Ships MANCHESTER and EVERSOLE), harassing the enemy south of Sokto.

TOBRUK commenced her fifth patrol on 1 January 1952 when she relieved HMS WHITESAND BAY in the Haeju area, operating mainly in defence of Yongpyong-Do. Two or three bombardments were carried out daily during this phase and on 7 January Chomi Do was heavily attacked to prevent a threatened invasion of Yongmae Do. On 9 January TOBRUK was relieved by CAYUGA.

TOBRUK's sixth and last patrol of her first tour of duty in the Korean War began on 16 January 1952 when she joined the ships of Task Element 95.11 screening *Sydney* (III). Two days were spent in the Choda / Sokto area, at anti-invasion stations by night and desultory bombardment of enemy shore batteries by day.

After a patrol marked chiefly by snow storms and gales, TOBRUK proceeded for Sasebo on 25 January, bringing to a close her first tour of duty in the Korean War. At the end of her five months of service in the operational areas, TOBRUK had steamed some 39,000 miles and fired 2,316 rounds from her 4.5-inch guns.

Referring to TOBRUK, the Flag Officer Second-in-Command, Far East Station, Rear Admiral A.K. Scott-Moncrieff, said 'she had recently made her presence known to the Communist Forces in Korea.' 'Fitted with the very latest gunnery equipment', he added 'she has carried out pin-point bombardments on both coasts of Korea and has hit trains, railways, railway bridges and troop concentrations. During the 118 days she operated in the Commonwealth Group, TOBRUK spent 89 days at sea and steamed about 27,000 miles. During the strike against Munognam in November she was one of the bombarding element which destroyed large areas of military installations.'

TOBRUK returned to Australian waters on 22 February 1952.

Following six months in home waters, TOBRUK in September 1952 escorted *Sydney* (III) to Manus Island and during the following month was engaged carrying out security patrols off the Monte Bello Islands, covering the explosion of the first British atomic bomb. The following seven months were all spent in Australian waters.

TOBRUK returned to Korean waters on 26 June 1953 when she reported for duty to Commander Task Unit 95.1.2 (HMS NEWCASTLE) at Taechong Do as relief to her sister ship HMAS *Anzac* (II) for west coast operations. On 27 June she joined the screening force covering the carrier HMS OCEAN. This duty continued until OCEAN was relieved by USS BAIROKO on 5 July.

TOBRUK's next mission was with Task Group 95.2 as part of the Yangdo Blockade and Patrol Group. She reached Yang Do on 14 July where she relieved HMCS HURON. Operations with this group continued until the close of hostilities on 27 July 1953. On 16 July TOBRUK sank a large motor sampan suspected of operating as a minelayer. She fired her last shots of the war on 24 July when she fired a few rounds of 4.5-inch ammunition at a radar post installation on Musudan Point between Chongjin and Yang Do.

Although hostilities ended on 27 July 1953, TOBRUK continued to serve in Korean waters in the post war period, conducting post Armistice patrols until January 1954. During her second tour of duty in Korean waters she steamed 26,000 miles, including some 7,000 miles before the end of hostilities.

After a refit in the early part of 1954 she operated in Australian and New Guinea waters until June 1955 when she exercised with the fleet in South East Asian waters.

In June and July 1955 TOBRUK served as a unit of the Far East Strategic Reserve, taking part in joint exercises. The succeeding years saw TOBRUK return to the Far East on a number of occasions as part of the Australian commitment to the Far East Strategic Reserve. She had longer tours of duty during the periods of December 1955 to October 1956, April 1957 to January 1958 and April to November 1959.

Following a refit in 1960, TOBRUK joined *Anzac* (II) for a cruise to Noumea and to various ports in New Guinea. In September 1960, while exercising with the fleet off the east coast of Australia, she was accidentally hit by a shell from *Anzac* (II). After effecting repairs at Jervis Bay, TOBRUK sailed for Sydney where she paid off into Reserve on 29 October 1960. During her service TOBRUK steamed 299,946 miles.

TOBRUK was sold for scrap on 15 February 1972 to the Fujita Salvage Company Limited of Osaka, Japan. On 10 April 1972 the Japanese ocean going tug SUMI MARU No 38 sailed from Sydney for Moji, Japan, with TOBRUK and another former Australian ship, HMAS *Quiberon* under tow.

Reprinted from The Royal Australian Navy Website

Retrieved from "http://www.navy.gov.au/HMAS_Tobruk_%28I%29"

Major General Cyril Albert Clowes, CBE, DSO, MC

Date of birth: 11 March 1892

Place of birth: Warwick, QLD

Date of death: 19 May 1968

Place of death: Melbourne, VIC

At Milne Bay, Cyril Clowes won the first land victory against the Japanese in the Second World War but he soon joined the ranks of senior officers removed from their posts during the Papuan campaign. Born on 11 March 1892 at Warwick in Queensland, Clowes entered the Royal Military College, Duntroon in 1911. He graduated in August 1914 and was appointed as a lieutenant in the AIF and posted to the 1st Field Artillery Brigade. He landed at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915, serving as a forward observation officer and directing naval gunfire against Turkish positions. Clowes was wounded on Gallipoli but recovered and was promoted to captain in the 2nd Divisional Artillery in Egypt during January 1916.



On the Western Front during 1916, Clowes served as the 2nd Division's Trench Mortar Officer and was awarded the Military Cross. He received a promotion to major in January 1917 and the following year was awarded the Distinguished Service Order for his work at Villers-Bretonneux. He returned to Australia in April 1919 and his appointment with the AIF was terminated in late June.

The following year Clowes took up a post as instructor at Duntroon, remaining there until 1925, the year in which he married Eva Magennis. The couple moved to Brisbane where Clowes undertook staff, training, and command duties until 1930. Similar postings to Sydney and then Darwin followed and in 1936 he was promoted to lieutenant colonel. He undertook a gunnery staff course in England before returning to Australia as the Chief Instructor at Sydney's School of Artillery. In August 1939 he was given command of Australia's 6th Military District - which covered Tasmania - and received a promotion to colonel the following November.

The Second World War having begun, Clowes was made a temporary brigadier in the AIF and in April 1940 was appointed commander of the Royal Australian Artillery, 1 Corps. He arrived in the Middle East in December 1940 and served in the ill-fated Greek campaign in 1941, where he performed with distinction. He returned to Australia in January 1942, was promoted to temporary major general, and given command of the 1st Division. In July he was sent to Port Moresby and given command of what became known as Milne Force. He reached Milne Bay and assumed command of the Australian troops there just four days before the Japanese began landing.

His forces proved victorious after a long and difficult fight in the most trying of conditions. Despite having won a most important victory, Clowes was attacked by General MacArthur and received little support from General Blamey. After a period of leave, he contracted malaria, a common occurrence in Papua. He continued to command Milne Force but with the battle over, this held little challenge.

He returned to Australia in 1943 and held various postings until the end of the war. Clowes retired from the Army with the rank of lieutenant general in June 1949. He died on 19 May 1968 at Heidelberg Hospital in Melbourne.

© 1997-2009 Australian War
Memorial

Reprinted from the Australian War Memorial
Website

<http://www.awm.gov.au/people/8133.asp>

**RAA Association (Victoria) Inc
Corps Shop**

The following items may be purchased by mail, or at selected Association activities.

PRICE LIST

<p>Badges, etc</p> <p>RAA Assn (Vic), members \$5.00</p> <p>RAA badge cuff links \$9.00</p> <p>Key ring, RAA badge \$4.00</p> <p>Key ring, RAA (Pewter) \$4.00</p> <p>Ties</p> <p>Blue with single red gun \$30.00</p> <p>RAA Burgundy with gold gun \$43.00</p> <p>RAA Navy with gold gun \$43.00</p> <p>St Barbara Stripe \$43.00</p> <p>Books</p> <p><i>Kookaburra's Cutthroats</i> \$39.00</p> <p><i>Aust Military Equip Profiles</i> \$13.50</p> <p><i>AMEF Profile - Leopard Tank</i> \$17.00</p> <p>ENQUIRIES: BRIAN CLEEMAN (03) 9560 7116 REG MORRELL (03) 9562 9552</p>	<p>Stationery</p> <p>Card, RAA badge, with envelope Christmas message \$0.20 Blank inside \$0.20</p> <p>Stickers</p> <p>Bumper: <i>Gunners do it with a bigger bang</i> \$2.00</p> <p>Square: gold badge, red and blue background \$2.00</p> <p>ORDERS: Most orders will require an additional FIVE DOLLARS packing and postage, which will cover one to several small items. If in any doubt concerning this, or availability, please contact one of the enquiries numbers above.</p> <p>Cheques should be made payable to RAA Association (Victoria) Inc, and be crossed <i>Not Negotiable</i>.</p> <p>Orders to: Mr B. Cleeman 28 Samada Street Notting Hill VIC 3168</p>
---	---

SOME OTHER MILITARY REFLECTIONS

By COL Graham Farley, OAM, RFD, ED (Retd)

4. Small arms and machine guns

"To destroy the enemy"

Most military appreciations have an aim similar to this. To enable the soldier to carry out the commander's wishes, he or she has to be provided with a "gun." History books tell of the development of the musket, with its smooth bore, to the "rifled" equipments that most of my contemporaries were issued with last century. Here are some thoughts on those that I met and used, but never in anger.

The rifle

In the Air Training Corps I was introduced to the .303 inch Short Magazine Lee Enfield No. 1. Mark III Star rifle. Range days were held at RAAF Point Cook and RAAF Laverton (now collectively RAAF Williams). I was taught how to hold the rifle and to keep the stock firmly nestled into one's shoulder. Designed in the early twentieth century the SMLE became the longest serving bolt-action rifle in world use.

I even had some success hitting the targets. These of course were the circular ones marked off for "Bull," "Inner," "Magpie," and "Outer." I was even selected to represent the Victorian ATC interstate, but the competition was called off through the outbreak of an infectious disease.

NS

Even in 1954, when I fronted up for national service, the same rifle was still in use. But this time we had the offer to change our rifle sights. The artificer would set himself up at a table with a set of pliers and various ranges as we "zeroed in" our rifles.

This did not help me at all. All I seemed to be able to do now was to miss the target. No matter how I squeezed the trigger ("take the first pressure") the rifle would fire and I would get the wave from the butts to indicate that I had missed again. I later decided that was the reason I was posted to the machine gun platoon in MUR when my full-time duty ceased!

Safety was relatively straight forward for the rifle. The instructor made sure that weapons on the mound pointed to the butts at all times. There was a simple but reliable system by line communication for the rifle butt parties to enter or exit the butts without any risk of being fired at.

We fired the rifle on the 25-yard range and then on the longer ranges up to 400-yards. "Range days" meant either a march out to the Puckapunyal range or one by trucks to the Seymour range. Meals would come out in hot boxes but I will keep that discussion until a set of "memories" on rations.

At the end of each shoot the rifle had to be "pulled through." The stock of the rifle had a storage space in which to store the cord with its weight at one end and an eye at the other. A piece of "four by two" oiled gauze would be "pulled" through the bore of the rifle until the grooves were shiny and clean. It was an offence to have a dirty rifle on inspection.

Rifle drill

The rifle became almost a part of one's body. I would be expected to carry it on parade and account for it at any time. It had to be kept clean. The basic methods of carrying the rifle accorded with its length. Whether "At ease," "At attention," "Slope arms," "Present arms," it seemed a set of natural ways of holding the rifle, despite its nine-pound weight.

But the position became one of shame if one accidentally dropped the rifle. The standard "punishment" seemed to be that one had to reach down and pick up the weapon, while at the same time saying "I love my rifle. I will not drop you again!"

The pistol

Wikipedia might let me down here but the pistol as I recall it looked very much like the Webley Mark IV. On the other hand I have been advised that it was probably a Smith and Weston. A paying officer would be issued with a pistol and six rounds. It was joked that the pistol generally came with the command that it was not to be fired; but rather let the thief have the money. This was on the basis that the paper work involved in the shooting would outweigh the cost, time and energy of the money lost!

I recall one range day at Williamstown when we officers were issued with pistols and asked to fire in the direction of the target. For once I do not think I did any poorer than my colleagues. I mused to myself that the "six-gun slingers" of the Wild West films would have had difficulty in hitting the side of a barn with such an ungainly weapon. I would need to be inside the barn. But I suppose you could get used to it and only use it at close quarters.

The Owen

This 9mm automatic sub-machine gun had been tested and proved almost to be almost fool-proof in the jungle campaigns of World War II. It was said that it could almost be fired underwater and if covered in mud. However, when it came to range days, its length was a challenge to all.

How did the instructor manage to keep all the weapons pointing at the targets? The apocryphal stories were told of the mythical recruit, endeavouring to fire his machine gun, swinging round to speak to the instructor and letting loose a fusillade of bullets! But I did not witness such an event.

During most days, as we trained in our lines or nearby, one could hear the firing of both rifles and the Owen guns on nearby Mount Certainty, where the 25-yard ranges had been built.

The Bren gun

This "light machine gun" was designed and built in pre-World War II Czechoslovakia and adopted by British forces during the thirties. Its name came from a combination of the first two initial letters of the town in Czechoslovakia where it was manufactured and of the Enfield ordnance works in England. It was a very popular weapon with the infantry and complemented the Vickers medium machine gun. Both fired the standard .303 inch round.

I was introduced to the Bren in national service. In the "dry" training lessons, the instructors fixed in our minds the inevitable need to change the barrel and adjust the four-positioned gas regulator. The Bren barrels "cooled" through the changing the barrels and also in the time taken to insert a fresh magazine. Although the latter could hold thirty .303 inch rounds, they were generally only loaded to 28 or 29 to conserve the spring in the curved magazine inserted into the top of the gun.

So I got used to the instructor ordering, "Gun stops firing." Upon this order, the firer changed the magazine. Inevitably during the lesson the next order would come: "Gun fires a few more rounds and stops again." Upon this order, the "number two" would remove from the pouch if he had not already done so the tool for adjusting the gas regulator.

It would mean "crawling" up alongside the barrel, removing it, adjusting the gas regulator and replacing the barrel. If I have got the drill wrong it just demonstrates what a poor infantryman that I was. I do not ever remember the Bren failing to maintain its fire on the range, but if one wanted a phrase to characterise national service, then the "Gun fires a few more rounds and stops again," was one of them.

I was never encouraged to fire the Bren from the hip for probably the same safety reasons that restricted the use of the Owen SMG. But we had all seen the films with John Wayne in the lead rôle running forward and mowing down the enemy as he moved.

The Vickers Machine Gun

On being transferred to the Melbourne University Regiment to complete my 180-days obligation, I found myself posted to the machine gun platoon. Since the machine gun "sprayed" the target even Farley could eventually hit something!

In 1974 there was a bivouac at Puckapunyal for the Support Company platoons. This included the anti-tank platoon. It was to be the weekend that the MUR anti-tank platoon "brewed up" a World War II tank that had been left out on the range as it had broken down at the end of the week's exercises.

Meanwhile on another hill, I was shown the Vickers medium machine gun in all its glory. Having just looked up Wikipedia, I am now an expert, but on that day I was greeted by a fairly large and heavy barrelled weapon surmounted on an equally heavy tripod. The gunner sat behind the firing sights with his assistant feeding the cloth-belted ammunition from the right.

It was explained to me that the rate of fire heated the water in the barrel jacket until it boiled. The steam was then funnelled down a rubber tube to a condensing can. In turn the condensed steam - now water - would be fed back into the barrel's jacket. The barrel needed 4.3 litres of water for firing to commence.

Eventually that day it was my turn to fire the gun. This was quite an experience. I had fired off quite a few rounds of .303 ball ammunition in national service and the ATC, but I must have fired off even more in the few minutes that I had the firing trigger curled back with my right index finger. Yes, one sprayed the target with joy.

The gun had been developed from the famous Maxim gun by Vickers Limited. It was supplemented by the Lewis light machine gun. The Vickers could be expected to fire 10,000 rounds an hour without failing the firing party.

I was not to see the Vickers in action again. I became a gunner in MUR's newly raised artillery platoon.

The SLR

The SMLE must have followed me into the Royal Regiment, but sooner or later it was replaced by the 7.62 mm self loading rifle. I did understand the SMLE, not that it had many parts to strip. Once you have mastered one type of equipment or invention, it is often hard for the mind to comprehend another unless it is used frequently.

As a BC or CO I needed to know how to fire the SLR, but I also needed to be able to fire it for the purpose of being classified "Efficient" and attract the few dollars and cents for so being. As a result, when firing on the range at Colac or Williamstown, I would have to be led away by one of the warrant officers, generally WO1 Bob Millett, MBE, and given careful instructions. Despite Bob's best efforts I still had trouble hitting the target. I was more fortunate in succeeding here as a gunner in my later army career!

Time passes, weapons change

In 1985 the Australian Army adopted the Austrian AUG (Armee Universal Gewehr) 5.56 mm Steyr assault rifle, also known in Australia as the Austeyr and manufactured at Lithgow under licence. While rifle drill had obviously changed to accommodate the SLR, gone for ever was the thrilling sight of bayonets flashing in the sun as the SMLEs came smartly from the "Slope" to "The Present," and clouds of blanco rose, caused by the left hands slapping the slings. of the many rifles. The old order had changed for ever.



This illustration of the Austrian AUG 5.56 mm Steyr assault rifle is sourced from Wikipedia, with appreciation

Parade Card

(as at 28 March 2009)

APR 2009

16 Committee
25 ANZAC DAY

MAY 2009

09 Grand Arty Ball

21 Committee

JUN 2009

?? Reserves Lunch

(all ranks)

18 Committee

JUL 2009

16 Committee
18 Gunner Dinner
30 Def Res Spt Day

AUG 2009

07 Gunner Dinner

20 Committee
?? DRA Nat Conf

SEP 2009

17 Committee

OCT 2009

15 Committee

NOV 2009

05 A.G.M.

19 Committee

DEC 2009

04 St Barbara's Day

10 Committee

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND DETAILS UP-DATE

*Please forward to:
RAA Association (Vic) Inc.
8 Alfada Street
Caulfield South Vic. 3167*

Rank _____ First Names _____ DOB _____

Surname and Post Nominals _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Phone (Home, Mobile, Work) _____

Fax and/or E-mail _____

Do you wish to receive Association information by E-mail Y/N

Serving Y/N If so, Unit _____

Awards, Decorations, Medals, Etc. _____

Brief Service History _____

Additional Information (Committee, Unit Rep, Etc) _____

Please Use Additional Blank Sheets if Space Insufficient

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC
101 Warralong Ave GREENSBOROUGH VIC 3088
Reg No A13889Z

Print Post Approved
PP 320418/00029

**PRINT
POST**

PP 320418/00029

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**

