



The Royal United Services Institute of Victoria, Inc.
Promoting National Security and Defence

A constituent body of The Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies Australia Limited

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RUSI VIC NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Mike Rawlinson

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Dale Marsh's painting of Teddy Sheean hangs in the Australian War Memorial (*Australian War Memorial*)

On 1st December 2020, 78 years to the day since his heroic actions in World War II, Ordinary Seaman Edward 'Teddy' Sheean became the first Navy crew member to be awarded Australia's highest military honour, the Victoria Cross. *See **For Valour**, Page 12.

Christmas Greetings



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Opinions expressed in the RUSI VIC Newsletter are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Institute.

From the President:

Major General Mike O'Brien CSC



May I wish all our members, volunteers and supporters a Happy Christmas and a prosperous and very-healthy-indeed New Year. We all have survived and deserve our reward in the next few months!

The last weekly issue of our *RUSIV Occasional* is planned for 21st December. This newsletter is popular and we plan to continue it in 2021 at fortnightly intervals from 11th January. Our current plan is to resume lunchtime talks on Thursday 28th February 2021 at Anzac House (4 Collins St Melbourne) at 12. We will hold our delayed AGM starting at 12. Our speaker is yet to be confirmed - please watch your emails for confirmation.

May I thank all those who have supported us in this trying year. Travel safely and enjoy Victoria's newly re-found freedoms!

Mike O'Brien

Now for a little history.

Extract from Argus (Melbourne, Vic: 1848 - 1957), Saturday 28 July 1934, page 9

IMPERIAL REGIMENTS ON VICTORIAN SERVICE (1837-1870)

By CHARLES DALEY

With the declaration of peace with Russia in April. 1856, the tension in military affairs was relaxed, but the erection of the Victoria Barracks and the two batteries for harbour protection at Sandridge and Williamstown had been commenced. In May H.M. sloop Victoria arrived, and was placed under the command of Captain Norman.

In 1858 an agreement was made with the Imperial Government for providing 400 regular troops for permanent service in the colony, the War Office to provide Imperial pay and allowances, the colony to

supply necessary accommodation, colonial pay, and allowances on its part. In this year a Royal commission under Major-General Macarthur, as president, was appointed to consider the defences of Victoria. Its ultimate recommendations by July 1859, were the erection of shore batteries of 68 and 32 pounder guns, the provision of 24 Armstrong guns of heavy calibre, and a battery of the Royal Artillery for permanent service in Victoria. The commission also formulated a plan for an infantry force of militia and advised the fortification of the Heads and an increase in volunteers. Thirteen new rifle corps, to raise the strength of this body to 1,000 men, exclusive of the volunteer artillery and mounted corps, were immediately formed.

The outbreak of the Maori War necessitated the transfer in 1860 of the regular forces in Victoria to the scene of action, the volunteers meanwhile undertaking garrison duties. In 1863 the volunteer force was reorganised on the new basis, to comprise 23 corps, with a total strength of 3,628 of all arms.

In June 1863, the Secretary of State, in an important despatch to the Australian colonies, all possessing responsible government, notified that the Imperial Government obligation to maintain the internal tranquillity of the country; would be limited; to the contingency of war and dangers of war; Naval defence was the true Imperial contribution to the security and protection of Australia. The colonies should provide for interest and coastal defence. The Imperial Government proposed the maintenance in Australia of 15 companies of infantry for a contribution of £40 a head per annum, a total of £55,000 for 1,327 men, Victoria's share for 445 men being £17,800. For additional infantry or artillery supplied the capitation would be £70 a man. In reply two objections were urged by the Victorian Government: - 1. That no guarantee was given that troops should remain in time of war. 2. That instead of the five companies of infantry, two batteries of artillery would be more desirable.

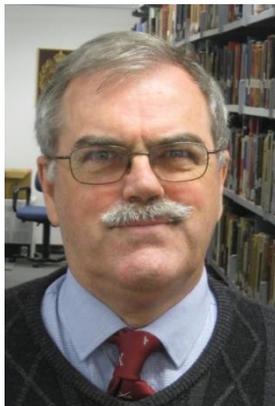
Recognising the depletion of troops in Victoria caused by their employment in the Maori War, the Imperial authorities sent out No. 1 Battery of the 15th Brigade Royal Artillery, under Major F. Dickson. This remained two years, until relieved by No. 7 Battery, 2nd Brigade Royal Artillery, under Lieut.-Colonel C. R. Smith. This battery remained in Victoria until 1867. The barracks were situated at Spencer street and just over Princes Bridge.

In December, 1865, the Secretary of State issued instructions for withdrawal of troops from New Zealand to their original Australian stations; so that in 1866 Victoria again had its complement of five companies and headquarters of the favourite 40th Regiment. Although the cost of maintenance was paid, the objections previously urged were maintained, the Victorian Government officially intimating that, unless the requests for retention of troops in wartime, and for substitution of artillery for infantry were conceded, the maintenance of Imperial troops by the State would cease.

Continued page 4

From the Secretary:

Lieutenant Colonel Bob Hart RFD



As we get close to Christmas, let me first of all wish you all a happy holiday time. Hopefully, after Christmas/New Year, we will be able to get back to almost normal again.

The Office will close for the holiday period as at 4pm on Monday 14th and re-open again on Monday 25th Jan. I will be able to check emails occasionally so if there is something that you want to share, feel free to drop me a line.

We have had no applications for membership since the start of the lockdown but we have farewelled the following members:
J P O'Reilly
Alan McDonald
John Morkham
David Butler.

We are hoping to restart our Lecture series in Feb 2021. There are a few obstacles still to be overcome, like finding a speaker and booking venues but we are hopeful all will go well. Once we have things confirmed, I will email you all with details.

Bob Hart

IMPERIAL REGIMENTS - *Continued*

The Secretary of State replied that the conditions were not acceptable to Her Majesty's Government, which had decided to withdraw the Imperial troops from Australia. This decision was not unexpected, and the colonies willingly accepted the obligation for internal self-defence.

After 15 years of useful colonial service the gallant 40th Regiment had in 1857 been replaced by the 2nd Battalion, 18th Regiment (Royal Irish), the assembled 15 companies of which on August 21, 1870, embarked at Melbourne on the vessel Corona, Sir Trevor Chute, the commandant, with the headquarters staff departing somewhat later. Thus ended a time-honoured and mutually advantageous association.



The first two F-35 Fighters arrive at RAAF Williamtown



Bequests

Royal United Services Institute of Victoria

The Royal United Services Institute of Victoria was established in 1890. It seeks to promote informed debate on and improve public awareness and understanding of defence and national security.

The Institute maintains a specialist library to assist in this, as well as scheduling regular lectures and visits of interest. The costs of doing so, however are becoming burdensome and are exacerbated by an ageing and declining membership.

To allow us to continue to provide services to members and the community into the future, you could greatly assist us by remembering the Institute in your will. Should you desire assistance in adding an appropriate codicil to your will, please contact the Secretary at secretary@rusivic.org.au. If you have added a bequest to your will, it would be of assistance to be advised of it (not the specific amount) in case we need to communicate with you or your executors.

Opinion: Hydrogen

Mike Rawlinson

What with our preoccupation with drought, bushfires, China, Trump, climate change and COVID -19, you may have missed important news items that hydrogen may have a major part to play in Australia's future.

Hydrogen is the earth's lightest element and is the most abundant chemical substance in the universe. A gas (H₂) at normal temperatures, hydrogen is explosive in air when ignited. It achieved notoriety as the gas which filled the Zeppelin airship Hindenberg when it exploded on mooring at Lakehurst, New Jersey in May 1937. More notoriety was achieved in 1952 with the detonation of the first thermonuclear device – the Hydrogen Bomb. The massive destructive power of H Bombs underpinned fear on both sides throughout the Cold War.

Hydrogen is a flexible, safe, transportable and storable fuel. It can be used to power vehicles and generate heat and electricity. When used as a fuel the only by-product is water. There are no carbon emissions. Hydrogen is a key ingredient for producing chemicals such as ammonia and methanol. Hydrogen can be burnt as a fuel or used to generate electricity in a fuel cell, but it is not a primary energy source and can be best thought of as an energy carrier.

The most straightforward method of producing hydrogen is by the electrolysis of water. Because electrolysis has been expensive, most hydrogen has been produced using coal or natural gas as feedstock, with accompanying carbon emissions. The development of the renewable electricity generation industry over the last 20 years have lowered the cost of electricity sufficiently to make generation of hydrogen by electrolysis commercially viable. Without any associated carbon dioxide emissions the product is known as green hydrogen.

Potentially Australia is ideal for generating hydrogen from renewables. It has sun, wind, and vacant land in sparsely populated regions.

In 2017 Japan adopted a *Basic Hydrogen Strategy* aimed at achieving cost parity with competing fuels such as petrol and diesel in transportation or liquefied natural gas (LNG) in power generation and including the entire supply chain from production to market applications. Japan intends to showcase hydrogen at the Tokyo Olympics with fuel-cell powered cars and buses, hydrogen generated electricity at the athletes' village and venues and even a hydrogen powered Olympic Flame. While hydrogen technologies receive government subsidies in Japan, these will be withdrawn as the industry expands and becomes commercially viable.

Fuel cell powered cars are limited by the availability of hydrogen charging stations. As the number of stations increase and fuel cell technology improves, fuel cell

power for electric cars will probably rival battery power in Japan.

Japan represents a very promising future export market for hydrogen.



A National Hydrogen Strategy for Australia

In December 2018 the Council of Australian Governments Energy Council set a vision for a clean (CO₂ emission free) innovative, safe and competitive hydrogen industry that benefits all Australians and is a major global player by 2030.

To achieve this vision a working group chaired by the Chief Scientist developed Australia's National Hydrogen Strategy which was announced in November 2019. The strategy identified 57 actions for the comprehensive development of hydrogen production in relation to exports, transport, industrial use, gas networks, electricity systems, and other issues such as safety, skills and environmental impacts.

A key element of Australia's approach will be to create hydrogen hubs - clusters of large-scale demand. These may be at ports, in cities, or in regional or remote areas, and will provide the industry with its springboard to scale. Hubs will make the development of infrastructure more cost-effective, promote efficiencies from economies of scale, foster innovation, and promote synergies from sector coupling. These will be complemented and enhanced by other early steps to use hydrogen in transport, industry and gas distribution networks, and integrate hydrogen technologies into our electricity systems in a way that enhances reliability.¹

The National Strategy was informed by numerous other reports, among them the CSIRO produced a National Hydrogen Roadmap identifying pathways to an economically sustainable hydrogen industry in Australia. A key determinant was the need to cut Australia's carbon dioxide emissions.

The Technology Investment Roadmap

The Federal Government's long-term strategy to reduce carbon dioxide emissions was announced in September

¹ COAG Energy Council, Executive Summary, Australia's National Hydrogen Strategy, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, Commonwealth of Australia, November 2019.

2020. Named the *Technology Investment Roadmap*, the strategy sets out five priority technologies that will be supported by federal government investment as Australia's contribution to cutting carbon-dioxide emissions. Hydrogen is included as one of the five priority technologies to be developed.

Production of renewable energy by wind requires reliable winds, while solar needs large tracts of non-agricultural land and a high proportion of sunshine days. The north-west coast of Western Australia has all these features and has been identified as a suitable location for future renewable energy installations.

Pilbara Hydrogen

One such project was the Asian Renewable Energy Hub first proposed in 2014. This was to be the world's largest wind farm and solar panel array, producing up to 26 gigawatts and located in north-west WA's Pilbara region. The original proposal was to provide electricity to Singapore via a 3,000km undersea cable. Economic and geopolitical uncertainties are responsible for a switch from undersea power transmission to using the electricity to produce hydrogen and then ammonia, a readily transportable store of energy.

Hydrogen is an awkward fuel to liquify because it requires cooling to minus 250 degrees celsius. It is much more practical to export ammonia (NH₃) which liquifies at minus 33 degrees celsius.

Ammonia NH₃ ammonia is a gas at room temperatures but readily dissolves in water to form ammonium hydroxide, the liquid called ammonia you may be familiar with as a household cleaner. Conveniently for transport, ammonia can be liquefied by compression at 125psi or by refrigeration at minus 33 degrees celsius.

Ammonia is an important raw material for both industry and agriculture in Australia. It's used in the production of ammonium nitrate, nitrogen-based fertilisers, sodium cyanide and in nickel processing. In 2018 the world production of ammonia was 175 million metric tons, with China accounting to about a third of the total. It is estimated the ammonia production consumes 2% of global energy, accounts for 3% of global carbon-dioxide emissions and 3-5% of natural gas consumption.

Green ammonia uses renewable energy instead of natural gas or coal for producing hydrogen; hence, is an effective way to reduce greenhouse emissions. Ammonia also has the potential to replace oil as a shipping fuel -again with no carbon-dioxide emissions.

Also in the Pilbara, the Yara Pilbara Fertilisers plant on the Burrup Peninsula near Karratha is one of the largest ammonia production sites in the world with an annual production capability of 850,000 metric tons. Yara exports liquid ammonia to domestic and global markets from the nearby port of Dampier. Ammonia (NH₃) is produced by combining atmospheric nitrogen N₂ with hydrogen from the steam reforming of natural gas

(CH₄). The latter process results in carbon dioxide emissions. The Yara plants location is due to the availability of natural gas, but potentially could take advantage of hydrogen from renewables if the cost becomes competitive.

Defence Interest

A strong Defence Force needs a strong economy. Coal is Australia's second largest export earner. Aside from China's boycott of Australian coal, world demand for coal may drop as countries seek to reduce emissions and close coal fired power stations or convert them to other fuels. Hydrogen/Ammonia could be Australia's next big export industry, making a large contribution to the federal budget.

There is every indication that countries are prepared to pay a premium for clean hydrogen and clean ammonia. However the potential of this new Australian export industry will depend on the cost efficiency of the renewable electricity used to produce the hydrogen and the cost/efficiency of hydrogen production, storage and transportation.

At home, hydrogen fuel for transport and heating will reduce Australia's dependence on imported fuel and contribute to national resilience.

While Australia has difficulties sustaining oil refineries and maintaining sufficient liquid fuel reserves, it could be self-sufficient in hydrogen. In direct support of the military hydrogen could provide the power for remote bases, and heavy vehicles. It could also be used for making synthetic liquid fuels for military use.

Hydrogen looks like a winner for Australia. The Japanese experience is worth following.

Postscript - Nuclear Fusion

Hydrogen is also the fuel in nuclear fusion – the combining of two atoms to make the atom of a heavier element and release energy. Since the 1950s there have been more than 100 attempts to build a successful fusion reactor. Fusion power commonly uses as fuel deuterium, an isotope of hydrogen. Deuterium exists abundantly in seawater and provides more energy for given weight than any known fuel. Under development in France since 2013 the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) is funded by seven members (the EU, China, India, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the US) with 35 participating countries including Australia. ITER is considered the most expensive scientific endeavour in history. There are also over 20 private companies working on fusion power. Several big-name US billionaires are represented as investors. The risks are high but the potential returns are huge. While commercial fusion reactors are unlikely before 2050, fusion reactors offer the means of powering future civilization including space vehicles.

A CHRONICLE of Events, Decisions & Issues relating to Defence Matters

October 1 – December 2 2020

by Michael Small

The Newsletter presents a four-page contraction from Michael's slightly longer Chronicle. Members can obtain copies of the original Chronicle by contacting the Secretary. (Ed)

October 1

AFP will investigate war crimes committed by Special Forces in Afghanistan. AFP Commander Brad Currie will head a *Special References Taskforce*. AFP Commissioner Reece Kershaw announced the appointment as Major General Paul Brereton finalises his war crimes inquiry for IGADF.

Each referral would be considered by AFP's *Sensitive Investigations Oversight Board*, taking into account legal advice, available resources and the prospects of successful prosecutions. The Brereton report will focus on eight to 10 of the most serious crimes identified in interviews with more than 330 witnesses. These include alleged murders of unarmed civilians and prisoners by SASR and Commando soldiers.

October 3

An *Army interim helicopter capability* (AIHC) to complement the MRH 90 *Taipans* of the Townsville-based 5 Aviation Regiment (5Avn) will be sought.

October 4-5

Lieutenant General Rick Burr said a report with allegations about Special Forces soldiers who carried out war crimes in Afghanistan is expected. General Burr says the allegations are '*extremely serious and deeply troubling*'. Defence Minister Linda Reynolds said Australians would be dismayed by the Report.

Major General Paul Brereton's task was to investigate rumours about these alleged incidents. IGADF's annual report includes 55 separate incidents or issues under inquiry. General Burr said ADF commanders have been working to correct what have been described as '*catastrophic cultural and professional shortfalls*'.

Changing the culture and ethics training in Special Forces are taking place. David Irvine reviewed the reforms that were put in place in 2018. This makes the *sixth* review/report to have been commissioned by the Chief of Army, CDF and now AFP. It is opined that *the values already in place* should be re-examined.

In a study of values across the ADF (2006) the mnemonic 'imPLICIT' was the key and over-riding term. 'imPLICIT' meaning *professionalism; loyalty; innovation; courage; integrity and teamwork*.

RAN followed 'imPLICIT', but wanted its own code *viz* HHCIL *i.e. honour, honesty, courage, integrity, loyalty*.

The submarine service then added '*esprit de corps*'; not strictly a value, but one the submariners wanted.

In respect to SASR, acknowledging Defence's overall 'imPLICIT' mnemonic, they too wanted their own set of values. In a later study (2010) SASR values were given as: *a relentless pursuit of excellence; a classless sense of family; discipline; primacy of operational capability; humility; a sense of humour; loyalty and respect for absent mates*.

If the values referred to above had been followed, then the studies/reports we are now seeing would not be necessary.

October 6

Special Forces will undergo *ethical leadership training* aimed at improving *their spiritual outlook and personal relationships*. These initiatives are part of the cultural reforms being put in place by Defence in advance of what are expected to be damning findings involving Special Forces soldiers.

ADF has introduced a *Special Forces Military Ethics Course*, developed by University of NSW, Australian Graduate School of Management and King's College, London University. The training is focused on improving the ability of Special Forces to make values-based decisions under pressure.

A new *Defence Special Operations Training and Education Centre* and *improvements to special forces management and governance* have also been put in place to deal with *ethical and disciplinary* problems that became obvious during the Afghanistan war.

The initiatives come as General Burr introduces an *Ethics Enhancement Plan* to help soldiers "understand ethical decision making in chaotic, uncertain and violent situations that typify conflict, but are applicable every day".

CDF General Campbell has unveiled a *new set of values* which he said would apply *to all services for the first time*. This statement about a new set of values applying to all three services *viz. "service, courage, respect, integrity and excellence"* is misleading. 'imPLICIT' *i.e. professionalism; loyalty; innovation; courage; integrity and teamwork* was in circulation to ADF personnel prior to 2006.

CDF also said the army's previous code *viz "courage, initiative, respect and teamwork"* had no explicit direction for soldiers to behave ethically. Well, that code didn't, but 'imPLICIT' did. ADF's code (*i.e. 'imPLICIT'*) includes the concept 'integrity', which by definition, subsumes an ethical/moral approach to issues.

October 7

Defence has been producing ethical/moral behaviour guidelines informing/advising members of the defence establishment about a wide range of ethical issues.

October 7

Foreign Minister, Marise Payne, met with foreign ministers in Tokyo from US, Japan and India for a meeting of the *Quadilateral Security Dialogue* (QSD). Japan's new PM, Yoshida Suga, met the foreign ministers. The meeting was reported to be about China. China's Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, intends to visit Japan to meet new Japanese PM. China regards QSD as an 'exclusive clique', but QSD is also a way for both Japan and Australia to temper America's behaviour in the region.

October 9

Former Japanese ambassador to Australia, Sumio Kusaka, has argued for: (i) Australian support for Japan to be admitted to the West's *Five Eyes* intelligence sharing network; and (ii) Taiwan to be included in the TPP trade deal. Japan and Australia must strengthen the regional order by promoting trade, sharing intelligence and working with partners to "find a path for peaceful coexistence with China". Japan and Australia are natural partners and should promote a free and open Indo-Pacific in collaboration with the US, India and ASEAN countries. UK and France should also be included which would be one way of curbing China's ambitions.

October 10-11

Australia, India, Japan and US are now in partnership *viz Quadilateral Security Dialogue* (QSD) with the aim of opposing a China seeking to dominate the Indo-Pacific region.

Singapore's former secretary of foreign ministry, Bilahari Kausikan, said Australia's approach to China has moved from '*extreme complacency*' to '*over-reaction*'. Foreign Secretary Payne met with Singapore PM Lee Hsien Loong, after talks in Japan, emphasising the alignment of Australia, Japan and Singapore.

October 14

Some of Australia's submarines, surface ships and aircraft have been inoperable for more hours than expected. Analysis reveals ADF's helicopters were unavailable for 26% of planned flying hours since July 2016, while RAAF aircraft were available for 21% fewer hours than planned. RAN's ships and submarines were at sea for 6423 fewer days than forecast, about 14% of planned availability, over the same period.

October 16

France's *Naval Group* will announce a \$900m package for local builders with the aim of boosting construction of the 12 *Attack-class* submarines.

October 19

Defence Minister *Reynolds* said: regional partnerships have taken on new significance in an evolving strategic climate. The Minister said it was her job to respond to the world as it is, not as we wish it to be. Australia's vision is closely aligned with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Outlook on the Indo-Pacific and Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific vision'.

October 21

Diplomatic tensions with China could resurface after Australia was invited to take part in *Exercise Malabar 2020* next month. The exercise involves US, Japan, India and now Australia

October 30

The Ombudsman's office has 422 reports of abuse to review. Most occurred years ago. Under the Defence administrative access scheme, ADF personnel can access up to \$45,000 in reparation payments for the most serious forms of abuse. 788 payment recommendations have been made to Defence. Defence had accepted 767 recommendations by June 30, totalling more than \$31.6m. The Royal Commission into *Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* reported in 2017 that abuse of recruits at HMAS *Leeuwin* had been widespread.

November 1-2

RAAF now operates in a contested 'grey-zone' where competing powers use influence and coercion. Air Marshal Mel Hupfield has set out a new strategy defining how RAAF must adapt in carrying out operations in the 'grey-zone. Air Marshal Hupfield said it was necessary to broaden RAAF's strategic aperture to encompass greater utility than merely contributing to high end warfighting. The strategy follows defence objectives that support the nation's interests.

RAAF is planning a new Lead-in-Fighter Training (LIFT) system, costing \$4-5bn, to prepare future aircrew for conversion to fast jet flying. The new system will prepare aircrew for conversion to flying F-35As, F/A-18F Super Hornets and EA-18G Growlers. RAAF Base Tindal will receive a \$1.1bn upgrade. This will involve a major redevelopment of airfield infrastructure to support the operation of large aircraft such as the KC-30A multi-role tanker transport (MRTT) and US Airforce's B-1 and B-52 strategic bombers RAAF's No. 75 squadron is based at Tindal and operates the F/A-18A/B Hornet. The squadron is expected to receive the first of 16 new F-35As in early 2022.

November 1-2

RAN's submarine building program has invited Australian firms to bid, in a competitive process, to supply steering gear systems, weapons handling systems and the main shaft line. Naval Group said least 60% of the value of contracted work would be undertaken in Australia. The first of the 4,900-tonne *Attack class* will be launched in 2030 and delivered to RAN in 2032. The other 11 *Attack class* subs will be constructed at North Osborne, one every two years, with three in build at any one time. The *Collins-class* submarine fleet is expected to undertake a life-of-type extension (LOTE) program starting in 2026

Army is expected to receive 30 *155 mm tracked Self-Propelled Howitzers* (SPH), and 15 *in-theatre re-supply vehicles* made by Hanwha of South Korea. The SPHs, using 'shoot and scoot' tactics, can fire several rounds in under 20 seconds, and then move location.

The Halifax Explosion

The video of the explosion in the port of Beirut on 4 August shows all the effects of a large explosion in shocking detail, especially if watched in slow motion. This explosion was caused by the detonation of some 2,750 tonnes (3,030 short tons) of ammonium nitrate, stored improperly for years and possibly detonated by fireworks (were these the small explosions seen just before the major detonation?). This disaster caused over 200 deaths, over 7,500 injuries and made thousands of people homeless. It is often forgotten that an even greater explosion occurred in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada in December 1917.

On the morning of 6 December the French SS *Mont Blanc* entered Halifax harbour, heading towards an anchorage in Bedford Basin at the end of the harbour. Her cargo consisted of 2300 tons of picric acid (2,4,6 trinitrophenol), 200 tons of TNT (trinitrotoluene), 10 tons of guncotton (nitrocellulose) and a deck cargo of drums of highly inflammable benzol (benzene). In the harbour narrows she met the outgoing SS *Imo*, who – incredibly – was on the wrong (port) side of the harbour. As a collision appeared imminent, both ships had stopped their engines, but the *Imo* struck *Mont Blanc* on the starboard side, rupturing some of the drums of benzine which flooded across the deck, into the hold and down the ship's side. As *Imo* pulled away her bow scraped along *Mont Blanc's* side creating sparks that ignited the benzine and making an explosion only a matter of time.

The response was impressively rapid. The collision took place at 0845 and well before the explosion at 0904, the tug *Stella Maris* and a steam pinnace with a volunteer crew from HMCS *Niobe* were on the scene. The crew of *Mont Blanc* had abandoned ship and the blazing vessel drifted across the harbour and grounded close to a jetty in Richmond on the Halifax side. *Stella Maris* had failed to pull *Mont Blanc* clear, and the crew from *Niobe* were attempting to secure a heavier towing hawser when *Mont Blanc* exploded.



The explosive in the recent Beirut explosion was ammonium nitrate, an agricultural chemical favoured by amateur bomb makers because it is relatively easy to obtain. Based on the heat generated however, it only about 37% as powerful as TNT. The Beirut explosion was the equivalent of just over one kiloton of TNT. The picric acid and guncotton in the Halifax explosion are

both more powerful explosives than TNT and the total explosive cargo was about 2.7 kilotons of TNT – almost three times the power of the Beirut explosion.



The neighbourhood of wooden houses on the Richmond hillside of Halifax were completely destroyed and the nearby naval and commercial dockyards were seriously damaged, but Citadel Hill protected the south end of Halifax. Overturned stoves caused a raging fire in the destroyed wooden buildings, and a blizzard that night completed the misery. The heavy gun from SS *Mont Blanc* was blown more than two miles through the air, and landed in the woods where it still stands. Casualties were very heavy: about 2,000 known dead and another 9,000 injured.

In 1945, when ships were being paid off and de-ammunitioned, an explosion and fire occurred at the naval magazine in Bedford Basin. It was feared that the thousands of depth charges and a large amount of RDX could explode so threatened areas were evacuated – but that is another story.

Roger Buxton

Book Reviewers Wanted

Due to the generosity of Australian and overseas publishers, RUSI – Vic Library finds itself swamped with copies of books that are required to be reviewed. To lighten the load and spread the workload, we are urgently seeking members who are prepared to assist with this task.

It matters not that you have never review a book before – we can provide you with easy-to-follow guidance. As benefactors of their generosity, we have an obligation to the publishers. They are often looking for a review to include in their publicity for the launch of a new title – so timeliness (a reasonably short turnaround time) is expected.

If you feel you can assist, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Please contact the Secretary Bob Hart, on 9282 5918

Chronicle Continued

November 1-2

Known as the AS-9 "*Huntsman*", the total cost is estimated at \$4.5-6.8bn, with a second and third tranche keeping the vehicles in service for the next decade.

Army has 22 *Tiger Armed Reconnaissance Helicopters* (ARH) said to be performing well. Nevertheless, Defence wants to replace them with 29 *AH-64E Apache attack* helicopters. France, Germany and Spain are currently upgrading their Tigers, and intend to keep them in service until the 2040s.

November 8-9

Germany wants to send a navy ship to the Indo-Pacific region for joint exercises with Australia next year. Germany shares the same values and wants to protect the provisions of international law in order to make sure they are adhered to.

November 10

Defence Department said it may take bravery medals from special forces soldiers if it emerges "a person's entitlement to an award may no longer exist". According to Australian and British tradition, a bravery medal would not normally be stripped from a war criminal unless it was awarded for action in which the crime was committed, or if the reported version of events was later found to be falsified. IGADF said it was investigating up to 55 alleged breaches of the laws of war by Australian personnel during the nation's 13-year on-the-ground commitment in Afghanistan. It is expected the report will criticise the warrior culture and command failings of Special Forces.

November 12

Ben Roberts-Smith VC has been ordered to hand over the findings made by a war-crimes inquiry into his conduct in Afghanistan to lawyers acting for the media companies he is suing for defamation. The documents are significant because they confirm Roberts-Smith has been the focus of IGADF's inquiry into war crimes. Roberts-Smith is a 'potentially affected person'. A PAP notice is issued to people who are the subject of an adverse finding or recommendation and is designed to give recipients a chance to respond to allegations.

November 13

A special investigator (expected to be an 'eminent' person) will be appointed to prosecute Australian soldiers for alleged war crimes. Defence is under pressure to address leadership failings that allowed soldiers to commit murder in Afghanistan. The special investigator, with support of federal and state police, will report to the government as he responds to the Brereton inquiry's findings.

November 16

General Campbell will release a summary of the Brereton Report on Thursday, November 19. The report is expected to detail at least 12 alleged war crimes by special forces soldiers in Afghanistan without identifying

any of 10 or more serving and former operators allegedly involved.

Australia and Japan will increase joint military operations, including patrols near disputed islands in the South and East China Sea, under a new defence pact to be progressed by PM Scott Morrison and Japanese PM, Yoshihide Suga this week.

The PM, currently visiting Japan, is foreshadowing an increase in Australia's engagement with one of its core Indo-Pacific and QSD partners. The visit follows Australia's return to India's *Malabar naval exercise* last month after a 13 year hiatus, in a move that reaffirmed the potential of the QSD as an informal military alliance.

Australia will strengthen security ties with Southeast Asian nations following the ASEAN Australia Summit, with the announcement of a \$105m package for military education, cyber resilience and maritime co-operation. PM Morrison also agreed to extend Australia's defence adviser and attache network to all Southeast Asian countries during the teleconference with ASEAN leaders, while also announcing a package of economic and development support.

November 17

Former SAS soldiers say the reputation of the SASR should not be impugned by the behaviour of those who were responsible. They were professional volunteer soldiers who frequently upheld the values of the Australian Army during a 10-year expeditionary campaign in the Middle East, despite the absence of any clear definition of victory.

Kill counts in Afghanistan were accepted by commanders as a sign of success, while warnings over the impact of repeated deployments on soldiers' mental health were ignored. General Campbell will release a summary of the report, which is expected to detail at least 12 alleged war crimes by special forces soldiers, without identifying any of 10 or more serving and former operators allegedly involved.

November 18

PM Scott Morrison and Japanese PM Yoshihide Suga have agreed to in-principle the Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA). Japan and US are now in a relationship similar to NATO. Japan is the only nation with which Australia has a *Special Strategic Partnership*. This is superior to a *Comprehensive Strategic Partnership* (which Australia has with Beijing), and just below a formal military alliance.

November 18

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said: (i) Australia was committed to restoring a working relationship with China. (ii) Both countries have benefited hugely from our growing trade relationship; without this, we both lose. The fact that we have different political systems and different values means we will not always agree. That is not new. But despite our differences, we are committed to maintaining a strong and productive

relationship. We stand ready to engage with the Chinese government in respectful, mutually beneficial dialogue.

November 19

Justice Paul Brereton's 465-page Report is released, but heavily redacted.

The Report has three parts: **Part 1** – The Inquiry which provides background and context. **Part 2** – Incidents and issues of interest which details allegations of wrongdoing and whether they have been substantiated or not. **Part 3** – Strategic, operational, organisational and cultural issues which consider systemic issues.

To illustrate, the section addressing 'culture' (Part 3, page 325) contains the following:

"While many factors contributed to this, they include the dominance of a clique of non-commissioned officers (NCOs) who embraced the 'warrior hero' culture; the promotion of the wrong exemplars; the disempowerment of junior officers, both domestically and on operations; the prolonged use of a small pool of Special Forces personnel to conduct what became conventional operations in Afghanistan to the detriment of their role in irregular and unconventional operations, and to their psychological welfare; the lack of effective operational oversight due to the assignment of Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) under command International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Special Operations Forces; the lack of mission clarity; and perceived dissatisfaction with policies that resulted in the release of captured insurgents; compounded by compartmentalisation of information and misguided loyalty that placed relationships and reputation above truth and morality".

November 20

With reference to the findings of the Afghanistan inquiry, released Thursday, November 19, 2020:

Justice Brereton

(i) found evidence of 23 incidents involving 25 current or former ADF personnel in which 39 Afghans were killed; (ii) condemned a culture of silence that stopped soldiers from speaking out about their comrades' conduct; (iii) expressed sympathy for troop commanders who tried to wrest back control from NCOs; (iv) conducted 510 interviews of 423 witnesses, and reviewed more than 20,000 documents and 25,000 images; (v) 'found no evidence that there was knowledge of, or reckless indifference to, the commission of war crimes, on the part of commanders at troop/platoon, squadron/company or Task Group HQ level, let alone at higher levels such as Commander Task Force 633, Joint Operations Command or Australian Defence HQ'; (vi) said the report has probably not uncovered the full scale of alleged war crimes.

Other comments/recommendations included:

(i) SASR 2 Squadron to be abolished; (ii) medals to be taken from 3000 soldiers; (iii) eight lower ranked

soldiers should have charges waived if they give evidence on those who ordered them to commit war crimes; (iv) those who bear the greatest criminal responsibility or culpability should be pursued over those whose culpability is less; (v) incident reporting was manipulated to avoid oversight by higher command; (vi) integrity in reporting is fundamental for sound command decisions and operational oversight; (vii) a large number of war crimes were hidden as combat casualties in operational reports; (viii) distinguished service awards to commanders at troop, squadron and task group level in respect to Special Operations Task Group Rotations to be reviewed; (ix) Chief of Army Rick Burr to lead cultural reform; (x) specific officers involved in eight incidents to be granted immunity from prosecution if they agree to testify for the Crown; (xi) the inquiry may have been less successful "in breaching the code of silence in 2nd Commando Regiment" than that of the SASR; (xii) lack of knowledge or suspicion over what occurred "does not relieve commanders of all responsibility", noting they indirectly contributed to criminal behaviour by failing to enforce professional standards; (xiii) the ongoing investigation of the degree of knowledge of several senior officers must continue; (xiv) Australia has to adhere to the Laws of Armed Conflict if it is to maintain its moral integrity and authority as a nation; and (xv) what happened in Afghanistan described as the most disgraceful episode in Australia's military history.

November 28-29

PM said he expects senior officers to be held accountable for war crimes identified in the Brereton inquiry, amid concerns top brass will "punish the many for the sake of the few".

The Brereton inquiry found "credible information" that up to 25 serving and former soldiers were involved in alleged war crimes in Afghanistan. It recommended that 19 individuals face criminal investigations.

November 30

CDF General Campbell is examining a list of dozens of officers who led special forces soldiers at the centre of war crimes allegations to determine which commanders should be held accountable and how they will be punished. Those on the list received command medals and other awards, including Orders of Australia, for their leadership of special forces soldiers allegedly involved in the murders of 39 Afghan civilians and prisoners identified in the Brereton war crimes inquiry.

Former SASR commanders and those who held the role of Special Operations Commander Australia (SOCAUST) are likely to come under heavy scrutiny.

December 1

General Campbell has backed away from a pledge to strip meritorious service awards from 3000 Afghanistan veterans to mark their "collective responsibility" for alleged war crimes. No decisions have yet been made with regard to the appropriate options and approaches to implement the more than 140 recommendations.

End.

Book Reviews

This newsletter has 13 Book Reviews. On behalf of members the Editor thanks the reviewers. The Royal United Services Institute of Victoria Library thanks authors and publishers for providing copies for review. If you would like a hard copy of a review, please contact the Secretary.

For Valour

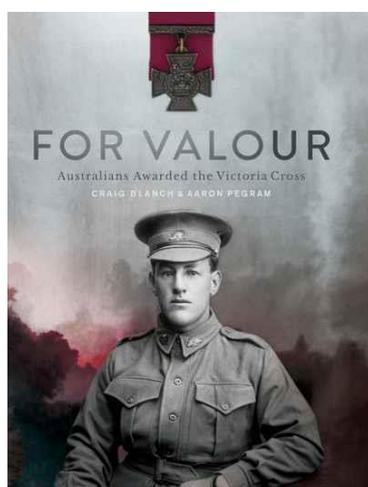
Australians Awarded the Victoria Cross

Aaron Pegram, Craig Blanch

Randwick, NSW: NewSouth Books, 2018

Hardback 512pp \$79.99

Reviewer: Neville Taylor, 1 December 2020



This superbly presented Australian War Memorial publication relates and illustrates the incredible stories of the 100 Australians who, in the presence of the enemy, performed acts of the most conspicuous gallantry, or daring, or pre-eminent acts of valour or self-sacrifice or displayed extreme devotion to duty in

battle have been awarded the Victoria Cross (VC).

The awards are listed in chronological order in the six wars Australians have been awarded the VC. A breakdown of the awards is as follows: Boer War 1899 – 1902 (6 awards); First World War 1914 -18 (64, with 19 being awarded posthumously); North Russia 1918 – 19 (two, one); Second World War 1939 – 45 (20, 10); Vietnam War 1962 – 75 (four, two); and Afghanistan 2001 – (four, one). The Afghanistan awards are for the Victoria Cross for Australia which was instituted in 1991. There are twelve recipients from the British Isles who migrated to Australia listed in an appendix

Digitisation of records has enabled the authors to present a much fuller account of the awardees' actions, and personal lives, photographic and artist colour portraits and battle scenes than have appeared in previous works on our VC winners. Coloured photographs of VC medal arrays frequently indicate that their VC action was not their sole extremely brave action in battle. Much of the material has been sourced from the Australian War Memorial records, collection and archives where Pegram and Blanch are a curator and historian respectively. Their text is accompanied by impeccable research, *Endnotes* and *Index*.

This is an historic document that deserves to grace all library shelves in order that 'we that are left'

remember the sacrifice these brave men made for their comrades in arms and their country.

On its second anniversary of being published, *For Valour* became no longer up-to-date. Today the presentation of a posthumous VC was made, making it Australia's 101st award.

On 1st December 1942 Ordinary Seaman Teddy Sheehan was a loader on the starboard Oerlikon anti-aircraft gun on the corvette HMAS Armidale off Portuguese Timor. After being struck by torpedoes delivered by a Japanese dive bomber, the order was given to abandon ship. Sheehan moved to leave then turned back, and wounded from machine gun fire, strapped himself to the Oerlikon gun seat and continuing firing. The Armidale survivors witnessed him shooting down one of the strafing dive bombers before dying and going down with his ship. The saga continued for days after the sinking, with incredible delays before search efforts were launched. The action saw a 'Mentioned in Despatches' awarded posthumously to Sheehan.

A 30-year battle for adequate recognition for Sheehan came to fruition today on the 78th anniversary of Teddy's action, with the Governor General, General Hurley, presenting the Victoria Cross to Garry Ivory (Sheehan's nephew). Teddy Sheehan has two additional distinctions: that of being the youngest Australian to receive the VC, and the first RAN recipient of the award.

For Gallantry

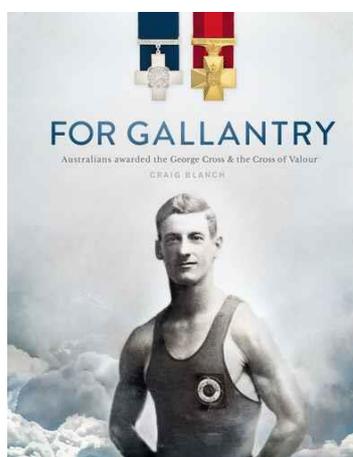
Australians awarded the George Cross & the Cross of Valour

Craig Blanch

Randwick, NSW: NewSouth Books, 2020

Hardback 192pp RRP \$69.99

Reviewer: Neville Taylor, November 2020



Another superb Australian War Memorial (AWM) publication that provides recognition of the amazing acts of gallantry of Australians over the last 100 years. It is the companion to *For Valour* (published in Nov 2018) which relates the incredible stories of the 100 Australians awarded the Victoria Cross for exceptional acts of bravery and self-sacrifice in battle.

The nation's highest non-combat award for bravery was the Imperial George Cross, and now its 1975 Australian Honours and Awards replacement is the

Cross of Valour. *For Gallantry* tells the stories of the 28 Australians awarded these two honours. They 'chose to go the wrong way; towards the gravest of threats rather than to comfort and safety'. The AWM and the Royal Australian Mint have a number of George Crosses in their permanent collections.

The Empire Gallantry Medal was discontinued when the George Cross was created in September 1940. Two surviving holders had their medals exchanged for the George Cross. Likewise the seven surviving holders of the Albert Medal for Lifesaving and Edward Medal for saving life in mines had their medal exchanged for the George Cross in 1971. This made the efforts of Richard Richards, from 1915 to March 1918 to save the lives of members of the Ross Sea Party of the Shackleton Trans-Antarctic Expedition, the earliest Australian George Cross recipient.

The George Cross has been awarded to military members who provided outstanding examples of stoicism and resistance during their long incarceration as prisoners of war, heroism during the Japanese Cowra Breakout in 1944, disarming sea mines and unexploded ordnance during World War II, and the *HMAS Voyager* disaster in 1964. The only surviving George Cross recipient is Michael Pratt, who as an unarmed off-duty police constable, attempted to foil a bank robbery in 1976.

The Cross of Valour has only been awarded five times during its 45-year existence. Its first recipient was Daryl Tree, a farmer, who in 1988 repeatedly used his body to earth 19 000 volts as he flung a young child to safety after a crane had struck overhead electric wires. Other awards have been made for rescuing a child trapped in a stormwater drain after an excessively heavy rainstorm, and rescue efforts at the Sari Club in 2001. To date none has been awarded to a member of the military.

Comprehensive descriptions of the heroic events have been matched with biographical profiles of most recipients, where available, to provide insights into their lives before and after their gallant effort. In excess of a quarter of recipients had the award bestowed posthumously, indicating their sacrifice of self for their fellow man. None of the Cross of Valour awards have been made posthumously, but post-traumatic stress disorder has dogged one recipient.

The work has been divided into three parts: George Cross exchange awards (1915 – 37), Direct George Cross awards (1941 – 76) and the Cross of Valour (1988 – 2002). Excellently illustrated with both black and white and coloured photographs, and meticulously referenced, this is a publication that should grace every Australian public library.

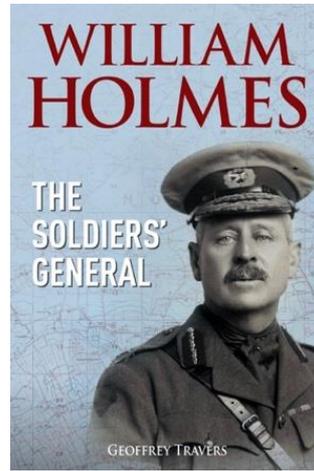
William Holmes

The Soldiers' General

Geoffrey Travers

Newport, NSW: Big Sky Publishing, 2020
Hardback 424pp RRP \$34.99

Reviewer: Mike O'Brien, November 2020



It's marvellous that biographies of Australia's senior commanders in the First World War are now being published. This volume, in the series promoted by the Army History Unit, is the second biography of the ill-fated General Officer Commanding of the 4th Australian Division. William Holmes was killed in action in France while conducting a visit to his front line by the Premier of New South Wales, William Holman. He was the most senior Australian killed in action in that war – he was the antithesis of a 'château general'.

The earlier biography *William Holmes: secretary and soldier: a first biography* (2016) was written by B. H. Travers, the uncle of the present author. Geoffrey Travers is the great grandson of William Holmes. This is indeed a family affair.

You can be certain that a biography sponsored by the Army History Unit is disciplined and accurate and this volume does not depart from that norm. It adds much to the earlier volume.

Holmes had an extensive career in Sydney's water authority and was an enthusiastic citizen soldier. Unlike Monash, he volunteered for the Boer War and served with distinction in the early phases of that conflict. On the outbreak of the First World War he was appointed to command the Australian Naval & Military Expeditionary Force which successfully neutralised the German forces in Rabaul. He was the victim of a poor interface between military forces and their political masters – an event deserving of close study by both such authorities with implications right up to the present day.

After returning from New Britain Holmes was appointed to command the 5th Brigade which he took to Egypt and to Gallipoli in August 1915. He continued this command in France, notably at the Battle of Pozières in 1916. At the end of that year he was promoted to the command of the 4th Division. Throughout he continued his habit of close reconnaissance of the front lines, on one occasion taking over or a sniper's role.

Holmes commanded the division during the very difficult battles at Bullecourt and then moved with it to Messines. While conducting a tour of the area for the Premier of New South Wales (William Holman) he was struck by shrapnel from a German shell, dying soon afterwards.

Holmes was a successful citizen soldier, leader and commander and leader at brigade and divisional level. This book contrasts his leadership style with that of Monash - a discussion of great interest. Would Holmes otherwise have progressed to corps command?

This is a well-written biography that deserves close study by military professionals. General Holmes deserves to be remembered for his significant achievements.

Right Man, Right Place, Worst Time

Commander Eric Feldt His Life and His Coastwatchers

Dr Betty Lee

Boolarong Press 2019

Paperback 330pp RRP 32.99

Reviewer: Neville Taylor, October 2020

We have again been blessed with an impressive work by a descendent of a wartime serviceman. Dr Betty Lee is the grandniece of Eric Feldt, and after reading his *The Coast Watchers* (1946), and despite never meeting him, she developed a great interest in his life.

Peter Feldt migrated from Sweden to Ingham, QLD in

1878, to be joined by his Swedish fiancé some years later. Eric was the eighth of their children, growing up on a cane field that was worked by Pacific Islanders and learning Pacific Islander Pidgin English.

Eric was a member of the inaugural class of 28 at Australia's Royal Naval Midshipman's Course in 1913, the year before the completion of the Naval College in Jervis Bay. He was very successful both academically and in sport and was selected for leadership

positions during his four-year course. In 1917 he was at sea with the British Navy for the last two years of the First World War. With the winding down of the RAN in the post-war years, Eric opted to resign in 1922. Late the following year Eric was appointed an administrative clerk at Rabaul in the New Guinea Territory.

There was little difficulty in being accepted for training as a patrol officer, with his first task being in the Sepik River area to quell fighting. When promoted to Assistant District Officer at Aitape taking the census, tax collecting and hearing court cases were the major tasks. In 1928 he was posted to Salamaua to resurrect a station in poor condition and spent four years in the area. By 1932 Eric found he had lost some of his normal fitness. The following year he married in Brisbane, just after being promoted to District Officer in Madang. After a very severe bout of scrub typhus and malaria, Eric opted to leave the District Services and become Warden of Wau.

The Australian Naval Board established a Coastwatching Organisation around Australia's coast and in adjacent island territories to the north at the end of World War I. Communication with the Territories was by cumbersome AWA teleradios. Rupert Long and John Collins, Naval College classmates of Eric, sought Eric's re-engagement in the Navy in September 1939 to head the Coastwatchers from a new Naval Intelligence Centre in Port Moresby. Embarking on sea and air visits to those manning the outermost posts, Eric, with personal contact and the distribution of the *Coastwatching Guide* to those he recruited, the North East Area network covering over half a million square miles was now manned. The delivery of the final teleradios in August 1940 put the Coastwatchers in the position to provide vital early intelligence on naval and air threats to the Allies. The 'Old Boy' networks

from both Naval College and PNG time had become invaluable in manning and logistics. In May 1941, the Area Combined Headquarters from Port Moresby was moved to Townsville. Eric continued to visit his 'watchers' – in case of invasion, those who were naval officers could be ordered to stay but civilians were told to bury their radios and escape.

The first spotting, on 9 December 1941, was a Japanese aircraft reconnoitring Rabaul. In the ensuing debacle that followed next month, the few civilian and military personnel managing to escape were greatly assisted by the knowledge and communications provided by the coastwatchers. Eric's network enabled vessels necessary for evacuation to be put in place. Eric worked strenuously to have watchers in place along potential enemy approaches, as well as organising their evacuation when their position became untenable. A number of watchers were to pay the ultimate sacrifice as islands were invaded and they were captured and never heard of again. In the ensuing months that saw the Japanese aerial bombardment of Port Moresby and later the naval attempt to capture it via the Coral Sea, early warnings by the embedded coastwatchers were invaluable to the Allied forces.

With the arrival of General MacArthur in April 1942, the Allied Intelligence Bureau was established in Melbourne in July. Eric remained in Townsville, still commanding the Coastwatchers while fulfilling his naval intelligence duties. Many of the coastwatchers opted not to be withdrawn and replaced, thus reducing Eric's ability to staff his office with experienced officers. After visiting Guadalcanal in March 1943, he suffered a heart attack and was hospitalised in Brisbane from April to June, then deemed unfit for active duty. Light duties followed in Brisbane in 1944, then in February 1945 he was appointed Naval Officer in Charge Torokina (west Bougainville). Bad health again ran him down and this led to his discharge to the Retired List in September 1945.

The Coastwatchers numbered almost 400 Caucasians with a matching number of natives. In charge were 90 skilled Coastwatchers, and casualties suffered were 36 Caucasian and 20 natives lost. Following Eric's command, their role changed to meet the demands of the conflict. Coupled with their surveillance task, they became responsible for ridding New Guinea and the Solomon of residual Japanese, with native police and scouts killing in excess of 5 000 and taking over 70 prisoners. They rescued over 300 downed airmen and 280 naval men from sunken ships including one J F Kennedy, but their greatest contribution was in enabling the Allies to gain air supremacy.

Eric was a recipient of an Order of the British Empire in the 1944 New Year's Honours List. Two years later he released a highly-detailed book, *The Coast Watchers*. A memorial lighthouse to the Coastwatchers was unveiled in Madang in August 1959 with Eric in attendance. No doubt his attention to detail and the tireless efforts and concern for those under his command was responsible for his ultimate ill health. A third heart attack in March 1968 finally claimed an outstanding and inspirational leader.

Betty Lee has sensitively treated her biography of Eric Feldt and the work of the Coastwatchers under his command. They have been brought to life as their exploits have been described. A generous number of photographs have been included, as have easy-to-follow maps showing both the Japanese approaches to targets and the location of Coastwatchers along those approaches.

This is a work that has brought so much detail to its readers and is an asset for any military library.

Endell Street

The Women who ran Britain's Trailblazing Military Hospital

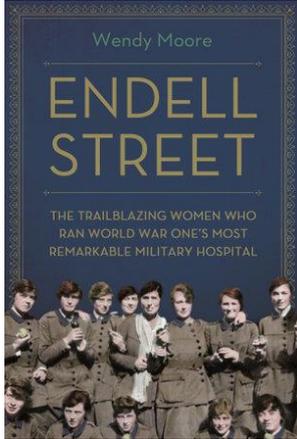
Wendy Moore

London, Allen & Unwin (Atlantic Books), 2020

Hardcover 384pp RRP \$34.99

Reviewer: Joy Cullen, November 2020

Endell Street is a thought-provoking book about the First World War on many levels. In February 2015, Sir Arthur Keogh, Director-General Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC), invited two women doctors, Flora Murray and Louisa Garrett Anderson, to run a 1000-bed military hospital in London, funded by RAMC. This remarkable request occurred at a time when female doctors were barred from serving in the British Army, and experienced difficulties obtaining medical qualifications and employment. Endell Street hospital, dubbed the Suffragettes Hospital, was to become acclaimed as one of the most efficient First World War military hospitals. The two directors, Dr Murray as Chief Administrator and Dr Anderson as Chief



Surgeon, were awarded CBEs in 1917 for their services.

Louisa Garrett Anderson was the daughter of Elizabeth Garret Anderson, the first woman to qualify in Britain as a doctor, founder of the New Hospital for Women in Marylebone, and a teaching staff member, later Dean, of the London School of Medicine for Women (LSMW). Flora Murray, the daughter of a naval commander and Scottish Laird, and Louisa both studied at the LSMW. Louisa subsequently travelled to Paris, Baltimore and Chicago to gain wider clinical experience in surgery, Flora studied anaesthetics. Both women experienced the career obstacles facing women doctors and became friends through their common interest in medicine and suffragette activism. They established a small hospital for children in Harrow Road, West London.

The unique request from Keogh followed the women's determination to serve despite numerous barriers. Murray and Anderson, with the support of the French Red Cross, had opened a hospital in Claridge's Hotel in Paris in October 1915, to care for medical evacuees. As the war escalated and evacuations centred on Boulogne, they opened a second hospital at Wimereux, near Boulogne, that soon obtained the status of an auxiliary military hospital, with food, coal and petrol rations supplied by the army. Senior RAMC officers visited the two French hospitals and sent glowing reports to the War Office.

Moore suggests that Keogh's offer was motivated as much by necessity as liberation – 46 doctors had already lost their lives in the first months of the war. Murray and Anderson did not hesitate, and on 12 May the first patients arrived at the hospital in the refurbished derelict workhouse at Endell Street, Covent Garden. The two directors were joined by fourteen doctors, all graduates of the LSMW, 29 qualified nurses and 80 orderlies, predominantly from middle and upper class backgrounds, and including many Volunteer Aid Detachments; with a few male RAMC orderlies were allocated for heavy duties. They were joined by staff from the two French hospitals that closed as evacuation procedures to England improved. Five Australian women doctors similarly barred from

entry to the Australian Army Medical Corps, and numerous other volunteers from the colonies and the United States, travelled to support the hospital. As the war progressed three auxiliary hospitals were established in large houses in London to provide convalescent care.

Endell Street aimed to provide a bright and comfortable environment, including use of bright quilts in the wards, flowers, a library, practical activities ranging from billiards to needlework, and regular entertainment, taking advantage of the staff's theatre, musical and social contacts. Heavy demands were placed on staff who worked long hours, carried out heavy physical work, and frequently wakened at night to the courtyard bell announcing the arrival of ambulance convoys and an early start to work. Moore makes effective use of letters, diaries, memoirs, newspaper cuttings, and other extant records, as well as Murray's 1920 book about woman army surgeons, to depict life at the hospital for soldiers and staff. Significant phases of the war permeate these formal and informal sources, with graphic descriptions of the grievously mutilated, gassed, and ill patients, and the impressive stamina and commitment of hospital staff. From the chaos at Boulogne to the influenza pandemic, the war unfolds through the eyes of the women and patients. One Australian soldier's light-hearted description of staff as the "What Ho Corps" illustrates the women's ability to maintain the positive 'Endell Street spirit', despite the endless challenges they faced.

The clinical and medical challenges that arrived with each ambulance led not only to long working hours but to the need for the women doctors to upskill for the surgical and medical roles from which they had previously been excluded. Endell Street was in the forefront of medical research as staff participated in trials, including use of X-rays, anaesthetics, electrotherapy, and antiseptic procedures. When Louisa Anderson published the results of the hospital's use of the BIPP method to treat septic wounds in *The Lancet*, she became one of the first women doctors to publish a scientific research paper. The Endell Street doctors were to publish seven research papers during the hospital's life.

As the war progressed Keogh appealed for female doctors to join the RAMC, there was increased acceptance of women doctors in hospitals throughout Britain, and medical schools began to accept women as students. Murray and Anderson continued to canvass for better conditions for female medical staff who paid more tax than their male counterparts, and had no rank, or clothing, transport and accommodation benefits. They also fought to improve the inadequate pay and allowances received by all the women at the hospital, including clerks and cooks.

Following the Armistice on 11 November 1918, the hospital remained frantically busy as ambulance convoys continued to arrive, and there were mixed feelings at the news that Endell Street had been asked to remain open for another year. The second lethal wave of influenza had peaked at the height of the Armistice celebrations and this was to be a difficult period for the hospital. Extra beds had to be supplied to cope with the influx of cases and nurses recruited to replace those who contracted the disease. With no antiviral medicines the death rate was high. Many soldiers, unhappy to be hospitalised after the end of the war, were difficult patients, RAMC orderlies replaced the demobilized orderlies and the Endell Street spirit began to disintegrate. By November 1919 the hospital had closed to patients.

The General Election of 14 December 1918 was the first time that women could vote, a gain that was attributed to the magnificent contribution of women to the war effort. The impressive medical advances by women were not sustained. Most of what they had gained during the war disappeared as men returned to their former status and positions. Drs Murray and Anderson returned to their Children's Hospital.

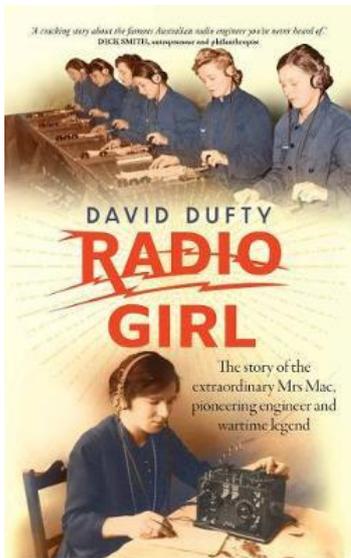
This book provides a unique medical perspective on the history of wartime sacrifice and is a useful source book for the specific contribution of suffragettes who reframed their suffrage campaign as a message of service. The book is meticulously researched, well-documented with endnotes and references, and includes interesting photographs of key personnel.

Radio Girl **The story of the extraordinary Mrs Mac, pioneering engineer and wartime legend**

David Dufty

Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2020.
Paperback 312pp RRP \$29.99

Reviewer: Joy Cullen, November 2020



In 1950, Mrs Florence Violet McKenzie (Mrs Mac) was awarded the OBE for voluntary services to the Women's Emergency Signalling Corps, acknowledging the acclaim in which she was held for her substantial training role in World War II. *Radio Girl* reveals the dizzying trajectory of Mrs Mac's ground-breaking contributions as it traces her complex story from childhood to old age. The book's structural device,

33 short thematic chapters, helps to create a very readable book.

Violet Wallace's childhood interests, playing with her father's tools and bells and buzzers around the house, evolved into her focus on electrical engineering. Violet won a scholarship to Sydney Girls High School, then trained as a mathematics teacher at Sydney Teachers College, later changing direction to enrol in the part-time Diploma of Electrical Engineering at Sydney Technical College. Rejected because she was not an apprentice, Violet circumvented this hurdle by purchasing her brother's failing engineering business in order to meet the College's practical experience requirement. Graduating in 1923, she was the first woman to gain a Diploma in Electrical Engineering at the College.

In 1921 she expanded into a new line of business to focus on essentials of the early wireless era: crystal sets and the MORSE code. At her new *Wireless Shop*, in Sydney's Royal Arcade, Violet had opportunistically picked up on these essentials through customer interests and needs, a characteristic which she displayed with great skill throughout her career. The shop sponsored The Metropolitan Radio Club, an association

for radio enthusiasts that became the largest amateur radio organisation within NSW. Violet then launched the successful magazine, *Wireless Weekly*, to cater for the interests of ordinary people and to provide a voice for amateurs distinct from the commercial interests that were beginning to dominate other publications in the field.

The titular name, *Radio Girl*, originated around the time she established her radio station, 2GA, following the sale of The Wireless Shop and her marriage to electrical engineer Cecil McKenzie, in 1924. In 1928 she opened *Radio Shop*, in Phillip Street, as Mrs V.F. McKenzie. Nationalisation of the broadcasting infrastructure in 1929 changed the local broadcasting scene and Violet received many requests to offer talks and shows from a woman's perspective, from newly nationalised A-Class stations. In 1930, another interest presented – the lack of women involved in electricity and radio. Violet started *The Women's Radio School*, through which she provided correspondence and evening classes, and helped her students to find related employment, a vital goal for young women during the depression years. In 1934 she established the *Electrical Association for Women* through which she arranged lectures, demonstrations and visits with the aim of increasing women's knowledge of safe practices with electricity.

As pre-war nervousness increased, Violet established her own signalling school for women after teaching MORSE code to members of the Women's Flying Club. The Women's Emergency Signalling Corps (WESC) trained women in signalling techniques throughout the War. The establishment of WRANS, in 1941, led to her graduates being appointed to naval positions. Following the attack on Pearl Harbour, the need for signalling skills escalated, and WESC graduates taught courses at the *Woolshed* to men from Australian and Allied forces who needed to upgrade their skills. At a critical phase WESC students were requested to transcribe Japanese naval communications via airwaves and to convey their content to the Code Breaking team in Melbourne. Amazingly, the students did not pay fees and Violet covered the running costs of the *Woolshed*, including home comforts to sustain her students.

This book portrays an unusual woman for her time. While much of her work could be termed voluntary, Violet worked long hours daily at the *Woolshed* to provide a successful training course. The qualities she displayed throughout her life- initiative, creativity, flexibility, far-sightedness, ability to negotiate, people skills, patriotism yet adeptness at manoeuvring around prevarications of politicians and senior officers from the forces; all combined to sustain her unique achievements. Named Mrs MAC by her WESC girls, she was remembered with affection and respect by people from all strands of her life. A fine collection of photos from the Ex-WRANs Association complements her story.

Red Lead

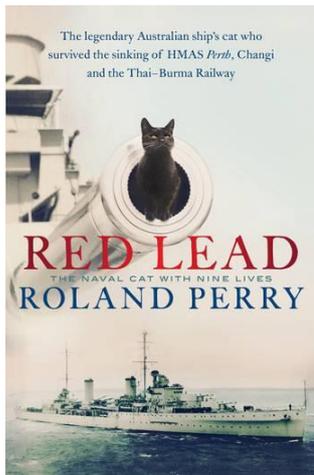
The legendary Australian ship's cat who survived the sinking of HMAS Perth and the Thai-Burma Railway

Roland Perry

Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2020
Paperback 344pp RRP 29.99

Reviewer: Kevan Sanderson, November 2020

Red Lead was the ship's cat on the first HMAS Perth which was sunk in 1942 during the Battle of Sunda Strait. Fewer than half of Perth's crew survived, but Red Lead was amongst them. Roland Perry's historical fiction tells the story of Red Lead and her primary carer, Dan Bolt; from joining HMAS Perth through sinking, capture, imprisonment on Java, in Changi and on the Burma railway. The final chapter summarises their lives after the war until their deaths in 1965 and 1982 respectively. Red Lead was 24 when she died.



Roland Perry's book masquerades as a military history book in which role it misses badly. As a history the book lacks substance. Historical characters and events are described as if from afar with no real depth or analysis. A number of photographs are included, several of which have appeared in other publications. Most of them are of locations, people or ships that are the background, or simply tangential to the story. The photographs add little and one feels they have only been included to camouflage the book as a serious history.

It is first and foremost a fiction. Perry has woven a tale of Red Lead amongst historical events, places and characters, drawing on a wealth of anecdotes, biographies and histories which are listed in the bibliography. Red Lead and Bolt have many adventures but the story, while interesting, lacks excitement and suspense. It is hard to identify or develop interest in the characters, who, with a few exceptions, are caricatures or drawn in scant detail. Disappointingly, there are no pictures of the main characters, including Red Lead herself; the cover does have a picture of a cat, but it is, in fact, not Red Lead.

The story does not flow smoothly because transitions between chapters, and sometimes from section to section within a chapter, are somewhat disjointed. It feels as though the writing has been rushed. Perry's writing style is simple and unsophisticated, which makes the book an easy, albeit not a compelling read. It is easy to pick up, but just as easy to put down.

In conclusion, it is an extraordinary and ultimately heartwarming story set against the well-worn backdrop

of struggle, hardship, misery and brutality that characterised the south-east Asian battleground of the Second World War. I would recommend it for teenagers and young adults or anyone with an interest in animal stories. It may even encourage an interest in serious reading about the period and events of that time and place.

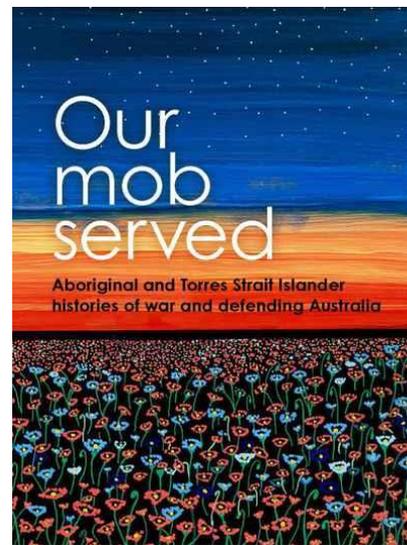
Our Mob Served

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories of War and Defending Australia

Allison Cadzow, Mary Anne Jebb (Eds)

Northcote, Vic: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2019
Paperback 320pp RRP \$39.95

Reviewer: Mike O'Brien, November 2020



This well-presented book provides the stories of at least 180 personnel - all 'First Australians' - who have served in the Australian Defence Force. It is one of the results of an Australia-wide study called 'Serving our country: A history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the defence of Australia' which was led by the well-known Mick Dodson, AM, Australian of the Year in 2009.

The range of conflicts is wide, from the Boer War to the present. What is particularly striking is the large number of family groups with defence participation - it is almost as if the clan entered as a team.

The book was assembled by a comprehensive oral history project. The 180 stories are diverse, but they frequently have a common core. Enlistment was often difficult, though once achieved was met with equality and mateship rather than discrimination. Post-conflict treatment was far less equitable. However, most have a very favourable memory of their defence service.

Enlistment papers do not differentiate between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal personnel so it is sadly near to impossible to ever produce a comprehensive record (let alone a nominal roll) of such service. RUSIV Library has made an effort to assemble as much published material as it can on their significant contribution. This book is a major contribution to this collection and to the knowledge of Aboriginal service.

U-Boat Commander Oskar Kusch

Anatomy of a Nazi-Era Betrayal and Judicial Murder

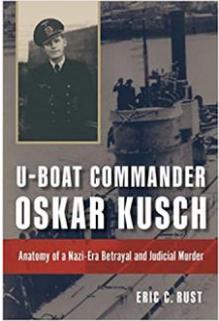
Eric Rust

Annapolis, Maryland, US: Naval Institute Press, 2020

Hardcover 384pp RRP A\$64.25

Reviewer: Roger Buxton, October 2020

In early 1944 *Oberleutnants zur See* Oskar Kusch, the commanding officer of U-154 was charged with "continually and publicly paralysing or eroding the will of the German people to self-assert themselves militarily and undermining the discipline of the German military", and also for listening to Allied radio broadcasts while on patrol. Found guilty by a court martial and refusing to ask for clemency, Oscar Kusch was executed by firing squad in Kiel on 12 May 1944.



This case was the subject of *Die Tragödie des Oberleutnants zur See Oskar Kusch*, by Heinrich Walle, published in 1995, but as this was published only in German, Eric Rust's is the first authoritative study in English.

Oskar Kusch was the son of liberal parents and spent his youth in the *bündisch* movement until it was subsumed by the *Hitlerjugend*. He was accepted as a naval cadet in Crew 37a (his year of entry as a naval cadet) and after service in the cruiser *Emden* he reported to the U-boat Training Command in April 1942. By the late spring of 1943 the U-boats had lost the initiative in the North Atlantic and when Kusch was appointed as commanding officer of U-154 his two patrols were to the South and Central Atlantic.

There is no evidence that Oskar Kusch was other than an effective officer, but as a liberal non-Nazi he held discussions with his officers in which he attempted to educate them to the fallacies and inconsistencies of Nazi doctrine and war aims. In the cramped confines of a Type IX U-boat it was inevitable that these discussions would be overheard by others. These 'unpatriotic' discussions infuriated two of Kusch's officers, especially the fanatical National Socialist Ulrich Abel, and both began to keep diaries recording what they saw as Kusch's disloyalty.

Oskar Kusch had recommended Ulrich Abel for command and when U-154 returned to Lorient in December 1943, Abel left for a training course at the Third U-Boat Training Division in the Baltic. Rather than submitting a report on his commanding officer to the flotilla commander in Lorient, where the matter might have been dealt with administratively, he 'stabbed Kusch in the back' by submitting it to the training division. This inevitably set in motion the *Kriegsmarine* discipline system with Kusch's arrest and court martial at Kiel.

This discipline system was fatally compromised with higher authority letting it be known, before a trial, the desired verdict and penalty. In this case the

prosecutor had only asked for a prison sentence, but the U-boat fleet was under great pressure and Heinrich Hagerman, the chief judge, decided to make an example of Kusch, possibly like Admiral Byng "*pour encourager les autres*" and sentenced him to death.

Eric Rust gives a comprehensive description of Oskar Kusch's early life, his naval service including his two patrols as captain of U-154, his trial and also the post-war trials of Hagerman for crimes against humanity, in which he was found not guilty. The way in which Kusch felt free to criticize National Socialism may be surprising, but the compromised naval justice system and the German post-war reluctance to pursue war crimes after the trials of the major war criminals at Nuremburg should not surprise. Eric Rust provides an insight into U-boat operations in 1943 and what can happen when the justice system becomes compromised and the difference between political and military offences disappears.

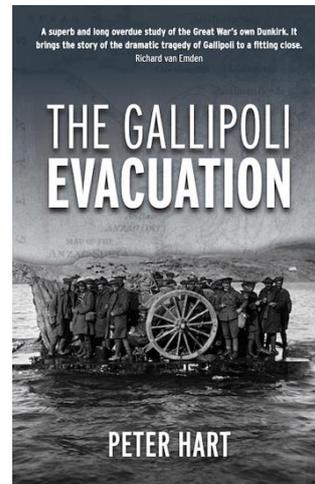
The Gallipoli Evacuation

Peter Hart

Manly, NSW: Living History, 2020

Paperback 312pp RRP\$35.99

Reviewer: Mike O'Brien,
November 2020



If there was triumph for the allies in the Gallipoli campaign, it was the withdrawal. Mat McLachlan (an Australian battlefield guide, now promoted to military historian) has commissioned Peter Hart to assemble this oral history of the evacuation.

Peter Hart was the oral historian for 39 years at the Imperial War Museum, during which time he interviewed thousands of veterans. He has written several books on the First and Second World Wars, including *Gallipoli*, many of which are held in our library.

This is a well-presented book with well-placed quotations by veterans – sadly now solely from written accounts. It gives us a sequential account with the background to the campaign, its stalemate, the change of command, decisions to evacuate, the planning and the phased withdrawals from Anzac and Suvla and then Cape Helles. The maps are clear and helpful. The bibliography reveals the depth of research: while principally through the Imperial War Museum and Australian War Memorial sources, Hart has ranged wider. For example, he quotes one Second Lieutenant Stan Savige – his writing was in a 1932 issue of the RSL magazine *Reveille*.

Hart's book is clear about many of the misconceptions about the campaign, pointing out, for example, that French casualties at Gallipoli were greater than those of Australia and New Zealand combined. He gives due credit to the detailed planning genius of Brudenell White, whose successful approach to evacuation broke with practice and doctrine.

Living History seems to be a new publisher. Perhaps their proof-reader changed the appointment of Principal Military Landing Officer throughout to 'Principle'.

This is a well-balanced account of the First World War's Dunkirk. It should be widely read.

ANZUK

What was it?

Colin Campbell

Canberra: Camp Bell Publishing, 2020
Paperback 278pp RRP \$34.99

Reviewer: Michael O'Brien, October 2020



I wonder, as did the author, how many present-day Australians have ever heard of ANZUK, the Australian, New Zealand and UK force based in Singapore?

I suspect the answer is alarmingly few. Yet the period in which this force existed (1971 -1974) was a most important one in Australian history.

This was a time of nation state political tension (particularly between Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia) and national policy upheaval. Great Britain signalled and implemented its withdrawal from 'East of Suez'. The Australian political lead changed from Liberal

to Labor and a range of defence-related departments were amalgamated as a Defence Department.

This book will redress this lack of knowledge about ANZUK. There is no doubt that most of those interested in this period will have their mind on the Vietnam War. It overshadows the concurrent defence involvement in ANZUK, in the Pacific Islands Regiment and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation.

Campbell traces the movements of the Commonwealth forces from Korea, their move to Malaya, then all the events through to the establishment of the ANZ Force in Singapore. The book goes on to describe how the ANZ Force became the ANZUK Force. He also explains the wider context and nuanced inter-relationships between SAETO, the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) and the Integrated Air (later Area) Defence System.

Pointing out the complexities of a combined and joint force, he examines HQ, Navy, Army, Air Force and the Support group. This is followed by information about the Lifestyle, Families, Sport and Recreation. ANZUK was force of over 3000 Australian service personnel in a total force of over 6000. The author gives a comprehensive analysis of all segments of the organisation, unusually emphasising the importance of its 'less glamorous' supporting elements.

The book then records how and why Australia withdrew from ANZUK and its subsequent collapse before drawing conclusions. He does not touch on – or delicately avoids – the question of whether ANZUK undertook operational planning or the collection of supporting intelligence.

There does not appear to be a definitive history of SEATO or the FPDA: that makes this book even more valuable. This book is a key to the wider political and military understanding of Commonwealth and Australian involvement in a time of forward defence and deserves to be studied in detail.

Campbell notes that while ANZUK was not recognised as a peacekeeping mission, it kept the region's peace. One can but agree!

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We have developed a trial system to allow us to post books or DVDs to our members. We won't charge postage to you, but you will need to pay return postage. We'll supply reusable protective packaging.

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library@rusivic.org.au

This system will operate during the Coronavirus period.

Australians and the First World War

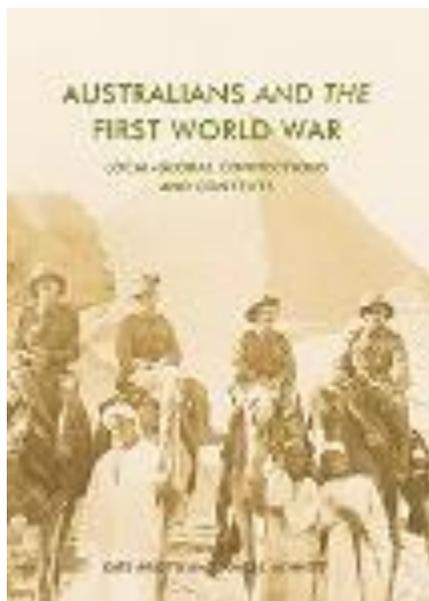
Local-Global Connections and Contexts

Kate Ariotti, James E Bennett (Eds.)

USA, Springer Nature Publishing: (Palgrave Macmillan)
2017

Hardcover 272pp RRP \$169.00

Reviewer: Neville Taylor, September 2020



This book grew out of a conference held at the University of Newcastle in March 2015 called *The First World War: Local, Global and Imperial Perspectives*. The conference brought together scholars working on aspects of First World War history that crossed national boundaries.

Divided into four thematic sections, the first examines the experiences of foreign-born servicemen in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) and their problems centring on the attitude to 'others' in Australian society; and then the AIF's contribution to operational weaponry and tactics development in the British push to victory in 1918.

Part II considers the boundaries of race, culture and gender. Those soldiers who became prisoners of the Turks had no idea of their culture, foods they were served and expected behaviour in captivity. For both sides it was a beneficial learning experience. The second paper examines the circumstances created when Australian nurses in a British Indian hospital in 1918 were accused of behaviour 'most unbecoming' by over-zealous and bigoted superiors. Fortunately sound reasoning was to eventually prevail, but the Inquiry did reinforce the growing conflict between AIF expectations and British stubbornness. Australian women who wished to contribute to the war effort could not enlist in a service, so they gravitated to the Red Cross (formed eight days after war was declared in 1914). Many went overseas and provided invaluable service in numerous theatres, while those still in Australia worked tirelessly to provide amenities for servicemen.

The War at Home examines politics and people in Part III. The implications of events overseas on those at home has been examined in far greater detail by recent historians. The attitude to Irish Australians hardened after the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin, leading to a major fracturing in Australian society, and culminating in the arrest in 1918 of seven accused of links to the radical Irish Republican Brotherhood. Many Aboriginals sought to join the AIF seeking to do 'their bit' for their country and Empire, enjoy regular employment and to better themselves with new skills. Those who managed to overcome 'white Australian' recruitment conditions, had nothing but praise for their treatment as equals by their colleagues in arms. Unfortunately, this all came to an abrupt end upon their discharge, with their banning from RSL clubs, no pension or soldier settlement entitlements. At the outbreak of war, Australia saw their fathers, sons and brothers heading off to a theatre of war in a theatre few were familiar. As the demand for recruits forced modification of how Australian society managed its agriculture and industry whilst supporting the need for a growing need for materiel, there was a transition towards total community involvement.

Part IV considers the war's cultural legacies in terms of remembrance and cultural representation. The rejection or confirmation of a British Empire approach to the war fluctuated as countries established their own recollection of various campaigns in the period between the two wars. Few could list all the nations (of both sides) with troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1915. The involvement of Australian troops on the Western Front, and more particularly in the Sinai, do not loom as large in most peoples' minds as the 'ANZAC at Gallipoli' campaign when the First World War is mentioned. With the flurry of writings and TV documentaries as the centenary of the 1915 Gallipoli landing was observed, the opportunity has arisen for a revision of attitude that war only involves those actually involved in combat, and a move to realize that one's country pays a considerable price as well.

Being academic papers, there is plethora of notation pertaining to original sources, with a very lengthy *Bibliography* and comprehensive *Index* included.

An excellent work embracing the majority of aspects that affected Australian society both during and immediately following the First World War.

Donations to your Library Fund are Tax Deductible

Help to maintain the Institute's Library as the best collection in Victoria on defence and military related subjects by donating to your RUSI VIC Library Fund. The RUSI VIC Library Fund is a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) approved by the Australian Taxation Office, and monetary gifts to the Fund over \$2 are tax deductible by the donor.

Please make cheques to the 'RUSI VIC Inc Library Fund'. Receipts will be provided.

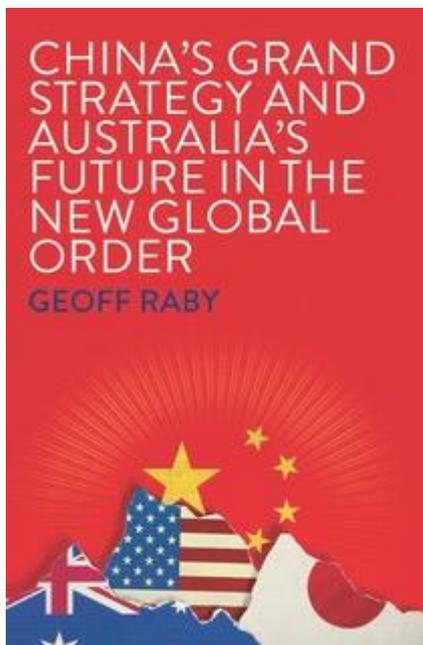
China's Grand Strategy and Australia's Future in the New Global Order

Geoff Raby

Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 2020

Paperback 232pp RRP \$34.99

Reviewer: Bruce Brown, October 2020



Few people would challenge the view that Australia's relationship with China has become the dominant issue influencing its current diplomatic, defence and economic policy development. The perception that China's expanding interests in the Indo-Pacific region challenge Australia's interests has given rise to books, articles and media discussion contesting the way Australia should frame its foreign policy response. In 2020 the focus on China became even sharper with the COVID-19 pandemic attributed to an outbreak located in China's Wuhan province. Criticism of the Chinese government by Australian politicians led to a diplomatic and trade spat between Australian and Chinese authorities and subsequent commentary on the way the relationship could be repaired.

Arguments over the Australia-China relationship have ranged from the need to encourage closer ties with China, to a view that Australia's democratic values and attitude to human rights are at odds with those of a Chinese government seeking to dominate the world through whatever means it has at its disposal. In 2018 Clive Hamilton's provocative book *'Silent Invasion: China's influence in Australia'* contended that the Chinese Communist Party and Australian democracy are on a collision course and that the Chinese government is intent on buying influence within Australia to pursue its goals. On page 132 he referred to Geoff Raby, a former Australian ambassador to China, as lamenting 'the influence of the defence/security establishment which . . . was placing too much emphasis on 'values' rather than 'economics'.

Two years on, Raby has provided his own up-to-date, informative and very readable perspective on the issue. His vast experience in a number of senior positions in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade culminating in his role as Australian Ambassador to China from 2007 to 2011. He writes, not as an apologist for China's often truculent behaviour, but as an experienced observer of the forces shaping China's attitudes and behaviour. As he writes on page 17 in his *Introduction*

This book tries to understand how China sees the world, its security and threats, and more importantly the constraints on its actions and how it seeks to overcome these. It also tries to understand how Chinese leaders want to shape the global order so as to advance their country's interests as defined by the party-state.

Raby's academic background is that of an economist, but he also provides valuable insights into the complex nature of power in international relations. This includes a discussion of the origins of China's Belt and Roads Initiative as well as the role of Soft Power as distinct from Sharp Power in enhancing a state's national interest.

Raby's final chapter includes a hypothetical scenario without the actual names of particular nation states which provides clarity in the way competing interests and power realities can be discussed. His final observation on page 193 cautions Australia to face economic realities in the post-Covid era

Economically, Australia is inextricably tied to China unless Australians are prepared to accept a big cut in their living standards. Australian foreign and strategic policy needs to be reconfigured to reflect fully this reality.

Overall, this is a fine, well-sourced and accessible volume for both the academic and general reader.

Postponement Update - MHHV Conference

The Bloody Beachheads:

The Battles of Gona, Buna and Sanananda

One-Day Conference Saturday 20 March 2021

RHSV, 239 A'Beckett St, Melbourne, 3000

Keynote Speaker

Dr Peter Brune – Author of 'A Bastard of a Place'

Register at www.mhhv.org.au



MILITARY HISTORY AND
HERITAGE VICTORIA INC.



Library Notes:

Library is now half staffed with 3 volunteers, including the Secretary and President, attending on Mondays and Thursdays.

As mentioned in the last report we have now received some large donations of books. Most notably many books in mint condition from the estate of an Australian Naval officer. In the last six months we have catalogued more than 800 items, mostly books. Some of the items are rare and valuable.

As a result of replacement of some of our stock with better examples we now have trolleys overflowing with duplicates for disposal. We will hold sales days in the New Year, these have been quite popular with Barracks personnel in the past. Many of these books are in particularly good condition and a bargain at the prices we will be asking. Members are encouraged to visit and buy! Inevitably we will have to bin the older and more commonly available books as we run out of space. We hate doing that.

Our service provider has a problem with their system, and we are unable to upload to the catalogue on the internet. This means that the 800 plus items we have recently catalogued are not yet visible on thecollectingbug.com/rusivictoria/ or the National library site – TROVE. Realistically it will probably be towards the end of January before the problem is fixed, we live in hope.

We wish all members a Happy Christmas and New Year and hope to see you at our lunchtime talks and the library next year.

Brian Surtees

Hon Librarian

New Acquisitions (since October 2020)

Books reviewed in this *Newsletter* have not been included

Title	Author(s)	Subject
<i>The Korean Kid</i>	Rochelle Nicholls	A young Australian pilot's baptism of fire in the jet fighter age
<i>You Shouldn't Have Joined</i>	Sir Peter Cosgrove	A memoir
<i>Bay of Pigs</i>	Phil Carradice	CIA's Cuban Disaster, April 1961
<i>Staring at God</i>	Simon Heffer	Britain in the Great War
<i>Missing</i>	Richard van Emden	The Need for Closure after the Great War
<i>The Long Shadow</i>	Peter Yule	Australia's Vietnam Veterans since the War
<i>Under Beijing's Shadow</i>	Murray Hiebert	Southeast Asia's China Challenge