

**THE BOER WAR:
ARMY, NATION AND EMPIRE**

**TOMMY CORNSTALK:
A SOLDIER'S IMPRESSION OF THE WAR**
Peter Burness

Tommy Cornstalk, by JHM Abbott, was first published in June 1902. The author described it as 'being some account of the less notable features of the South African War from the point of view of the Australian ranks'. In its time, it was quite widely read as an historical novel.

I believe that *Tommy Cornstalk* is a valuable account of the Australian Boer War experience. This value is enhanced when Abbott's background, and the context within which he wrote it, is understood. Accounts in the book are based on real incidents and the observations are derived from actual events.

The author of *Tommy Cornstalk*, John Henry Macartney Abbott, was born on Boxing Day 1874 at a place called Haydonton in New South Wales. His father was Sir Joseph Abbott, a prominent solicitor and eventually a heavyweight in the rough and tumble of late nineteenth century New South Wales parliament. 'Jack' was just six years old, and had a younger brother and sister, when his mother, Matilda Elizabeth, died. His father remarried three years later. Another son and three daughters were born from that union.¹

When he was a young boy, Abbott saw the first Australian troops go off to war. He was thrilled by the spectacle. He was ten years old when the New South Wales Contingent marched through Sydney, amid wild crowds, to board the troopships carrying them to the Sudan in March 1885. Much later, he was in his seventies when he wrote about it.² He, his brother and his sister, had a good vantage point for the parade since their father was a government minister. The recollection, he said, was one of the most important impressions of his early childhood.

Like his father, and other male family members, Abbott was educated at King's School, Parramatta. He was a member of the First XV for two years, and was the School Vice-Captain in 1893.³ Later he attended the University of Sydney. I suspect that his decision to abandon further studies, and the prospect of a professional career, was a disappointment for his father. Anyway, we know that he chose to do rural work, going bush, and working on some family properties.

Physically strong and robust he had little trouble in adapting to the rugged outdoor life. He seems to have been content to live rough in the bush, and to mix with the stockmen and station-hands. He spoke like a bushman; for the rest of his life his speech was described as often 'slovenly colloquial'. Even in these early years, his lifetime burden, the 'demon drink', took an early toll. He was also cursed with a volatile temper. It is said that he suffered 'a mental breakdown' while still in his twenties.

Intelligent and well-educated, Abbott enjoyed writing, and eventually developed this into a career. In 1897 his first literary contribution, a poem, 'Lord, Think of the Lambs', was published in the *Bulletin*.⁴

Abbott saw active service in the early stages of the Boer War. His unit was raised from men already serving in the pre-war volunteers, so we can presume that he had some military training before going to South Africa. However, it may not have been much. We find that, although his family background was more like that of some of the officers in his regiment, he was a trooper when he sailed for South Africa.

It is significant that he served in the 1st Australian Horse Regiment. This was a part-time, citizen cavalry regiment raised in 1897 by Kenneth Mackay, a grazier and member of parliament. Mackay would have known Abbott's father. The regiment was formed in the New South Wales country districts and from its beginning had troops in the Scone and Belltrees districts around where the Abbotts had properties. Jack was with a group of men who came down from Scone to go into camp in Sydney before finally embarking for the war on 17 January 1900.⁵

The 1st Australian Horse did not go to South Africa as a whole regiment. Instead it called for volunteers from among its officers and other ranks to provide a separate 'service squadron' for the war. It was a small unit; less than 150 men. However these troops arrived in South Africa in the early stages of the fighting and, with a sister squadron from the New South Wales Lancers, became a part of the British Cavalry Division, and took part in many important actions. The early contingents from the Australian colonies were composed of men already serving in the forces; very soon appeals went out for civilians in the towns and on the farms to join newly raised regiments. Some from the 1st Australian Horse, who had been unable to get away with the service squadron, joined the later units. Ultimately the regiment supplied more men for the war than any other of the pre-war New South Wales regiments. It also suffered the highest number of fatalities.

Jack Abbott spent ten months at the war, mostly with the Australian Horse, before he was invalided home. Less than a year later Sir Joseph Abbott died in 1901. He had been ill for a long time and his passing came as no shock to the family. Jack's uncle, William, became the family patriarch. As proud as his uncle was of Jack's acclaim following the publication of *Tommy Cornstalk* in 1902, he held great concerns for Jack because of his drinking and bohemian lifestyle. Uncle William's distrust of his financial management seems apparent in his will; he left large sums to his brother's sons, except Jack who received only the interest on an investment. After his uncle's death in 1924, this provided Abbott with some limited regular income, although it seems that he was not entrusted with a lump sum.⁶

The artist and writer, Norman Lindsay, got to know Abbott sometime before the First World War. He described him:

Physically, he was big man, with a finely built strong body, and a rather long face, and all his features were good—a straight nose, well-cut lips, and a fine brow, but with that extension in the length of the jawbone which indicates pugnacity and obstinacy when aroused to action. In youth he must have been extremely handsome. Little John Dalley, five foot odd, who saw the embarkation march of the contingents for the Boer War, singled out Abbott as one of the finest-looking men he had ever seen. In uniform, trained to the minute, and mounted on a fine troop-horse, he must have set amorous ardours twitching in every girl who saw him passing out of her young life forever.⁷

Abbott's war service obviously had a profound effect on him. In later life he was proud to be an old soldier, and often mentioned the fact. He was a long time member of the South African Soldiers' Association of New South Wales. As a veteran-author he contributed the entry on the South African War to *The Australian Encyclopaedia*.⁸ He retained an attachment to, and performed a similar role for, his old school.

Abbott's account of war service. *Tommy Cornstalk*, is one of the earliest examples of Australian war literature. It was well received, and brought him some small fame. The success of the book encouraged him to turn to freelance writing. He went to London soon after the war, where he published another book, in 1903, titled *Plain and Veldt*, which dealt further in part with South Africa. *An Outlander in England*, and *Letters from Queer Street*, followed in 1905 and 1908.

Letters from Queer Street has been described as semi-autobiographical; in fact, I would suggest that all of his early books are. It tells of the hardships of living rough and broke in London. It is about the sad struggle to become established as a writer, and hints at the dark and wild side in Abbott's nature.

Abbott's time in London was not all bad. He did find work, and wrote for the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Spectator*, and other journals. He also had books published. By 1909 he was back in Australia, living in Sydney. Evidently this was about the time that Norman Lindsay met him. Lindsay provides a brief description that gives a glimpse of the nature of the man. Abbott was becoming involved in writing Australian historical novels, and Lindsay was interested in doing illustrations for him. He wrote:

I suggested that we collaborate on a novel of the period as told by a sergeant of the Rum Corps, which he was to write and I was to illustrate, and I handed over to him my New South Wales 'Historical Records', and a considerable number of works dealing with that period, many of them rare editions and difficult to obtain. That, I may add, was the last I ever saw of them. He did start on the novel, and wrote a couple of chapters. He introduced me to his landlady as his 'partner', which was an onerous election, for she began sending me accounts for his upkeep. I began to find that his bouts of going on the booze cancelled out any pleasure I had in his spells of sobriety. And he never finished the novel.⁹

Despite this, Lindsay saw a great deal more of Abbott during their lifetimes. I need only to sketch the outline of Jack Abbott's later career, before we return to the subject of his Boer War service.

Over the next forty years Abbott wrote more books, together with hundreds of articles, series, and serials, which were published in the *Bulletin*, *The Lone Hand*, *Truth*, and *World's News* and other journals. Most of his stories were based on early Australian pioneers and colonial history. Despite the volume of his writing, he was often in financial trouble, and he was declared bankrupt in 1923.

Abbott was over 50 when he married Katherina ('Rina') Wallace, herself an author, in Sydney, in 1926. In 1942 he was awarded a Commonwealth Literary Fund fellowship. However, by 1948 ill health had stopped his writing. He was eventually admitted to Rydalmere Mental Hospital where he died on 12 August 1953. He was buried in the Anglican section of Rookwood Cemetery.¹⁰

My own appreciation of *Tommy Cornstalk* is largely derived from two incidents. I have long had an interest in the history of the 1st Australian Horse Regiment. In my research I found that *Tommy Cornstalk* was a rare and very welcome account of the unit's service in the Boer War from a soldier among the regiment's ranks. The second occasion that I came to value this book was in more recent years when I was working on the development of the Memorial's Boer War gallery. For that exhibition, the staff decided to include quotes from soldiers' experiences, particularly as they related to the various types of objects that we were exhibiting. Abbott's descriptions of daily life provided us with a valuable source.

In the preface of *Tommy Cornstalk*, Abbott says: 'In these pages the author has striven to show other Australians ... what some phases of campaigning were like, as viewed from the standpoint of the Australian ranks, and has occasionally ventured to say, as an Australian, how things have impressed him'. The book's first chapter goes on to explain the title. 'Tommy', of course is the generic name for a British soldier, while 'Cornstalk' is a New South Welshman.

Abbott describes the 'Cornstalk':

So Tommy Cornstalk is generally a long-limbed fellow, with a drawling twang, to whom anything in the nature of sport appeals most strongly ...

The Bushman—the dweller in the country as opposed to the town-abiding folk—the real Cornstalk, is, to all practical purposes, of the same kind as the Boer ... His soldiering is mainly of the present. The only discipline he really knows is the 'discipline of enthusiasm'. He may have made many sacrifices for his volunteering. He may have been accustomed to ride miles to his parades. His shooting may have cost him time and money ... [but u]ntil he has signed his attestation paper, almost until he has embarked upon the troopship, he has never thoroughly been 'under the whip!' ...

And, at first, he does not take altogether kindly to it. He has been a free man ... He may have been to school with some of his officers, may know them intimately in civil life. It is even possible that, in his own district, he may occupy a social position above that of his officer ... Tommy Cornstalk (is) ashamed to be seen walking. He is essentially a horseman—and generally a horsey man ... In Australia the possession of a horse carries with it something of a guarantee of respectability and solvency. A man who cannot read is far less to be pitied than one who cannot ride.¹¹

Compare these extracts from Abbott's first chapter, with the following from Gullett's volume of the *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-18*, describing the lighthorsemen. The language is similar.

They began their campaigning strong in the first essential quality of mounted soldiery; they instinctively understood and loved their horses. They were self-respecting men, accustomed to hard-working, independent lives. Like all citizen soldiers, they found rigid discipline irksome, but to all the essentials in that discipline their obedience was instant and absolute ... So far as a distinctive type has been evolved, it is to be found among men from the country districts, where there is a preponderance of young men long of limb and feature, spare of flesh, easy and almost tired in bearing, and with a singular native grace of posture.¹²

Abbott says that 'most of the rank and file of the troops who went to South Africa from Australia were of the Bush'. Here is an early expression of the belief that the Bushman was a natural soldier. This idea that found support, but less substantiation, in the later Anzac legend.

While the Australians may have shown an adaptation to the conditions on the veldt, and proved themselves resourceful and useful troops, particularly in scouting and such work, talk of being natural soldiers can be easily exaggerated. To be fully effective, soldiers need good leadership, discipline, training, equipment, and experience. Abbott's unit's pre-war training may have helped them, but they would also have had to learn on the job very quickly. The greatest deficiency among the Australian units was often the lack of military experience among the young officers; many troop leaders had little more service than their troopers.

To what extent was Abbott one of his Tommy Cornstalks? Quite a lot, I suppose. Later, he lived most of his life in the city. Certainly, as a young man, he was probably more representative of the Australian soldier in South Africa than of the later men of the AIF overall where the representation was drawn far more widely and from a mainly urban society. On the other hand, can anyone who maintains a meticulous diary, is a keen observer, a sensitive and gifted writer, or writes a definitive personal account of his war service, be truly representative of the ordinary mass he tries to represent?

Clearly, while on active service, Abbott was a good and intelligent soldier. In South Africa he was promoted to corporal, and was then selected for a temporary commission in the British Army. He was transferred to the Royal Field Artillery as a second lieutenant some time about August 1900. However, shortly after this he became ill. Sickness, particularly typhoid, usually took a toll on most men. He was sent to hospital before being invalided home.

Abbott was not out of place among the men of the squadron he was with. His age and occupation was quite typical of the rest of his squadron. In his other book, *Plain and Veldt*, which I include in this consideration, Abbott describes the military camp in Sydney before the troops embarked for the war. It seems to be based directly on his experience. We can compare it with what we know of the composition of his unit. Abbott wrote:

There were squatters, jackeroos, shopmen, policemen, bank-clerks, loafers. Gentleman and cad shared their brown blankets. Wealthy men borrowed 'fills' of tobacco from men who were seeking to evade their creditors. Policemen rubbed shoulders with thieves. Boundary riders fraternised with sheep-stealers. There was one in a certain tent who had been a priest, and another who was a baronet. It was not so much patriotism, as a longing for adventure and excitement, which possessed most of those who filled the camp and hung about the riflerange all day.¹³

Certainly these men could be found in his Australian Horse squadron—although I would not like to try to identify the thief, and I do not know about a baronet.

Although there were fewer than 120 men in camp with Abbott's service squadron, the unit contained a good share of remarkable, and of ordinary, men. For example, there were two troopers with interesting connections: Herbert Bridges, was a dealer from Moss Vale. His brother, William Throsby Bridges, was a regular soldier who would become famous as the commander of the 1st Australian Division AIF; and died at Gallipoli. Then there was Walter Legge who had been studying for the priesthood at Mary's Mount, Goulburn (could this be the priest?), before he joined up for the war. His brother was also a professional officer, and another to command an AIF division in the First World War. He was Lieutenant- General Legge, whose appointments included Chief of the General Staff.

There were others in the squadron who would make a mark of their own. Trooper Donald Cameron, an earnest young stockman in the Belltrees troop, would one day lead the 12th Light Horse in their charge at Beersheba. His cousin, William, also serving, would become the local member for Scone in the New South Wales parliament. Another who came in from Scone with Abbott was Trooper Cecil Granville. He would command the 1st Light Horse Regiment in the First World War. Their sergeant, Charles Hargrave, would be mentioned in Lord Roberts' final Boer War despatch. Hedley Kirkpatrick, like Abbott, was commissioned in the British Army in the field. He became an officer in the 6th Dragoon Guards, and was awarded the Distinguished Service Order. And, there were railwaymen, an Aboriginal, station-hands, and farmers. A policeman is not hard to find: Trooper Henry See had been one.

Abbott's background fitted him comfortably among these men. However his birth and education may have been more like those of his officers. There is some evidence of this in the dedication of *Tommy Cornstalk*. The book is dedicated to the memory of 'WRH—killed in action at Diamond Hill, June 12, 1900'. It is a simple research task to discover that this must refer to Lieutenant William Rupert Harriott who was killed serving with the New South Wales Mounted Rifles. He was 23 years old—possibly a boyhood friend. Abbott's second book, *Plain and Veldt* was dedicated to 'Bushmen and Bushwomen'.

To what extent was Abbott's own unit representative of the Australian contribution overall is a more difficult question. The 1st Australian Horse had been raised in Australia before the war and these men had some level of military skill and training. It was also a Volunteer unit (it became Partially-Paid in 1900), made up of enthusiastic, unpaid, part-time soldiers. It was comprised of a particular cross-section of male society that may not necessarily have been the same as the men who responded to the general call for enlistments for war service. It was also a cavalry unit. This meant that the men were equipped with sword and carbine, and trained to fight from horseback, and for the charge. Almost all of the other Australian regiments in South Africa served in the mounted rifles role.

Tommy Cornstalk was not intended as a direct historical narrative. In the preface Abbott explains that the two 'Battle' chapters are not meant to represent any particular engagement, but is rather a kind of composite portrait of half a dozen or more.

Despite this, the descriptions are valuable in revealing the soldiers' general experiences and their feelings, such as the frustration in trying to find and engage the Boers. He writes: 'We march, and march, and march day after day, week after week, and we never come to hand-grips with our wily foe. Will they ever stand and fight us?'¹⁴

When a battle does commence, the cavalrymen obey orders, and manoeuvre, rarely knowing what is actually happening, or where the enemy is. There are a couple of descriptions in these chapters that locate the action as being based, in part, on an experience at Sanna's Post, outside Bloemfontein, and also a later action fought outside of Johannesburg. These were some of the actions in which Abbott took part, and he presents them as a telescoped single battle. In the story, the day of the battle commences much like any other:

They were strange figures that huddled amongst the rocks. Unshaven, dirty, wolfish faces looked grimly out from woollen caps and mufflers as the tired men sat in their blue-black overcoats, with the great collars sticking up about their ears, carbines resting across knees, the thin rick of disreputable pipes tingeing the clear air. We gathered up haversacks and water-bottles, and wended our weak way down the slope to where the poor limp horses and the profane horse-holders hung their heads and cursed the cold night respectively.¹⁵

Histories tell us that on 29 March 1900, the Cavalry Division encountered the enemy near Karee Siding. Early in the afternoon the scouts drew fire, and the regiment in which the Australian Horse squadron was serving was sent to reinforce a flank. Feeling safe, because they had not drawn any fire, the Australian officers moved their troops down in close order to cross a creek. Suddenly a shell landed amongst them, followed by Pom-Pom fire. The first shell burst in front of Lieutenant Wilkinson's troop and Troopers Martin, Wessell, and Bonner, and their horses, all crashed down. John Bonner was killed outright, while Martin was wounded in the leg, and Wessell in the arm.

This is how Abbott described the moment:

In the flash and roar of the bursting shell, you see the stricken man throw out his arms. As the horse rears backward he comes to the ground clear of him, and lies spread-eagled with limbs outstretched, and blackened, bleeding face staring dumbly into the smiling heavens.

God!—it was sudden. His brother is beside him, lifting a white, horror-stricken face, as he holds the battered head upon his knees.

'Come on, you fellows; never mind that man,' cries the troop-leader, trotting back to where you pause like a crowd at a street accident. You ride past the dead man. It makes you feel bad inside, but wild to rush the fifteen-pounder on the second ridge which did the work.¹⁶

Later that day the Boers slipped away towards Brandfort. The British infantry occupied the abandoned positions, and the cavalry rode back to their bivouac. Shortly after arriving back to camp the ambulance brought in Bonner's body wrapped in his green regimental greatcoat. He was buried that evening.¹⁷

It is the quality of his observations, and descriptions, of what are ordinary moments, that makes Abbott's work unique among the Australian writers of that war. Consider his description of a typical morning scene in a camp out on the South African veldt:

Already the cooks are astir. They are breaking up biscuit-boxes for fuel, and kindling their fires round the piled up 'dixies'.

The world seems very still, and lifeless, and cold. As the day becomes more and more daylike, the long dry grass shines white with frost, and the huddled heaps of blankets are grey and stiff with it.

The heaps on the ground stir, and roll. Strange figures in woollen nightcaps emerge from them slowly, and, one by one casting off their coverings, sit up, blinking and sleepy-eyed. They rise to their feet, full dressed, and stretch themselves. A hasty shake and the buckling on of spurs is the only toilet. A sergeant comes striding down his troop, inquiring sarcastically whether the remaining heaps of blankets would like cups of tea brought to them. Corporals move about kicking up the sluggards. Slowly and stiffly man after man staggers, half-awake, to his horse, and commences to rub him down with more or less energy. Blankets are folded, white and wet still, and put on the horses' backs to serve as saddle-cloths. Then the bare saddles are girthed on, carbines struck into 'buckets', and swords slipped into their 'frogs'. Where the heaps lay are only the scanty domestic utensils—men's tins and meat cans—haversacks and bandoliers.

So you mount your feeble steed, already weighed down by a load as great as yourself, and lurch along to where your troop is forming up in its squadron and regiment beside other squadrons and regiments. The bivouac-ground is deserted save by the inevitable laggards or men with sick horses who must follow slowly. Nearly everyone is smoking.

Now you are off – the horses' legs swish-swishing through the long grass; the mess-tins rattling against the carbine-butts; bits jingling musically; the bright sun just peeping over the edge of the world on your right hand; white puffs of tobacco smoke drifting up into the clear air. The veldt is turning to burnished gold.¹⁸

Equally well described are some significant events. Take for example, the period following the British Army's triumphal entry into the Boer capital (Orange Free State), Bloemfontein. This victory was followed by an epidemic of enteric. It is a reminder that disease was the constant enemy of the Victorian soldier. Abbott wrote:

One remembers too well that awful period of waiting at Bloemfontein whilst the army rotted inactive, and the little cemetery under the old fort filled and overflowed; when officer, and comrade, and inferior went down alike before the sickle of the grim reaper—enteric. There is too sad a memory of the delirious, dying men who babbled, in the close wards, of far-off places where there were peace and love. There is no forgetting the carts that rumbled through the streets loaded with those stiff, blanket-shrouded shapes, which had been vigorous men—the dwindling squadrons, the crowded sick-tents, the unfed, unwashed, unhappy men who filled them, will never cease to linger in one's memory.¹⁹

The Australians did good work in South Africa. It is interesting to note that Abbott's little squadron of part-time bush cavalry was attached to the famous British regular cavalry regiment, the 2nd Dragoons, The Royal Scots Greys, during its service with the Cavalry Division. *The Historical Records of The Royal Scots Greys* described the Australian Horse as a 'fine squadron... [which] did excellent work on all occasions'.²⁰ Abbott also described the association:

Isn't it something for a one-horse volunteer crowd like you to be a squadron of such a regiment as the one you are with—a regiment which was fighting before there was an Australia, a regiment which saw Waterloo and Balaclava? And another thing— isn't it something to have shown a regiment like that how to scout, how to take cover, how to ride, how to shoot, how, in short, to play this particular game as it should be played?²¹

Even allowing for youthful confidence and enthusiasm, and exaggeration, the passage gives an insight into how the Australians saw themselves. Whether or not Abbott's squadron was as good, or better, than the British cavalry is open to debate. However it should at least be

acknowledged that these men had only a fraction of the regulars' training and military experience. In no other war have Australian troops been expected to transform themselves from civilians to soldiers engaging the enemy in such short time. Of the hardships of mounted service, Abbott wrote:

We have dug latrines, and buried mules, and made graves. We are crawling with vermin. We are tired, and stiff, and hungry.

Why did we ever come? This isn't charging into battle. This isn't racing through the foe. This isn't getting the Victoria Cross. Where is all the 'pomp and circumstance of war'? Where are the bands and the martial music to play us into action? Where are the clouds of drifting smoke we've read about? Where's that 'thin red line' and all those gorgeous uniforms that used to make war picturesque, and romantic, and spectacular? Where's anything but dirt, and discomfort, and starvation, and nigger-driving? Who wants to participate in a shabby war like this?

Then he reflects:

Oh, you growling swine, Tommy Cornstalk! What about the hour or two when the people were howling mad over you, when girls you didn't know came and kissed you, when the effusive males who didn't go themselves handed you bottles of beer to quench the magnificent thirst you had cultivated betwixt barracks and boat? How did you feel then?²²

Jack Abbott provided a unique 'insider's' view of the war. Victorian issues, values, and attitudes come to the surface. At times his writing shows normal human frailties, intolerance, and racism; both in the army of which he was a part, and in himself. There were other Australians who wrote about the war, notably 'Banjo' Paterson, Frank Wilkinson, and William Reay. They were war correspondents. Abbott was different, he was a soldier in the ranks.

There is much more available in *Tommy Cornstalk*. Abbott writes about soldiers, generals, the Boers, black Africans, the veldt, and the British. But, in conclusion, it is worth returning to what Norman Lindsay had to say about him. Lindsay reflected kindly at the end of his reminiscences of Abbott:

But at this date, reading *Tommy Cornstalk* again, as I did before sitting down to write this profile, I can think well of Abbott. Not only the sober Abbott, but that streak of dangerous man in him, for it carries with it a reckless disregard of danger. He was of the substance which makes for the finest fighting man, and that was his true vocation. And his country owes him a debt, in that he put on record the emergence of the Australian fighting men on the stage of world warfare. He helped to create the legend of courage and endurance in battle which they have so finely vindicated in two world wars. And that is a big thing to have done.²³

Endnotes

1. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol 3 (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1974), 7.
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3. PJ Yeend (ed), *The Kings School Register* (Parramatta: The King's School Council, 1990), 11.
4. *Bulletin*, 10 September 1938.
5. PL Murray (ed), *Official Records of the Australian Military Contingents to the War in South Africa* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1911), 41.
6. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol 7 (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1979), 3.
7. Norman Lindsay, *Bohemians of the Bulletin* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1965), 70.
8. Arthur W Jose & Herbert James Carter (eds), *The Australian Encyclopaedia* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1926), 482-44.
9. Lindsay, *Bohemians of the Bulletin*, 70.
10. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 7: 2.
11. JHM Abbott, *Tommy Cornstalk* (London: Longmans, 1903), 6-10.
12. HS Gullett, *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-18*, vol 7 (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1941), 32-36.
13. JHM Abbott, *Plain & Veldt* (London: Methuen & Co, 1903), 22.
14. *Tommy Cornstalk*, 104.
15. *Ibid*, 105-6.
16. *Ibid*, 114.
17. Peter Burness, 'The Australian Horse: A cavalry squadron in the South African War', *Journal of the Australian War Memorial* 6 (April 1985): 37.
18. *Tommy Cornstalk*, 27-37.
19. *Ibid*, 141.
20. E Almack, *History of the Second Dragoons, Royal Scots Greys* (np, 1908), 91.
21. *Tommy Cornstalk*, 67.
22. *Ibid*.
23. Lindsay, *Bohemians of the Bulletin*, 75.