Defence Force Journal

Contributions of any length will be considered but, as a guide, 3000 words is the ideal length. Articles should be typed double spaced, on one side of the paper, and submitted in duplicate.

All contributions and correspondence should be addressed to:
The Managing Editor
Defence Force Journal
Building C, Room 4-25
Russell Offices
CANBERRA ACT 2600
(062) 65 2682 or if unanswered 65 2999

Illustrations
Army Audio Visual Unit, Fyshwick, ACT

Photography
D.P.R. Stills Photo Section

Published by the Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, for the Department of Defence.

© Commonwealth of Australia 1987
ISSN 0314-1039
R 85/1198(4) Cat. No. 86 1352 0
CONTENTS

2 Letters to the Editor

5 Foreword

7 The Corps of Staff Cadets over Seventy-Four Years
   C. D. Coulthard-Clark

17 General Sir Horace Robertson, BCOF and the Korean War, 1950-1951
   Dr Jeffrey Grey

24 A Glimpse at the Third Commandant of Duntroon
   Major Warren Perry (RL)

38 Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey and the Exercise of High Command in Australia
   Lieutenant Colonel David Buchanan, RAR

45 Strategies of Land Warfare
   Lieutenant Colonel D. M. Horner, RAInf

56 Book Review

Cover: Graduation Day.

Contributors are urged to ensure the accuracy of information contained in their articles: the Board of Management accepts no responsibility for errors of fact. Permission to reprint articles in the Journal will generally be readily given by the Managing Editor after consultation with the author. Any reproduced articles should bear an acknowledgement of source. The views expressed in the articles are the authors' own and should not be construed as official opinion or policy.

Printed by Ruskin Press, North Melbourne
Letters to the Editor

Elective In-Service Commutation
Dear Sir,

Wing Commander Mills' article has come too late for too many. At present the only way we can obtain the benefits of 20 years service is to leave our vocation. In contrast in some civilian occupations many benefits are paid on joining as a means of gaining the commitment of the new members, yet the Services, a people oriented organization, by Government direction, does exactly the opposite.

I cannot commend this article too highly as it clearly identifies all of the problems and the effect they are having on the Services. When I did my own 'appreciation' of whether or not to stay or go, when it came to commutation I identified three points influencing my decision. The loss of commutation benefits to my family in the event of my death, the persistent threat to change commutation in some detrimental way, and the tiny annual gain taxed at a high rate. In essence, every consideration concerning commutation said take the money and run while you're alive and have the chance!

I found only one small weakness in the article though I understand the reason for it. This is the proposal to stagger the introduction over five years. Frankly, nobody at even 26 years service, is going to be influenced to hang on for another two years to obtain his in service commutation.

Those Murphy brothers will cause problems so bite the bullet and make the scheme start from the 20 years mark for all.

My congratulations on a timely, accurate article, now all we need is action to implement its proposals.

Lt Col Alistair Pope (Rtd)

Dear Sir,

I congratuate Wng Cdr Mills and the Defence Force Journal on the excellent article published in the Sep/Oct 86 edition. The content was clear, succinct and accurate. It presented the case for elective in-service commutation in an exemplary manner and should be a lesson in clear thinking and written expression to all young officers.

Whilst serving in Defence Central in the early 1980s, I submitted a letter to the Army Newspaper proposing in-service advances on retirement benefits. The comments from the DSC respondent were derogatory and unhelpful to say the least.

It is to be hoped that a more intelligent and enlightened approach will be adopted by our political and PS masters in this case. Perhaps ARFFA should recognise this as a prime issue to be resolved before peripheral matters such as allowances.

D.R. Dixon
Major

Dear Sir,

Since writing the article on Elective In-Service Commutation of DRF&DB entitlements, I have become aware of a factual error. I stated that on death, the leave and long service entitlements are forfeited to the public purse. This is no longer the case, and I understand that the financial value of the entitlements becomes part of the person's estate. I apologise for any anguish or administrative effort this erroneous statement has caused.

The concept of Elective In-Service Commutation has had a long gestation period. The idea was first presented to Personnel Division — Air Force in 1980, but was rejected on the basis of risk to the conditions and difficulties with taxation. In 1985, I presented the idea to the Defence Force Suggestions Scheme with a similar result. The Defence Force Ombudsman requested a copy of the proposal to attempt to resolve a complaint from a person who claimed discrimination on the basis that they could not rejoin the Service on the grounds of being in receipt of a commuted pension. No changes have arisen from these submissions.

I am pleased to see the Defence Force Journal provide a forum for discussions on the more controversial aspects of Defence Force management. With increasing constraint on re-
sources, managers must often adopt new and innovative solutions to problems. At times, the more conservative managers can use 'the system' to stifle constructive debate. Publication of proposals can help clear such obstructions and add new dimensions to solutions.

I would like to thank those members who took the trouble to contact me personally on the article, and will attempt to answer further enquiries as they arise.

C. L. Mills, WGCGR (Retd)

Educational Turbulence
Dear Sir,

I am a civilian reader of the Defence Force Journal.

Eileen Duffy’s splendidly researched article “Educational Turbulence for Defence Force Children” was a most interesting contribution to the Journal.

I was particularly interested in the mention that Bourke and Naylor found very few significant correlations between change of school and academic achievement.

Since 1948 I have been a teacher and an administrator concerned with education and have, generally, been associated with mobility of students. My direct observations indicated no adverse result attaching to student mobility, in point of fact the very opposite could be established, in my view.

During my experience I consistently found that mobility could be a problem and in some instances mobility seemed to have a detrimental effect however such was by no means usual.

As an educationalist I compliment the Journal for publishing a valuable contribution, on a vital aspect of education, because mobility is not restricted to military personnel and the article is important to all parents and children who are "mobile."

R.G. MARSHALL
Ministry of Education Victoria.

Problems of an Expeditionary Force
Dear Sir,

Major Breen is to be commended for his comprehension article on the ‘Problems of an Expeditionary Force’. 1 RAR 1965 in DFJ No 60. The issues he raises relating to the rapid deployment of IRAR to SVN and their implications on current operational deployment forces are most topical to those of us in 1 RAR today.

21 years hence, 1 RAR again stands ready for operational deployment. Fortunately, the majority of problems faced by our predecessors have now been tackled and resolved. We actively train for credible contingencies, and we have good working relations with supporting arms, services and the RAAF. We now hold our own war stocks of the whole range of logistic items, and have others ear-marked in back-up. We are almost fully manned to war establishment and fielded a 900 man Battalion Group on Ex K86.

Admittedly we still eagerly await a more comfortable boot and better clothing and load carrying equipment (‘Light’ Battalions seem to carry even more on their backs!)

But the bottom line is that we are ready to go wherever, on very short notice, and with everything we are likely to need for the job.

We do appreciate that our privileged priority does come at a cost to our sister battalions in the south. But we should all take heart from Maj. Jucha’s very positive article in the same Journal, and acknowledge that our current ODF is providing Australia with the basis for a credible deterrent. Hopefully, our win in the Cambrian Patrol Competition in the UK, adds weight to that as well.

G. J. Stone
Major 2/IC 1 RAR

Wrong Academy Crest
Dear Sir,

I refer the article by Lieutenant Colonel N.A. Jans, RAA, in your July/August 1986 edition (No 59). I wish not to comment upon the contents of the article but rather to draw your attention to the fact that the Academy crest used was not the correct one.

The badge used on the article was in fact one of the older prototype versions under consideration in bygone years. It is not the approved Defence Academy badge and motto.

As the Defence Academy is the newest unit in the Defence Force, I have enclosed a coloured photograph of the approved Defence Academy badge and motto. The symbology is outlined overleaf:
The crown surmounting the shield — Allegience to crown and country
The federation star — Australia
Three-sided shield enclosing the single Service colouring — Joint Service nature of the Academy
Navy blue colouring — RAN
Red colouring — Army
Light blue colouring — RAAF
Gauntlet and sword covering University of New South Wales Book of Knowledge — Military/Academic Bond

I hope that you will see fit to reproduce the badge, along with the explanatory symbology, in your next issue. This will achieve two aims.

- Correct any misunderstanding that may have arisen as a result of the article; and
- Introduce a significant section of the Defence Force to the badge and motto of the newest unit.

P.W. Keane
Major
Public Relations Officer

Badge and Motto of the Australian Defence Force Academy.
THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE,
DUNTROON 1911-1986

IN 1902 the first commander of the Australian Military Forces, Major-General Sir Edward Hutton, recommended that a military college be established along the lines of the United States Military Academy at West Point, the Royal Military College Kingston in Canada, and of the Great Public Schools of England. Subsequently, Field-Marshall Lord Kitchener was invited to visit Australia and advise the Government on the defences of the Commonwealth. Among the recommendations of his report of 1910 was that a college should be established for the training of officers of the permanent military forces.

The Government instructed the then Colonel William Throsby Bridges, to visit and report on military colleges in England, Canada and the United States. Colonel Bridges reported to the Minister for Defence in June 1910. His recommendations were accepted and he was given the task of founding the new college as its first commandant, with the rank of Brigadier-General. Bridges chose the site at Duntroon, and by June 1911 the essential buildings had been constructed, the college staff appointed, and the first intake of 32 Australians and 10 New Zealanders admitted. On 27 June, the Governor-General, Lord Dudley, opened the college and announced that it would be called the Royal Military College of Australia.

General Bridges based the College curriculum on that of the United States Military Academy. It was designed for a four-year course, half of which would be devoted to military and half to academic studies. The first course was curtailed after the outbreak of war in August 1914, and the first intake of cadets graduated specially for war service. The courses of the next three intakes also were shortened. The majority of the graduates from the first four intakes (1911-14) served overseas with the AIF or the NZEF. Forty of the 117 Australian graduates died in the Great War, seventeen of them at Gallipoli. Major-General Sir William Throsby Bridges, the first commandant, also died at Gallipoli while in command of the AIF.

The four-year course resumed at the College after the war. The College passed through a difficult period in the twenties, when there was general apathy towards military matters. Intakes were low and the small number of graduates in the late twenties included officers for the Royal Australian Air Force as well as for the Army. During the depression the College was closed at Duntroon, and from 1931 to 1936 it was located at Victoria Barracks, Sydney. It re-opened at Duntroon in February 1937 in new and permanent buildings.

During the 1939-45 war the course was reduced to two years' duration. Additional special entry classes were admitted to the College for six, nine and 12 months, and Duntroon became a centre for other military activities in addition to those of the College. By 1943 the improved military situation made it possible for the College course to be extended and a three-year curriculum was introduced for the 1944 intake.

In 1947 a revised four-year course was introduced which included alternative academic courses in Arts or Science. Under the guidance of the Standing Committee on the Royal Military College Curriculum, which was created as a statutory body in 1951, the development of the academic courses proceeded.

By 1958 the College offered courses in Arts, Science and Engineering, each at two levels. These courses enabled selected graduates to obtain exemptions up to the equivalent of half the appropriate
The Royal Military College, Duntroon, is composed of three 22 week terms, and is both comprehensive and demanding. The bases of the curriculum were the military skills and knowledge of all arms and services required by an infantry platoon commander and the study of additional subjects appropriate to a general military education. Throughout the course emphasis was placed on the development of character and leadership qualities and of fostering strong motivation towards the Service.

Under an agreement with the University of NSW, the Faculty of Military Studies was established and in 1968 commenced the conduct of courses leading to a degree in Arts, Science, and Engineering at pass and honours levels. In order to graduate the cadet had to pass in both military and academic studies and had to meet the required standards in qualities of leadership. The faculty also offered opportunities for research leading to higher degrees of the University.

In January 1985, as a precursor to the centralisation of Army Officer training at Duntroon, the training of female officers was moved to the Officer Cadet School, Portsea. In January 1986, the College became the Regular Army's central training establishment for officer cadets when the Officer Cadet School was closed. At the same time, the responsibility for Tertiary Studies moved to the University College of the new Australian Defence Force Academy.

The Royal Military College now conducts a course of full-time military instruction. 'Normal Entry' cadets, that is civilians and in-service entrants both male and female, complete a course of 18 months duration. Army Cadets from the Defence Force Academy, including female cadets, undertake a full-time military studies course of 12 months duration following three years of academic studies at the Academy. The mature population of the College is expected to be about 450 cadets, with an intake in January and July, following graduations in December and June of each year.

The aim of the new course at the Royal Military College, is to produce junior regimental officers who, after their corps Regular Officers Basic Course, will be capable of commanding a platoon or equivalent within their allotted arm or service. The curriculum is composed of three 22 week terms, and is both comprehensive and demanding.

At the completion of the first term, the cadets will have a grounding in such subjects as battlecraft, infantry tactics, navigation, first aid, weapon training, character development, communication skills, military history and leadership. By the end of the second term the cadet is required to have grasped the basics of command and leadership up to platoon level, with a further advance in tactics, military history, administration, training, science and technology, and communications skills. The final term further practises the cadet in command at platoon level, and develops tactics to unit level and administration at division level. Special operations are studied and officer training is rounded off with strategic studies, military history and leadership.

The Commandant is also responsible for the special to service training (Single Service Training) of Army cadets at the Defence Force Academy, which takes place at Duntroon in the first six weeks of each year. A total of 15 weeks of Single Service Training is conducted during the three years a cadet spends at the Defence Force Academy. This training, together with the Common Military Training conducted by the Defence Force Academy itself, equates to the first six months of the 'normal entry' course of 18 months. This is essential for the Academy cadet to be integrated with the Royal Military College cadets for their final 12 months of military studies. In January 1987, this Single Service Training will swell the total cadet population of the Royal Military College to nearly 800.

The Royal Military College continues to provide military training for the officer cadets of other countries. Cadets have attended the College from New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand. Airfield Defence officers are also trained for the RAAF. The College also continues to participate effectively in local competitive sports, and to perform the traditional ceremonial activities of Queen's Birthday Parade, a uniquely Army tradition conducted at the College since 1957, the 1812 Overture and Beating the Retreat, and artillery salutes.

On completion of the 18 months course for normal entry cadets, or the 12 months course for Ex-Defence Force Academy cadets, the cadets are graduated in the rank of Lieutenant. The majority of them will then attend Regimental Officer's Basic Courses of up to 6 months duration to round off their training. Many return to the Defence Force Academy to complete honours or engineering courses as officer undergraduates.

The role of the Royal Military College, Duntroon, has changed in 1986. But the responsibility of the College to produce for the Army high quality young officers with a well developed sense of honour, loyalty, duty and responsibility has not changed in 75 years.
The Corps of Staff Cadets Over Seventy-Four Years

By C. D. Coulthard-Clark

In the 74 years between 1911 and 1985 a total of 4917 cadets entered the RMC. Of these, 4427 were Australians, 452 were from New Zealand and 38 were foreign students from India, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia. To the end of 1985, 3006 were recorded as graduates of the college. Among these were 2635 Australians (including one New Zealand cadet who obtained a transfer to the Australian Army during his final year), 344 New Zealanders, one Indian, eleven Thais, twelve Singaporeans and three Malaysians. Apart from 301 cadets and 26 officer undergraduates remaining after the 1985 graduation, the remainder — 1585 cadets (or 32.2 per cent of all admissions) did not complete the RMC course. Not all these non-graduates may be regarded as casualties of the course, however, as the figure includes five New Zealand cadets withdrawn by their government in December 1921 as an economy measure, another eight Australians who were transferred to the Commonwealth public service or withdrawn by the RAAF when the college moved to Sydney at the end of 1930, and thirteen Australian cadets who died while members of the Corps of Staff Cadets.

What follows is an analysis of the composition of the Corps of Staff Cadets since its inception. Only the Australian component of the cadet body is considered here. Except for the New Zealanders, foreign students have been generally too few to permit meaningful analysis, as well as only a relatively recent addition to college numbers; consequently their impact within the armies of even their own countries have been limited. Apart from the Crown Prince, by 1985 the longest-graduated Thai graduate was holding the rank of lieutenant-colonel. The first Singaporean graduates were holding the rank of major, and the most senior of the Malaysian graduates was a captain. The college's sole Indian graduate died in March 1973 while holding the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

An attempt to analyse the nature of Dunroon as an institution by looking at the characteristics of all those who sought to go there is
First Batch of Cadets.
a formidable task which is largely beyond the scope of this article. In the last ten years alone the number of young Australians enquiring about admission (both normal and scholarship entry) has generally been between two and three thousand annually. Over a third have applied and of these more half have been interviewed. Those selected, some subject to vacancies being available, have been only about 20-30 per cent of original applicants. For reasons of availability and manageability of data, the focus of analysis is on the characteristics of the group actually comprising RMC's intakes.

States of Enlistment

Successive censuses over the 70 years between 1911 and 1981 revealed a pattern of change in the distribution of population between the Australian states. The proportion of population living in New South Wales rose from 37 per cent in 1911 to 39 per cent in 1947 before dropping back to 35 per cent; Victoria's proportion steadily declined over the period from 29 to 26 per cent, as did Tasmania's from four to three per cent; Queensland's share, on the other hand, rose from 13 to 15 per cent, and so did Western Australia's from six to nine per cent, and the Australian Capital Territory's from around half of one per cent before the 1930s to 1.5 per cent by 1976. South Australia remained relatively constant at around nine per cent.

Data about intakes to the Corps of Staff Cadets between 1911 and 1984 confirm that RMC could justifiably claim to be a national institution. It included cadets from all parts of Australia, although the composition of the Corps in particular periods did not always match the actual distribution of the national population.

A notable feature of recent years has been the particularly strong representation of the Australian Capital Territory, reaching as much as five times the proportion the territory's population makes nationally.

Given the desire of the authorities when the college was established that the cadet body should have a balanced representation from the whole Commonwealth, even to the extent of allotting vacancies to each State in fixed proportion, the fact that this was not realised is of some interest. The initial reason seems to have been simply the period of time it took for the college to become known to the Australian public. The period needed for an awareness of
length of time it took this hostility to disperse in the 1970s. While the college could console itself that the quality of applicants from Victoria was high, a clear legacy of Victorian supremacy in RMC's earlier years was passed to the Officer Corps of the Australian Army. In 1956 one analyst noted that 40 per cent of a sample of senior officers serving in the Army were originally Victorians; even 20 years later the proportion was 36 per cent.

The matter of location certainly favoured recruitment from New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, although in the latter case the transfer of the Defence Department from Melbourne to Canberra in the 1960s and the consequent influx of a large number of servicemen and their families would also have played a part. A number of reasons might be found for Queensland's strong representation at this time, including the army's high visibility in the state which would have ensured public awareness of it as a prospective career. A particularly important factor was held to be the fact that Queensland and Western Australia were industrially less developed, which meant there were few employment opportunities outside the capital city areas and school-leavers were forced to look further afield.

**Father's Occupation**

In 1919 the Commandant listed in the college annual report the occupations of fathers of cadets since RMC's inception. He did so 'to show the very democratic nature of the College', and it was to prove the same point that C.E.W. Bean made use of the figures in referring to Duntroon in his official history of Australia's part in the First World War. In reality, the available information shows cadets only imperfectly reflected the Australian population of 1911, with the professional and commercial classes heavily over-represented (at 60 per cent) while industrial and primary producer groups were heavily under-represented. When it is borne in mind that 63 per cent of the nation's wage-earners were drawn from the last two categories, where Australia's working class was to be found, it would appear that RMC did take on something of an elitist character. There were probably a number of reasons for this, such as lack
of economic or educational opportunities, particularly in country areas, which militated against those whose families were less well off even thinking of any army career, let alone competing successfully for a place at the college. The point is significant if only because it became one of the traditional boasts of RMC that parentage played no part in the selection of cadets. This claim was patently untrue when it came to racial considerations (in 1913 the College regulations were amended to exclude candidates who were not of substantially European origins or descent), but this was hardly extraordinary in the context of attitudes prevailing at the time. More important, however, was that RMC did admit the sons of two engine-drivers, a labourer, a plumber, a blacksmith, etc.; as one writer remarks, although 'such instances were few they would certainly not have occurred at Sandhurst or Woolwich at that time'.

The pattern established during the College's first few years did not markedly alter over the intervening period to the present. The preponderance of professional men among the fathers of cadets remained at just under 50 per cent in the 1920s (including 13.6 per cent who were in the permanent defence forces), with those from the commercial class accounting for almost another 20 per cent. Fully three-quarters of cadets entering in the 1930s had fathers in commerce and finance, or public administration and the professions; 10 per cent of the total had fathers employed as members of the permanent defence forces. Little more than nine per cent were employed in primary industry or industrial occupations, although these two categories continued to employ almost half of the nation's breadwinners.

Statistics derived from college records are subject to a margin of error, caused by gaps in the records and difficulties in classification owing to unhelpful descriptions such as 'attendant', 'clerk', 'manager' or 'foreman'. Differences in the categories of occupations used between various censuses add to the problem. Even so, it remains clear that during the Second World War the majority of Australia's male breadwinners, particularly those receiving wages or salaries, were employed in the manufacturing, construction and primary production sectors whereas more than one-third of all RMC cadets came from the families of professional men or those engaged in public service, although this group comprised only 8.8 per cent of the nation's male workforce in 1947. By the 1950s the largest number of cadets were still drawn from 'lower middle class' occupations included in such census categories as 'commerce' and 'Public Authority and Professional Activities'. Very few cadets had fathers described as a ganger with the Main Roads Board, a tram conductor, a bricklayer or farm labourer.

Studies of recruitment to RMC in the period 1970-74 suggest that, though cadets in this later period were drawn from all sectors of the socio-economic spectrum, there was a continuation of the established trend for entrants to be disproportionate to the Australian general population, showing a marked tendency to be drawn from 'middle' and 'upper' class brackets. The sons of farmers and manual workers were statistically under-represented in comparison with employer and manager, professional, and clerical and sales occupational categories.

**Religious Affiliation**

The 1911 Census showed that the largest single religious group in the Australian population was formed by adherents of the Church of England. Proportionately this group was over half as large again as the Roman Catholic community and three times as large as either the Presbyterians, Methodists, or the remaining denominations taken as a group. Only 3 per cent of the population declined to nominate their religious allegiance. According to the census 70 years later, Anglicans and Roman Catholics each accounted for a quarter of the national population, with Presbyterians, Methodists, and the newly-formed Uniting Church of Australia between them representing a further 13 per cent, the same proportion formed by remaining denominations taken collectively. Respondents to the census who failed to specify their religion (or stated it as 'Nil') now amounted to 22 per cent, a proportion which largely negated the value of recent satisfies as a yardstick of this feature of the composition of Australian society.

This evolving pattern was only rarely matched at RMC. Throughout the life of the college Anglicans were hugely over-represented as a proportion of the cadet body, even though the proportion which they comprised declined over the period. Similarly heavily over-represented were Presbyterians, their numbers at times being more than double the proportion members of
King's Birthday Parade, Victoria Barracks, 3 June, 1931. Inspection by the Governor General Sir Isaac Isaacs.

This church comprised nationally. Catholics were markedly under-represented until the decade of the 1930s and again during the Second World War, after which their presence at RMC rose to a level exceeding the national proportion. Also under-represented were Methodists until the 1960s — especially after the Presbyterian Church slipped in the late 1930s from being the third largest denomination to fourth — and so too were the smaller faiths during the period.

These various imbalances indicate the relative attractiveness of an army career to sections of Australian society. Methodist under-representation, for example, might be assumed to have had something to do with Wesleyan beliefs on the evils of war. The enthusiasm of Anglicans and Presbyterians probably derived from the college's appeal as an avenue to an honourable career upholding the values of sections of society still largely adhering to British values and traditions. It was clearly no coincidence that the majority of professional people were Anglicans, nor should it be discounted that for those applying to enter such a traditional institution as RMC, Anglican probably seemed the thing to be. It was particularly notable, for instance, that of five cadets admitted from Melbourne's Wesley College in 1913 only one gave his religion as Methodist while the rest nominated Church of England.

The reasons for Catholic under-representation can be suggested as having less to do with the Irish background of most Australian Catholics than the fact that this group tended to be of working-class origin. Possibly an element of the Labour Movement's aversion to militarism and the army came into play; certainly in 1923 the Catholic Press railed against the expense of running Duntroon and remarked: 'Fancy paying £2000 a year to educate a snob who would be dear at £100 a year, and who is taught to despise the public who keep him!' But there are reasons to suspect that Catholics were not so much ideologically averse to the idea of an army career as unable, on educational grounds, to compete for admission. There was, for example, no evidence to suggest that Catholics were especially opposed to the theme of compulsory military training before the First World War. On the other hand, when competition from applicants from affluent families who had attended independent schools fell away during the 1930s, the Catholic presence at RMC rose dramatically.

As to the College claim to be a national institution, the significant point was that its doors were not deliberately closed to any section of the community on religious or any other grounds. That members of minority denominations such as Jews, and in more recent years,
Moslems and the Greek Orthodox and Serbian Orthodox churches, did enter the Corps of Staff Cadets confirmed that claim. Imbalances which undoubtedly existed were attributable to factors beyond army control.

School Background

A noteworthy feature of the background of cadets entering the college was the proportion from State and Catholic schools, and also from public schools (in Australia the term “public school” generally carries the English meaning and refers to independent, usually denominational, establishment). In his report on the 1912 Entrance Examination, the first commandant (Brigadier-General Bridges) noted that the majority of successful candidates came from state schools and that the Great Public Schools (GPS) did not send many candidates with the notable exception of Wesley College, Melbourne, which that year gained five places. This was all the more remarkable as state secondary schools were relatively few before 1912. Wesley College continued to provide the largest number of cadets of any school — its 14 entrants between 1915-18 representing 10.6 per cent of all admissions in the period. The prominence of this one school was due to the personal influence of its long-time headmaster, L.A. Adamson, who provided special coaching for boys of his school seeking to enter Duntroon.

In the 1920s independent schools continued to supply rather more entrants than the state schools while Catholic schools provided little more than 10 per cent. The four years 1924-27 were an exception, an occurrence most likely explained by the apparent aversion of independent headmasters (and of parents) to encourage boys to embark on a career with such poor prospects. In 1922 and 1923 C. J. Prescott, headmaster of Newington College, Sydney, wrote to several newspapers saying that he had felt it quite useless to call for applications for Duntroon from his students because ‘the boys knew that one of our old boys, who had completed his course with credit, and had served a year in India, was discharged with a gratuity because there was no position for him in the military’.

Lukewarm enthusiasm for the prospects of an army career appears to have kept down numbers entering the college from independent schools for most of the next decade too, with comparatively poor response to RMC’s at-
tempts at recruitment in 1932 and 1934 (reflected in the 1933 and 1935 intakes). Independent school interest in the college underwent a resurgence in the last years of this decade, so that intakes in 1937 and 1938 included more cadets from these schools than from State schools and replaced what had, until then, been a fairly healthy level of representation from Catholic schools. Six entrants in 1937 (one quarter of the whole intake) were from Scotch College, Melbourne, alone! A reason for the dearth of public school candidates in the mid-1930s was probably the decline in the numbers attending such schools owing to 'a falling-off in prosperity, particularly in country areas', brought about by the depression. Independent education had already been affected in the 1920s by the development of state systems, especially as regards the provision of secondary education.

Independent non-Catholic schools re-established a disproportionate presence in the immediate prewar years and this remained with the RMC throughout the war, reaching about 60 per cent. Only in the last year of the war did the number of cadets drawn from state secondary schools exceed the number from independent schools. This reversal of trend, however, stayed with the college from this point. In intakes between 1947 and 1959, for example, 47.5 per cent came from state schools, 30.4 per cent from the independent schools and 20.9 per cent came from Catholic schools, a level which for the first time matched the proportion of Catholics in the Australian population. The strength of Catholic representation remained into the 1960s. Indeed in 1968 it was claimed that Catholics were over-represented in the Officer Corps, an alleged outcome of the large number of strong cadet units in Catholic schools steering potential officers in the direction of Duntroon. The effect the stricter atmosphere of Catholic schools had in promoting acceptance of disciplined military life, and the attraction of a free education at RMC for Catholic families less able to afford the tertiary education desired by their sons, were held to be the main reasons for this phenomenon.

In reality Catholic over-representation was something of a myth. While cadets from Catholic schools outnumbered those from independent schools, their strength was really only marginally above the proportion of Catholics in the national population recorded at the 1966 Census. This same situation applied during the 1970s too. There was no major deviation at RMC from the proportion of Australian matriculation students produced by state, Catholic and independent non-Catholic schools; Catholic schools, however, found slightly more cadets for the college than might have been expected and the independent schools provided slightly fewer. The commandant publicly stated in 1978 that 55 per cent of cadets then at Duntroon were the products of state high schools, but the school with the record for providing the greatest number of RMC’s cadets in 1982 was Melbourne High School, with 13 former students spread across the four classes at Duntroon.

As regards the role of school cadet corps, while the figures in the 1960s showed that some 70 per cent of cadets entering RMC from Catholic schools had been cadets or in the Air Training Corps, this was not much higher than the 67 per cent of entrants from state schools and rather less than the figure of 86 per cent which applied to non-Catholic independent schools. The army certainly valued its connection with schools having cadet units and sought to foster the association by annually paying for school cadets to visit the college, as well as for 30 headmasters who might influence cadets in their choice of career.

**Ethnic Composition**

In the 40 years since the end of the Second World War the ethnic composition of Australian society has been heavily influenced by the effects of large scale migration. Censuses since the war show, for example, a steady increase in the proportion of the population born outside Australia from 10 per cent in 1947 to 21 per cent in 1981, although a major portion of this group comprised people whose birthplace was in the British Isles (42 per cent in 1961 and still 35 per cent in 1981).

This development was reflected in the composition of the Corps. Over 6 per cent of entries in the years 1946-55 had been born outside Australia; in the next ten years the figure rose to 11 per cent, and for the period 1966-77 was over 14 per cent. Inevitably, however, a heavy proportion of this group had been born in the British Isles — 31 per cent in 1946-55, 55 per cent in 1956-65, and 51 per cent in 1966-77. Still others were born in countries with British Commonwealth links, so that sons of former officers of the British Army in India living in retirement in Western Australia or Victoria
formed quite a distinctive category. Despite the evident British bias in this pattern, a small number of cadets from other ethnic backgrounds — Germans, Estonians, Latvians and Dutch — began to enter the ranks of the Corps in the years following the war. With the larger cadet intakes of the 1960s and 1970s the college began to see an increasing number of cadets bearing surnames representative of the sizeable ethnic communities by then present in Australia, names such as Pimpenella, Zaharias, Halabe, Degabriele, or Stojanovic.

Though the Corps undoubtedly came to include more cadets of non-British origin, their numbers represented little more than a token presence. The reason for this was claimed to be that only limited numbers of candidates from these groups offered themselves for selection; migrant groups generally were disadvantaged by the education and language requirements needed to win admission.

In 1978 the commandant (Major-General A. L. Morrison) admitted to a newspaper interviewer that:

We have now some members of other ethnic groups coming into the college, but not as many as we would wish and certainly not in proportion to their numbers in the Australian community.

This led the journalist to conclude that, ‘while a large number of Australia’s future army leaders may well have working class parents, they will still, mostly, have Anglo-Saxon, Scottish and Irish names’.

**Political Orientation**

Although there is evidence that the Corps has become socially more diverse in recent years, thereby increasing potential for varying motivations, values and interests to emerge, it may be doubted whether the college has really broadened its horizons very much. The candidate who applies for entry is still more likely to be conservative and traditionally minded. Illustrating this point is the voting pattern at Duntroon polling station in federal elections for the division of Fraser, although this is an admittedly imperfect indicator because only cadets over 21 years of age could vote until 1974, because voters at the polling station include other persons of voting age (for example, military and academic staff and their families), and because the Corps vote is usually “dissipated” through cadets voting at other booths in the ACT. Nonetheless it is significant that in a seat which has consistently returned a Labor Party candidate, there has been a disproportionately heavy Liberal vote at Duntroon in elections since 1969. At the 1983 election it was particularly notable that Duntroon was the sole polling booth in the ACT which failed to record a majority
House of Representatives vote for the division of Fraser in favour of the Australian Labor Party.

Offering some additional evidence regarding cadets’ political leanings is the fact that when graduates have involved themselves in politics it has usually, at least most publicly, been on the conservative side. Dr A. J. Forbes (1942) held portfolios as minister in successive Liberal governments between 1963-72, and the Fraser Liberal ministries of 1975-83 included two ministers who were graduates — Brigadier the Hon. D. S. Thomson (1943) and Lieutenant-Colonel the Hon. K. E. Newman (1955) — as well as one other (P.N.D. White, 1957) on the backbenches. A notable exception to this pattern was Hon. C. R. Evatt (1921), who served as a Labor minister in New South Wales in the period 1941-54.

Discharges

Patterns and trends associated with the selection of candidates to enter Duntroon stood, of course, to be modified in the four years cadets spent at the college. Examination of data concerning cadets who were discharged before graduation indicates that a number of changes occurred to the Corps’ profile as a result of college processes, often emphasising differences between the composition of the Corps and the national population which already existed. For example, the representation of the various states was modified through wastage so that the state with the best record for providing cadets who completed the college course was Queensland.

In religion it appeared that attrition was heavier among Catholics and Methodists than among Anglicans and Presbyterians, but the differences were marginal and do not support a conclusion that particular denominations were more prone to be discharged than others. Schools attended before entry to Duntroon did, however, seem to make a difference, with the rate of discharges before the Second World War being higher for cadets from independent non-Catholic schools, whereas after the War this distinction passed to those from Catholic schools.

The relevance of academic skills as a factor in discharges is demonstrated by the fact that throughout the college’s history, at least until the 1980s, failure to make sufficient progress in studies was the cause of nearly half of all discharges. Those who abandoned their decision to seek an army career and resigned from RMC accounted for about six per cent of discharges before the Second World War, and for the next 35 years accounted for between a quarter and a third. In the years 1980-84, however, resignations were nearly 54 per cent of discharges, while academic failures were only 33 per cent. A difficulty with these figures is, however, that the specified reason often cloaked the real cause of a cadet’s departure, so that a resignation from a cadet whose parents could not afford the required bond was sometimes classed as an academic failure for compassionate reasons, and those discharged as unlikely to make an efficient officer had occasionally shown more serious failings than the record indicated.

Chris Coulthard-Clark graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon, in 1972 with a Bachelor of Arts in Military Studies degree from the University of New South Wales. He served with the 2nd Cavalry Regiment in Sydney, and the Directorate of Military Intelligence and the Joint Intelligence Organisation in Canberra, before leaving the Army in 1979. His biography of Duntroon’s founder, Major-General Sir W. T. Bridges, entitled A Heritage of Spirit, was published in the same year and commended in the Fellowship of Australian Writers awards for 1980. He worked in Strategic and International Policy Division of the Department of Defence in 1980-85, during which time he undertook a 12-month secondment with the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1984, before joining the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in 1986 as an adviser in the International Division. Research into the history of Duntroon carried out for a Master of Arts degree, awarded by the University of New South Wales in 1980, formed the basis of his book Duntroon: The Royal Military College of Australia 1911-1986, which was launched by the Governor-General in conjunction with the college’s 75th Anniversary; the above article appears as an appendix in the book and is printed here (less several charts) with the permission of the publishers. He has written a further book which came second in the 1986 Vogel-Australian Literary Award and is due to be published late in 1987. Entitled No Australian Need Apply, it is a study of the career of Lieutenant-General J. G. Legge, which focuses on conflict between sentiments of imperialism and nationalism within the First AIF.
General Sir Horace Robertson, BCOF and the Korean War, 1950-1951.

By Dr Jeffrey Grey, Australian Defence Force Academy

Along with Blamey and Vasey, Lieutenant-General Sir Horace Robertson was one of the most striking and colourful Australian soldiers of the generation that reached general officer rank during the Second World War. Known as "Red Robbie" because of the colour of his hair, not his temper, he had been service in the Great War with the Light Horse in both command and staff positions. During the soul-destroying years between the wars he earned a reputation for ability, egotism, tactlessness, and originality of thought. His essays on "The Defence of Australia" and "The Empire and Modern War", published in the Army Quarterly1, still repay reading today, but it was the less admirable side of his personality which attracted more attention. Thus Major-General Sir Kingsley Norris wrote of him that "at the right military moment, vanity such as Robbie's could be a virtue, but divorced from such circumstances vanity could become tiresome." Recalling Robertson's time on the staff at RMC Duntroon, Brigadier Geoffrey Solomon observed caustically that:

"there was no bushel large enough to hide [his] light. If one had been found he would have been astonished and dismayed . . . Vain, self-centred and arrogant, he looked and acted the part which he had written for himself."

Whatever his other qualities, Robertson was chiefly remembered for what one observer has characterised as "that boring ego."

This is the generally accepted picture of the man, one which his command of the 19th Brigade in North Africa could not dispel and which his part in the near-farcical "revolt of the generals" in March 1942 only seemed to confirm. Because of it, the outstanding service he rendered the army and this country while commanding the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF) in Japan between 1946 and 1951 has generally gone unrecognised. So too has the success of that Commonwealth organisation as a whole. As the British historian Roger Buckley has pointed out, few forces so deserve that over-used label "The Forgotten Army" as does BCOF. The force has been largely ignored, especially in Australia, as has its commander. In part this is a result of the general indifference displayed by Australian historians to both the occupation of Japan and military questions generally. Equally dislike of Robertson had led to the belittling of his achievement.

There are many aspects of Robertson's time in Japan which deserve attention, but I wish to concentrate here upon some of the events following the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950. To do this, however, it is necessary to know a little of the background also, and this involves some observations concerning the occupation of Japan in the period 1946-50. A history of BCOF is overdue, and I do not pretend to fill the gap here. However, some of the personalities active in the years before the outbreak of the Korean War were carried over into the latter period and this continuity explains a great deal, both about the success of the organisation in coping with the demands placed upon it by renewed hostilities and about the conflicts which arose within the Commonwealth itself.

A Commonwealth role in the occupation of Japan arose from the desire, especially on the part of the British, to play a part in the final act of the Pacific War, thus strengthening their position in the decision-making councils of the allies in the Far East. Economic considerations were important, as was the need to re-establish European prestige in Asia. Victory over the Japanese had been overwhelmingly an American victory, and the British wanted to assert strongly the Commonwealth's right to a part in the post-conquest settlement. On the part of some, such as Australia, there was also a grim desire for retribution in some form.

The British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, had originally suggested that the force should consist of one brigade group each, furnished
by Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and a British/Indian brigade together with a tactical air force component. The Canadians were not interested and never formed part of the occupation force, a decision perfectly in keeping with their historical lack of interest in Asia and the Pacific. Australia, on the other hand, was insisting on the right to send an independent force under an Australian commander who would be directly answerable only to the Supreme Commander, MacArthur, and his own government. As D. M. Horner has shown, this move was born of the desire to be regarded as a principal Pacific power, through measures such as membership of the Allied Council for Japan, and to be recognised as a major belligerent of the Japanese. The proposal had damaging implications for the future of Commonwealth unity and defence cooperation, and any independent Australian force would inevitably be swamped by the vast American organisation around it, upon which it would also be totally dependent. As Roger Buckley has recently noted, however, in order to avoid: "the embarrassment of possibly two Commonwealth forces it appeared to be wise to concede ultimate responsibility to Australia in the expectation that Australia would swallow the bait and return to the Commonwealth fold." To this end, the British agreed to the appointment of an Australian Commander-in-Chief of the occupation force, and the job went initially to Lieutenant-General John Northcott. He undertook the negotiations with the Americans over the role and tasks of BCOF, which culminated in the Northcott-MacArthur Agreement of 18 December 1945 and which governed the operations of the force for the rest of the occupation. In mid-1946 Northcott returned to Australia to become Governor of NSW, and was succeeded in Japan by Robertson. The tasks actually facing the occupation force were essentially non-military in nature, for somewhat to the surprise of the allies Japanese resistance had completely ceased after the announcement of Japanese capitulation by the Emperor. In addition, most aspects of administration in Japan were handled by American military government teams. The two most taxing tasks to face Robertson personally were the need to avoid antagonising the Americans and the maintenance of smooth relations between the Commonwealth components of the force. Relations with the Americans were not a serious problem, for the Northcott-MacArthur Agreement ensured that BCOF would operate in Japan on American terms anyway. The Commander-in-Chief enjoyed the right of direct access to the Supreme Commander, and Robertson and MacArthur enjoyed good personal and professional relations. The same could not be said of the Commonwealth force itself. Many of the pressures that influenced decision-making during the Korean War were present already in the immediate post-war period. British Army manpower was under severe strain, for example, and the cutting of the proposed length of service from eighteen months to twelve in the National Service Act of 1947, together with pressure from the CIGS, Montgomery, to increase the force contribution in Europe, led to the withdrawal of the British component from Japan in February 1947. Sections of the Foreign Office had never been in favour of an occupation force in the first place, and had strongly advocated an early withdrawal. The opposition of the Foreign Office also stemmed, in part at least, from the diplomat's dislike of military men having too great a say in the running of foreign relations as was the case in Japan, particularly with the continued appointment of General Sir Charles Gairdner as Attlee's personal representative to MacArthur. Robertson also resented Gairdner's appointment, and considered that the latter "worked constantly for [the] UK's individual interests only [...] in direct opposition to any question of British Commonwealth co-operation." Robertson insisted that as Commander-in-Chief in a state of occupation he took precedence over all other Commonwealth officials in Japan, both civil and military. Neither Gairdner nor the head of the British civil liaison mission, Sir Alvery Gascoigne, were inclined to accept this. Robertson was placed in an invidious position by Gairdner's appointment, and by the latter's antics, for it was important to relations with the Americans that the Commonwealth be seen as a single force. US authorities also made a point of only dealing with one Commonwealth authority on all matters concerning all Commonwealth forces. In addition Robertson experienced some difficulties with Major-General D. T. Cowan, commanding the British-Indian
division, the largest single formation in BCOF. These may have arisen through frustration of the latters’ exception that he would be appointed commander-in-chief after Northcott’s departure.

According to Major-General R. N. L. Hopkins, commander of the Australian Military Forces component from 1946-48, the fault in these disputes lay very much with Gairdner and Cowan. Personalities aside, there were several reasons for conflict. Although senior in rank, Robertson had only experienced about 55 days of command on active service, in North Africa, during the war. His claims to seniority, in that sense at least, did not rest on very sure foundations. With the end of the war in the Pacific and the appointment of a Commander-in-Chief for the occupation it is clear that Gairdner’s appointment should not have been persisted with, for he no longer had a function and spent his time attempting to displace both Robertson and, at times, Gascoigne. The arrangement merely led to ill-feeling on both sides. That it was continued is undoubtedly owed to British dissatisfaction with the tightly circumscribed role they were able to play in Japan coupled with resentment at their being commanded by a colonial, a situation they had strenuously avoided during the Second World War. Buckley has commented that “the presence of Australian troops supported Australia’s claims to be taken seriously as a regional power.” The British derived no such return from their part in the force, and additional prestige accruing from Australian occupancy of the senior position must have been additionally galling.

When the Korean War broke out on 25 June 1950 the decision to withdraw the remnants of BCOF had already been announced. The force was now entirely Australian in composition, and severely under-establishment in preparation for return to Australia. The decision to withdraw was not immediately rescinded, Robertson being instructed to act merely as a channel of information, but by 14 July the Defence Committee had decided to “hold in abeyance” the plans for BCOF’s return. This decision was not made simply in order to maintain supplies to the RAAF’s 77 Squadron, by then in action over Korea, but rather out of a general sense of caution and a desire to await possible developments.

The provision of ground forces by Britain and Australia, and subsequently by New Zealand and Canada, was just such a development. While a RAAF squadron, under operational command of the US Fifth Air Force and flying American-designed aircraft, could be supplied and maintained from American resources, this was not the case with Commonwealth ground forces with their different equipment, organisation, and staff and tactical concepts. Although BCOF was now manned by Australians, it was still a Commonwealth force in name, and this was important because under the terms of the occupation only those countries which took part in the occupation were able to base troops in Japan. The majority of UN countries which committed troops had to base and train their units in Korea. The Commonwealth was able to use the greater resources of Japan, and was able to set up the separate administrative machinery and lines of communication necessary for forces which did not operate on the American system.

It was with the introduction of ground forces that tensions within the Commonwealth again became evident, and these in large part revolved around the issues of control of forces and command responsibility. As early as 4 August 1950 Robertson was advocating unity of Commonwealth forces and a central role for the BCOF organisation in maintenance and support. “Whatever happens” he wrote to the Australian Chiefs of Staff,

“a base here is necessary and this implies a chain of supply right forward to the front line including some advanced base in Korea. . . . Any suggestion that each portion of the Empire should be separate and distinct must mean a large overhead to each with the establishment of separate bases. . . . The waste of effort in having all these separate bases and separate units appears to me to have nothing to commend it . . . it appears to me quite impracticable for the British Commonwealth to do anything other than have one force with one organisation and one chain of command.”

The earliest sign of discord came over the question of representation at MacArthur’s headquarters, but was also related to the question of responsibility for forces in Korea. The position of personal representative to the Supreme Commander had lapsed after the British withdrawal of forces from BCOF and the retirement of Gairdner, but in July 1950 the appointment was revived and filled by Air Vice
Marshal Cecil Arthur Bouchier, a retired airman of fifty-five. Bouchier had enjoyed a gallant career, serving in the Great War and having commanded the Royal Indian Air Force in the interwar period and the fighter aircraft forces on D Day in 1944. Between 1946 and 1948 he was Air Officer Commanding British Commonwealth Air Forces, Japan and thus served directly under Robertson, as his principal Air Force officer, and in fact acted as Commander-in-Chief briefly in early 1948 while Robertson was in Australia and New Zealand for consultations. He had retired in 1949 but was reinstated to the active list and sent to Japan in 1950.

Gasciogne had recommended against the appointment on the grounds that Robertson would be likely to resent it, but was ignored. The Foreign Office minuted Attlee about the potential difficulties in light of the fact that “Robertson is a particularly ‘touchy’ individual and we have had a good many difficulties with him in the past.” Although acknowledging that Australia, New Zealand and Canada all had an interest in the matter, the Foreign Office considered it sufficient merely that they be informed of the appointment after approval had been obtained from US sources. Attlee noted that he would “speak to Menzies” about potential difficulties with Robertson.

The selection and appointment of Bouchier is interesting. There is no evidence, nor was there ever any suggestion, that Robertson as Commander-in-Chief, or the Australian Chiefs of Staff, had ever failed to keep the British fully informed on matters which arose in Japan and which were of interest to the Commonwealth. The appointment of an airman made little sense, in that Bouchier’s considerable experience with fighter aircraft in no way qualified him for command in, or comment upon operations which were pre-eminently army ones, and this was to have serious consequences early in the war. The only other justification was previous relations with MacArthur. There is no evidence that Bouchier enjoyed any great level of access after he was appointed as the Chiefs of Staff representative. This access was based on the position he occupied then, and not on any previous association.

The only grounds on which the appointment could be justified, previous lack of information, operational expertise, or previous closeness to MacArthur, did not in fact exist. Why then was the appointment made? The answer appears to lie in a mixture of internal Whitehall politics and malice. Although Bouchier was sent as representative of the Chiefs of Staff, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field Marshal Sir William Slim, disowned him as soon as the Australians objected. The Foreign Office did not have the power to make the appointment, but benefitted from it. Instigation for the appointment probably came from the Minister for Defence, Emmanuel Shinwell, with the agreement, if not necessarily connivance, of Attlee. This would explain why Bouchier was accredited as the representative of the Chiefs of Staff and not of the Prime Minister, as Gairdner had been. Robertson had never been popular in Whitehall, for he was too ready to assert the rights of the dominions and insist these be recognised. In addition, it is probable that sections of the Foreign and War Offices sought to isolate him and undermine his position. Additional weight for this proposition is provided by the fact that Bouchier’s “mission” comprised himself and one sergeant. He was entirely reliant upon others for accommodation, transport and signals priorities. The poor man even had to encode and type his own daily reports. It was not exactly a high-level mission.

Robertson’s personal position was invidious, but this was not the most serious consequence arising from the situation. As he wrote later, the result was that he:

“did not hear as much as I should have heard of what was going on and UN command were never quite sure who they should refer to on British Commonwealth matters.”

These concerns were perfectly illustrated when the British despatched the depleted 27th Brigade to Korea from Hong Kong. Bouchier urged haste in order that Britain should be the first UN nation to physically commit forces, and suggested that the brigade sail without its transport or heavy equipment in order to save time. He was confident that any such deficiencies could be made good from American sources, and in this demonstrated complete ignorance of the true situation facing the US Army.

Robertson was not informed of this until after the recommendations had been accepted in London, and even then was informed not
by Bouchier but by General Harding at Far East Land Forces who thought the proposition militarily unsound. The end result was that the battalions sat on the wharfs at Pusan for a week waiting for their transport to catch them up. With more serious long-term implications was the expectation that BCOF would provide certain services to the brigade that the Americans could not, and on a generally ad hoc basis. With characteristic directness, Robertson requested his superiors in Melbourne to place the arrangements on a regular footing. "I feel that we are just being made use of on the one hand and being insulted and slighted on the other," he wrote:

"The Americans also somewhat bewildered and ... cannot understand why the whole of this is not done through BCOF. If UK is desirous of acting independently with her forces being maintained by the Americans then I consider this should apply to all her forces ... [we can] then make very considerable reductions in BCOF and take some steps towards the withdrawal from occupation." 13

Rowell, the Australian Chief of the General Staff, needed no further prompting. On 31 August he addressed a long, polite, but very hard-nosed signal to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff. His opening shot was a succinct comment on much that had characterised the Empire military relationship since the beginning of the Second World War.

"We always talk very glibly about the way we cooperate but when it actually comes to the practical test we have a special facility for doing the opposite. I suggest in the present circumstances the more or less complete sidetracking of BCOF is a case in point."

Rowell went on to ask whether, for political reasons, the British had decided to deal through the Americans or whether simple dislike of Robertson had led them to consider setting up a separate channel of their own. The end result, he felt, was that British troops would suffer from the failure to reach agreement on the use of BCOF facilities.

"As things stand today Commander-in-Chief BCOF is under no obligation whatever to afford British troops any facilities. In actual fact your people are compelled to use our signals and cipher staff and I have no doubt that very soon Bouchier or Coad will be asking for ... hospital accommodation and the like. Under no circumstances would we refuse these facilities but we would very much prefer to have their use planned for ... particularly as any increase in the existing base facilities will have to be met from here. I suggest to you that it is not too late to put this business on the right basis and so prevent what can only become a quote buggers muddle unquote in which the only people to suffer will be the soldiers." 14

Slim assured Rowell that the British had no intention of cutting out Robertson or BCOF and that, on the contrary, their intention was to utilize BCOF's facilities to the maximum. He expressed himself as being in "complete agreement with everything" Rowell had said. Bouchier's independence of action was about to come to an end, for in any battle over jurisdiction the arguments favoured Robertson. Bouchier's inability to act effectively in the role he wished to write for himself has already been noted. Now it became evident that he also lacked a powerful advocate in Whitehall, for the CIGS had no intention of provoking a breach with the Australians while the Foreign Office, happy to use him for their own purposes, privately expressed no faith in him. 15 On 24 October he relinquished all responsibility for the British forces operating in Korea, a responsibility which passed officially to Robertson.

Two matters awaited resolution, the size and form of the organisation in Japan and the future role of the hapless Air Vice Marshal Bouchier. At a meeting on 17 August the Australian Defence Committee had instructed Robertson to consult with the Americans on the size and form of the Commonwealth base, and had also ordered a Joint Administrative Planning Committee report on the matter. The latter recommended that a limited force commitment required a small base establishment, and that it might even be possible to commence winding-up BCOF as had originally been intended. 16 This supposed a very limited and attenuated role for BCOF, indeed almost no role at all, and was scarcely in keeping with Robertson's vision. Once again, however, the situation changed. Rowell circulated the JAPC report to the New Zealand CGS and the War Office, and was surprised to find that the War Office favoured an expanded supply and administrative role for BCOF in keeping with an earlier agreement entered into with Australia and New Zealand in August. Rowell disagreed, but thought it
difficult to insist on a change of the policy which we ourselves proposed and endorsed.'

BCOF now went ahead and began to regularise the arrangements for support of Commonwealth forces.

Part of this process involved the provision of a directive to Robertson, setting out his duties and responsibilities to the participating governments, and in doing so ran into further objections from the British. In particular, the latter would not agree to Robertson being the representative of the British Chiefs of Staff in dealing with the Americans. They insisted that this function should continue to be carried out by Bouchier and that they would amend his instructions to reflect the fact that he was to have no direct administrative interest in the British forces in Korea.

The Australians were not happy with this since they considered that such a dual appointment "was not in harmony with the established principles for cooperation in British Commonwealth Defence." Indeed they resented it quite strongly, although they had not previously expressed opposition despite the fact that just such a dual appointment had been in existence since July. The British countered by pointing out that Attlee had discussed the matter with Menzies, and that in similar circumstances the Australians would want a representative of their own on the spot. The Defence Committee responded that Menzies had not in fact mentioned this to anyone, and that in the past "they had frequently not had such a representative." Parallels were also drawn with "the anomaly of Gairdner", a little belatedly one might think.

The Defence Committee reluctantly accepted the amendment, but the matter did not end there, for the Foreign Office now expressed concern that the situation in Japan "could conceivably do harm to our relations with Australia." The British High Commissioner to Australia raised the matter personally with Menzies, reminding the latter of his conversation with Attlee over Robertson's "temperament." Menzies showed little interest, however, and there was nothing more that the Foreign Office could do, for British officials in Tokyo were utterly opposed to Robertson being removed at that time. As the High Commissioner noted, despite the fact that they were dealing "with an inflated ego who has been a source of continuous embarrassment on the personal level everyone seems to agree . . . that he has done an excellent job in Japan and we do not at this stage want him displaced."

He also volunteered the interesting observation that most of the British officials in Tokyo could not comprehend the reasoning behind Bouchier's appointment in the first place.

The end result was a compromise, and probably pleased no-one. Robertson remained as Commander-in-Chief until the end of 1951 and retained non-operational control and administrative responsibility for British Commonwealth forces in Korea. Bouchier remained as personal representative of the British Chiefs of Staff on the Supreme Commander's headquarters, even after MacArthur was removed by Truman and the principal justification for his presence completely disappeared. The Australians had successfully defended the principle that an officer from the Dominions could command British troops, and had done the wider argument that favoured Australian leadership of the Commonwealth in Pacific Affairs no harm either. The Foreign Office continued to dislike Robertson, Robertson continued to resent Bouchier's encroaching on his authority, and Bouchier continued to discharge his only remaining function, daily reporting to the British Chiefs of Staff.

The logistic and administrative organisation in Japan functioned efficiently for the benefit of the troops in the line, and for this success Robertson can take much of the credit. He had insisted, in the face of strong pressure, that the existing BCOF organisation could and should provide the back-up for Commonwealth forces in the area, and had successfully argued that it was unwise to assume or expect that the thinly-stretched American system had the capacity to do this. In the space of three months, his organisation had been transformed from a force of one battalion and supporting services, readying itself to return to Australia, into an expanding base organisation supporting one brigade already in the field, preparing to support a second, and planning to support a third should it be despatched from Canada. On top of all this he had maintained communications with MacArthur who, once the Korean War began and especially after the Inchon landings, was out of Tokyo as often as he was present. His insistence on the continuing role of BCOF meant that Australians played a much larger role in
the non-operational command of forces than they would otherwise have done, and found them playing a central role in certain areas, such as the financing of the force which was administered by the Australian Treasury. In this latter instance, Australians found themselves leading negotiations with the Americans on behalf of the Commonwealth over questions of financial reimbursement. Such a situation had not arisen before and might, without exaggeration, be considered as important a milestone in Australian-British relations as the Halibut Fisheries Treaty of 1923 was to Anglo-Canadian relations.22

I began by suggesting that Robertson's achievements in Japan have been downplayed largely through dislike of the man. His temperament and personality were a gift to his opponents, who could thus disguise policy differences behind complaints about his being "difficult." Yet it was the drive and force of his nature that enabled Robertson to put BCOF on a sound logistic and administrative footing where his predecessor, Northcott, had failed. The re-establishment of joint Commonwealth machinery in Japan after June 1950 also raises questions about the whole concept of Commonwealth defence cooperation in the aftermath of the Second World War. Those who attempted to avoid conceding authority to Robertson, apparently regardless of the possible consequences, gave striking conformation to the view of the Canadian Prime, Mackenzie King, that defence cooperation was an excuse for the centralisation of control in Whitehall to the ultimate detriment of the Dominion's own interests.

NOTES
5. Roger Buckley, *Occupation Diplomacy*, 89.
7. Major-General R. N. L. Hopkins, letter to the author, 3 June 1985. Hopkins had known both Gairdner and Cowan before the war, friendly with both, and cannot therefore be construed as a biased witness.
10. Robertson to Chiefs of Staff, 4 August 1950, CRS A 5954 Box 1688, file 2.
15. Minute, R. H. Scott to Sir Patrick Dixon and Sir William Strang, 19 October 1950. PRO F0371/84108. Bouvier "is not in my view the possessor of a very sound judgment and... lends himself too readily to echoing [MacArthur]." Bouvier's reports were valuable to the Foreign Office, however, because SCAP refused military briefings to civilian members of the liaison missions.
17. Minute, Rowell to Secretary, Defence Committee, 3 October 1950, CRS A5799, 50/107.
18. Minute, Cassells, Chief Liaison Officer, United Kingdom Service Liaison Staff, to Department of Defence, Melbourne, 23 October 1950. CRS A5799, 50/148.
22. This treaty was signed between Canada and the United States, and established the precedent by which the Dominions might sign treaties with a third country without permission from, or reference to, London. This had important implications for Dominion foreign policy, and it was entirely consistent with Canada's more robust attitude to Empire relations.

Jeffrey Grey is a member of the Department of History in the University College, ADFA. A graduate of the Australian National University, he recently completed a doctoral thesis on the Commonwealth and the Korean War. He has published a number of articles in scholarly journals, and is currently engaged in a biography of "Red Robbie".
A Glimpse at the Third Commandant of Duntroon Lieutenant-General James Gordon Legge, C.B., C.M.G., M.A., LL.B.

By Major Warren Perry (RL)

THE 75th Anniversary of the official opening of the Royal Military College of Australia in 1911 on its present site at Duntroon is a time for thoughtful people, interested in the well-being of the College, to reflect on its achievements during the 75 years of its existence. These reflections cannot fail to summon from the shadowy past recollections, either direct or indirect, of at least some of its earlier Commandants. Each of these Commandants has contributed in some way or other to the shaping and guiding of the destiny of the College in the course of its development.

The study of the histories of military colleges for the training of cadets is, although not widely recognised, an important aspect of military education as distinct from military training which is something much narrower in scope and more superficial in content. Military training emphasises habit and experience, rather than knowledge and understanding, which belong rather to the province of military education. But apart from stressing this distinction between military education and military training, it should also be stressed that the study of the origin and development of any military college is inseparable from an examination of its Commandants — an examination of the professional capacity and the personality of each of these Commandants and of the influence that each has had on the development of the College generally and on the education and training of the Cadets, collectively and individually.

A good Commandant stamps his personality not only on the college he commands but also on its individual cadets. Major-General Sir Julius Bruche (1873-1961), the 5th Commandant of Duntroon, claimed in some of my many interesting conversations with him that he could usually pick out an ex-cadet who had passed through the College during the time of Lieutenant-General John William Parnell (1860-1931) as Commandant.

Lieutenant-General J. G. Legge, was the 3rd Commandant of the College. He and Major-General Bruche, the 5th Commandant of the College, were contemporaries in the post-Federation Permanent Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia. But it should be noted that Legge was 10 years older than Bruche. Each had begun his military career before Federation as a Militia officer; each in the course of his career became Chief of the Australian General Staff; and each had been a practising lawyer before he became a Permanent officer. Legge had been a practising Barrister at the New South Wales Bar and Bruche had been a practising Solicitor in Melbourne. Each had a scientifically trained mind which could be applied with advantage in their official work, including Administration, of which Co-ordination and Report Writing are parts, and Military Training by the methodical collection, analysis, classification and evaluation of information for study and application. Nobody falls out of the cradle fully equipped with these qualities and qualifications. They are cultivated over long periods of time, and ideally under sympathetic supervision. Bruche, like Monash, had considerable and precise abilities to describe, to explain and to illustrate when speaking, writing and instructing. I can only presume that Legge had these qualities and qualifications too, because I did not at any time meet him or even sight him.

However, neither Legge nor Bruche expressed their thoughts in any fumbling schoolboy fashion. Each wrote with firmness, clarity and assuredness just as many other great soldiers have done such as Wellington, Hamley, Ian Hamilton, Monash, McCay and Iven Mackay. These features of the trained minds of Legge and Bruche, which can be verified by any reader who cares to study their official correspondence and reports, made them ideal selections for the post of Commandant of the Royal Military College of Australia. Each was a man of thought as well as a man of action. Neither leapt before he looked.
Legge is still the best qualified Commandant, academically, that the College has had. But he was not a Staff College graduate. When he was eligible, in the matters of age and rank, no arrangements existed for officers of Australia's military forces to attend the Staff College, Camberley. This Staff College was the only one in the British Empire until the opening of the Indian Staff College, Quetta in temporary premises at Deolali on 1 July 1905. It should be mentioned here too that two later Commandants at Duntroon were university graduates. One, Brigadier Eric Fairweather Harrison (1880-1948) was a graduate in Arts at Cambridge, a later Commandant, Major-General C. A. E. Fraser, was also a university graduate in Arts.

Major-General John Coates, a more recent Commandant, is a graduate in Arts. Major-General B. H. Hockney, the present Commandant, is a graduate in Science.

Legge had other claims to distinction since his return to Australia from active service for almost the duration of the South African War, 1899-1902. He was the "architect" of Australia's Universal Military Training Scheme which was introduced at the Cadet level in 1911 and at the CMF level in 1912. He became Australia's first Quartermaster-General in January 1909. The appointment with this title had a proud history which extended back through the British Army to its first occupant in 1688, Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Maxwell. In accordance with normal practice in the Australian Army of tearing up its traditions and its history from time to time and starting again from square 1, the title of Quartermaster-General was abolished some years ago. It was replaced by a title which I can never recall without the aid of a Staff List. After Admiral, Sir John Fisher went to the Admiralty on Trafalgar Day in 1904, he drew up a scheme for its re-organization. In a letter to Ronald, Viscount Esher he said the First Lord of the Admiralty "swallowed it whole" and "I got the Order-in-Council for it". The new scheme, he said, "resuscitated the old titles of Sea Lords dating from A.D. 1613, but which some silly ass 100 years ago altered to Naval Lords. This precedent gives hope to those who wish to see the restoration of those dignified titles of Quartermaster-General and Adjutant-General. Legge was the Australian Representative on the Imperial General Staff at the War Office, London, from June 1912 to July 1914. During this time the so called "Curragh Mutiny" occurred which caused the resignation of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field-Marshal Sir John French. When Legge was appointed Chief of the Australian General Staff on 1 August 1914 he was on his way home from London to Melbourne. A state of war began between the British Empire and the German Empire as from 11 p.m. (London time) on Tuesday 4 August 1914. But Legge did not reach Melbourne until Sunday 9 August 1914 when he took up duty as Australia's first wartime Chief of the General Staff at Victoria Barracks, Melbourne.

The AIF was formed in Australia officially on 15 August 1914 and Bridges, the original Commandant of Duntroon, was appointed with the rank of Major-General, to command it and its 1st Australian Division concurrently. Bridges, while in command of this division in the Gallipoli campaign was mortally wounded and he died on 18 May 1915. The Australian Government sent Legge to Gallipoli to succeed Bridges. In this way Legge became Australia's second divisional commander. Before Bridges had become Australia's first divisional commander in August 1914, Australia had not hitherto maintained any field formations higher than that of an Infantry Brigade and these were commanded by colonels and not, as in the British Army, by brigadier-generals.

But it is not the purpose of this article to consider Legge's Army career in all its details and so our attention will now be turned to a consideration of his work in his last posting before retirement which was that of Commandant of the Royal Military College at Duntroon.

At the close of hostilities, in the War of 1914-1918, on 11 November 1918, Legge had been for a second time Chief of the Australian General Staff since 1 October 1917. In the early post-war era he was to play a major part, militarily, in committees, conferences, discussions and planning connected with Demobilisation, the Re-organization of the post-War AMF, Military Training, the Role of Post-War Military Aviation, and changes in allotments of duties of officers. In this last matter Legge was to be personally affected himself.

Members of the Military Board, of which Legge was the First Military Member, entertained him at a Farewell Dinner at Scot's Hotel, Collins Street, Melbourne on Wednesday evening 12 May 1920. Legge was about to relin-
quisch his post of Chief of the General Staff. Those present included the Minister for Defence, Senator G. F. Pearce, the Assistant Minister for Defence, Major-General Sir Granville Ryrie, and presumably the Permanent Head of the Department of Defence, Mr Thomas Trumble.

Legge’s successor, as Chief of the Australian General Staff, was Major-General (later General) Sir Brudenell White (1876-1940). White’s place in history today is that of Australia’s most outstanding staff officer in war. He was the first Australian officer to gain a p.s.c. at the Staff College, Camberley, and with his brilliant professional qualities and qualifications, he combines an attractive personality. In August 1914 he acted as Chief of the Australian General Staff, in the rank of major, until Legge reached Melbourne to take over from him.

Legge was appointed officially on 1 June 1920 to his next posting which was that of Commandant of the Royal Military College of Australia, Duntroon. He succeeded Major-General J. W. Parnell, who had succeeded earlier, on 1 June 1914, the first Commandant of the College, Brigadier-General W. L. Bridges. Bridges had borne the burdens of establishing the College and then conducting it for its first three years as an educational and training institution. Major General Parnell had borne the heat and burdens of the war years during which time he had tried to maintain educational and training standards. Now Legge had arrived to take over from him and to begin laying the foundations for the post-war years of the College.

When Legge took up duty at Duntroon in June 1920 it was winter and Canberra was a bush town. Daily life there was difficult because many of the conveniences available in Melbourne or Sydney were lacking such as made roads and footpaths, shopping facilities were poor, retail prices were high, and medical and dental services were a cause of anxiety — and inconvenience. People arriving and departing from Canberra did so normally by train and the nearest railway station was that of Queanbeyan. The seat of the Federal Government was still in Melbourne and the Federal Parliament was also located there.

The Australian War Memorial, the National Library of Australia and the Australian National University were not even on the drawing board when Legge arrived in Canberra in 1920 to take command of its military college. At the College the Cadets trained with horse-drawn field artillery and their Cavalry training was done with horses and not with armoured fighting vehicles.

One of Legge’s major duties, soon after his arrival at the College was to prepare for a visit later in the month by H.R.H. Edward, Prince of Wales. His Royal Highness arrived on Monday 21 June 1920 and he was received on the lawn at Duntroon House by the Commandant and a Guard of Honour of 2 officers and 50 Staff Cadets. Later, Legge accompanied His Royal Highness on an inspection of the Corps of Staff Cadets, the buildings of the College and the Cadets at work.

Later in that year, on 1 October 1920, some officers on the staff of the College, including the Commandant, were affected by the creation of a new corps designated the Australian Staff Corps. This Corps was created by the transference to it of a number of officers who had hitherto been borne on a number of separate seniority lists which were then cancelled. The new Corps consisted exclusively of the combatant officers of the Permanent Military Forces. Legge’s transfer to the Australian Staff Corps on 1 October 1920 from the Administrative and Instructional Staff made him one of its original general officers. The most senior general officer of this new Corps at this time was Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Chauvel whose distinguished service in the War of 1914-18 was the Commander of the Desert Mounted Corps is today a matter of history. The earlier Indian Staff Corps possibly provided the ideas, in matters of organization and composition, for the Australian Staff Corps in 1920.

The first Graduation Ceremony at Duntroon, over which Legge presided, took place on Wednesday 15 December 1920. It had a special significance for him. Among the Staff Cadets who graduated that day was one of his three sons who later became Major-General Stanley Ferguson ‘Sammy’ Legge, CBE (1900-77), an officer of the Australian Staff Corps whose final posting was that of Master-General of the Ordnance. As Legge watched his son go through the motions of graduating that day in 1920 his thoughts would occasionally have turned to his eldest son, Private George Ferguson Legge (1897-1918), a student-soldier of the 22nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Brigade, 2nd Australian Division, who was killed in action.
on the Western Front in Europe on 4 October 1918.

The Minister for Defence, Senator G. F. Pearce, visited the College on Thursday 24 March 1921 when he inspected the College premises and the Cadets at work. He had a special interest in the College not shared by any other Federal Ministers for Defence. He had approved of the selection of the site at Duntroon for the College; he approved of Colonel W. T. Bridges' outline plan for the foundation of the College; and he was the Minister for Defence at the time of the official opening of the College on Tuesday afternoon 27 June 1911 although on that date he was absent in London on official business.

In the following month, on Thursday 14 April 1921. His Excellency the Governor-General, Lord Forster, visited the College accompanied by the Inspector-General of the A.M.F., Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Chauvel, and Commodore H.M. Edwards, R.N. who was representing the Naval Board, Melbourne. His Excellency was received on the lawn at Duntroon House at a ceremonial parade of the Staff Cadets. His Excellency inspected the College buildings and the cadets at work. That evening His Excellency dined in the Cadets' Mess. After Dinner the vice-regal party departed by train from Queenbeyan Railway Station.

As Commandant of the College, Legge continued the practice of his predecessors of inviting persons prominent in their professions to visit the College as guest speakers. The speakers for the year ending 30 June 1921 included: Captain C.E.W. Bean who spoke on "Pozières"; Professor Sir Edgeworth Davide, D.S.O. etc., formerly Chief Geologist at Haig's G.H.Q., France, who spoke on "Geology in War"; and Colonel F.B. Heritage, the first Chief Instructor at the School of Musketry, Randwick in 1811 and a future Commandant of the College spoke on "Modern Developments in Musketry".

The 1 June 1921 marked the completion of Legge's first year of duty as Commandant of the College and the 27 of June 1921 marked the 10th Anniversary of its official opening in 1911. During this interval the War of 1914-18 had come and gone — the War in which the graduates of the College had distinguished themselves beyond the expectations of their civil teachers and their military instructions at the College.

Legge thought highly of the officers who had graduated at Duntroon, and he spoke from much direct experience when he said in the Report of the R.M.C. of A for the Year 1920-21: "Prior to my appointment to the College, I realised the great value of the training obtained by the graduates, and have seen it on active service." But he was not alone in holding this option, for he went on to point out that: "When I had the task, as Chief of the General Staff, of organising new units of the A.I.F. during the early part of the Great War, (the value of this training at Duntroon) was brought home to me by the urgent demands for the services of class after class — demands pressed by officers of the Citizen Forces, who understood the need for the training which is given here."

A glance at Legge's Staff List at the College, as at 30 June 1921, will show that his Adjutant was Major (later Brigadier) A.M. Forbes, M.C., a Gunner officer of the Staff Corps; his Director of Military Art was Lieutenant-Colonel (later Lieutenant-General Sir) J.D. Lavarack, another Gunner officer of the Staff Corps, who later became Commandant of the College, Chief of the Australian General Staff, and Governor of Queensland. His Director of Drill was Major (later Brigadier) O.V. Hoad, Staff Corps whose father, Major-General Sir J.C. Hoad, was the Chief of the Australian General Staff at the time of the official opening of the College in 1911. Legge's Staff Officer for Administration was Captain (later Brigadier) R.C.G. Prisk (1849-1960) of the Staff Corps. His knowledge and experience of Organisation and Administration at higher levels and his skill in drafting reports and correspondence set very high standards for others to emulate. He strove at all times for excellence in the execution of staff duties and in this way he inspired others to do likewise.

The Commandant's Civil staff in the year 1920-21 did not have a Director of Studies. So presumably the Commandant himself had to co-ordinate the work of this branch of his staff. It included Professor R.J.A. Barnard (Mathematics) and Professor R. Hosking (Physics) who were members of the original staff in 1911. Professor J.F.M. Haydon who was the Head of the Department of Foreign Languages, had joined the staff of the College in January 1912. Mr A.D. Gilchrist, who was the Lecturer in Mathematics had joined the staff of the College
Major General Sir William Throsby Bridges, KCB, CMG.
Queen’s and Regimental Colours of the Royal Military College.
in January 1912 from the staff of the School of Mines and Industries, Ballarat where he had since December 1905 been the Head of the Department of Engineering and Surveying. At a Special Meeting of the Council of the School on 11 January 1912, his resignation was accepted with “the regret of the council, the staff and the students in order to take up a position as Lecturer in Mathematics at the Royal Military College, Duntroon”. These were of course only a few of Legge’s more numerous Civil staff.

When the New Year opened on 1 January 1922 Australia was in the grip of a severe economic depression; the severe reduction in the Estimates for the College for 1921-22 were already being felt at the College; and because of these financially stringent times the New Zealand Government decided to withdraw its Cadets from the College and not to send any more in the near future. An immediate consequence of this decision was that one N.Z. Cadet, who had completed three years of the course, and four other N.Z. Cadets, who had completed two years of the course, did not return to the College at the end of the Christmas-New Year vacation in 1921-22. This decision was a bitter disappointment to Legge and no doubt to the N.Z. Staff Cadets concerned also.

The Annual Presentation of Prizes in 1921 took place on Tuesday 13 December and the Assistant Minister for Defence, Major-General Sir Granville Ryrie, presented the prizes to the winners. The Sword of Honour was presented to Battery Sergeant Major F.E.G. Batley who, in December 1922, transferred to the Indian Army. The King’s Medal was awarded to Corporal C.R. Evatt.

At the Graduation Ceremony at the College on the following Day, Wednesday 14 December 1921, Corporal C.R. Evatt graduated top of his Class. Other Staff Cadets who graduated that day included Company Sergeant Major A.R Garrett who later became a Knight, a lieutenant-general and Chief of the Australian General Staff; Sergeant E.M. Dollery, M.C. who later became a Brigadier and Commander of Tasmania Command; and Lance Corporal G.E.W. Hurley, who later became a brigadier and Military Secretary of the A.M.F.

The British Empire Delegation to the Washington Naval Disarmament Conference was led by the British statesman, Mr A.J. Balfour. The Australian component to this Delegation was led by Senator G.F. Pearce whose work as an Australian Minister for Defence will always form an inseparable part of the history of Duntroon. Balfour had a great respect for Senator Pearce as a statesman; and their relations in Washington during this Conference, which had begun in November 1921, was a long one and it did not close till February 1922. It was while attending it that Senator Pearce relinquished, on December 1921, the Defence Portfolio. He was succeeded by Sir Walter Massy-Greene.

The Annual Presentation of Prizes in 1921 took place on Tuesday 13 December and the Assistant Minister for Defence, Major-General Sir Granville Ryrie, presented the prizes to the winners. The Sword of Honour was presented to Battery Sergeant Major F.E.G. Batley who, in December 1922, transferred to the Indian Army. The King’s Medal was awarded to Corporal C.R. Evatt.

At the Graduation Ceremony at the College on the following Day, Wednesday 14 December 1921, Corporal C.R. Evatt graduated top of his Class. Other Staff Cadets who graduated that day included Company Sergeant Major A.R Garrett who later became a Knight, a lieutenant-general and Chief of the Australian General Staff; Sergeant E.M. Dollery, M.C. who later became a Brigadier and Commander of Tasmania Command; and Lance Corporal G.E.W. Hurley, who later became a brigadier and Military Secretary of the A.M.F.

During the year 1921-22 Legge received portraits from the following distinguished soldiers of British and Allied armies during the War of 1914-19 which were hung in the Mess of the Staff Cadets:

**British Armies**

Field-Marshal Viscount Allenby
General Sir W.R. Birdwood, Bart
General Louis Botha
Lieutenant-General Sir A.W. Currie
Lieutenant-General Sir A.J. Godley
Field-Marshal Earl Haig
General Lord Horne
General The Hon H.A. Lawrence
Lieutenant-General Sir W.R. Marshall
Field-Marshal Lord Plummer
General Lord Rawlinson
Field-Marshall Sir William Robertson  
General Sir James Willcocks  
General Sir H.H. Wilson  
Air-Marshall Sir H.M. Trenchard, RAF late British Army

**Allied Armies**

Marshal Foch, French Army  
General J.J. Pershing, US Army

In looking over this list of names today — names which were headlines 65 years ago — one is left wondering how well they are known or remembered today outside military circles.

General Sir William Birdwood inspected the College on 15 and 16 April 1920 and during the first day he unveiled the memorial stone on the grave of the first Commandant of the College, Major-General Sir W.T. Bridges. Some readers may be surprised to learn that in 1925 Birdwood became Australia’s first Field-Marshall.

General Sir Arthur Currie was the “General Sir John Monash” of Canada. Currie and Monash met for the last time at the official opening of India’s new capital, New Delhi on this occasion as the representative of his country. Monash died later in that year, on 8 October 1931, in Melbourne. Currie who was ten years younger than Monash, died on 30 November 1933 in Montreal, Canada.

General Sir Alexander Godley of the British Army was not a stranger at Duntroon or to the earlier graduates of the College. Sometime in the latter half of 1912 — when he was commanding the N.Z. Military Forces — he made what was probably his third visit to Duntroon. His first visit to Duntroon was to inspect, with Bridges, the site on which the College was later established.

Field-Marshall Lord Haig had visited Australia in 1892 as a junior officer. But he did not make a second visit and so he did not ever see Duntroon. But many of its graduates served under him the War of 1914-18. Legge himself, during that War served under Haig as GOC of the 2nd Australian Division.

Field-Marshall Sir William Robertson was a figure more remote from the history of Duntroon than some of the others in this portrait gallery which Legge referred to in his last Annual Report as Commandant of the College. As far as I know Robertson did not ever visit Australia and so he never saw Duntroon and for most of the latter half of the War of 1914-18 he was the C.I.G.S. But there are no doubts about his having been one of the pre-eminent British soldiers of his time. His rise from a Private — he was actually a Trooper in the 16th Lancers — to a Field-Marshall is alone an achievement which stamped him as an outstanding soldier. His two books *From Private to Field-Marshall* (1921) and *Soldiers and Statesmen, 1914-18* (1926) are, like Shakespeare’s works, books for all times. Even Mr W.M. Hughes has commemorated Field-Marshall Sir William Robertson in a brilliant essay in his *Policies and Potentates*.

Marshal Foch will be remembered for his achievements on the Western Front in Europe in 1918; for his own published works including *The Principles of War* and *The Conduct of War*; and for the books that have been published about him.


It is unfortunate that space forbids consideration of the other distinguished historical figures whose names appear in General Legge’s List of Portraits presented to Duntroon during his period of command.

One distinguished name is missing from Legge’s List of Portraits and presumably because he did not present the College with a portrait of himself, at least when Legge was its Commandant. The name is that of General Sir Ian Hamilton under whom Legge had served, as a divisional commander, in the Gallipoli campaign of 1915.

In the earlier half of the previous year, while Legge was serving on the Imperial General Staff at the War Office, London Hamilton came to Australia on an official visit. He was then the Inspector-General of British Overseas Forces and, at the request of the Australian Government, he had come to inspect and report on Australia’s military forces and its training establishments.

He spent two days at Duntroon in 1914, Monday 30 and Tuesday 31 March. The late Brigadier J.E. Lee, in his *Duntroon*, said: “The visit of such famous military leader and writer was an event in the life of the College and all were profoundly impressed with his colourful
Order of Dress

P.T. Dress, 1911-1916 RMC Blazer, 1911-1932
Walking Out Dress, 1911-1934
Ceremonial Dress, 1937-1939
Ceremonial Dress, 1949-1952
Sketches by: John Dowie and Jeff Isaacs.

Marching Order, 1911-1938

Mounted Dress Summer, 1915-1942

Ceremonial Dress Summer, Introduced 1960

Winter Dress, 1986
personality.” Hamilton inspected the College thoroughly “in all its phases” and each Cadet was introduced by the Commandant, Brigadier-General Bridges, to General Hamilton. This former A.D.C. to Field-Marshal Lord Roberts in India, this former Chief of Staff to Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener in the War in South Africa of 1899-1902, this leader of men and man of imagination, was an inspiration to the staff and cadets of the College.

The Staff Cadets, who would have been presented to General Hamilton on this occasion, would probably have included those Cadets who later became: Brigadier W.J. Urquhart who enjoyed the distinction of being Staff Cadet No. 1 of the College; Lieutenant-General S.F. Rowell; Major-General Sir G.F. Wootten; Brigadier E.L. Vowles, a Commandant of the College; Brigadier J.E. Lee, author of Duntroon; Brigadier B. Combes a Commandant of the College; Lieutenant-General Sir H.C.H. Robertson; and Lieutenant-General Sir William Bridgeford.

If the Cadets who met General Hamilton at Duntroon remembered the occasion for the rest of their lives, General Hamilton certainly did not forget his visit to the College in 1914. In the year before the end of his long life, in his 95th year in October 1947, he wrote the First of the Six Forewords, which were published in Brigadier Lee’s Duntroon.

But towards the end of the financial year on 30 June 1922, Legge had more urgent matters to attend to than that of displaying portraits of distinguished soldiers in the College.

In April 1922 the Minister for Defence, Sir Walter Massy-Greene, visited the College and in the course of a speech to the Cadets he denied the rumour that the College was to be closed down and he assured his audience that the existence of the College would continue. This assurance by the minister created a more hopeful outlook for the time being at the College. But it did not allay altogether the feeling that more was yet to happen.

Legge himself did not have long to wait for the next move in the inauguration of the Government’s retrenchment scheme. The Minister for Defence announced, on Wednesday 28 June, 1922, that in pursuance of its policy of retrenchment, the Federal Government was obliged to dispense with the services of many officers, including those of Major-General J.G. Legge, who, he said, “had rendered Australia very long and valuable service in peace and war”. But against this tribute three factors have to be equated. First, his services were dispensed with before he had reached the age of 62, which was then the prescribed age for an officer of his rank to retire. Second, he returned to civil life without a pension because no superannuation scheme then existed for members of the P.M.F. Third, he went from the familiar scenes of his labours forever without a knighthood to serve as a mark of public appreciation for his “long and valuable service in peace and war” to the nation.

Legge relinquished the post of Commandant of the Royal Military College of Australia, Duntroon and he ceased active military duty in the Permanent Military Forces on Monday 31 July 1922. His career as a regular officer had thus come to an end and it came to an end just a fortnight before his 59th year.

It has been said earlier and elsewhere that: “The Australian Army’s loss by his premature retirement is incalculable; and the benefits which the nation gained by his premature retirement in 1922 were certainly not obvious in September 1939.” Legge died at Oakleigh in Victoria on 18 September 1947 at the age of 84 years.

NOTES
3. For a list of the officers of the Australian Staff Corps, as at 1 December 1922, see Officers List of the A.M.F. Part 1. Active List, pp. 45-53.
7. I served my “apprenticeship”, as a staff officer, under Brigadier Prisk when he was the DA & QMG of the Second Australian Army, which was then commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir Iven Mackay. The demands of these two officers for ever higher standards of competence in staff work were insatiable. In this pursuit of excellence, each exemplified the truth of Mr Malcolm...
Fraser's later, and oft repeated, assertion that "Life is not meant to be easy". W.P.
8. Earlier Professor Richard Hosking had been on the staff of the School of Mines and Industries, Ballarat, Victoria.
9. Later, I studied German under Professor Haydon at the Canberra University College which was then a college of the University of Melbourne, W.P.
13. Brigadier Urquhart died as recently as November 1985 in Adelaide, South Australia. At his funeral on 2 December 1985 Major-General R.N.L. Hopkins, a graduate and former Commandant of the R.M.C., Duntroon, delivered a Eulogy. Its text was published in the Newsletter of the Duntroon Society, April 1986, pp.6-7.

Major Warren Perry, MBE, ED, MA(Melb.), BEc(Syd.) (RL) was commissioned in the RAA as a Militia Officer. He served with the AIF in WWII in regimental and staff appointments. His post-war career in the Commonwealth Public Service included service in the Department of Defence. Major Perry has contributed to the Army Journal and the Defence Force Journal on previous occasions.
Guns Firing, 1812 Overture

Queen's Birthday Parade.
Field-Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey and The Exercise of High Command in Australia

By Lieutenant Colonel David Buchanan, RAR

'Command is very much a personal matter, but the exercise of high command in modern war demands much more than an instinct for leadership.'

Introduction

There is no doubt that Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey served Australia with distinction in a military career that spanned two world wars. His career encompassed landing at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915, as Bridges' GSO III (Intelligence) and the signing of the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay on 2 September 1945, as Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Military Forces (C-in-C AMF). Not surprisingly, a career such as this contained many aspects of significance, more than a few of which are relevant to the Army today. Amongst these may be listed courage under fire, exemplary staff work, great organisational ability and a sound grasp of both tactics and military strategy. All of these attributes are well documented and form part of the positive side of the legend that is Blamey.

It is clear, however, that these attributes were not Blamey's alone. The history of Australia's involvement in both world wars illustrates the worth of Australian divisional, corps and army commanders in these conflicts. All of them demonstrated most of these attributes, and some of them all of them. Only Blamey, however, was given the privilege and the burden of the full extent of high command. It is Blamey's exercise of this high command, in the South West Pacific Area (SWPA) between 1942 and 1945, that provides the most lasting legacy of Australia's premier soldier and only field marshal.

High Command

From the outset it is necessary to determine just what is meant by high command. High command has been defined recently as 'that level of command which determines and executes military strategy and allocates military resources'. Although this definition separates the concept of high command from that of command, and indicates the level at which it applies, it fails to indicate clearly the relationship between high command and the higher, or political, direction of war. It is this relationship, central to the concept of high command, that is often the most demanding burden the high commander has to bear. As chief military advisor to the Government, the high commander would fail if he were incapable of translating political will into military action on the one hand, and tempering political determinations with military realities on the other.

Thus 'an instinct for leadership', no matter how necessary for any commander, is not sufficient qualification for a successful high commander. Prime Minister R. G. Menzies may well have selected Blamey to command the 6th Division in 1939 because of his power of command, 'a faculty hard to define but impossible to mistake when you meet it', but Blamey needed more than 'presence' to exercise high command successfully in the SWPA. He not only had to determine and execute military strategy, but he also had to ensure that this was done in accordance with, and in support of, national strategy. Not only did he have to allocate the military resources made available to him, but he was also actively involved in securing the resources he needed and ensuring that their use met with Government approval.

He was indeed 'the link between the Government and battlefield'. Unfortunately for Blamey, and to some extent Australia, he was the only or the main link. The environment in which he exercised high command was a difficult one.

The Command Environment

On 17th March 1942, Prime Minister J. Curtin, in consultation with the Australian Government's Advisory War Council, accepted with enthusiasm the appointment of the United States' General Douglas MacArthur as Supreme Commander of all Allied Forces in the SWPA. One month later the War Cabinet formally as-
signed to him command of all the available fighting formations of the three Australian services. Under the pressure of seemingly imminent Japanese attack on Australia, the Australian Government made a notable surrender of sovereignty. MacArthur determined strategy and his advice was generally accepted, even when it went beyond the limits of military strategy.

Australia's international situation has changed since World War II and it is inconceivable that Australia would ever again willingly surrender its self-determination to an ally. It is conceivable, however, that Australia may once again need the help of such an ally, or could be involved in combined operations. If the ally is more powerful than Australia, for example the United States, a future high commander may well have to guard Australia's national interest, and fight for it as hard as did Blarney. Alternatively, if Australia ever has to provide assistance to a weaker ally, for example PNG, Blarney's problems with MacArthur provide lessons that a future high commander should bear in mind in the interests of allied goals and harmony.

The other aspect of Blarney's command environment, the tenuous political basis on which he maintained his command position, is probably of greater immediate relevance. Although acknowledged as the most suitable officer available at the time of his appointment, Blarney was not popular with much of the Government and a number of his peers. Throughout his tenure as C-in-C AMF he suffered almost continuous sniping from his political and military detractors, and was supported on occasions only by Curtin. Admittedly, much of his unpopularity was a result of his personality, but it is a characteristic of high command that, because contact with politicians is frequent, politico-military personality clashes are more likely to occur at this level than at the lower levels of command. The high commander must be able to cope with this.

High Command and Strategy

It is fortunate for Australia that MacArthur's interpretation of American strategy in the SWPA, until approximately the end of 1943, roughly coincided with the Australian Government's grand strategy. The immediate danger to Australia was from the Japanese forces in Papua and New Guinea. There was little choice but to stem the Japanese advance initially, build up the Allied forces in Australia and then launch a counter-offensive. Thus the Australian Government's reliance on MacArthur for strategic advice during this period, although detrimental to the development of an independent Australian strategy, caused little conflict.

At the level of military strategy however, as distinct from grand strategy, it was left to Blarney to safeguard Australia's interests, by default. As Commander Allied Land Forces, the majority of whom were Australian during this period, Blarney was able to influence the deployment and employment of his forces. This was despite MacArthur's desire to control the land battle himself. While it is true that Blarney lost command of the US component of Allied Land Forces in February 1943, with the grouping of all US land forces as 'Alamo Force' under MacArthur's direct command, he continued to resist all attempts to fragment Australian forces.

The employment of Australian forces as homogeneous formations, commanded by an Australian, when serving outside Australia, was a long-standing Government principle. On Blarney's instigation, Curtin was forced to remind MacArthur of this in February 1945 to maintain Australian control over the First Australian Army. Prior to reaching this stage, Blarney had on a number occasions been forced to confront MacArthur directly. In late 1944, for example, during the planning for the invasion of the Philippines, Blarney refused to agree to a plan to employ 7th and 9th Divisions separately, under American corps commanders, in November 1944 and January 1945. As a result, 1 Australian corps was tasked to advance westwards through Borneo, and later invade Java.

The importance of this, and its relevance to Blarney's exercise of high command, was only partly that Blarney was able to maintain the integrity of the forces that were his responsibility. Undoubtedly the divisions would have been armed, equipped and rationed to conform to the American formations, and both their strategic and tactical employment and deployment would have followed suit. Blarney's objections to this were not just parochial however. He was aware that fragmentation of the Australian forces, particularly as they are now in the minority in the SWPA, would effectively decrease the perception of Australia's contribution to the war for part of the last year of
The RMC Anzac Memorial Chapel completed 1966.
the war, Australia's Army in the field was 'larger in proportion to population than that of any of the allies, except perhaps Russia'.

The conduct of offensive operations in Borneo and the Dutch East Indies, in many ways backwaters at this stage of the Pacific War, was criticised at the time and still receives adverse comment. Blarney pursued these operations for a number of reasons, including maintaining the morale of his troops, eliminating the Japanese in the area to enable a reduction in Army strength and the freeing of the native inhabitants. He also wished to free his forces for the future invasion of Japan to maintain Australian visibility and influence in the region. Perhaps Blarney was not specifically authorized to decide on policy of this nature, in this particular case, but:

'... if he had ignored the political aspect and... had made his plans purely according to military facts, he would surely have been condemned by many critics.'

The relevance here is not that future high commanders should attempt to make political policy decisions, but that once aware of the Government's political policy decisions, these aims must be borne in mind when military strategy is determined and executed.

**High Command and Resources**

Whereas the determination and execution of military strategy have particular relevance in war, the securing and allocation of military resources are a function of high command in peace as well as war. Blarney's example in this field has particular relevance to the Army today. As chief military adviser to the Government, MacArthur notwithstanding, Blarney was deeply involved with this aspect of his high command, and showed a sensitivity to the implications of military resource management that transcended the merely military. Although a commander may consider military resources to be those armaments, equipments and men allocated to him to enable him to execute military strategy, a high commander must take a broader view. It is within the province of the high commander to consider that all the nation's resources are integrally related to the war effort, and are in a sense military resources. This is not to say that the high commander should be involved in politics, commerce or industry, but that he must be aware of their relationship to the military effort.

Blamey had particular expertise in the field of manpower resources. In 1938 he had been appointed Chairman of the Manpower Committee, with the task of preparing 'allocations of personnel in emergency to the armed forces, munitions factories, key industries and essential services'. Although no plans for the allocation of manpower within industry itself were made, the Committee gained a clear understanding of the proportional allocation that Australia could afford to devote to the armed forces. Their figure of ten per cent was vindicated during the war. Thus when Blamey found himself C-in-C AMF, faced with the responsibility of recommending Army manpower allocations to the Government, he was well aware of the necessary balance that had to be achieved between strategic desirability and resource availability.

This balance was particularly vital to a small industrial nation such as Australia. Curtin revealed that by mid-1944 Australia was over-committed, with twenty-six per cent of manpower allocated to direct war activities. This was despite the reduction in Army strength from twelve to nine divisions, as recommended by Blamey, in April 1943. Curtin ordered a further reduction to six divisions and directed Blamey to release an additional 30,000 troops to industry by June 1945. In the course of the correspondence between Blamey and Curtin that followed this and subsequent directions to reduce Army manpower, Blamey revealed a keen appreciation of both sides of the problem. He was able to limit the decreases with argument that centered on evidence that the Army had in fact released more men than required after June 1944, that further decreases would not enable him to meet the operational requirements set him by MacArthur, and most telling, that: "... further reductions will greatly reduce the status of Australia and our voice later in important matters of policy."

It can be seen then that not only did Blamey allocate the military resources provided to him, but that he had an integral part to play in securing the resources he needed to fulfil his assigned tasks. He appreciated that a changed strategic situation demanded appropriate changes to resource allocation, and advised acting Prime Minister Chifley to seek a reduction in Australia's war effort after the surrender of Germany in May 1945. At the same time he strenuously opposed Government plans to grant immediate discharge to all soldiers who had
served in the Army for five years. His reason for this was that the indiscriminate discharge would denude the Army of many of its senior and junior leaders at time when its remaining three divisions were heavily committed to offensive operations. His submissions to Government resulted in a more gradual and balanced policy that enabled the Army to maintain its effectiveness.

It was obviously easier for Blarney to secure resources during World War II than it is for the Australian Army today. However, there is relevance in Blarney's wartime example that also applies to the Army in the present threat environment. Blarney did not expect to receive the resources he needed just because Australia was at war and there was an obvious military need for them. He realized that the Government had many conflicting responsibilities and had to meet demands for resources from a number of areas. He competed successfully for these resources, not by using emotional rhetoric or sweeping generalisations, but with logically presented argument that demonstrated to the Government the long-term strategic value of his proposals. Thus, even though he was disliked in many quarters, his judgement was respected and he generally achieved his realistic aims.

It is more difficult for the Army today to achieve its perceived aims when there is no recognized immediate threat. It is therefore even more important that proposals for resource allocation should demonstrate an awareness of long-term strategic goals, a consistent and realistic pattern of development and an appreciation of the cost of provision, and non-provision, of these resources. As Blamey demonstrated, the credibility of military judgement in Department of Defence and Government circles may well determine in part, the allocation of resources and thus the Army's ability to meet its, and the nation's, vital requirements.

The Politico-Military Interface

This aspect of Blamey's exercise of high command is the most difficult to analyze and relate to the Army today. While there is no doubt that a critical function of high command is the commander's performance as the link between the Government and the forces, by its very nature this aspect of high command is situational. Despite this, Blamey's career provides some valuable insights and some interesting possibilities that are worth exploring.

There is evidence to suggest that Blamey was a 'Political General', who understood politics and knew how to use power. Like all high commanders, he was selected by politicians and maintained his position only by retaining the confidence of the Government, or in the worst case the Prime Minister, his military skills notwithstanding. Blamey understood the precariousness of his position in late 1942 when he was directed to command from New Guinea. He was 'fighting for his political life'. In the event he took the pragmatic approach, sacked Rowell, benefited from Rowell's careful planning, stabilized the military situation and returned in a much stronger position. He was able to exert his will at Advisory War Council meetings, and through his direct access to the Prime Minister, defuse the complaints of first Curtin's and then Chifley's Army Minister. These actions did little to improve his popularity with the rest of the Government however and with the death of Curtin his power declined rapidly.

Blamey's unceremonious and unrewarded release from service at the end of the war highlights the fine line the high commander must walk, between what he considers to be military necessity on the one hand, and political acceptability on the other. Blamey was not afraid to disagree with political decisions that adversely affected his ability to exercise his command, when he considered it necessary for the successful prosecution of the War. Unfortunately, he lacked the tact required to do this without antagonising those with whom he disagreed. As a result he was allowed to slip quietly into civilian life, and it was not until 1950 that he was finally rewarded for his outstanding contribution, by his promotion to Field Marshal. In fact it has been suggested that the abrasiveness of Blamey's political involvement so unsettled both politicians and civilians at the time, that Australian civil-military relations have reflected their wariness since.

Despite this unfortunate personal trait, Blamey demonstrated the importance to a high commander of an understanding of politics and the relationship between politics and high command. He gained his understanding of politics, in the main, during his term as Victorian Policy Commissioner. Although this was a stormy
period of his life, it fitted him well for the rough world of wartime civil-military relations, as it allowed him to appreciate the different motives and operating methods of his counterparts in the civilian world. This enabled him firstly to understand their concerns and the rationale behind decisions that affected his exercise of high command, and then to present his counter-arguments, when necessary, in an effective way.

Because of this period outside the Army, Blamey’s career could be described as ‘extraordinary’ as opposed to ‘routine’, a prerequisite for modern high command in the opinion of Janowitz. If Janowitz is right, and Blamey’s success as a high commander seems to indicate this, there is a case for following Blamey’s example in the Army today. Mutual benefit could accrue from the detachment of selected officers to positions in industry and commerce, preferably in defence related areas. At the very least these officers would gain a deeper understanding of the nation they have a duty to defend and the experience would better equip those destined for higher command and staff appointments to be more effective at the civil-military interface. In addition, their presence in commerce and industry may well improve civil responsiveness to defence needs.

Conclusion

It is almost forty years since the end of World War II and Australia and the Australian Army have changed considerably. When lessons learned during this conflict are considered today, care must be taken to ensure that they are relevant to today’s situation. The most significant aspect of Field-Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey’s distinguished career, his exercise of high command as C-in-C AMF and Commander Allied Land Forces in the SWPA between 1942 and 1945, undoubtedly has this enduring relevance.

The relevance of Blamey’s exercise of high command to the Army today lies in five main areas. First, and most obvious, is the unique nature of Blamey’s high command experience. Many Australian soldiers have served with distinction in positions that required them to exercise elements of high command, but none apart from Blamey had the opportunity to bear the full burden of this position. In lieu of extensive doctrine on the exercise of high command, we must turn to Blamey for guidance. This is true despite the apparent changes in the command environment since Blamey’s time. Self-reliance notwithstanding, Australia will undoubtedly need allies in any major conflict in the future, or may be the major ally in a lesser conflict, and the civil-military relationship in Australia is unlikely to change radically in the foreseeable future.

In the areas of high command and strategy and high command and resource management, the most relevant lesson to be gained from Blamey’s exercise of high command is that the high commander has responsibilities that transcend purely military considerations. Military strategy must reflect and be responsive to the requirements of national grand strategy and national objectives, even when these are inferred rather than clearly stated. Likewise, the nation’s resources as a whole are relevant to the wider implications of their use. Finally, Blamey’s exercise of high command provides both positive and the negative lessons in the field of politico-military relations that are relevant today as they were during World War II.

NOTES

17. Long G. The Six Years War. p 294.
27. Mench. p 56.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Articles

Published Papers

Military Publications

Newspapers

On behalf of the Board of Management I wish to thank Mr. A. Harkness, Archivist, Royal Military College, Duntroon for his assistance with compiling photographs for this special issue of the journal.

M. Tracey
Managing Editor
Strategies of Land Warfare

By Lieutenant Colonel D. M. Horner RA Inf.

ALTHOUGH Australia's armed forces have been involved in seven wars since Federation, her military leaders have had only a limited experience in strategic decision making. In the First World War our political leaders were not closely involved in the great questions of strategy such as whether to attack on the Western Front or at Gallipoli. Similarly, our senior generals, Monash, Chauvel and White operated within the strategic framework constructed by their British superiors.

The situation was slightly different in the Second World War, but it was not until the Japanese threat of early 1942 that the Government developed strategic policies for which they were willing to argue forcefully against their powerful allies. In the field Generals Blamey, Herring and Morshead made their presence felt on particular occasions, but in the long run General MacArthur's views prevailed. Again, in Vietnam our operations were determined largely by the policies of our American ally.

With this historical background it is not surprising that the study of strategy and operations has received increased attention at the Australian Staff Colleges over more recent years. As a non-nuclear power our focus has been on conventional warfare and it has become almost mandatory for each course to receive lectures from senior service representatives on naval, land and air strategy. For the naval and air officers involved this has been a relatively easy task. The naval man usually speaks about winning the war by blockade and submarine warfare. He emphasises sea denial, sea control and of course sea power. Furthermore, there are good examples of wars being won by the exercise of naval strategy. The United States maritime stranglehold on Japan in the closing months of the Second World War is as comprehensible and relevant as Britain’s blockade of Germany in 1918. The airman talks about air power and claims, perhaps with a few qualifiers if he is cautious, that if given a chance superior air power will win the war by itself. The conventional bombing of Japan before the finality of the dropping of the atomic bombs lends some support to these arguments. There is a good body of literature for these officers to use and the concepts of sea and air power are well understood. But there is no general agreement about the concept of land power. This article does not provide a definitive answer as to the nature of land strategy, but does propose some methods of approaching the subject.

Because it is so central to warfare, land strategy cannot be put into neat boxes in the same way as naval and air strategy. Although parts of it might be discussed in isolation, it must be seen in context within a wider strategy. Before going on to wider strategy, however, it will be useful to discuss the key elements of land operations. When senior officers go into the higher level defence committees at Russell Offices they need to have firmly in their minds the essential characteristics of land warfare. How do the strategic concepts they are considering actually work on the battlefield? What are the problems facing the land commander who has been given the responsibility for conducting the campaign? After proposing some answers to these questions the article will examine some ways that land forces can be employed as part of particular military strategies.

In recent years the focus of strategy has moved upwards from manoeuvre for battle to the realm of international politics. Since the Second World War the Australian Defence Force has not been involved in the direction of any large scale campaign. Thus Australian officers involved with strategy have been concerned mainly with the upper levels of strategy, the allocation of resources, the development of force structures and the commitment of forces to support government policies, whether they be in Malaya, Vietnam, the Sinai or the multinational exercises. While these matters are of vital importance, concentration on them has meant that the lower levels of strategy have been largely overlooked.

With this concern in mind the Australian Army has now introduced a term called the operational level of war. The operational level of war is concerned with the planning and con-
duct of campaigns. The idea of the operational level of war has been around for some time. It is really what Jomini, Clausewitz and Liddell Hart were referring to when they spoke of strategy, and the idea is in lively use today with the United States and the Soviets. For a while the Americans used the term campaign strategy before introducing the term the operational level of war. Campaigns take place in an area of operations or in a theatre.  

The Germans have traditionally emphasised operations but it has recently been given further emphasis in a speech given by their Army Chief of Staff at their last Army Commanders’ Conference. He said that because they had been concentrating their thinking primarily on strategic questions there had been a deterioration in operational thinking. “I shall see to it”, he said, “that there is once again the classic division of the concept of command into three parts: strategy, operation, and tactics”. He added that “fewer rules apply for operations than for tactics. For operations, everything depends on the idea. Operations are the field for creative minds”. It is at the operational level that military strategy is implemented by assigning missions and resources to tactical operations and it is at the operational level that the primacy of the military commander in war emerges.  

The relationship of military strategy and the operational level of war is shown by the relationship of General Wavell, Commander-in-Chief in the Middle East in 1940 and 1941, to the Chiefs of Staff Committee in London. The Chiefs of Staff determined military strategy, deciding which theatre was important, and allocating resources. With the resources provided, Wavell had to assign missions to his subordinate commanders and to protect them from political interference from London. He also had a number of theatres to control, and it could be said that his subordinate commanders in Libya, Greece and Syria were also operating at the operational level of war.  

What then are the important characteristics of land operations? What are the sorts of considerations faced by the practitioner of land strategy? The essence of operations is manoeuvre: what is to be moved, where is it to be moved and how, will the enemy allow me to conduct the manoeuvre, what will be the impact on him, and will I be better off not moving at all? There are, of course, a range of factors which affect these questions. For example, the capacity for manoeuvre will be affected by the existing force structure, by logistic resources, by terrain (which is not a factor which greatly affects the navy and air force), by the morale and levels of training of our forces, and by political considerations. The bottom line is, how much freedom of action do I have? That is, what is my capability for manoeuvre?  

At the operational level of war, manoeuvre is aimed at decisively influencing the outcome of future operations by throwing the enemy off balance, wresting the initiative from him and gaining the freedom of action to implement one’s own concept of operations. The difference between manoeuvre at the operational and tactical levels of war is not only about the size of forces involved, but also about aim and function. The degree of the manoeuvre which can or should be achieved on the land battlefield remains the central question in any discussion of land operations.  

Writing soon after the Second World War, Lieutenant General Sir Francis Tuker discerned what he called the traditional pattern of war. In his view, three conditions determine a war of manoeuvre in the classical form, or a static war in the abnormal form of France in 1914-18. These conditions were: firstly, “Flanks shall be tactically open or it shall be possible to create a flank by a break-in and break-through”; secondly, “The mobile arm shall be predominant (and this arm includes the air force)”; and thirdly, “That it shall be possible to administer the mobile arm to the point at which it will decide the battle and gain decisive victory”.  

He wrote that if all conditions were favourable there would be a war of manoeuvre such as in the days of Genghis Khan, and if none were favourable there would be the linear war of 1914-18. Generally the pattern varies between the two extremes, and thus armies must include what he called fortress troops and field armies of manoeuvre.  

The static war of 1914-18 provides a good starting point for a discussion of manoeuvre in war. During that war the main strategic argument was between the so-called Easterners and Westerners. Rather than attacking Germany’s strength in France, the Easterners, who included politicians like Winston Churchill and Lloyd George, advocated attacking Germany’s weaker allies, Turkey and Austria-Hungary, in the East. Taking advantage of the strategic flexibility conferred on them by the large French and
British navies, the idea was to weaken Germany by knocking her allies out of the war.

This was the purpose of the attack at Gallipoli in February 1915 culminating in the landing on 25 April. Advocates of the strategy still argue that if the campaign had been better managed Constantinople would have been captured and Turkey would have surrendered. Later in the war Britain devoted vast resources to conducting campaigns in Palestine and Mesopotamia, while France and Britain became heavily involved in the Salonika campaign and on the Italian-Austrian border. The British generals, however, argued that whatever happened in the East, the German army in France had to be defeated and this was the area where both France and Britain, and later the United States, could concentrate the maximum amount of power.

The argument between the Easterners and the Westerners reflects one of the principal arguments about strategy and warfare of the twentieth century. On the one hand there is the view that wars and campaigns can be won by manoeuvre, by striking the enemy where he is weakest, by using superior mobility, be it sea, air or armoured vehicles. Liddell Hart's indirect approach incorporates this view of strategy.

On the other hand there is the view that when a country's existence is at stake it can be defeated only if its forces are confronted by and defeated by weight of numbers of firepower. Thus it is argued that in the US Civil War the Confederates were defeated not because of Sherman's march through Georgia after the battle at Atlanta, but because Grant tied down the main confederate army in bloody battles of attrition in Virginia. Writers such as John Terraine have argued that the British Commander-in-Chief in France, Field Marshal Haig, understood this reality of war — that the Germans had to be ground down in France and that successes in Salonika or Palestine would have little effect on the outcome of the war.

The argument appeared again in the Second World War when the British preferred to strike at Hitler's "soft underbelly" in the Mediterranean while the Americans were anxious to open a second front in France as soon as possible. Protagonists of the war of attrition school would point out that Germany was ultimately beaten by the huge costly battles against Stalin's Russia on the Eastern Front.

Accepting the view that during the First World War ultimately a decision would be reached only on the Western Front, critics of British Army policy have still argued that Haig and his generals showed little imagination in employing new technical innovations like the tank or aircraft and that Britain's industrial resources should have been concentrated to produce more tanks and heavier aircraft. Defenders of Haig have argued that tanks were unreliable, slow, vulnerable and in short supply. Aircraft pay-loads were small, the aircraft were vulnerable and in the long run could influence the land battle only marginally.

The stalemate on the Western Front in the First World War led thinkers such as General J. F. C. Fuller and Captain Basil Liddell Hart to propose new strategic and operational concepts. Both writers were advocates of the use of tanks and mechanized infantry to punch a hole in the enemy's defences and to strike at his command centres in the rear. These ideas led Liddell Hart to propose what he called the indirect approach.

The basic idea of the indirect approach is to seek decisive battle only when the enemy has been thrown off balance or dislocated. Indeed the essence is not so much to seek battle as to seek a strategic situation so advantageous that if it does not of itself produce the decision, its continuation by battle is sure to do so. In other words, dislocation is the aim of the indirect approach, with its sequel either the enemy's dissolution or his easier disruption in battle.

A careful distinction needs to be made between the indirect approach in military strategy, and indirect strategy. While indirect strategy is concerned with the different ways of dealing with an enemy — military, political, diplomatic, economic and psychological — the indirect approach is concerned with the battlefield and can be applied at either the operational or strategic levels. The Germans used a direct strategy to defeat France in 1940 by resorting to invasion, but their technique of a narrow thrust to the rear areas was the use of an indirect approach. The Americans are currently using an indirect strategy with Nicaragua.

Liddell Hart first proposed the theory of the indirect approach in 1929 in a volume entitled The Decisive Wars of History in which he argued that the successful wars in history had
almost invariably been won by the indirect approach. As a reaction to the slaughter on the Western Front in the First World War he sought to discover or rediscover a means whereby victory could be achieved with the minimum of casualties. He criticized what he believed was the Clausewitzian approach by making the enemy’s main army the real objective. As Brian Bond observed, “Liddell Hart was so emotionally involved in attacking the inept conduct of the First World War and its legacy that he was unable to approach its more general causes with detachment. Instead he found a plausible scapegoat in what he mistakenly believed to be Clausewitz’s notion of strategy”. Liddell Hart went beyond a mere theoretical argument for the indirect approach, and became an advocate for what he called the “expanding torrent” method of attack with mechanized forces.

His description of the expanding torrent was, of course, a description of the blitzkrieg. The driving force behind the development of the German Blitzkrieg was General Heinz Guderian who achieved the cooperation of tanks, mechanized infantry and air support to enable his forces to thrust powerfully through an enemy’s line. A blitzkrieg need not necessarily be indirect; nonetheless, the hallmark of the blitzkrieg is speed and weight of attack at a relatively narrow point, and if there are to be long term gains the attacking commander obviously needs to push on to the vulnerable points in the rear.

While the blitzkrieg attack can be stopped by a well prepared defender and while Liddell Hart’s writings on the indirect approach can be criticised on theoretical grounds, blitzkrieg remains to this day, with added emphasis on the air dimension, the most effective offensive strategic concept. It has been used recently by the Israelis and similar concepts are expected to be used by the Soviets. To counter a Soviet attack in Europe, and faced with the problem of having to “fight outnumbered and win”, the Americans developed their AirLand Battle concept, set out in their new *Field Manual (FM) 100-5 Operations*, in 1982. While the fundamentals of the AirLand Battle are described as “initiative, depth, agility and synchronization”, the emphasis is on the offence and deep battle. The theme of the AirLand Battle, therefore, is manoeuvre warfare, and it relates directly to the ideas put forward by Liddell Hart in the inter-war period. As two American writers observed: “Liddell Hart and Fuller are readily acknowledged as the ‘spiritual fathers’ of the AirLand Battle, the former more so than the latter”.

Although the NATO armies accept the value of the manoeuvre war, as witnessed by the German armoured developments and the emphasis placed on the counter stroke by the British commander of the Northern Army Group, NATO has not accepted all the ramifications of the AirLand Battle, particularly the emphasis on the offence. Thus the official NATO concept of Follow-On Forces Attack is limited to the use of conventional air power in interdiction missions against deep targets like enemy logistics forces and transport facilities.

Clearly the extent of manoeuvre has been determined by changes in technology which have affected both the ability to move and the capacity to prevent movement. A case can be made that new technology is increasing the capability for manoeuvre. Certainly the potential is there, but the reality of battle is that manoeuvre and attrition are the two sides of the one coin. At some stage attrition war may be unavoidable and strategic planners should keep this reality in mind.

Land strategy is far more complex than sea or air strategy. A full-length treatment of land strategy, which is not being attempted in this article, would need to discuss the different effects of terrain: Jungle, urban terrain, desert, the arctic and mountains. Furthermore, discussion would need to cover the requirements of different levels of warfare: peacekeeping, counter-terrorist, counter-insurgency and limited operations, full-scale conventional war and the thermo-nuclear battlefield. It would be possible to list the forms of manoeuvre available to the land commander with relevant historical examples of each. Offensive manoeuvres would include the direct approach, and flanking, envelopment and by-pass movements, while defensive manoeuvres would include linear, strong point, chequered, delaying, and mobile defences and strategic withdrawal. All these factors merely underline the complexity of land strategy. But when all these factors into account what sort of options are available to the strategist?

In general terms there are five schools of military strategy: continental, maritime, aero-space, revolutionary and nuclear. Only the first two, continental and maritime will be discussed. The continental school is clearly land oriented and the most obvious option in continental
strategy is the blitzkrieg. Few countries in the world openly espouse the blitzkrieg as a strategic option because of its offensive and aggressive connotations. Certainly many countries include blitzkrieg-like tactics in their concepts, but these concepts are normally part of a generally defensive framework.

Nazi Germany's offensives into France and the low countries in 1940 and into Russia in 1941 are well known examples of an aggressive land strategy. But the fact should not be ignored that these strategies were merely refinements of Germany's earlier advances into France in 1870 and again in 1914. In those advances the strategic envelopment was mounted directly from the initial concentration. Strategy and operations were combined into one sequence.

Other examples of an offensive blitzkrieg-based strategy are the Soviet Union's failed attack on Finland in 1939, Italy's failed attack on Egypt in 1940, the advance of Mao's forces against those of Chiang Kai Shek in China in 1949, North Korea's attack on South Korea in 1951, Israel's seizure of the Sinai in 1956 and in 1967, India's rapid capture of East Pakistan in 1971, North Vietnam's attack on South Vietnam in 1975 and Iraq's unsuccessful attack on Iran in 1980. In each case the strategy was based on a blitzkrieg-type offensive to win an offensive war. It is possible to think of many examples of a defender using blitzkrieg-type concepts in his counter-offensive but it is usually not his initial strategy. Those subsequent operations move into the realm of the cut and thrust of land operations in general, where the factors mentioned earlier such as manoeuvre and attrition come into play.

Countries which at present seem to structure their forces for a blitzkrieg-type offensive are the Soviet Union for an attack on the West, and North Korea, for an attack on the South. It is, However, a matter of perception. Both the Soviets and the North Koreans claim that their forces are structured for defence. It is well to remember that the Soviets have 26 tank and 44 motor rifle divisions deployed in Eastern Europe with a further 105 divisions in European Russia available for the central front. The 52,600 Soviet tanks in Eastern Europe present some defensive force, outnumbering the NATO forces by a ratio of 2.59 to one in tanks.13

There are far more defensive concepts around than offensive ones, and the first example is the pre-emptive strike. In its pure form this strategy involves the attack on an enemy before he mounts his own attack, and it has been used, but not often, in recent history. For example, the British-Australian attack on Syria in 1941 was meant to pre-empt the Germans from establishing themselves there. Similarly the Germans intended to pre-empt an allied move into Norway in 1940. In the same vein the United States invaded Grenada in 1983 allegedly to prevent it becoming a Soviet or Cuban base. Other pre-emptive strikes involved the Israelis in their attack on Egypt and Syria in 1967 and on the Palestine Liberation Organization in Lebanon in 1982 when they claimed they were forestalling a PLO attack on Galilee. The Israelis have adopted the strategy primarily because they have very little strategic depth with respect to area or numbers of personnel. Developing technology makes pre-emptive strike a possible military strategy. Improved means of surveillance mean that an enemy's intention might become more obvious earlier, and air and mechanized forces make a swift pre-emptive strike more feasible. But there are severe political and psychological barriers to be overcome.

The second example of a defensive concept is mobile defence. While it is possible to think of recent historical examples of delaying defence, such as the Germans in Italy 1943-1944, it is much more difficult to think of examples of successful mobile defence. Some examples are the battle of Suomussalmi in East central Finland in December 1939 and January 1940 when one understrength Finnish division completely destroyed two Russian divisions, the Germans in Russia in 1944 and the Israeli defence of the Golan Heights in 1973. In each case the defender had superior tactical mobility. In the case of the Israelis, they did not intend to conduct a mobile defence. After the 1967 war they specifically rejected a manouevre oriented strategy for defending the Sinai. Instead they chose forward defence, which in addition, has always been the preferred strategy for defending the Golan Heights.

Few countries have specifically framed their concepts of operations around mobile defence, but Sweden appears to have adopted it. In the event of attack Swedish forces aim to delay the enemy, extend his line of communication, cut him off from support, weaken him and finally destroy him. The concept relies on utilizing the very difficult Swedish terrain for which ar-
moured vehicles have been specifically produced. The concept lends itself to the use of advanced technology, but requires the ability to mobilize an army of some 800,000 personnel in 72 hours and the maintenance of some 670 main battle tanks.

The third example of a defensive concept involves the extensive use of guerillas and Finland provides an example of this concept. Only 10 per cent of Finnish terrain is suitable for armoured operations and in most areas 100 metres is the maximum range for line of sight shooting. The country has a vulnerable road network and is covered by dense forests interspersed with marshes and lakes. Upon full mobilization the ground forces are divided into general and local forces. The general forces, composed of some 20 brigades, are equipped with heavy weapons and modern equipment and are formed in the military districts where their task is to concentrate against the enemy after he has been weakened by local forces. The local forces are formed in sub-areas of each military district and consist of over 100 independent guerilla battalions. Their task is two-fold. In the vicinity of the border they carry out guerilla operations against enemy lines of communication and attack the enemy from the rear. In the rest of the country they initially protect vital targets such as airfields, harbours and mobilization depots, but once the enemy main force reaches their area they disperse into the forest and revert to guerilla operations. They are trained to operate independently for months and their orders are to stay in their area and strike at the enemy from the rear. Their activities are co-ordinated, with the objective of softening the enemy prior to the decisive battle with the general forces. Thus the present Finnish concept does not call for barrier defence at the border but for letting the enemy penetrate the country.

Yugoslavia also applies the guerilla concept, with its territorial defence force half a million strong organised down to regions. The Peoples Republic of China until recently has advocated a "Peoples War" concept which takes advantage of a massively mobilised nation, rugged terrain and great depth to draw in an enemy and then exhaust him and 'drown him in a sea of people'. As with mobile defence, the concept can be enhanced by advanced technology, but it also relies on mobilization, commitment and suitable terrain. In all cases a substantial, highly trained striking force is required.

The fourth example could be described as deep area defence. This concept is best articulated by an Austrian General, Emil Spannochi. Realising that for small neutral states even manoeuvre formations of the highest quality would be quickly overwhelmed by vastly superior numbers and firepower, he advocated "technologically competitive — although never unnecessarily complex — defensive weapons such as anti-tank guided weapons, employed by small cell-like formations to the entire depth of the country". The objective is to make the occupation of that territory disproportionately expensive to its strategic value. 75 per cent of Austria is suitable for prolonged defensive effort. While the key areas are to be defended stubbornly, light infantry militia battalions are to conduct guerilla type operations. The main force of the mobile infantry and armoured brigades will be deployed into the threatened region to help the territorial militia defend the area.

This concept is similar to that employed by Switzerland. The defensive battles throughout the entire territory, which will repeat themselves at every key position, are designed to consume the strength of the adversary, using heavy concentrations of firepower to inflict maximum destruction. Israel uses the same concept based on its settlements in the occupied West Bank area, although they also use other concepts. During the 1948 war two settlements on the Egyptian route to Tel Aviv stood fast for weeks, beating off repeated battalion attacks supported by armour and artillery.

In each case the country is small, and in the cases of Austria and Switzerland their terrain lends itself to defence. Effective mobilization is vital. The concept relies, perhaps optimistically, on the defensive power of precision guided munitions and other counter mobility systems. Unlike Switzerland or Sweden, Central Europe does not have the type of environment which provides natural obstacles such as mountains to the mechanized attacker. Nevertheless, home guard units can be effective in holding static key positions, and if combined with well-trained troops equipped with sophisticated anti-armour systems, they might well deter a potential aggressor seeking quick, easy, territorial gains.

The fifth example, that of forward defence, is about defeating the enemy on or near the
frontier. This concept applies to the NATO forces in Germany, Israeli forces in the Golan Heights, on Vietnam's border with China, in Korea and in Kashmir. It involves the maintenance of a considerable standing army and is vulnerable to penetration by a blitzkrieg-type attack. In NATO the US Airland Battle concept and the German Armoured Concept 90 seek to reduce the effect of the enemy's thrust by a counter strike at the enemy's second echelon, but such concepts require a full range of high level technology, training and readiness.

The sixth example involves containment and perhaps delaying defence followed by a counter-offensive. To some extent this concept is applied in Norway. Most of its small population and reserve units are concentrated in the southern half of a fairly large country. The standing armour-reinforced brigade in northern Norway has to fight for time while the remainder of the Army is mobilised and while NATO units are deployed. This concept is somewhat similar to the present Australian concept for medium level operations. In the containment phase of the Australian concept forces will be deployed rapidly to the area of the enemy lodgement. If the enemy forces cannot be defeated by the containment force then delaying defence and perhaps mobile defence will be employed until sufficient forces can be mobilised and deployed to begin the counter-offensive phase. The concept relies on a fairly high state of readiness and mobility for the containment forces, mobilisation and deployment plans for the counter-offensive phase, and sufficient space for operations. Unlike most of the other concepts, it does not rely on a large standing army or on the rapid mobilization of a large segment of the population. It does, however, require a level of technology in the containment force at least commensurate with that of the enemy.

Clearly the six defensive concepts that have been discussed are not employed in isolation, and indeed a number of concepts can be employed as part of a total military strategy. There are also several elements which need to be considered as adjuncts to the central concepts. These additional elements are: reserves, conscription, home guard (regional forces), and special operations.

Many countries rely on reserves either to supplement their regular forces, or to form the bulk of their army on mobilization. Britain uses territorial army units as part of its concept of operations in Germany. The Netherlands Army Corps in Germany consists of 10 brigades of which 4 need to be mobilized. Plans envisage them being ready to depart for their defensive locations within 24 hours after first alert. Israel's use of reserves is well known. Their standing army is 104,000 personnel mobilising to 600,000.

Most of the countries mentioned rely on conscription to maintain their relatively large standing armies. For example, of Israel's standing army of 104,000, 87 per cent are conscripts. Of Sweden's standing army of 47,000, 78 per cent are conscripts. Moreover, conscription is designed not only to bolster the standing army, but to provide the trained manpower for the reserves. Thus, in addition to Sweden's standing army of 47,000, they have 70,000 conscripts plus 15,000 officer and NCO reservists doing refresher training each year. On mobilization the army can reach a strength of some 700,000, the majority of whom are compulsorily trained reservists.

Most of the countries mentioned make use of a home guard or regional forces with an integral role in their concept of operations. One of the most impressive concepts is in Germany. The German territorial army has a peacetime strength of 45,000 increasing to approximately 460,000 in war. The territorial army is not under NATO control, but has strong liaison with NATO. The territorial army is responsible for the protection of the rear area, including civil defence. The Danish Home Guard with a strength of 60,000 is voluntary and unpaid. Its tasks include surveillance, protection of vital installations, minor combat tasks and special tasks such as traffic control. Norway's Home Guard of 72,000 has similar tasks although the members are reservists. The South African Commando force consists of reservists who serve in their home district in counter-insurgency and security operations. In Australia, of course, we have NORFORCE and the regional units in the Pilbara and in Far North Queensland, but we have no concept covering rear area security and civil defence in the more populated areas.

Reserves, conscription, home guards, and mobilization plans are therefore prime considerations in the development of land strategies. The ability of the commander to apply his strategy on the battlefield is determined partly by the resources he has been given and this depends
on force structure decisions made in Russell Offices and elsewhere long before war erupts. Decisions on, for example the call out of reserves, are essentially decisions of strategy.

Most countries have special forces of some type, but few countries have incorporated special operations as part of their concept of operations. The Soviet Spetsnaz forces are designed to attack key NATO installations and assassinate leaders as part of a Soviet offensive strategy. As part of a defensive strategy special operations could be used to carry the fight to the enemy's homeland. It is not current Australian policy, but it is a strategy proposed by the US, especially outside the NATO area.

These examples give some idea of the many options available in developing defensive land strategies in a continental setting. It would, however, be useful briefly to look at maritime-oriented strategy and examine the role of land forces in that strategy. An example of the interaction of land forces with naval and air forces in an essentially maritime strategy is the experience of the Australians in the South West Pacific Area in the Second World War.

Before Japan entered the war in December 1941 the defence of Australia was based on the assurance that the Royal Navy would be available to take on the Japanese. During this period the role of the Army was to secure the naval base at Singapore to provide facilities for the promised British fleet. It was realised that the army had only limited capacity to defend Australia if the Japanese landed, and the army's strategic role was to assist in the maritime defence of Australia. Thus in addition to securing Singapore, the army was to protect various air bases such as Rabaul and Ambon. Rabaul was Australian territory and Australian forces could be deployed as soon as they were available, but there was hesitation in moving into the Netherlands East Indies.

After the outbreak of war the Australian land strategy could be described as one of pre-emptive deployment to Ambon and Timor to secure air bases and to prevent the enemy using them as bases to attack Australia. At the same time the defences of Papua new Guinea and Java were built up to deny them to the enemy and in so doing restrict the Japanese lines of approach towards Australia. Thus if the areas to the north of Australia could be denied to the Japanese, either because we already held them, or by pre-emptive deployment, the allied maritime forces, primarily US naval and air forces, would have the best opportunity of restricting the Japanese advance.

At the same time the army had to provide for the final defence of Australia should these maritime efforts fail. Thus the First Army was deployed to Queensland and the Second Army to New South Wales and Victoria. This force was of sufficient size to act as a deterrent to the Japanese Army which resisted the Japanese Navy's desire to invade the continent. The sorts of options available for conducting continental defence have already been discussed, but as part of the maritime strategy the continental defence of Australia certainly had a role to play.

Following the battles of Coral Sea and Midway the allies were able to begin a counter-offensive against the Japanese. The counter-offensive was essentially maritime, but in the South West Pacific Area the land forces played important roles. By hard fighting the Australians and Americans had held Papua and Guadalcanal, and they now set out to recapture territory from the Japanese. But the target was not specifically the Japanese Army. MacArthur's strategy, essentially an air and maritime strategy, was to seize a base from which he could support operations to capture the next base and in so doing eventually provide a base from which to launch an invasion of the Philippines. Although MacArthur wanted to recapture the Philippines for personal, political and diplomatic reasons, it was also to be his final base from which he could launch his attack on Japan. Thus even an essentially maritime strategy involves a wide range of roles for the land forces.

During the Second World War the Government asked the Australian Chiefs of Staff how many divisions they would need to defend Australia if sufficient naval and air forces were not available. The Australian Chiefs said 25 divisions. MacArthur was smarter. He refused to countenance the defence of Australia without naval and air forces, but he also knew that the dozen or so divisions available was scarcely enough.

Australia's experience in the South West Pacific Area in the Second World War highlights two points. First, it emphasizes that military strategy depends for its success on the effective use of all the armed services to achieve its goal. Second, it points out, at least implicitly, that although there are similarities in each of the
strategies of the three services, the differences are what characterize each.

The key difference in the participation of the army as an instrument of strategy over that of sea or air power is that an army takes and holds ground. Once the soldier has been committed as an element of a nation’s overall strategy, there is a degree of escalation and commitment that is far more difficult to reverse than other visible instruments or signals of military strategy such as overflights or steaming in a region. The soldier is more obvious, his actions are more attributable and irreversible — and, he is more difficult to sustain. The man is the key ingredient in land strategy.

The man is doubly important. At one level, battles and campaigns are won by soldiers with high morale and training — soldiers who stand in their slit trenches and fight, who withstand enemy bombardment from artillery and air weapons, who keep going when they are tired, cold and hungry. At a higher level, battles and campaigns are won by the initiative, skill, determination and flair of commanders. In particular, campaigns and wars are won by commanders and staffs who know how to apply all the ingredients of land strategy. It is an art and science which deals inevitably with much that cannot be foreseen or anticipated. It relies on years of training and intuition borne of the close study of war over many years.

This article began with the assertion that land strategy must be seen in the context of a wider strategy. Every country’s strategic situation is unique, but there might be lessons from the way another country converts its strategy into operational doctrine. In this respect Israel provides a useful example of the connection between strategy and operational policy even if the particulars of the doctrine are less relevant. The broad purpose of Israeli strategy is deterrence of Arab aggression and the clear-cut defeat of the enemy if deterrence fails. This deterrence is generally achieved by presenting a potential enemy with a credible threat to exact a high price should aggression be attempted. In the short term, Israel hopes the Arab memory of previous defeat will “deter” them from initiating any particular war. In the long term, Israel hopes that a string of such defeats will result in a process of cumulative dissuasion ending in permanent resignation to Israeli’s existence.

Four elements contribute to deterrence and figure importantly in Israel’s strategic doctrine. The first element is that Israel has identified casu belli to warn the Arabs to avoid certain political and military actions. The second element is Israel’s determination to achieve a clear-cut military victory. The third element is Israel’s determination to preserve its image of autonomy — that she will act independently of US wishes. And the fourth element is to provide defensible borders to convince an enemy that the costs of invasion will be too high.

To convert this higher level strategy into reality the Israelis have developed an operational doctrine, which while expressed in general terms, relates directly to land strategy. There are six main components in this strategy. The first component is a strong commitment to the offensive. Offensive operations are believed to compensate for Israel’s overall numerical inferiority; by seizing the operational initiative it can dictate the place and pace of events.

The second component is a high regard for the advantages of pre-emption. This is closely related to the idea of the offensive. It denies the enemy the use of his predetermined battle plans. The third component is speed in the conduct of wars. Israel seeks a quick decision before the superpowers or other Arab states can intervene. Israel cannot afford a war of attrition as witnessed by their willingness to negotiate as they began to be bogged down in Suez in 1973 and in Beirut in 1982. The fourth component is an inclination toward the “indirect approach”. Perhaps if Liddell Hart had not invented it the Israeli’s would have. They always seek to find the indirect approach, but are willing to make frontal assaults against objectives of major operational or strategic importance if they perceive no speedy alternative.

The fifth component is the exploitation of Israel’s advantage in competence. The Israelis seek to exploit their superior “battle-management” capability and they stress initiative at all levels. They believe that the increasing complexity of the modern battlefield with smaller dispersed units gives greater advantages to the army that is good at decentralized operations. The final component is a heavy reliance on air power and tanks with a strong commitment to joint service, all arms operations, although the Israelis acknowledge that at times they might have to operate without close air support. They
are determined that armour, artillery, engineers and infantry should all have the same degree of mobility and protection. 28

These components of Israel’s operational doctrine provide the military means of addressing the higher-order political-military considerations. Although they might not be taught to the Israeli Defence Force officer corps as a formal doctrine, these components seem to hang together, both in theory and in practice. In Australia we may not be able to articulate, at this stage, such a coherent operational doctrine, but there seems advantage in developing our own indigenous and coherent strategic and operational doctrines.

This article has outlined some approaches to understanding the strategies of land warfare. Strategy, however, is dynamic. New strategies will be developed and old one will be adapted. Nonetheless, land strategy will remain central to warfare, and practitioners have a continuing responsibility to extend their understanding and expertise in this area.

NOTES
3. MLW1,1,1, p. 2-3 which states that the operational level involves the manoeuvre of formations.
20. MLW1,1,1, Section 15.
28. Yoav Ben-Horin and Barry Posen, Israel's Strategic Doctrine, Rand, Santa Monica, CA, 1981, passim. See also Efraim Inbar, "Israel's New Military Doctrine", Naval War College Review, January-February 1983.

Lieutenant-Colonel David Horner is an Honorary Visiting Fellow in the History Department of the University College of the Australian Defence Force Academy. He graduated from RMC Duntroon in 1969, served with 3RAR in Vietnam and has had a variety of regimental and staff appointments. His publications include Crisis of Command (1978), High Command (1982), The Commanders (1984), and Australian Higher Command in the Vietnam War (1986).

Enroute to Field Training 1918.

Reviewed by LtCol J. J. Moore RA Inf

I was somewhat nonplussed to find new material on the subject of the Burma-Thailand Railway; I would have thought that a myriad of authors and documentalists had sucked the orange dry and that all available source material had been uncovered and published. It was a surprise to discover maiden reports and photographs under the title A Life for Every Sleeper.

Mind you, if any author was going to produce fresh information, it was going to be Hugh Clarke.

Hugh is the author of eight other works. He is a survivor of this infamous slave labour project and yet appears to be able to speak without rancour of his and his colleagues experiences. Many of his new sources for reports and photographs are from Japanese contacts carefully developed and constructed over the years.

That he is able to apparently banish rancour is as commendable as it is surprising as he saw comrades perish at the rate of one for every sleeper.

Despite this, his descriptions of brutality and heinous daily routine loses nothing with time; nor has Hugh Clarke's attitude and respect for his colleagues who helped lay the sleeper. Some names are well known; others are published for the first time and some previously unsung heroes can now take their due place.

Although billed as "a pictorial record", A Life for Every Sleeper has a remarkable quantity of written descriptive reportage — all of it absorbing and quickly reflecting Hugh Clarke's zeal in his documentation of his ordeal.

Of the past, there is much but the book also features the "NOW" — the towns, the railway stations, the bridges and, of course the remains of old rails, Hell Fire Pass and, the end of the Line.

The physical book is well printed and bound, photographic reproduction is excellent despite, in many cases, variable quality of the originals taken by men who toiled on the railway.

For students of Australia at war, this volume is a necessary addition to a specialist library. Publishers Allen and Unwin have "done Hugh Clarke proud".


Reviewed by John Buckley OBE, ED

BEFORE I give my impressions of the story, might I be permitted to congratulate the Melbourne University Press on the presentation and quality of the publication. It could only be described as first class.

The author Peter Pedersen is a Duntroon graduate and belongs to that group of young historians who have contributed much to writing Australian history. I like his authentic approach to his subject — he gives a balanced view and leaves out any gossip or unsubstantiated weaknesses of his subject which in some instances detract from the work of some contemporary historians. Furthermore, he does not speculate!

Pedersen provides the information about Monash's ability as a soldier and commander which Geoffrey Serle did not set out to do in his excellent story of Monash (also published by the Melbourne University Press). I thoroughly enjoyed both books — two of the outstanding Australian publications in the 1980's.

Pedersen regards Monash as an excellent corps, and division commander. He compares Monash with other Australian and Allied commanders, Liddell Hart is quoted as follows: "Sir John Monash had probably the greatest capacity for command in modern war among all who held command . . . he might even have risen to Commander-In-Chief. If capacity had been a determining factor, he would have done so."

Field Marshal Montgomery saw Monash as the best general on the Western Front in Europe; he possessed real creative originality, and the war might well have been over sooner and with fewer casualties, had Haig been relieved
of his command and Monash been appointed to command the British Armies in his place. Some praise indeed from Monty!

Pedersen mentions the interference of Keith Murdoch in high level military affairs, not always with best results. It seems remarkable that the egotistical journalist, through his influence with Prime Minister Hughes and other notables was able to press his own opinions. In the Second World War he tried to unseat the Curtin Government in 1943 by writing a series of highly critical stories. The voters were not hoodwinked and Curtin was returned with a resounding vote of confidence.

No doubt the quality of this book and Geoffrey Serle's *Monash* is in part due to their cooperation and harmonious relationship. They were not competitors, but each was responsible for certain talents and facets of the brilliant soldier, engineer, lawyer and administrator.

The book is easy to read and will please even the most critical reader. Pedersen and the Melbourne University Press have produced a most comprehensive and absorbing story about a great Australian general. Together with Geoffrey Serle's *Monash* Pedersen's story makes a most substantial contribution to Australian military history.

I strongly recommend this book.


Reviewed by Chris Coulthard-Clark, Dept. of Foreign Affairs.

The six years of the Second World War called forth a military effort on a scale which exceeded Australia's national experience during even the War of 1914-1918. The very substantial contribution of military engineers to that effort is reflected in the size of this third volume in a four-part history of the R.A.E. to 1975, which equals in page length the combined total of the first two volumes covering 84 years.*

As one would expect, wherever Australian ground forces were operationally engaged their elements of the R.A.E. were to be found too. Accordingly readers are presented with a narrative which portrays engineers in action at Bardia, clearing gaps in minefields and crossings of anti-tank ditches, building railway lines in the Lebanon, repairing cratered roads or cratering them anew in Greece, unloading ships in port under air attack in Crete, demolishing bridges to deny routes to the advancing Japanese in Malaya, conquering impossible terrain in New Guinea with the construction of roads, and clearing bombs, mines and booby-traps in front of our own infantry at Balikpapan. Some less well-known aspects of the engineers effort are also given their due, however, with the inclusion of details concerning the forestry units that milled timber in England and Scotland as well as the Pacific, the work of Engineer Services Branch in meeting the demand at home for camps to accommodate a rapidly-expanding Army and in maintaining land communications in northern Australia, the establishment of a Transportation Service, the development of Australia's coastal defences, and measures undertaken to provide for camouflage both for formations abroad and within Australia. It is this aspect regarding the diversity of engineer roles that the author, himself an engineer and retired major-general, brings out in his conclusions by referring to sappers having made essential contributions during the war not only to the Army's teeth but to its tail as well.

It is a story of impressive achievement under all the pressures that war is capable of generating. And the demand on the R.A.E. did not slacken with the end of hostilities; roads and bridges still had to be kept open against the ravages of climate and terrain for purposes of resupply and, as the Army's fighting elements moved out of the jungle, new camps and facilities had to be built to hold the troops prior to returning to Australia. The account provided by the author, of challenging situations and the means used to resolve them, will undoubtedly interest past and serving members of the R.A.E. For non-sapper types (like this reviewer) for whom these aspects are not the main interest and who find the novelty of more road-building beginning to pall after a few chapters, there is greater understanding to be had regarding the contribution of engineers in maintaining the fluidity of operations.

Some of the military problems that this book highlights are of more than simply passing professional concern to serving members of the Australian Defence Force. Observations about the difference in quality until 1942 between
A.I.F. units and the militia, especially once the "eyes" in the latter had been picked out for the A.I.F. and other good men had been withdrawn because their civil occupations were in the reserved category, point up the difficulty that could still possibly confront the regular army in undertaking expansion using the resources of the Army Reserve. The instance of the infantry commander on Bougainville who set the sappers of the field company allocated his brigade to digging latrines while important work on the main communication road lagged also points up an obvious lesson. The over-bombing of Japanese targets on Tarakan before the Australian landings pointed out the penalties accruing from a lack of strategic foresight; the unnecessary obliteration of existing installations and facilities, when all that was required was that they be kept out of operation by the Japanese until they could be captured, created the need for a much heavier engineer effort than would otherwise have been required.

A more difficult area on which this book comments is touched on mainly in the author's assessment of the Engineer-in-Chief, Major-General Clive Steele. He was, we are told, impatient of delay and obstruction, and nursed a well-known aversion to finance officers, business advisors and civilian public servants. There is in this, of course, plenty to fuel the prejudices of present day servicemen, but whether the situation was as clear-cut in favour of the exasperated military officers is less clear on the evidence presented. Could it be that their antagonists were also charged with faithfully doing a job requiring the implementation of the Government's desire for domestic recovery once the direct danger to Australia had passed? Of Steele's antipathies, McNicoll says nothing more censorious than that these 'tended to be aped by the less discerning of his staff and subordinates, though the more responsible were often able to ease the tension. Some would say that these attitudes did the Corps a disservice, and it is probable that after the middle of 1943 a more accommodating stance would have been of benefit.'

Of fortitude and courage, both in and out of battle, this book has many stories to tell. The one which struck the deepest chord with this reviewer was the construction of the Bulldog-Wau road. After the conquest of the Owen Stanley Ranges was complete, entailing heights of 9,500 feet, dense forests, numerous obstacles, and eight months unremitting labour in nightmarish conditions, the military utility of the road was reduced even before the first trucks traversed its length by the capture of Lae and the opening of the Nadzab airfields. Consequently it was kept open only a few months. Against this less-than-funny example, the book has many humorous sidelights which even the non-sapper will appreciate. Like the case of the C.R.E. who lost his job because a demolition prepared in the canteen at Milne Bay was fired by mistake during the Japanese attack — 'Blowing up beer is serious', notes the author — or the reported involvement of the Milne Bay fortress camouflage officer, a keen musician, during salvage operations to right the capsized M.V. Anshun laying stuck in the silt of the bay — he allegedly ensured cables were equally stressed by striking their pitch with an iron bar! A classic illustration of the Australian Army's ability to make do with next to nothing comes in the form of the words of a U.S. officer, whose engineer regiment of the 41st Division was taking over from the 7th Divisional Engineers in Papua in January 1943; having heard out the C.R.E. he remarked, 'I just can't work with what you've got. I'm not going to try' and ordered a signal sent off to Port Moresby for extra equipment.

Also given is the account of how the Army supposedly came to be at Kapooka, near Wagga Wagga, a site which still retains its army associations today. In choosing a site near General Blamey's birthplace General Steele was making sure he would have quick approval from the Commander-in-Chief in locating a new R.A.E. Training Centre. The author tells us too that the Australian Army was simply conforming to British practice in transferring responsibility for coast and anti-aircraft searchlight from the engineers to the artillery. Personally, this reviewer preferred the alternative version as to why this change came about, reportedly as a result of an incident in Port Moresby which was being visited by a very senior officer at the time that a searchlight location was being abandoned:

Some of its equipment remained, including its field telephone, and was being guarded by the sapper who could best be spared from other unit duties. The sapper rang his corporal and said 'There's a fat old bloke in Bombay bloomers outside wanting to come
BOOK REVIEW

in. I told him no one was allowed in but he won't take no for an answer. He says he's General Something. What'll I do?*

* Vols 1 & 2 were reviewed in the May/June 1978 and May/June 1981 issues of DFJ. Vol. 3 is available from the Royal Australian Engineers Corps Committee, Directorate of Engineers, Department of Defence (Army Office), Campbell Park Offices, Canberra, at the recommended retail price plus postage.


Reviewed by Brigadier F. W. Speed, OBE, ED.

GORDON Bennett was a man of outstanding ability in the profession of arms, but his character was flawed.

He read deeply, achieved a grasp of tactics, exhibited courage and effective leadership in contact with the enemy. But he had unbridled ambition, was sarcastic in criticism, and his career was punctuated by gaffes he was unable, or unwilling, to avoid.

Bennett began his military service in 1908, at age 21, as a second-lieutenant of the 5th Australian Infantry Regiment in Victoria. He was an actuarial clerk in the AMP Society when the term 'clerk' had status. He was wiry and active with an abundance of energy and an enthusiasm for soldiering. His military training involved at least three nights a week, most weekends, and all his civilian annual leave. Before long, when not actually on regimental duty, he took his own officers and others into the open country to engage in map reading and tactical exercises. In consequence, his results at promotion courses were consistently high. By 1911 he had reached the rank of captain: and in 1912, through the introduction of Universal Training, he was transferred to the 64th (City of Melbourne) Infantry, in the rank of major.

The author implies but does not precisely bring it out that, during this period, Bennett had seen the 'permanent' officers as expert administrators and parade-ground-type instructors who lacked the opportunity to command troops in the field. The volunteer and militia officers, on the other hand, although part-time only, were in direct contact with their men in the unit drill halls, on weekend exercises, and in camp. Moreover, they brought to their military service, qualities from their civil experience that permanent officers could not have. One thing that does come through clearly is that Bennett, while conceding that permanent force officers were able staff officers, firmly believed none was a good commander.

By mid-1914, Bennett had become a citizen force professional — with a developed antipathy to the permanent force officer which he was at no pains to conceal. In fact, he had already had abrasive encounters with several, one of whom was named Blamey. And this rift between Bennett and Blamey was irreparable.

Naturally one of the first to join the AIF, Bennett sailed for Egypt as second in command of the 6th Battalion. Under the heading 'Seeds of Disaster', Lodge describes Bennett’s first indiscretion. His CO, rather old for the rigours of war, with withdrawn and replaced by Major W. R. McNicoll (aged 37), from 7th Battalion. Bennett (aged 27) maintained the supersession nearly broke his heart. The Official Historian is quoted as saying ‘he was ever afterwards highly critical of McNicoll and decried him as a shirker’. As it happened McNicoll was wounded a fortnight after the landing on Gallipoli, and Bennett was given command. McNicoll in due course went on to command a brigade in France and Flanders, with the same three decorations as Bennett.

It is left to Bennett’s biographers to record his World War 1 progress, marked by his courage, superior tactical ability — and a propensity for overt critical comment on juniors, peers, and seniors alike. Then, Lodge, still under the heading ‘Seeds of Disaster’, brings out the numerous instances of Bennett’s anti-Staff Corps attitude during the inter-war period, even to the extent ultimately of highly contentious articles in the daily press and in correspondence with politicians. Perhaps the most egotistical earlier incident, following his appointment to command a CMF division, was his effort to gain promotion to major-general for which the peace establishment of the time did not have a vacancy.

The Second World War began for Major General Bennett, on the morning after the Prime Minister's announcement '.... Australia is also at war', with a series of letters to those in authority and politicians, canvassing his capacity for senior command and seeking immediate preferment. These letters, and the events ac-
companying them, are well reported by the au-
thor in a way that leaves readers to draw their
own conclusions. After some months, several
disappointments, and a period in command of
the Eastern Command Training Depot, Bennett
was at last given the 8th Division, then in train-
ing. Following some uncertainty about the di-
vision’s destination, it was decided to send one
brigade and part of the divisional headquarters
to Malaya, to assist in its defence, leaving the
remainder in Australia. Bennett was first to
arrive at Singapore.

In due course, 8th Division was allotted an
area in southern Malaya and began training in
jungle conditions. Initially, with one brigade
only, Bennett was continually breathing down
the neck of the brigadier. When, after much
debate with Army Headquarters chiefly by let-
ter, his second brigade and some divisional
troops were sent up, the pressure on staff and
subordinates eased a little, but there were spo-
radic difficulties over interpersonal relations
with his senior regular staff officers, and on
occasions, with the ex-CMF brigade command-
ers and divisional advisers.

Lodge gets into his stride in a chronicle of
the preparations for defence of the peninsula
and Bennett’s part in the campaign that fol-
lowed. It makes interesting, even fascinating
reading. The style and analytical method are
very good; and the sketch maps particularly
well done.

Unquestionably the General was an experi-
cenced and capable commander, but one gets an
impression of rigidity of thinking, not adapting
to the fluidity of Asian warfare. He had the
streak of ruthlessness that is necessary in a
leader aspiring to greater heights, but in Bennett
it was to excess. He was an egotist who had
substantial difficulty in taking part in the team-
work essential to the conduct of operations.
Generally if things did not go his way, they
must be wrong. Extracts from his papers, quoted by Lodge, indicate that at times relationships were quite reasonable, at other times bad. His relations with his GSO1 in particular were sadly at fault, apparently because he believed complete subordination to his opinions was the only attitude permissible. And it is difficult to avoid concluding that Bennett was chiefly to blame.

The author deals fully with Bennett's escape from Singapore, his two years as GOC 3 Corps, his resignation and transfer to the reserve of officers in 1944, the publication of his book Why Singapore Fell, the post-war Court of Inquiry, and, very fully, the subsequent Royal Commission. The highly complicated affair was, however, not yet finished. The GOC Malaya's despatch covering the campaign was referred to Australia in 1946, before its publication. Although there were substantial differences between it and General Bennett's own despatch written in 1942, Australia offered no comment on the former; and when it was published Bennett's initial public reaction was quite favourable. Then when the Australian Official History was in draft, a curious quirk of fate surfaced.

The writer of the Malayan volume, Lionel Wigmore, had been a representative of the Department of Information located in Singapore, and the Minister of the Interior, Wilfred Kent Hughes, had been on the staff of Headquarters 8th Division. Both had occasionally been subject to Bennett's criticism but came out in his favour, the one in his writing, the other in his determination to get correction of the errors that Bennett found in that draft.

As a postscript it may be added that in 1957 General Bennett returned to Singapore for the opening of the British Commonwealth War Memorial, and a personal visit to Johore and the northern part of the Island. It was this reviewer's duty, as Comd Aust Army Force FARELF, to arrange transport and to offer a staff officer to accompany him as a kind of ADC. Service befitting a retired lieutenant-general was provided, and, when the departing aircraft was delayed for some hours, the reviewer sat with the General until take-off. The impression he left was of a man badly bruised, and just as little chastened, by his experiences.
A HISTORY OF THE 2/29 BATTALION —
8TH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION A.I.F. Edited
by R. W. Christie, 2/29 Battalion A.I.F. Asso­ciation 1983. 223 pages, photographs and
maps.

Reviewed by A. Argent

THIS is the story, told simply yet compel­lingly, of a battalion that never had a
chance. It went into action less one company
and a platoon under command of an Indian
Brigade to counter-attack the Japanese break­through at Muar River on the evening of 17
January 1942 and less than a month later on
15 February it laid down its arms in Singapore.
But what a story there is to tell of those short
days of action and the subsequent long days of
hardship in captivity.

The 2/29th, as was the 29th of the Kaiser's
War, was a Victorian unit and was raised on
17 October 1940 and trained at Bonegilla. Be­cause there was a requirement to raise the Bat­talion quickly, the CO was given authority to
select officers from 23 Brigade of 8 Division
and thus some of the originals had begun their
AIF service in 2/21, 2/22 and 2/40 Battal­ions. The adjutant was the only permanent soldier.
The men came from training battalions at Al­bury and at Darley near Bacchus Marsh and
there were 130 who had been training as cav­alrymen. In February 1941 the Battalion moved
to Bathurst to join its Brigade (27 Brigade) and
its other battalions — 2/26 (Queensland) and
2/30 (NSW) and after further hard training
including enduring the bitter Bathurst winter,
the Brigade sailed for Malaya in late July.

In Malaya 2/29 Battalion was stationed at
places familiar to Australians who served there
later in the 1950's and 1960's and initially they
were at Segamat and , later when war was im­minent, at Kluang airfield with a company
at Kahang airfield nearby. It was from here
that they motored two and a half hours to the
Muar area and into history.

Attached to the 2/29 Battalion was 13 Battery
2/4 Anti-Tank Regiment and their 2-pounders
knocked out the nine Japanese tanks, some of
which had broken into the Battalion perimeter.
Two war correspondents took the photographs
that are today so well known. Then followed
a week of hard fighting when the 2/29 (and 2/
19) withdrew along the Muar road from Bakri
to Yong Peng. Years later, I often travelled
along this narrow bitumen road with its deep
drains on either side and then rubber or swamps
beyond and I would often think of the diffi­culties of turning vehicles around on such a
narrow strip, the problems of getting the
wounded out, the lack of radios that worked,
the noise and confusion and, above all, the
dreadful tiredness that comes with continuing
action. The delay these two Australian battal­ions imposed upon the Japanese allowed our
other forces to withdraw down the trunk road
to the north without being cut-off. 2/29 Bat­talion's casualties were 13 officers and 296 other
ranks or fifty-eight per cent of those who went
into action. The CO was killed and only one
company commander survived.

After this the Battalion was reformed in Jo­hore with a new CO and a new headquarters
and took in 540 reinforcements including 19
officers. As more than 400 men came from
other states, the Battalion lost its Victorian
identity. To the everlasting shame of the Aus­tralian Government of the day and Army Head­quarters in Melbourne, the reinforcements were
untrained; some had only been in the Army for
a month, many had never fired their rifles. In
fact, 2/29 reinforcements did bayonet training
and fired their rifle practices on Bukit Timah
range in Singapore with Japanese bombers over­head. Little wonder that the behaviour of some
Australian soldiers in the final days of Singa­pore bought such disrepute to the AIF.

That it was not more widespread, for ex­ample, in the case of the 2/29 Battalion was
probably due to the trained and disciplined
originals who set the example to the reinforce­ments.

In Singapore, the Battalion was in action near
Tengah airfield and fought alongside the re­doubtable Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders
and in the closing days moved closer to the
city. After the cease fire, they marched 17 miles
to Serang Barracks at Changi.

This book contains excellent chapters on the
fighting including vivid extracts from the diary
of the regimental medical officer and short,
matter-of-fact account by the signals sergeant
who eventually joined the guerrillas. Fourteen
men of the 2/29 died with the guerrillas.

The history of the Battalion as prisoners of
war is also well covered. 640 officers and men
were in F Force, which worked from the Thai-
land end of the railway, and a smaller party was in A force for the Burma approach. Another group went with B Force to Borneo. There is an account by a soldier who was picked up by a US Navy submarine when the Raikuio Maru was torpedoed en route to Japan in September 1944. From this man and others the Allies first learned of the Japanese atrocities and of their brutality on the Death Railway. (The reader must go elsewhere to find the Australian Government’s initial craven reaction to these first-hand reports.)

The Battalion dead from all causes totalled 17 officers and 640 men. All told, 1572 men wore the black and yellow colour patch.

I’ve long believed that we can gain more than military history by studying our defeats than by going over those battles and campaigns, such as Alamein and Normandy, where there were an abundance of riches. The past clearly shows that should Australians go to a big or little war again we will lose the early battles and, as ever, it will be the regimental officer and the men of the battalions who will pay the price. This story of the 2/29 Battalion AIF stands as a grim reminder of the years that the locusts ate. Have those years returned?


Reviewed by LtCol J. Moore RA Inf

Duntroon is one of the best $30.00 worth of books I’ve read . . . and I’ve read a lot of history. As readers of history will often find, it is served up as a series of dry academic facts with little to commend its literary merit.

Duntroon is different; it is an academic work — well researched and with an extensive bibliography to support it but, and this is the significant but, I found it eminently readable: Duntroon came alive; its personalities, its traditions its spirit and to me, this is real history — living history.

It is fair to say that no institution is better known in Australia than Duntroon; Australians are proud of its record and its product and Duntroon men can stand tall in the community. However, despite this, very few Australians know much about the institution: it remains a mystique and, I suppose it’s fair to say that this book goes a long way toward being the mystagogue.

Of course Duntroon is not only about the Royal Military College it is a specialist view of Australia’s history since Federation and it provides yet another angle on the story of Australia at war — particularly Australians at war but it continues to reflect history and development to the end of 1985.

As a true reflection of history, the book explores a variety of side issues which are relevant to Duntroon and its graduates. For example, although whispers in corridors had suggested that regular army officers (Duntroon graduates) had in latter WWII years purposely and with deliberation, put in motion a plan to assume future dominance of the Army in that command posting would only go to regulars and not to citizen soldiers (reservists). This book, for the first time to my knowledge, documents the details and in some cases, names the “plotees”. Perhaps this aspect of the book should be read in conjunction with the newly released book The Fall of General Gordon Bennett where, during in the early stages of documentation, Bennett is portrayed as being paranoiac about regular officers attempts to displace citizen soldiers commanders.

Duntroon, in its portrayal of the institution, is not all glamour, it exposes its warts too. It does not pull its punches on hazing (better known to the Australian population as “bar-stardisation”) nor does it side step associated traditions (now dead) such as the Easter Bunny. Quoted Sydney media reports, dated 1933 charging that “awful tortures” were inflicted on recruits causing three to return home while the remainder remained as ‘white-faced mental wrecks’ will have a ring of familiarity with Melbourne media accusations of the mid-80’s. However, in balance Duntroon reflects well the contribution the Royal Military College has made to the nation and the “warts” such as they are, are reflected in their true perspective as being an appendage of institutional life. The greater good — the real story — is the dominant.

In summary, Duntroon is readable history about Australia and Australians; that the book has now commenced its second edition speaks for itself.
The Duntroon Society

The Duntroon Society was formed on 27 June 1980, the 69th anniversary of the opening of the Royal Military College. To a large extent the Society was instigated by the then Commandant, Major General A. L. Morrison, with the enthusiastic support of several friends of the College, most of whom had been cadets there in the 1930s and 1940s.

Previous attempts to establish an association of RMC graduates some 60 years earlier had not been successful, so this time something much broader was attempted, avoiding an exclusive "Old Boys' Union".

The Society's Purpose is to encourage a continuing interest in the Royal Military College by providing an organisation through which former cadets, members of the staff, and friends of the College may associate.

The Society's Objectives are to provide:

- The means for its members to maintain contact with Duntroon;
- A forum for social and professional contact among its members; and
- Support to the College as considered appropriate.

The term "friends of the College" is indeed broad in scope. It includes anyone at all with an interest in the College. In this category can be found OCS graduates, interested Canberra residents, and relatives of former staff members. This broad scope is particularly important, now that OCS Portsea and OCS George's Heights have closed and their functions are now performed by RMC Duntroon. The Society's ability to cater for this larger family is emphasised by the existence of at least one RMC graduate in the 1970s whose father is an OCS graduate from Portsea and whose mother is an OCS graduate from Mildura (though she does not seem that old!).

The Society is run by its National Council, chaired by the RMC Commandant, with representatives from each State as members. A Society newsletter is published twice a year, keeping members informed of news of interest. Topics so far covered include:

- The Teaching of Japanese at RMC (from 1917 to 1938 when it was no longer seen as relevant!);
- The Future of ADFA and RMC;
- RMC and the RAAF Connection;
- Burley Griffin at Duntroon;
- The Commissioning of Female General Service Officers. Where to Now?;
- Extracts from RMC Orders, 1911 (including snake bite first aid: "cauterise by applying pure carbolic, nitric acid, or by red hot wire);
- Life as a Staff Cadet — 1914 (by Brigadier D.A. "Torpey" Whitehead CBE, DSO and bar, MC, Croix de Guerre);
- Mixed sport at Duntroon (which started a little earlier than generally believed, despite MajGen Bridges' best intentions!); and
- Officer Training School, 1916 (on a site now occupied by ADFA).

The Society newsletter also covers the activities of the Society's regional branches in each State and in New Zealand.

Regional activities are organised by the local branch committees, and help to further the Society's objectives. Some activities are purely social, such as luncheons, dinners, and cocktail parties. A notable occasion being the Victoria Branch luncheon in October 1984, addressed by Brigadier Whitehead, then an alert 88. The ACT Branch had organised several visits — to the ADFA site in 1983, to the Australian War Memorial in 1984, to the Parliament House construction site in 1985, and to the newly opened ADFA in 1986, with a visit to the Australian Institute of Sport planned for 1987. The NSW Branch has held several successful Race Days at Randwick, and the limitations of distance in Australia have been reduced by the postal golf competition run by the ACT Branch for competition by the whole society. The postal golf is run similarly to postal rifle shooting, with scores on the day adjusted by personal handicaps and par scores for the local courses.

The Duntroon Society currently numbers some 700 members, and it is very pleasing to see several OCS graduates actively involved, including two key members of the ACT Branch committee.

To join the Society, one need only contact the Council Secretary, who is the Military Assistant to the Commandant, RMC, Duntroon, ACT 2600, or: Telephone (062) — 75 9701, and be prepared to pay a subscription of $5 for one year or $22 for five years.