



National Boer War Memorial Association

National Patron:

Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin AC
Chief of the Defence Force



Monumentally Speaking - Queensland Edition

QLD. COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER - VOLUME 7, NO. 3 - NOVEMBER 2015

Fathers of the ANZACS ~ 27th September, 2015



MC Miles Farmer



RSL President Kevin Alcock



Attendees



Diane Melloy



Bill Cross



Owen Corry



Mick O'Mallon



Qld. BW Pres. Ron McElwaine



Steve Bain
Project Manager



Grahame Jardine-Vidgen

Diane Melloy

Margaret Ward

Rob Francis



Drawing the Lucky Ticket
- Winner is Bill Cross

Grahame is holding the photograph of Lieut-Col Sir Donald Charles CAMERON.
Margaret is holding the photograph of Lieut-Col Dr Joseph Espie DODS.

Diane is holding the photograph of Lieut James BENSON.
Rob is holding the photograph of Major Thomas James LOGAN.

Thanks to Committee Member Derek Ellis for these photographs

Queensland Chairman's Report

Welcome to the twenty-first Queensland National Boer War Memorial Association newsletter.

National News

1st Horse This is now complete and arrangements are in hand for this statute to be transported to Canberra by the Army.

2nd Horse The 1/2 scale model is complete and the clay model is now due for completion in Sept/ Oct 2015, and foundry finish in March 2016.

3rd Horse The 1/2 scale and clay model starts in Nov 2015, to be complete by April 2016.

4th Horse The order is yet to be placed.

Design Site Works

These are now 95% complete and are being examined by NCU. Once any changes are incorporated, working drawings/documents will be prepared ready for calling tenders.

Survey

This will be carried out by the Army, commencing in December 2015.

Financial Position

As at 8 Oct 15, funds raised were \$3.651m. We received a grant of \$1.45m from the Army. This means we need \$700k to achieve our goal. Please keep the donations coming as we can see the end in sight.

Progress Report

Michael Crouch is doing a great job as chairman of the Finance Committee, and he has prepared December 2015 Progress Report. For those receiving this newsletter by email, please use the following link http://www.bwm.org.au/documents/Nat_Newsetter_2015_12.pdf. The Report is included in this newsletter delivered by Australia Post.

Queensland News

We held 2 Commemorative Services in February and May, and in September, we conducted a seminar on Sunday the 27th entitled "The Fathers of the ANZACS".

We covered Boys of BGS, Soldiers of the Queen and King to the Boer War, by Diane Melloy, Soldiers and Technology, and Smuts in the Boer War and WWI.

Diane is the daughter of a Boer War veteran and widow of a WWI veteran. Diane was one of ten widows who attended the ANZAC Ceremony in Gallipoli this year.

We had 100 in attendance with 26 War Widows from Toowoomba attending. Steve Bain (Project Manager) gave a briefing on the progress of the monument.

Future Events

Our next gathering will be the **4th February 2016** when we commemorate the battle of Onverwacht Hills - the last major battle of the Boer War in which the 5th QIB played a significant part. See photo below.

Conclusion

We are well on the way to achieving our goal, but we are still \$700k short. We still need your support. Donation Form is included in this newsletter.

Ron McElwaine OAM RFD ED
Chairman
Qld Committee of NBWMA



5th QIB



Have you registered all your Boer War Ancestors' Descendants?

National Boer War Memorial Association Database - www.bwm.org.au. Alternatively, contact us for an application form and we will carry out research on your behalf. Being on the Queensland database entitles you to a Newsletter, and invitation to all Memorial services. The database will enable future generations to trace their ancestors.

Become a Queensland Supporter. Only \$15.00 per annum for 3 newsletters, invitations, a Boer War badge, a car sticker and a Certificate. Helps to ensure all donations go to the Memorial Fund. Contact Jennie at NBWMA Supporters, c/o P. O. Box 100, Corinda, Qld. 4075.

Don't worry about avoiding temptation.
As you grow older, it will avoid you. ~ Winston Churchill

BOER WAR REMEMBERED PHIL BROWN

Written in the Courier Mail - Sat. 22.8.2015

The Boer War is largely forgotten, but it shouldn't be. In the past year or so we've been focusing all our attention on World War I, but let's not forget the Boer War, which was attended by six contingents of troops from Queensland.

It blooded many of them for the horrors to come at Gallipoli and on the Western Front where many Boer War veterans served. It seems only fitting, therefore, that they should have their own memorial and one is now being built, if built is the right word for a work of art.

Sculptor Louis Laumen is making a bronze of Boer War horsemen for a National Boer War Memorial in Canberra, for completion by May 2017 if enough money is raised to meet the cost: \$4.9 million. The fund-raising is going well and some of the larger-than-life bronzes are already done but they need our help to finish the job.

The memorial, featuring a mounted patrol, will have pride of place on Anzac Parade, and will be set in a specially landscaped area that will resemble the South African veldt. The project got a kick-along recently at a function at Queensland Art Gallery.

It was a small but rather impressive assembly with two former governors of Queensland on hand, Major General Peter Arnison and Dame Quentin Bryce, and two former governor-generals of Australia – Dame Quentin Bryce again and Major General Michael Jeffery, among other dignitaries including art dealer Philip Bacon, a supporter of the project, and Colonel J S Haynes, president of the Nation Boer War Memorial Association.

Major General Jeffery delivered an impassioned and illuminating speech describing the National Boer War Memorial as “a wonderfully aesthetic and beautiful memorial” and he urged Queenslanders to lend their support. He admitted that what most people know about the Boer War they know from the film ‘Breaker Morant’, which is better than nothing. He went on to point out that it was a noteworthy conflict.

“The Boer War was the first war in which the Commonwealth of Australia engaged and these soldiers formed the first truly Australian expeditionary force to fight overseas,” he said.

“In the beginning there was a preference for infantry units but the value of Australian bushmen was quickly recognised. Many of the Australian soldiers came from country regions and were very skilled horsemen, very keen shooters and had bush skills that were very readily adaptable to the African countryside.”

They fought in what was the Second Boer War from October 1899 to May 1902, a bitter conflict that raged across the South African veldt between Britain and her Empire and the two largely self-governing Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

The six Australian States (colonies then) were quick to make troops available to Britain when a Boer ultimatum to the British expired and Boer commandos streamed across the borders into the British colonies of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal.

The first formed unit of troops from Australia, a squadron of the NSW Lancers, landed in Cape Town on 2nd November, 1899, less than one month after hostilities began. It was a brutal business that cost 75,000 lives, many of them Boer

women and children held in concentration camps set up by the British, a shameful phenomenon.

Major General Jeffery points out that it was a brutal conflict that was only resolved with “a change in command to Lord Roberts and then Lord Kitchener,” who finally overcame the Boers in 1902.

My ears pricked up at the mention of Lord Roberts because I have a family connection there. It just so happens that my paternal grandfather, who was born in 1900, was christened Lord Roberts Brown in honour of the Boer War hero. It was a handy moniker in an age when class mattered and sometimes people thought he was a real lord, despite his humble South London origins.

Many Queenslanders will have a connection to the Boer War, some without knowing it and without knowing much about the war itself.

“Many Queenslanders will have very little knowledge of the Boer War and the contribution made by our fledgling nation,” Major General Jeffery said, including the fact that six Australians were awarded the Victoria Cross for their service while many others received other decorations.

About 23,000 Australians were involved in the Boer War and about 1,000 died. About 43,000 horses were sent and none returned.

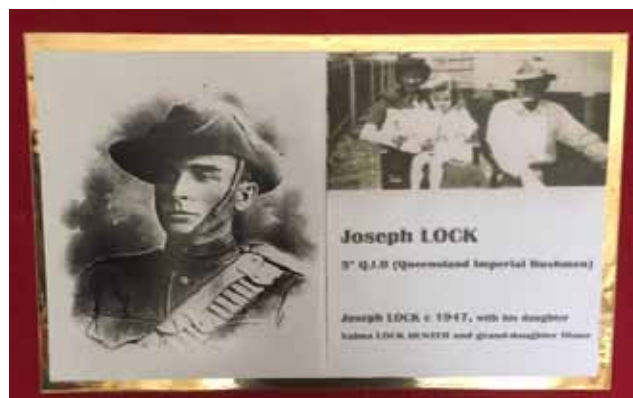
Six contingents of the Queensland Defence Force fought there between 1899 and 1902, and some of them might be your ancestors. Major General Jeffery suggested that it was high time they were honoured and the new memorial in Canberra will do just that and, after all, that contingent of horsemen in bronze could well have been Queenslanders. If you want to help the memorial, donations are tax deductible. bwm.org.au/donate.”

The Raffle for Trooper Bert Jones – The Great War Bear

was won by Committee Member Bill Cross when his ticket was drawn out of the bowl by Diane Melloy, our guest speaker.

A sincere **thank you** to everyone who contributed to our raffle, which was drawn in front of everyone attending the “Fathers of the ANZACs” Seminar on 27th September, 2015.

Almost \$400.00 was raised for the National Boer War Memorial Fund



Photograph of Cpl Joseph LOCK 5th Q.I.B.

Second photograph with his daughter Valma Lock Hunter, and grand-daughter, Diane (now Mrs Melloy)

Part 3. (Continued from the previous issue of Monumentally Speaking). **Final part.**

British Boer War - Instances and Characters.

“Military Incompetence”



Spion Kop - General Sir Charles Warren – “Bad luck” may have been the excuse used by some British generals but worse luck was to follow in the shape of the 1400-foot Spion Kop. The totally unnecessary storming of this mini-mountain was to the Boer War what the charge of the Light Brigade had been to the Crimean War.

While still numbed by the series of defeats just recounted, Buller’s army of 29,000 infantry, 2,600 mounted men, 8 field batteries and 10 naval guns, was enriched by the arrival of a fresh division commanded by Sir Charles Warren, R.E.

Together these two forces under the supreme command of Buller, were employed to try and lift the siege of Ladysmith. Unfortunately, and despite their immense superiority in men and equipment, they failed to do so.

So far as the British were concerned, the operation involved crossing the river Tugela and then closing on Ladysmith via a complex of small hills and ranges of high ground. There were two places at which the river could be forded. Buller ordered Warren to lead the assault across one of these ‘drifts’, while another force, under another General Lyttleton, created a diversionary crossing at the other. For success, the plan depended upon speed of movement, surprise and synchronizing the two crossings. Ideally, Warren and his force on the left flank should have been over the river and well on their way to Ladysmith, while Lyttleton was still occupying the Boers attention on the right flank.

The plan went wrong for several reasons. In the first place Warren’s Division was far too small for the main attack. As to why Buller should have used an attacking force whose size in comparison with the total number of troops he had available constituted a mere pinprick, suffices to note that it accorded with his general policy of avoiding any direct responsibility for whatever might transpire. If the worst happened it would be Warren’s army, not his, that would carry the blame. In due course we shall examine two deeper reasons for this particular form of military incompetence.

The second reason for disaster lay in the character of Warren, who has been described as ‘dilatatory yet fidgety, over-cautious yet irresolute and totally ignorant regarding the use of cavalry’. He was also obsessive, obstinate, self-opinionated, and excessively bad-tempered.

While Lyttleton crossed the Tugela with his diversionary force and successfully convinced the Boers that this was Buller’s line of advance, Warren failed to exploit the situation. Instead of crossing the river with all speed he seemed ‘to give way to certain fads and fancies’. These included an obsession with his enormous baggage train and the fear that it might be destroyed by non-existent enemy guns on the small mountain Spion Kop.

So concerned was he with his baggage that he spent twenty-six hours personally supervising its transfer across the river. The delay was invaluable to the Boers.

One of the factors, which slowed up Buller’s military movement in the Boer War, was the quantity of the baggage with

which officers went on active service. According to Kruger this might well include pianos, long-horned gramophones, chests of drawers, polo sticks, and in Buller’s case, an iron bathroom and well equipped kitchen.

However, it was at this point that mere tardiness and inefficiency gave way to something more. Under the mounting strain of inactivity a curious *folie a deux* seemed to descend upon Buller and his subordinate. In chronological order the events were as follows: -

1. A cavalry reconnoiter by Lord Dundonald of the territory beyond the river revealed an obvious line of advance for Warren’s army.
2. Warren was furious that Dundonald should have used his cavalry to make the reconnaissance.
3. Partly through his obsession with the baggage train and partly because of the unsolicited and unwelcome information from Dundonald, Warren rejected the projected movement and opted instead for a direct advance across the Tabanyama range, directly to his front. Unfortunately no reconnaissance had been made of this area.
4. It was at this point that Buller began describing Warren’s behaviour as ‘aimless and irresolute’. Nevertheless, he still refused to assume command.
5. Warren’s assault on the Tabanyama range was hardly a success. This was because he found the Boers well dug in on a second crest of which he had been ignorant. He still refused to outflank the Boer positions.
6. Buller, who was becoming increasingly restless, rode over to proffer criticism and advice. He still refrained from giving any orders to Warren.
7. Warren’s eye now lit upon the cone-shaped eminence of Spion Kop. He knew instantly that it must be captured. Buller readily agreed even though neither general had previously considered such a course of action, let alone worked out what it would entail.
8. The job of attacking what has been called ‘an unknown mountain on a dark night against a determined enemy of unknown strength’ was given to General Talbot-Coke, whose ‘qualifications’ for the venture were that he had only just arrived and was seriously affected by a game leg. At least he was no more ignorant of Spion Kop than were any of his colleagues, for they knew nothing about its summit, its extent or suitability for defense. No one wondered why the Boers had no guns up there, hence no diversionary tactics were employed.



While the generals stayed below, the men were ordered up the steeply sloping mountainside into a dense fog.

When, in almost zero visibility they thought they had reached the summit the assault force halted, congratulated themselves on the total absence of opposition, raised the Union Jack and tried to entrench.

The operative word is ‘tried’, for the top was much like the rest of the mountain, solid rock. Nobody had warned them of this. They decided to use sandbags, only to find that no one had remembered to bring them. While the mists cleared they did the best they could with pieces of rock and clods of earth, only too well aware that this flimsy protection provided no head cover whatsoever.

If this gave them food for thought there was more to follow, for with a further improvement in visibility they made a second disquieting discovery. They were not where they thought they were. Instead of the summit they found themselves on a small plateau some way below the mountaintop: 1,700 men on a piece of ground 400 x 500 yards, and above them on three sides, the Boers.

The enemy opened fire. Within minutes the ground was littered with corpses, many with bullet-holes in the side of the head or body. Owing to the lack of head cover the losses from shrapnel were even greater. Trapped in this seemingly hopeless position without any guidance or directives from their general, two hundred Lancashire Fusiliers laid down their arms and surrendered to the Boers.



Spion Kop

Their place was taken by reinforcements sent up from below.

Meanwhile Warren and Buller did nothing to help the hard-pressed troops. No doubt appalled by what was happening to his army on the heights above, Warren, supine at the best of times, went into a state that has been described as 'paralytic'. Only once did he try to interfere with the course of events. This was to stop his battery of naval guns from shelling Boer positions on a neighbouring peak. He did so in the mistaken belief that the troops they were shelling were British.

Although possessing the necessary equipment, he had failed to establish telegraphic communication with his troops on Spion Kop. Had he done so this particular costly error would never have occurred.

As to why he, the commanding general, should deliberately cut himself off from the main source of intelligence, his own front-line troops, one can only surmise that, at some level he just did not want to know. This hypothesis that Warren was using what is technically known as the mechanism of denial, receives support from another curious incident.

A war correspondent who had witnessed the dire events on the top of the mountain hurried down to the commanding general. But instead of receiving this, admittedly unsolicited information with gratitude, Warren flew into a rage and demanded that the journalist should be arrested for insolence. The war correspondent in question was Winston Churchill.



Winston Churchill captured with other British soldiers, Pretoria 1900. Churchill is standing alone on the right, already contemplating his escape.

Warren's behaviour was only part of a *folie a deux*. No less extraordinary was that of his commander-in-chief. Buller's contribution was violently to resist the pleas of his subordinate commanders for an attack upon those positions from which the Boers were so assiduously shelling his troops. He even went so far as to recall such

units as had managed to reach peaks held by the enemy. Had they been allowed to remain, the massacre of British troops would have been substantially reduced.

When night came, those who had survived the constant shelling and rifle fire decided to seek permission to withdraw. Unfortunately their lines of communication were again disrupted, this time because they had not been given sufficient oil for their signaling lamps. Maintaining communications within his army was not Warren's strongest suit. He did, however, order General Talbot-Coke to go up the mountain and bring back news.

But once again he took great pains to avoid hearing the worst. For a start, he selected as his messenger a lame man who did not know the country; then, just in case he did succeed in struggling up and down the mountain, Warren took the ultimate precaution of shifting his H.Q. to a new location. Since he did this in Talbot-Coke's absence, and without a word to anyone, he managed to sustain his ignorance.

So ended the battle. Having lost 243 dead and 100 wounded the Army withdrew. The following day found 20,000 sullen men marching back the way they had come. For all their superiority in numbers, for all their training on the drill squares of Aldershot they had achieved nothing. Once again the rigid Goliath had been ousted by the astute but nonconformist David.

Conclusion - This, the last of their disastrous battles, showed up the weaknesses of the high command with blazing clarity. As one captured Boer artillery officer remarked: 'If *your* men had *our* generals where should we Boers be?' Though slight compared to what lay in store for them years later the cost was immense by contemporary standards: 22,000 British dead in only 31 months and a bill to the nation of £22,000,000.

As with other generals in other wars, Buller's hitherto inconspicuous energies found their outlet not on the battlefield but afterwards in making scapegoats of his subordinates. In his case it was the unfortunate Warren who bore the brunt. Buller was dismissed from the Army in 1901. The following year the Government published his dispatches. These proved him to have been 'incompetent, blundering, defeatist'.

It is worth placing the Crimean and Boer Wars in the same perspective, in that both present a picture of what appears to be incompetence, but more interesting is the psychological pattern of these events.

Here was a rich and powerful nation anxious to assert its rights, first in Russia and then in South Africa.

It achieved little but to send out highly regimented armies, which endeavoured to make up in courage, discipline and visual splendor what they lacked in relevant training, technology, and adequate leadership.

For the moment it might prove helpful to keep in mind certain characteristics of the incompetence just described.

They include:

1. An underestimation, sometimes bordering on the arrogant, of the enemy.
2. An equating of war with sport.
3. An inability to profit from past experience.
4. A resistance to adopting and exploiting available technology and novel tactics.
5. An aversion to reconnaissance, coupled with a dislike of intelligence.
6. Great physical bravery but little moral courage.

7. An apparent imperviousness by commanders to loss of life and human suffering amongst their rank and file, or (its converse) an irrational and incapacitating state of compassion.
8. Passivity and indecisiveness in senior commanders.
9. A tendency to lay the blame on others.
10. A reliance on the frontal assault.
11. A rigid adherence to the strict preservation of 'the military pecking order'.
12. A high regard for tradition and other aspects of conservatism.
13. A lack of creativity, improvisation, inventiveness and open-mindedness.
14. A tendency to eschew moderate risks for tasks so difficult that failure might seem excusable.
15. Procrastination.

Buller was aged 60 when he was sent as Commander of the [Natal Field Force](#) in 1899 on the outbreak of the [Second Boer War](#), arriving at the end of October. Because of concerns about his performance and negative reports from the field, he was replaced in January 1900 as overall Commander in South Africa by [Lord Roberts](#)



Buller passed away a short 8 years later on 2nd June 1908 (aged 68), at [Crediton, Devon](#).

There were many public expressions of sympathy for Buller, especially in the West Country where in 1905 prior to his death in 1908, by public subscription a notable statue by [Adrian Jones](#) of Buller astride his war horse was erected in [Exeter](#) on the road from his home town of [Crediton](#) (facing away from Crediton to the annoyance of the inhabitants of Crediton.)



Tasmania's Boer War Brigade puzzle

The Mercury (themercury.com.au) published this photo on 5 July 2015. Scott Seymour found and digitally coloured this photo, which was taken at Launceston's Albert Hall on the first Tasmanian contingents arrival home in December 1900. Anyone with information about any of the men in the photo can contact Mr Seymour via the Facebook page – Tasmania – The Boer War.

I always try to believe the best of everybody - it saves so much trouble. ~ Rudyard Kipling

The Lesson 1899-1902 (Boer War)
Rudyard Kipling

*Let us admit it fairly, as a business people should,
We have had no end of a lesson: it will do us no end of good.*

Not on a single issue, or in one direction or twain,
But conclusively, comprehensively, and several times and again,
Were all our most holy illusions knocked higher than Gilde-roy's kite.
We have had a jolly good lesson, and it serves us jolly well right !

This was not bestowed us under the trees, nor yet in the shade of a tent,
But swingingly, over eleven degrees of a bare brown continent.
From Lamberts to Delagoa Bay, and from Pietersburg to Sutherland,
Fell the phenomenal lesson we learned-with a fullness accorded no other land.

It was our fault, and our very great fault, and not the judgment of Heaven.
We made an Army in our own image, on an island nine by seven,
Which faithfully mirrored its makers' ideals, equipment, and mental attitude--
And so we got our lesson: and we ought to accept it with gratitude.

We have spent two hundred million pounds to prove the fact once more,
That horses are quicker than men afoot, since two and two make four;
And horses have four legs, and men have two legs, and two into four goes twice,
And nothing over except our lesson -- and very cheap at the price.

For remember (this our children shall know: we are too near for that knowledge)
Not our mere astonished camps, but Council and Creed and College--
All the obese, unchallenged old things that stifle and overlies us--
Have felt the effects of the lesson we got-an advantage no money could buy us!

Then let us develop this marvellous asset which we alone command,
And which, it may subsequently transpire, will be worth as much as the Rand.
Let us approach this pivotal fact in a humble yet hopeful mood--
We have had no end of a lesson, it will do us no end of good!

It was our fault, and our very great fault--and now we must turn it to use.
We have forty million reasons for failure, but not a single excuse.

So the more we work and the less we talk the better results we shall get--
We have had an Imperial lesson; it may make us an Empire yet!

~~~~~  
How many legs does a dog have if you call the tail a leg?  
Four; calling a tail a leg doesn't make it a leg.

~ Abraham Lincoln

**A great Christmas or Birthday present !**



**'CARVINGS from the VELDT - Part Two'**

*Rifle carvings from the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902*

**Price now \$40.00**  
(was \$90) + \$13 postage

**SPECIAL DEAL** - Thanks to the generosity of **Dave George**, IF YOU BUY IN Brisbane, **PRICE \$40.00** with \$10.00 donated to NBWMA

The author has decided to sell off remaining stocks of this book. Hard-covered book with 350 pages in A4 size. 306 weapons are featured - all with *carvings or engravings* (including rifles, carbines and handguns used by both sides). 95% of the 1,400 photos are in full gloss colour, which show great detail of the weapons.

The book includes four rifles used by Boer Generals and over 70 weapons named to Australian and NZ troops, with interesting service histories and many photos of the veterans. Also a selection of swords, bayonets, bandoliers, ammo, medals and a large selection of unit badges and headgear worn by both sides - British, Colonial and Boers. Also chapters on Anglo-Boer War re-enactor groups and POW trench-art (e.g.: pipes, artefacts and jewellery).

**Author: Dave George** Ph: **02- 6676 4320** (8.30am to 5.00pm NSW)

Of great interest to Boer War descendants,  
Rifle Collectors and Military Historians.

~~~~~  
One of Dave George's grandfathers fought throughout the Anglo-Boer War. Dave was given Granddad's bayonet at the tender age of 12. Dave has been interested in the history of the war all his life. Over the last 20 years, Dave has become very 'passionate' about recording as many of these historic weapons that have names carved onto their stocks. These items are 'living history' and a close 'personal link' to the lives and stories of the soldiers who carried the rifles during the conflict. Dave has been able to contact several descendants of the soldiers and some amazing and fascinating stories have emerged, and are recorded in his books.
~~~~~

**A review in Black Powder magazine, June 2009 by Alan Overton U.K.** (I have précised the review – Ed)

"Members may recall I previewed this book, and my own copy has arrived and exceeded all expectations.

What a book it is! An A4 size hardback with over 300 pages absolutely packed with photographs – mostly in colour – providing a personal link to those who fought in this bitter conflict. Much painstaking research by Mr George to record and document the rifles, uniquely bearing the name or initials of the Boers, identifying the owners and giving a brief record of their lives and fates.

Close liaison with archives of nations resulted in more detail being unearthed, including family origins, medal entitlements, Prisoner of War camp, etc.

Correspondence and Donations to: - The Secretary, Boer War Memorial Association, P. O. Box 165, Fortitude Valley, Qld. 4006

Spectacular quality of carvings and decoration, sometimes including State Coats of Arms, silhouettes or personalised initials. The British were subject to military law for defacing Her Majesty's property, but Australian, New Zealand and Tasmanian owners personalised their rifles.

Miscellaneous carvings and trench art showing beautifully made trinkets by Boer Prisoners of War, and a fine selection of cap and unit badges, and other equipment such as swords, bayonets and bandoliers.

The overall value of this definitive work of reference is enormous, and Mr George is to be congratulated for his dedication of effort and research that is evident on every single page.

\*\*\*\*\*

One story on page 48 tells of Trooper St. John Robinson, 2 QMI, who was born in North Queensland in 1876, and raised at 'Cordelia Vale' in the Herberton River district.

St. John Robinson enlisted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> QMI as Trooper No. 62. The military museum in Townsville, Qld. Records him as serving as a despatch rider. His pay would have been 4s. 6d a day.

St. John Robinson (*also known as Saint John*) was able to retain his service carbine on discharge, and he decorated it as a reminder of his service in South Africa. He also brought home a cavalry sword.

St. John Robinson recorded the names of various actions he took part in as well as many of the places he was stationed at. The 2<sup>nd</sup> QMI were present at Poplar Grove and Driefontein and various actions leading to the occupation of Bloemfontein, then on outpost duties in and around Bloemfontein until 9.4.1900.



Klip River, close to Johannesburg on 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> May 1900, and Diamond Hill on 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> June 1900. There may have been a skirmish at 'Silver Kop' – could have been the name of a Boer Farm.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> QMI marched across the Transvaal to Balmoral (which they captured under Major C. Rankin) and on to Rustenburg through minor



clashes with the Boers. These are carved on to the stock fore-end - Belfast,



Carolina, Middleburg, Machadodorp, Rustenburg, Poplar Grove and Barberton.

'St. John Robinson' and 'Boer War January 1900-1901' are carved on the top hand guard.

St. John Robinson died in Queensland in 1967 aged 91 years.

The Robinson Family presented his carbine, his .303 bandolier and cavalry sword to the North Queensland Military Museum.

(Excerpt from "Carvings from the Veldt" by David George)