



# National Boer War Memorial Association Inc Victoria

Vol. 1 Issue 2

March 2011

## Melbourne has a new Memorial at the Shrine of Remembrance



This plaque was originally unveiled at the Boer War Day Memorial Service held at the Shrine on the 30th May.

On Saturday 16th October, a small gathering of descendants of veterans met, in rather inclement weather, for the dedication of the plaque now located at the base of our own Jacaranda tree at the Shrine.

Following a welcome by the Hon. Michael Baden-Powell and the playing of God save the Queen, the new memorial was dedicated by The Rev Kevin Dobson. Lt Col Ian George (Rtd) recited the Ode. The last Post and Rouse were played, followed by Advance Australia Fair.

Fortunately the rain held off until the conclusion of the service and the banner bearers did well to keep their feet on the ground with the prevailing wind.

The tree, located adjacent to the

An invitation is extended to all  
Descendants of Boer War Veterans  
and supporters  
to attend the  
Boer War Day Service  
at the  
Shrine of Remembrance  
Melbourne  
Sunday 29th May 2011

Prior to the Service  
Descendants of Boer War Veterans  
are invited to participate in a short march  
to the Shrine  
commencing at 12 Noon.

Assembly time will be  
11:30 am at the ANZAC Avenue  
end of the Shrine forecourt

Personal and family medals may be worn  
No photographs or memorabilia to be carried.

To assist with planning, it would be appreciated if potential marchers advise their intentions to Secretary, Bill Woolmore .

McRobertson Fountain near the corner of Commercial Road and St Kilda Road will be a permanent memorial for descendants of all Boer War Veterans to visit.

### The Jacaranda Tree

The chosen tree is the Jacaranda



# National Boer War Memorial Association Inc

(ABN: 29 293 433 202)

## Victoria

Mail: P O Box 2006, Blackburn South, Victoria, 3130

Web Site: [www.bwm.org.au](http://www.bwm.org.au)

**Patron-in-Chief:** Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

**National Patron:** Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston AO AFC, Chief of Defence Force

## Committee

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## Promotional Merchandise

To promote the Association and assist in fund raising, the following items are available for purchase. Contact the Secretary at the above address. Please see page 12 for an order form.

### NEW

Pens \$10 each

Available in: Maroon and Gold; or  
Black and Gold



Car Sticker \$2.00  
(10cm x 10cm)



Lapel Pin \$8.00  
30 x 30 mm



Lapel Pin \$10.00  
25 x 25 mm

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cont from page 1

Mimosifolia, a hardy, sub-tropical native of South America. It is a popular tree in South Africa and lines many of the streets in Pretoria, the old Capital of the former South African Republic. When the flowers begin to fall the streets are a carpet of blue.

The Jacaranda in bloom would have been a familiar sight to many of the Australian servicemen and women during the Boer War between 1899 and 1902.

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### **Promotion Activities**

Activities over the past few months have centred around generating interest in the memorial, promoting the memorial fund, and seeking moral as well as monetary support. Talks have been given to community groups including RSL's, Rotary, Scouting, and Probus.

A Keynote presentation has been prepared to accompany a talk lasting approx 30 minutes. A five minute DVD is used where time is very limited.

**Our intention is to make this presentation to as many groups as possible and bookings are now being taken for 2011.**

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### **One Day in November**

Friday the 26th November was a very busy day for our presentation team visiting Mildura.

In the lead-up, the Sunraysia Daily ran several articles on Boer War veterans from the Sunraysia area and ABC Radio interviewed our chairman, Michael Baden-Powell.

The Mildura Rural City Council and Mildura RSL sponsored a morning function for invited guests including local dignitaries, businessmen and approximately 30 descendants of Boer War veterans. WIN Television Mildura provided a State wide news coverage of the event.

In the afternoon, a similar function was held for the general community and service organisations.

Later that evening, local Scouts were very interested to hear of the links between the Boer War and the scout and guide associations.

At a similar Scouting presentation in Sale last June, the local Scout Troop raised and donated \$500 towards

the memorial and threw out a challenge to other troops to equal or better this sum. Their reason - if it was not for the Boer War, the scouting movement may never have eventuated.

Saturday saw the team mounting an exhibition at the Centro Shopping Centre, Mildura.

In December, Benalla RSL hosted a lunch and once again we had the opportunity to present our appeal to a very appreciative audience.

These events certainly raised awareness to the need for a National Memorial and also helped with the funding.

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### **Boer War Day Memorial Services**

May 31st marks the declaration of peace for the Boer War and last year commemoration ceremonies were held in several locations around Australia. Whilst these ceremonies are known to have been held in each Capital City, it would be interesting to know how many were held in rural Victoria.

If you know of a service, other than that held in Melbourne at the Shrine of Remembrance, please send a brief report (and photo's) to the Editor. Many towns around the State have Boer War specific memorials and these towns, at the very least, should be encouraged to hold a remembrance service each year.

We would particularly like to hear of any suburban or country services planned for this year.

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### **Memorial Design Competition**

The National Boer War Memorial Design Competition commenced in March 2010. Strong national interest was generated with a total of 186 design competition registrations being received. Ultimately, 61 entries were submitted. Four entries were selected for progression to Stage II of the Competition which concluded in October 2010.

The jury assessment occurred during late 2010. The outcome of the assessment process has been referred to the national Government and for review by the appropriate Parliamentary Committee. Given the very high standards and expectations for memorial design in the Anzac Parade precinct, the consideration of competition and design issues typically does take

## ANZAC Day 2011

We will again be marching in Melbourne on ANZAC Day and descendants of Boer War Veterans are invited to participate.

Assemble at the corner of Swanston and Flinders Streets (St Paul's) at 8.45am. This is a long march and a reasonable level of fitness is required.

- All marchers must be able to do so without the use of any walking aid, able to maintain the pace and remain in line.
- Marchers should be appropriately dressed - no sporting colours, T shirts or other clothing which may be deemed inappropriate for the solemnity of the occasion.
- Children will NOT be permitted to march.
- Personal and family medals may be worn;
- Photographs and other memorabilia etc are NOT to be carried.
- Remember, we are marching to show our respect to those served not only in the Boer War but all other conflicts as well.

some time. The announcement of the outcome of the competition and final design will be made as soon as practical.

### **The Hoof of Ballarat Bob (1900)**

This hoof belonged to 'Ballarat Bob,' the war horse of Colonel Thomas (Tom) Price (1842-1911), who established the Victorian Mounted Rifles Regiment in 1885. The bottom of the hoof still has its original shoe attached, and the official government registration number 196 inscribed on the toe. The top features a metal plaque, on which is engraved 'Hoof Of Ballarat Bob, The Gallant Charger Who Carried His Master Through The Boer War 1900 And Was Shot Under Him At Treufontein [sic], 9th September, 1900. Presented To The Mayor And Corporation Of Ballarat By Colonel Price, C. O., V. M. R., S. A.'

The hoof is of historical significance as a poignant reminder of Australia's equestrian casualties in the Boer War, where tens of thousands of horses were sent to South Africa, and few if any returned. It also contributes understanding to the bond between the soldier and his mount. Although it seems a grotesque souvenir to contemporary eyes, it is clear that Colonel Price valued the service of Ballarat Bob so highly that he wanted to preserve part of him to be returned to the horse's 'home' town.

There are a small number of horse hooves in collections across the world, but this one is of particular interest for its direct connections to Ballarat and Colonel Price. This hoof has not been as elaborately remodelled as many others, although it may have pieces missing. The gap in the centre of the plaque suggests it may also have been used as an inkwell, as similar Victorian and Edwardian animal mementos were used in this way.



Thanks to Claire Muir, Assistant Curator, Gold Museum, Ballarat for this interesting and unusual story.

### **The 5th Victorian Mounted Rifles And The Wilmansrust Affair**

*With our Boer War Day service this year specifically remembering the 5th Victorian Mounted Rifles it is appropriate that we take a brief look at this contingent and particularly at the conflict in which it was 'unjustifiably' shamed and humiliated.*

*The Contingent, formed in February 1901, consisted of 46 officers, 971 other ranks, with 1,099 horses*

and required three transports to convey it to the war. Departing on 15th February, 1901, the bulk of the Regiment sailed on the 'Orient' and the horses and a horse-deck guard of about 100 sailed in the 'Argus' and the 'City of Lincoln'. On arrival at Cape Town the troops were directed to Port Elizabeth where they disembarked and the horses were sent along the coast to Durban. Each having made their way to Pretoria, the Regiment was mobilized between 24th March and 4th April, 1901.

Guerrilla war was raging across the veldt with commandos conducting hit and run raids, and Lord Kitchener employed new tactics - scorched earth, blockhouse lines, drives, raids and internment camps. Men who had served in both the regular war and the guerrilla war stated that the latter was more unpredictable and therefore far more terrifying. It was in these operations that the 5th VMR served. They joined General S. B. Beatson's column in clearing operations north of the Delagoa Bay Railway, destroying crops, capturing stock, and taking women and children away from farms.

Then in operations south of the line the left wing was detached and on 12 June was attacked on a pitch dark night at Wilmansrust farm by a force that had evaded the outposts and opened fire, stampeding the horses over the men and rushing the camp. The Victorians lost 18 killed and 42 wounded. The Court of Inquiry into Wilmansrust indicates that during hand to hand fighting a bugler received an order to blow 'Cease Fire', relayed in the dark confusion by a sergeant but actually given by a Boer. The Boer commander, General C. H. Muller reported to General Ben Viljoen that he had routed the enemy, but the evidence indicates that the Boers were suffering casualties and had the 5th been routed there would have been no need for an order to blow 'Cease Fire'.

After the firing stopped the Boers looted the camp and

departed with pom-poms and stores. The Victorian Medical Officer was killed and the hero of Wilmansrust was Veterinary Lieutenant Sam Sherlock, who during the night set bones and bandaged the many wounded, and in the morning put out of their misery many horses which had also been severely wounded.

In subsequent recriminations the 5th were humiliated by Beatson, who accused them of cowardice, calling them 'a lot of white-livered curs'. Three men, who were overheard expressing apprehensions about leadership that had cost their comrades' lives and threatened their own, were charged with 'incitement to mutiny', court-martialed and sentenced to death. This was commuted by Lord Kitchener and the men were sent to serve gaol terms in England, until in response to official inquiries, Mr Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, explained that the Judge-Advocate General had advised that the men had been tried under the wrong section of the Army Act and would be released. This was not a reprieve nor a pardon but a quashing of the charges, although the 5th still suffers from the stigma of having damaged the reputation of the Australian soldier.

After Wilmansrust the 5th served with General H. C. O. Plumer in the south-east Transvaal, had many successful operations and was one of only four units out of the fifty sent from Australia that could claim a Victoria Cross, won by Lieutenant L C Maygar. Their new column leader, Colonel W Pulteney, said that he had felt trepidation when told that 5th VMR were to be posted to him but within two

days his fears were dispelled and they were the finest irregular regiment in the field.

It is hoped that in future they will be remembered for their many fine achievements rather than their undeserved humiliation.

Max Chamberlain



**Memorial erected by members of the 5th Victorian Contingent, Victorian Mounted Rifles in memory of their fallen comrades in South Africa, 1901-1902.**

*Following the Wilmansrust disaster three men of the 5th VMR were sentenced to death for inciting mutiny and one of these, Tpr. Steele, gave his story below to the Sydney Morning Herald when he arrived home after being released.*

“We arrived at Middleberg on June 3rd having been two days on the trek. Of my troop a flying squadron of 250 men was sent out under Major Morris, an Imperial officer, with orders to camp about 11 miles from the main body. They were instructed to surprise Viljoen’s laager in the morning. Accordingly they went into camp about 5 o’clock in the afternoon, leaving an observation post out. This post was to have come in at sundown, and the main picket was to have taken its place, but instead of this being done Major Morris got the night picket ready and kept the men fooling about dressing rifles and saddles within the line of camp until 7 o’clock. The observation post came in at dusk and the Boers followed them into camp, and the first thing the fellows heard was “Hands up you Australians: we will give you reveille at 3 o’clock in the morning.” The camp was at once at the mercy of the enemy, and at short range the firing was terrific. The men dropped on all sides without being able to retaliate. The right half of the battalion was appraised of the state of things at midnight, and not till then did we make a move. It was 10 o’clock by the time we reached the scene of the disaster. We buried 22 bodies and found 42 wounded men, whom we conveyed to Middleburg.

It was soon after our return that we heard General Beatson’s remark describing our men as “a lot of white-livered curs”. Nothing further occurred however until July 7th when the General ordered a march for 8 o’clock that night. Right through the ranks there was a generally expressed determination not to go with him again, and what was virtually a refusal of orders took place. There was talk through the lines of piling arms. A lance corporal advised them not to do so, and warned them that if they carried out their threat half of them would be shot. I was present at the time and turning round to the non-commissioned officer said “It would be better for the men to be shot than to go out with a man who would call them a lot of white-livered curs. Their country will think more of them if they throw down their arms and refuse to go out.” Half an hour later I was placed under arrest, though previously Parry and Richards were arrested by Sergeant Major Cogling for being in the lines and urging the men to mutiny. On July 11 we were tried by a Field General court martial and sentenced to death. The charge preferred against us was that of having persuaded His Majesty’s troops in the colonial forces

to join in mutiny. A report of the trial was forwarded to Lord Kitchener who commuted my sentence to 10 years penal servitude, and that of Parry and Richards to 12 months imprisonment each. We remained in custody for a month before being sent to England and on arrival there were kept in Gosport Military Prison for a fortnight. I was sent from there to Lewes civil prison in the south of England and remained there for a month before I was released. Parry and Richards were incarcerated at Wakefield for a month. We were all liberated the same day and sent to Shorncliffe Barracks in Kent pending our departure for Australia.”

*Bugler Jack Carolin of the 5th VMR wrote home to his father:*

“As regards our disaster at Wilmansrust, we were in no way to blame for it as Major Umphelby told us at General Beatson’s request. A few days after we reached Middleberg to get a new issue of kit etc. I can tell you that as brave men were killed that night as ever put their feet on South African soil. I might mention that General Beatson only ranked as a Colonel when we joined him, and when he left us, and prior to our entraining at Witbank, Transvaal for Newcastle, Natal, he sent our C.O. a telegram through Lord Kitchener congratulating us on the good work we had done, as it was mainly through our efforts he had been promoted, and wishing us further reward. The man to blame in my opinion is General Beatson’s Brevet Major (Major Waterfield) for the remarks published, and I consider he should be asked for an explanation. ....Major McKnight, who was second in command on that regretful night, has I believe, arrived in Victoria and he will be able to convince the public that the disaster was not any fault of ours.”

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### **A Returned Soldier.**

He had gone away with one of the contingents, and returned invalided. A bullet wound in the head had laid him up at Pretoria Hospital for some time, and, although it was thought he had little chance of recovery, his good constitution pulled him through, and he arrived in Victoria fat, and well, looking no end of a hero in his shabby khaki and battered helmet, with its big scrawly number and letters inked on by himself. The township to which he belonged got up a social for him: drove him from the station with the best buggy and pair of horses the place produced, and for several weeks he was the central figure of attraction and had to tell his adventures over and over again, and lower his head to show where the bullet had gone in and come out again.

However, after a time, when his soldier clothes were reverently packed away by his old mother, and he found himself at the familiar work on the farm, soldiering and South Africa seemed a thing of the far past, and even that ugly scar was forgotten. It was some three months after our return that I received a letter from one of his sisters asking me to come up to the farm for a while. That Andy seemed queer, and that they thought one of his mates who had been through things with him might understand him better than they did.

I went at once, for I was out of a billet, and knew I could make myself useful on the farm, also, Andy's sisters were pretty girls.

Arrived there, I was told that although Andy seemed all right in every way, he would suddenly disappear, usually at night, and always in his soldier clothes. His people were very much troubled about it, as, of course, they knew it was no drill or parade that he was attending. Well, I was there for about a month, and he showed no sign whatever of wishing to go off secretly; he was rather silent, but he was that kind anyhow, and the family began to think that there was nothing wrong, and that they had alarmed themselves unnecessarily. I arranged to go back to Melbourne on the following day, and that same evening rode into the township with Andy to say good-bye to several of the fellows who had returned more recently than ourselves.

It was only a little after 10 o'clock when we returned home. We put away our horses and went straight to bed, as the rest of the family had retired. Andy was very silent, and I had an idea he looked queer, but he undressed quickly and was soon snoring.

I was nearly asleep myself when I was startled by Andy growling out "Oh; d..... the pickets. Why can't they tell a man he has got to go out before he turns in? Whose order is it?"

At first I thought he was only talking in his sleep, but by the moonlight I could see he was sitting up in bed, and was wide awake.

"Paddy" he called to me. "Paddy, you brute, come on; we've got to go out to that .....kopje on picket again." My first impulse was to reason with him, but, on second thoughts, I thought I'd better see it through.

"Who says we've got to go?" I asked.

"The sergeant major: hurry up."

I dressed in my uniform — for I had brought it with me — as he was doing, and it seemed queer, I tell you, to be sitting on the edge of a bed in a comfortable bed room, rolling putties on for dear life, and in silence. Andy pulled a rug off his bed, so did I. Took down his rifle and bandolier; it did not trouble him that it had no ammunition in it. We went to the stable and saddled our

horses.

"Have you got any rations?" I asked.

"No, I'll get some. And while he was away I scribbled a few lines, and pinned them to the stable-door to tell the family things would be all right. He came back saying he had some bread and bully beef, also the emergency ration. I noticed he had an old billy also. We mounted and set off.

"Have you the countersign?" I asked.

"Yes; Britannia!"

It was broad moonlight and nice and warm. I did not, particularly mind the picnic. It was like being at the old game again.

"What post are we going to?"

"That kopje away there on the right, where we were two nights ago. I'm blest if I know what the blazes we're wanted for, though, for it is right behind the big kopje and there is a picket of V.M.R.'s there."

"Well," I responded, "It's rot turning us out, just after we had turned in, especially after the day we've had."

Suddenly Andy yelled out, "Friends!" and I knew he was challenged by an imaginary sentry. I stopped, and let him go on and give the password. I heard him call out softly, "Britannia," and then he cried out to me that it was all right, and to come on. We rode on, past a creek, over several paddocks, and at length reached a small, stony rise, for all the world like a kopje, only it was not rough enough.

"Here we are," said Andy, "Hold the horses, and I will go and see if anyone is about."

Away he went, and in a few minutes I heard him yell "Friends" again, and then heard him having an imaginary conversation with the corporal or sergeant in charge, as to times and places. He returned then and told me that we were to stay where we were, and act as a connecting post till evening. "They didn't want us to act sentry, but if we hear any firing to report at once."

"Oh, that's all right," I said, "we can sleep all day."

So we tied up our horses to branches of scrub and lay down. I was to be called at 2 by the others, he said, and he was to take last shift. I could not sleep, it was so cold, so I sat up and smoked till 4 o'clock, and then called Andy.

I fell into a doze then, and when I woke it was broad daylight. Andy had boiled the billy, but was cursing everything blind, because, he said, someone had shook the bully out of his wallet. Of course, it had never been there, and, feeling particularly hungry, I thought I would go and forage from a cottage away down the hill. I told Andy that I was going to try and

get some food from a Kaffir Kraal that I knew of. I went, and nearly frightened a harmless old woman to death; however, she let me have some eggs and milk. I returned and found Andy writing a letter home. While he went off to get water to boil the eggs I glanced over what he had written, and found there was no doubt, that he still thought himself in South Africa. The date was the 3rd of April 1900, and was written from Groeblar's Kop. He told something of the work we had been at, and said that we hoped to have a real good "go in" with the Boers before reaching Bloemfontein. He was pretty quiet through the day, and we sat there smoking and thinking, but I was determined he should go home that evening, as I was full up of playing outpost, and besides I did not know where the game might stop. As likely as not he'd go off on a reconnaissance into the Dandenong ranges, and that wasn't good enough. So about 5 o'clock I suggested that he should take the horses to water, and when he returned it was just beginning to grow dark, and I was kneeling down rolling up the rug. "Slimey came over with word for us to go in," I said.

"That's all right," he replied, and to my relief we started off home quietly. When we got in he behaved as if nothing unusual had happened, changed his uniform for his old tweeds, and sat down to tea. I told his family all that had occurred, and a few days later they got a doctor to see him, and he declared he would gradually get all right.

I stayed a few weeks longer, and he did not appear to want to go out on picket again. I got some work in the neighbouring township, and began to hope he was getting all right. However, some weeks later the young brother came for me; and said Andy had disappeared again, and would I look for him. I got into my uniform, saddled my horse, and cantered off to the stony rise. When about half a mile away I was startled to hear the crack of a rifle and to see a bullet hit the ground about ten yards ahead of me.

Now, that kind of thing is so usual and monotonous in South Africa that you don't take any notice of it, but when it happens in Victoria it sends your heart into your mouth. I took off my hat and waved it — an old sign between us — and it had the desired effect. When I rode up to him he called me all the idiots in creation for coming across the hill that way.

"What they were thinking of not to smash you up is more than I can understand; they're lying in that hollow there like flies on a dead sheep."

I told him that we had shifted them only an hour ago, and that the patrol had orders for the pickets to come in at once, as we were probably shifting camp in an hour.

He started to get his things together, and I galloped home ahead of him, and told them when I arrived to be sure and see he had no ammunition about him in future.

When he came in he seemed dazed and silly; could not make out where he had been. "What is the matter with me, Paddy?" he asked. "I thought I was out in South Africa, and here I am home."

"Oh, you're all right; you've been dreaming." I said. He seemed satisfied with that, and in half an hour had forgotten all about it.

A fortnight later he went queer again, and has never got properly right since. He works away, and then suddenly hears an imaginary summons, drops his tools and is off.

All the neighbours have his countersign, and are obliged to give it. His rifle was taken from him, and he satisfied himself with a piece of sapling and an old knife tied on for a bayonet. Sometimes I come across him out scouting, or doing picket. I have met him far away on a lonely reconnaissance, in the ranges. It soothes him most to give him some imaginary order, and to tell him old war news. At work he is sane and silent; he is always harmless, and though his family were heartbroken at first over the trouble, they are gradually growing used to it, and humour him with the password, and so on.

The Argus, Melbourne, Saturday 13 July 1901

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## Finding Grandfather

Late in 2001 after moving house, Pam Hore unpacked a previously unopened box her mother had given her years earlier. At the bottom of the box were three medals rattling around on faded, water damaged ribbons and a manuscript written by her grandfather about his time during the Boer War.

In his manuscript, her grandfather who goes by the name 'Euie', talks about his day to day activities from the time he left Australia in 1899 to his final discharge from duties in mid 1902.

Eugene Daylesford Patterson left Melbourne on the SS Nineveh on the 23rd December 1899 arriving in Cape

Cont page 11



# Memorials

## Farrier Edwin Charles Matthew Bawden Eldorado, Victoria

Travelling around Victoria over the past eight months I have visited numerous Boer War memorials of various types and sizes, in town streets, parks, churches, community halls and cemeteries. Apart from those located in community halls, none have proved more difficult to access, and as rewarding to reach, than that at Eldorado.

Eldorado is a former gold mining town with a population of approximately 290, located 254 km north east of Melbourne and 20 km from Wangaratta.

On a hilltop just south of the general store is a memorial to Farrier Edwin Charles Matthew Bawden.



There are no signs, paths or tracks to the memorial and it is very difficult to see from road level. A short vehicle track leading off Main Road past a private residence leads to some vacant land behind the hill. A short climb through long grass, low scrub, over large boulders and dead trees and one eventually comes to the summit, the memorial, and great views over the township and surrounding countryside. On a warm sunny day this would be great snake country, and in the wet, very slippery however the 10 - 15 minute climb is well worth the effort.

The white marble plaque is weather worn however the Wangaratta RSL and the Dept of Veterans Affairs restored the memorial with a bronze plaque in 2004.

Edwin Bawden was born in Eldorado in 1876 and was a blacksmith living in Moreland when he enlisted in "C" Company Victorian Mounted Rifles, The Fourth (Imperial) Contingent.

This contingent was unique in two respects; firstly, it was the largest armed force to leave Victoria to that date, comprising 630 men. Secondly, these were the first Victorians to depart as part of a fully 'Australian' Contingent, earlier soldiers served

in 'Victorian' contingents.

The troops marched from Mentone to the Flemington showgrounds during which they were given a public farewell on Saturday 28th April 1900 however delays in preparing the ship resulted in departure being put back four days. On Tuesday 1st May the crowds gathered again as the troops marched to their ship at Port Melbourne. Enthusiastic crowds of matrons with their hair still in curlers, workmen 'willing to lose a few hours work' and school children lined the streets to cheer on the men.

As the troops passed the North Melbourne Laundry a bevy of maidens hanging out laundry on the house tops, with a fit of enthusiasm, rushed to the parapets and waved whatever they happened to have in their hands. The assortment of garments 'was large and curious' and the soldiers sent up a hearty cheer.

School children were quite active and vocal, running alongside shouting "Down with Kruger and the Boers". One little chap darted into to the column, offered his hand to an officer and said 'Good bye, mister', "slash old Kruger to bits if you catch him!" The officer promised he would. Another lad running beside the men said "If you get Kruger, mister, please send me his belltopper - I go to Albert Park State School." The soldier agreed amidst laughter from his comrades.

The Contingent departed on the transport ship 'Victorian' arriving in Beira, South Africa, on the 23rd May and served in Rhodesia, West Transvaal, and Cape Colony.

On 11th February 1901, 40 men of "C" Squadron, under Captain Tivey, made a forced march of 40 miles to Philipstown and surprised more than 300 Boers occupying the adjacent kopjes, and kept them in check until reinforcements arrived.

On February 23rd, whilst following up De Wet, "C" Squadron came in contact with the Boers at Read's Drift, Orange River, where one BL 15 pounder field gun and one pom pom (37mm Vickers-Maxim gun) were captured. The pursuit was still maintained and the Victorians marched 380 miles in 15 days, being very highly complimented by Colonel Plumer.

On 1st March, at the junction of Orange and Sea Cow Rivers, Captain Dallimore and a party of 16 men surprised and captured a party of 33 armed Boers, and 54 horses.

The Fourth Imperial Contingent left South Africa on the "Orient" and returned to Melbourne on 12th July 1901.

Edwin died in hospital in East Melbourne, on 7th August 1901, from pneumonia contracted whilst in South Africa.

Edwin Bawden was a favourite with the people of Eldorado, who showed their regard for him by erecting a broken column of polished granite to his memory. The monument surmounts the highest point of One Tree hill facing the town. It was a memorable day for the people when the squadron of the Victorian Mounted Rifles from the district road into the town of Eldorado under the command of Colonel Patterson and proceeded to the spot, where the army chaplain and Major Holden duly unveiled the memorial with the usual ceremony observed by soldiers to a fallen comrade."



**If you know of memorials to Boer War soldiers in churches, community halls, cemeteries and other 'out of the way' places in Victoria, please contact -  
Geoff Dare, P O Box 2006, Blackburn South Vic, 3170;  
email: gadare@tpg.com.au; or Phone 0417 593 001**

*The Victoria Cross was instituted in January 1856 as the highest award for acts of bravery in war time. The original VC's were struck from the bronze of Chinese canons, captured from the Russians, at Sebastapol during the Crimean campaign. Eligibility for Australians ceased in 1991 with the institution of the Victoria Cross for Australia.*

The first Victoria Cross awarded to an Australian occurred during the Boer War and was to -

**Neville Reginald Howse  
VC KCB KCMG KStJ**



Rank: Captain (then Lieutenant)

Age: 36

Unit: New South Wales Army  
Medical Corps

Date: 24 July 1900

Place: Vredefort, Orange Free  
State



During the action at Vredefort  
on the

24 July, 1900, Captain Howse went out under a heavy cross fire and picked up a wounded man, and carried him to a place of shelter.  
London Gazette: 4 June 1901

Howse went on to serve during World War One and was promoted to Director General of Medical Services, Australian Army Medical Corps. Later promoted to Major General.

Town on 18th January 1900. After being kitted out and assigned to Roberts Horse Corps he was given the task of teaching the squadron how to ride a horse. Food rationing commenced almost immediately without having left the camp, a Johnny Boer sighted or a bullet fired. The lack of food indicated it was going to be a hard war but despite rationing there always appeared to be some 'Tickey Beer' or Cratur (golden nectar) on hand if one knew where to look.

Euie writes of encouraging the men to feed their horses before themselves. He describes dust storms, flooding of immense proportions and often no food or clean water for several days on end. They fought on very little sleep as they often rested a mere three or four hours at night before heading off in pursuit of Cronje or some snipers known to be hiding in the bush. By riding at night they could get in position for an early morning attack with minimal loss to themselves or the horses.

The squadron teamed up with General French to begin the great march to the Relief of Kimberley and the Siege of Kimberley. During this time Euie also notes with humour and admiration the Boer's method of retreat which involved those still standing after battle fragmenting into small groups. Each group then took off in a different direction to make for cover in the surrounding Kopjes where they could 'gather their wits' before getting back together for the next round. After many of the battles the townspeople gave the troops a large feed; they sang 'God Save the Queen' and celebrated their safety with much 'Glory to Britain'. These occasions were relished by the men as they had hot food aplenty, gifts of tobacco from the citizens of London, a drink to warm the heart and sometimes even the Queen's Chocolate was distributed. After one battle Lady Roberts presented Euie with a pair of field glasses in recognition of the major part he played in the initial reconnaissance work – a rare gift of significance.

After each of these rests which saw them with good beds and the chance to have a jolly good wash and be fitted out with new kit and boots, the men and their horses would head out again. This meant collecting extra food to supplement the meagre rations by purchasing what they could from the locals, shooting wild animals or at worst looting if necessary – the latter on occasions unfortunately played a part in the survival of the troops and their horses.

In lighter moments Euie talks of a sniper attack as 'a bit of fun' meaning that everyone was at the ready and tactics and understanding of the land and the Boers themselves became a real challenge. Over the course of time the men went down with various complaints which included dysentery, toothache, enteric and even corns. The doctor always seemed to pull out a No. 9 pill for the ailment; if he had run out of those he resorted to a No. 4 or No. 5. Good luck and a man's constitution played a part in their survival.

The blokes had to have their tobacco – it was a 'great calamity' when they all ran out which usually meant they had nothing to share between them for three days or more before winning another battle and getting fresh supplies in the town.

Euie was medically discharged after spending a month in hospital with lumbago and severe fever and resting for a further month. He was not satisfied with the job he had done and signed up with a local Corp in Cape Colony where he continued to fight on land with the troops before being seconded to a role in Field Intelligence.

Euie was awarded the DCM for saving a young soldier whose horse was shot from beneath him and carrying the despatches, the QSA with eight clasps and the KSA with two clasps. He stated "that having collected some very valuable curios during the war, the most valuable prize was that of his life and that Australia should be proud of the men who went to war as they are most respected by all".

Pamela Hore

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## They Deserve To Be Respected

On the 31st May nineteen hundred and two  
The Boer War finished for many more than a few;  
Leaders of note finally met one with the other  
Putting an end to South Africa's ongoing bother.

Twenty three thousand Aussies heeded the call  
From their Queen, Mother England – one and all;  
One thousand of their mates died out on the veldt  
And each time one was lost it was keenly felt.

Those who died in South Africa were destined to stay  
Carefully buried in graves their cobbers had made;  
And as a final prayer was said for they who had died  
Skirmishes loomed once again leaving no time to bide.

Hundreds of horses died in those battles as well –

It sure did become a mad war made in hell;  
 Courageous Cape ponies and strong horses from home  
 That never again would be able to roam.

Yes... it took us a while to honour our Vietnam Vets—  
 But we're well overdue to remember before everyone  
 forgets  
 The twenty three thousand who heeded that call  
 To fight in the Boer War knowing many of them would  
 fall.

Honour my grandfather; honour my great uncle too  
 Even if one hundred years have passed and it didn't  
 affect you;  
 Respect all of our dead and the blokes who all fought  
 It's what we should do – we most definitely ought.

So let's get off our butts like they got off theirs  
 And show all of their families as a Nation we care  
 That they answered that call to fight the good fight  
 And did the job proudly with all of their might.

There's a site for their memorial in Anzac Parade  
 To ensure what they did was more than a passing  
 charade;  
 But we must raise the funds now before all are forgot  
 Rally forth Governments and people  
 Lest We Forget!

Pamela Hore

### Public Recognition of Donors

To recognise larger donations certificates will be  
 awarded as follows -

Bronze	\$1,000 to \$9,999
Silver	\$10,000 to \$49,999
Gold	\$50,000 to \$99,999
Platinum	\$100,000 and above

Recipients will be permitted to use that level of donor  
 logo on their stationery. Gold and Platinum donors  
 will also have their logo placed on future BWM  
 promotional materials and the National website.

**Did you** receive this edition of 'The Victorian  
 Contingent' by post?

**Do you** have an email account?

**Register now to receive future copies of 'The  
 Victorian Contingent' by email.**

By doing so you will help our funds by cutting  
 costs in, printing, paper and postage, as well as  
 helping the environment.

## Your support will help

Please supply:

..... Lapel Pins (square) @\$10 each \$ .....

..... Lapel Pins (2010) @ \$8 each \$ .....

..... Pen - Black and Gold @ \$10 \$ .....

..... Pen - Maroon and Gold @ \$10 \$ .....

..... Car Stickers @ \$2 each \$ .....

Postage

Badges (up to 4) \$2.50

Pens (up to 2) \$2.50

Stickers only \$1.00

\$ .....

Sub-total \$.....

Donation To Memorial Fund \$.....

Total \$.....

(Circle one) Mr Mrs Dr Ms Miss

Other .....

Given Names: .....

Surname: .....

Organisation / Business (if applicable):

.....

Address: .....

Suburb: .....State :.....

Postcode: .....

Phone: Home: ..... Mobile: .....

Business: .....

Email: .....

I enclose cheque/cash for \$.....

Cheques payable to:

National Boer War Memorial Association,

P O Box 2006, Blackburn South, Victoria, 3130.

Please do NOT send cash in the mail

**Office Use Only**

**Receipt No:** .....

**Date:** .....