



## Lieutenant Herbert Gerald HINTON

[1879 – 1915]



2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse Regiment

Herbert Gerald Hinton was born in Queensland (probably Brisbane) on 23 February 1879, the second son and one of seven children of John Edward Hinton (soldier and Superintendent of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade) and Mary Elizabeth Hinton (nee O'Reilly) of Graceville.

He was educated at Boys Central State School and later gained employment in the pearl industry on Thursday Island then as a salesman in Brisbane and finally as a commercial traveller.

He was also a citizen soldier, serving in the ranks with Queensland Volunteer Rifles and Queensland Field Artillery. Private Hinton was also a keen and capable shooter, a member of QVR's second rifle team on 24 August 1896, and a member of No 2 Battery Queensland Field Artillery Rifle Club on 16 January 1899.

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Hinton served in the South African War (Boer War), being selected as a private (sometimes called trooper) in the First (Queensland Mounted Infantry) Contingent on 28 October 1899. He departed Brisbane for South Africa on *Cornwall* on 1 November 1899.

In about August 1900 he was medically evacuated and invalided to England with Enteric Fever. On 16 January 1901 arrangements were made via Queensland's Agent General in London for him to be attached to the Royal Horse Artillery *for instruction* while he was there. Apparently, this attachment did not proceed as Hinton joined Warren's Mounted Infantry<sup>1</sup> in South Africa (presumably arranging his own travel) and served with that unit from 16 January until 8 August 1901. He then secured a commission in the South African Light Horse and served with it from 8 August 1901 to June 1902, after which he returned to Australia.

For his Boer War service, Hinton was awarded two medals (Queen's South Africa Medal and King's South Africa Medal) and clasps for the Relief of Kimberley, Paardeberg, Driefontein, Cape Colony, South Africa 1901, and South Africa 1902.

On his return to Queensland in 1902 Hinton took up pearl fishing at Thursday Island, but after a few years he returned to Brisbane and worked for Butler and Sons. He married Mabel Cecilia Mahony in Brisbane on 9 August 1909, and they later had four children - three sons and a daughter.

Hinton re-joined the militia in about 1912, serving two years with 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse. On the outbreak of the Great War, he volunteered for the AIF and was appointed to 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse Regiment (a unit of 1<sup>st</sup> Light Horse Brigade). Second Lieutenant Hinton passed his promotion examination on 28 October and was promoted to Lieutenant on 1 February 1915.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse Regiment sailed from Brisbane on HMAT A15 *Star of England* and trained in Egypt before being landed at Gallipoli (without their horses) on 12 May 1915. They were to reinforce the infantry divisions which had suffered heavy losses since the Landing. On arrival the unit moved towards Monash Valley to relieve 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade, where sporadic but intense fighting had occurred at Pope's, Quinn's, and Courtney's Posts.

On 13 May the regiment relieved 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion at Quinn's Post. Lieutenant Hinton was slightly wounded in the eye on 14 May but returned to duty. At Quinn's with the Turkish line a mere 15 yards away, inexperience saw early heavy casualties among 2<sup>nd</sup> Light Horse Regiment (2LHR). Following the failure of an attack by the regiment on 15 May, it was relieved by 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion and a system of 48-hour rotation of units through the post was introduced.

A heavy operation was commenced on 6 August with attacks planned in several locations including Quinn's Post, Pope's, Russell's Top, and German Officers' Trench. 2LHR's task was to capture Turkish trenches opposite Quinn's Post. 2LHR attacked at 4.30am on 7 August 1915. The troops were to emerge from tunnels preceded by preparatory activities including the taking of other objectives, the firing of a mine, the provision of artillery support and the element of surprise.

Lieutenant Hinton and his comrades (including Major T.J. Logan, another Club Member) were killed in an attack on a Turkish position near Quinn's Post on 7 August 1915. They were killed before they had gone five yards in a failed assault where every man but one in the first line was killed or wounded. It was all over in less than two minutes.

Surprise was impossible and the enemy was perfectly prepared. Extracts from the Official History provide more detail:

*...The 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment knew before dawn that German Officers' Trench was still in the hands of the enemy. As for the bombardment... the fire of field-guns against such a position was useless except to repel attack. It followed that... the assault would be dependent for success solely upon surprise,*

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<sup>1</sup> Warren's Mounted Infantry was raised by the Cape Colonial Government in January 1901 and taken over by the Imperial Government on 20 July 1901.

*and since all night long the enemy had been roused not only by the fighting at the Pine and German Officers', but also by demonstrations-intended to cover the advance of the main columns--loyally and thoroughly carried out by the very troops who were to attack at Quinn's, Pope's, and Russell's Top, there was small chance that surprise would be achieved.*

*Nevertheless, the troops who were to make the assault, though their intelligence showed them that every condition was now against them, faced their task with a grim determination.*

*But here, as at The Nek, the enemy was perfectly prepared. As the troops scrambled from the trenches, intense fire was opened upon them. One Turkish machine-gun was shooting from the direct front, two from Dead Man's Ridge, and a fourth from German Officers'. Major Logan, who led the line, was killed before he had gone five yards. .... With one exception, every man of the first line was killed or wounded, the majority before they had gone six yards. Many owed their lives to the fact that they were struck when on the parapet and fell back wounded into the trench. ...In this action Major Logan, Lieutenants Burge and Hinton, and 14 others had been killed.*

Herbert Gerald Hinton was 36 years old when he was killed on 7 August 1915. He left a widow and four young children, then residing at Sandgate. Lieutenant Hinton now lies in Shrapnel Green Cemetery.



Sources included:

- Australian War Memorial
- National Archives of Australia
- Various web pages
- *United Service Club, Queensland: The First Century, 1892-1992* by Flight Lieutenant Murray Adams and Lieutenant Colonel Peter Charlton
- Club Meeting Minutes, Annual Reports and sundry documents