

Background

Figure 1-3: These are extracts from the "All-Australian Memorial" pages 60/61, PART III: AUSTRALIAN'S FIGHTING FAMILIES"
Transcription of above extracts:

CRAIG, J.B., Pte., 2nd Fld.Amb.; s. of J.T. and the late Mrs. Craig, N. Fitzroy; b. at Dunedin, N.Z., Aug. 22, 1895; educ. Zercho's Col., Melb.; commercial traveler; enl. Melb., 1914. War service: Volunteered on his 19 th birthday, and by reason of military training in cadet force was made instructing corporal at Broadmeadows; later transf. to Fld. Amb.; was present at Gallipoli Landing and subsequent fighting till June, when he was compelled to rest at Lemnos; later he returned to the Peninsula until the Evacuation; afterwards accompanied his unit to France.

Part 1

Getting There

According to military records, Jack was born 22/8/1895 and enlisted on his 19th birthday in 1914. However other records indicate he was born on 22/8/1896. It is interesting to note his date of birth is not shown on the NZ Online Cenotaph AIF Project – refer: <https://www.aif.adfa.edu.au/showPerson?pid=66944>

This anomaly is being investigated, however it is likely 1896 is the correct year as recorded in his own hand writing and WWII records – refer: <http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRRetrieve/Interface/DetailsReports/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=5380206&isAv=N>

Jack embarked the HMAS Berrima on the 22/12/1914 from Melbourne, for the Middle East, via Adelaide, Albany and Perth

31 December 1914 departed for the Middle East as part of the second troop convoy, carrying Australian and New Zealand troops and towing the submarine AE2

A35 - BERRIMA

11,137 gross tons, 7037 net; 13730 dwt. Lb. 500'2" x 62'3" (152.4 x 19 metres). Passenger/cargo steamship. Built by Caird & Co, Greenock and completed 5th December 1913. Passenger capacity 350 permanent 3rd class, 250 temporary 3rd class. She was the fourth of the five prewar 'B' class vessels ordered for what had been Lund's Blue Anchor Line emigrant service, bought by Peninsula and Orient Steam Navigation Co, London (P&O) in 1910. Propulsion: Two four cylinder quadruple expansion steam engines, 9000hp, twin screws, 14 knots. Britain - Australia emigrant service via the Cape of Good Hope (Branch Line). Cost £209,456. December 1913: Maiden voyage London - Cape Town - Adelaide - Melbourne - Sydney Sisterships: BALLARAT, BELTANA, BENALLA, BORDA

12 - 18 August 1914 converted at Cockatoo Island Drydock, Sydney as an expeditionary vessel capable of transporting 1500 Troops and Officers. At a cost of 4,513 pounds sterling, she was given essential hull stiffening, re-fitted with four 4.7 pound guns, two on the forecassle and two on the poop deck and small arms ammunition arranged both fore and aft on the lower deck where the magazines for the 4.7 guns was also stored. Signalling arrangements on the bridge were upgraded, whilst existing accommodation on the upper deck was converted into a hospital. Further accommodation was altered into baggage rooms, guardrooms and cells. The cargo holds were fitted out for troop accommodation complete with latrines and washrooms placed below the poop deck

18 August 1914 commissioned by the Commonwealth RAN as auxiliary cruiser HMAS Berrima

Departed Sydney on 19 August 1914 carrying men of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force for operations against the German New Guinea colonies. Troops were landed at Herbertshöhe and Rabaul on 11 and 12 September respectively, and on the New Guinea mainland on 24 September. Berrima subsequently returned to Sydney and, despite plans to employ her as an armed merchant cruiser, she was paid off in October for conversion to a troop transport.

30th October - 7th November 1914 underwent further conversion at Cockatoo Island Drydock, Sydney. The hospital was extended given an extra 33 berths, a steriliser room and extra latrines. Further troop accommodation (timber) was fitted on the bridge and upper deck, with extra latrines and wash facilities added to the upper deck both fore and aft. Troop accommodation on the main deck rearranged and the galley extended

Berrima leased by the Commonwealth until 10 October 1917 as A3 Berrima. See: <http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRRetrieve/Interface/DetailsReports/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=5380206&isAv=N>

Below is the diary entry for the 25/4/1915:

April to October 1915 War Diaries are here:
<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/RCDIG1013211/?image=1&fullscreen=true#display-image>

Part 2

A Bullet Through The Wages Book

If my grandfather hadn't survived the landing at Gallipoli (İgaleli; Turkish: Gelibolu Yarımadası; Greek: Κόκκινη, i.e. "beautiful city"), and air force service in WWII, I would not be writing this.

Nor would his 3rd great-great grandchild be preparing for birth in 5 months, following his 2nd born great-great grandchild this year, (around the time of anniversary of his passing), and his 1st great-great grandchild a few years ago.

He married Marie, and she was a woman of strength and commitment. She willingly cared for their 3 daughters, while he was serving through WWII.

Why? Why am I writing this? More importantly, why am I still here to write this on the 100th anniversary eve of ANZAC Day, 2015? I lived with my grandparents for two years while my father was being treated for "shell-shock" as a result of WWII injuries. Jack Craig was my "father" for this time, and that, I think, is why I survived the trauma of my parent's separation.

He was a peace-loving man, an environmentalist and natural nutritionist, a home gardener and inventor and cared for others, especially the "battlers" and new arrivals who sought a future here.

To-date there exists 15 direct descendants of this wonderful man, none of whom would have had life if it weren't for Jack Craig, and perhaps his "Book of Life", with a chapter that included a Wages Book, that stopped a bullet at Gallipoli.

Jack Craig stayed until the Evacuation of Gallipoli and continued to serve in the Middle East and Europe, and re-enlisted in the air force in WWII. This dedication is to his descendants and wider family, the descendants of his brothers and sisters, and to all who choose peace over conflict.

More about Jack is yet to be written...

Michael Craig Scott
Grandson

Part 3

What did the 2nd Field Ambulance do?

(from <http://www.rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/units/353>)

The 2nd Field Ambulance was the Field Ambulance Company that was one of three such units of the First Division. There was one each nominally assigned to each of the three Brigades: the 1st 2nd and 3rd. The 2nd Brigade to which the 2nd Field Ambulance was assigned, comprised of the 5th 6th 7th and 8th Battalions, all from Victoria. The 2nd Brigade landed at Gallipoli on the 25th April and the 2nd Field Ambulance served throughout the campaign and followed its parent Brigade to France and Belgium from 1916. Field Ambulances were established close to the beach at Gallipoli and were under constant threat of shell fire and even rifle and machine gun fire on occasion. Relatively few South Australians saw service in the 2nd Field Ambulance because no South Australian Battalions belonged to the First Brigade.

The Field Ambulance Company was responsible for "Second Line" casualty evacuation from "First Line" Regimental Aid Posts (RAP) in each battalion. The RAP belonged to the Battalion (or other units) and was manned by the Regimental Medical Officer (RMO), a qualified doctor generally of Captain rank supported by several non-commissioned officers (NCO) of Sergeant and Corporal rank, with a number of medical orderlies at the rank of Private. They in turn were supported by unit stretcher bearers, generally drawn from the Battalion's Band. These men would be trained to administer First Aid sufficient to clear airways, staunch bleeding and perhaps splint fractures so that casualties could be evacuated to the Battalion RAP.

Casualties would be hand carried - requiring at least four men but more like eight over any distance for each casualty. Hand carts were also used but rough ground generally meant stretchers. When mass casualties occurred, such as through major shelling or an enemy attack, decisions would have to be made about the priority of evacuation. The RMO would assess the casualty and decide whether they were to be evacuated and with what priority. Grievous wounds with little chance of survival would generally not be evacuated.

When an attack or advance was undertaken, the RAP would follow up the units' forward elements and were thus exposed to enemy direct fire (rifles and machine guns) and indirect fire (artillery mortar fire and even gas).

The Field Ambulance would have personnel deployed forward to retrieve casualties from the RAP to the Field Ambulance Advanced Dressing Station or direct to a Casualty Clearing Station (CCS). They would have to deploy forward to reach the RAP, and thus come under the same risks as the front line combat troops. They may have had a number of means to assist in casualty evacuation from light rail, horse drawn vehicles and even motor vehicles. Or they could indeed also be stretcher borne.

Once at the CCS, additional Medical Officers and supporting personnel were available to carry out life saving surgery. Some casualties might be retained in a limited number of beds - generally to allow more seriously wounded to be evacuated further to rear. The tragic fact was many men would have died here from serious wounds and indeed many of the cemeteries scattered through Northern France and Belgium originally began alongside a CCS. From a CCS casualties might be taken to a Field Hospital or straight to a General Hospital.

On Gallipoli, the Field Ambulances were 'on the beach'. Subsequent evacuation was by ship to Lemnos Island, then to Malta and ultimately to the United Kingdom where soldiers might be hospitalised for many months. Then they would undergo rehabilitation, either in the UK or in serious cases they might be repatriated back to Australia. Many of the wounded succumbed to their wounds in transit. They would be buried at sea in the traditional naval fashion.

Soldiers with serious wounds who needed surgery have what is called "The Golden Hour" to receive the treatment they need. After that time their chance of survival diminishes rapidly. Conditions were such that evacuation times were extended considerably by poor weather, the predominance of water, mud, the detritus of battle, shell torn ground and enemy action. At the time infection was also a great risk as it was prior to the discovery of penicillin and other antibiotics.

Did he land on Z beach or V beach? Continuing

PART 4

14th Field Ambulance

Here is a link to the war diaries;

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/RCDIG1014386/?image=1&fullscreen=true#display-image>

England

Larkhill Camp began on 12 August 1914, and completed in early 1915, was designated as the School of Instruction for Royal Horse and Field Artillery (Larkhill).

In 1916, the AIF decided to form Australian training battalions in England from which reinforcements could be posted to Australian Divisions in France. As well, Battalions that were already formed, such as the 42nd, did their acclimatization and final training on the Salisbury Plain. Camps were established at Larkhill, Rolleston, (See map) Perham Downs, Parkhouse and Tidworth. However, Larkhill seems to have been unpopular with the Australians. On 3rd September 1916, W.J Sinney wrote, in an unpublished letter:

'It has been raining like fun here and things about Larkhill are pretty sloppy. It's a rotten place when it rains and a jolly sight worse if it keeps fine for any length of time. The dust is that fine that it will get in anywhere; do what you will you can't get away from it.'
During July 1916, units of the 3rd Division began to arrive from Australia and assembled at Larkhill, where they remained, in training, until the Division moved to France at the end of the year. And so the 42nd arrived, all the way from sunny Queensland, by way of Egypt, at Amesbury Station.

Formed, Hamilton, England, 31 August 1916 as 3rd Division Reinforcements and designated E Training Group 5 December 1916 and 3rd Training Group 9 December 1916. Moved to Codford 2 October 1916, Larkhill 15 December 1916, Durrington 30 July 1917 and Fovant 12 October 1917. Disbanded 8 November 1917.

Subunits:

9th Training Battalion 9 December 1916 to 8 November 1917
10th Training Battalion 9 December 1916 to 8 November 1917
11th Training Battalion 9 December 1916 to 8 November 1917

Here are links to the War diaries of the 9th Training Battalion:

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/RCDIG1006366/?image=1&fullscreen=true#display-image>
<http://www.diggerhistory.info/pages-conflicts-periods/ww1/salisbury.htm>

More to come Michael Craig SCOTT