

This extract from "*The Fighting 10th*", Adelaide, Webb & Son, 1936 by C.B.L. Lock; kindly supplied courtesy of the 10th Bn AIF Association Committee, April 2015.

BEEVOR, Miles Fitzroy

Born 27 February 1883 at North Adelaide SA.

Son of the late Miles Horatio BEEVOR and Mother Teresa Victoria (nee MANTEGANI), who was formerly a Farmer and later a Mercantile Broker, and had been a Captain in the Georgetown Company of Volunteers, and subsequently joined the SA Garrison Artillery at the same time as Lieutenant-Colonel F W Hurcombe was serving therein.

His grandfather, Horatio Beevor, had served with the 13th Madras Light Infantry, took part in the Burmese and South African Wars, was wounded and subsequently settled in Australia.

He was educated at various schools and at the age of fourteen entered the service of the English and Australian Copper Company at Port Adelaide, where he subsequently rose to the position of Chief Accountant and later that of Manager for South Australia. He associated himself with the activities of the Australian Natives' Association in 1900, and in 1906 was made President of Adelaide branch. For several years he served with the Board of Directors, and as Chairman of the metropolitan committee. Later he was appointed Auditor to the Board, and held this position for a number of years. In 1908 he became an Associate of the South Australian Society of Accountants, which was later absorbed by the Commonwealth Institute of Accountants. He also obtained the Diploma of the Society, and later became a Fellow (FSASA).

From his youth he was keenly interested in military matters, and with an athletic appearance was always considered a fine type of Australian manhood.

He joined the South Australian Military Forces in 1900, enlisting as a Private in the Old Adelaide Rifles, in which he served one year as a Private, one as a Corporal and one as a Sergeant.

On 9 May 1903 he received his first commission as a Lieutenant in the same regiment. He was transferred as a Lieutenant to the 10th Australian Infantry Regiment on 1 July 1903 and promoted to Captain, and appointed to the Command of a Company on 4 February 1908. He received his majority on 11 September 1911 and with the introduction of universal military training was transferred to the 74th (Boothby) Infantry on 1 July 1912. He was appointed Area Officer (Unley Training Area, 74A District of Senior Cadets) on 21 June 1911, this appointment terminating on 30 April 1918.

His certificates from various military schools of instruction include:

- Infantry School issued 15 January 1904
- Infantry School issued 30 December 1907
- Duties in field issued 29 May 1911
- Technical Fitness to Command, vide Section 21A, Defence Acts 1903-12 issued 29 January 1913
- Light Horse School issued 11 December 1912

He was a well known figure on the rifle ranges, his best achievement being the winning of the Simpson trophy in 1909 with a score largely in excess of any before or since. He Captained the Rifle Team which secured the Tennyson Cup, which is now in the South Australian Art Gallery, by winning it three times.

At the outbreak of the Great War he was one of the first Officers selected by Colonel Weir for the 10th Battalion, and on 19 August 1914, was appointed Major and Officer Commanding 'A' Company, and was thus senior Company Commander at Morphettville. From the earliest days at Morphettville the men of his company were invariably referred to as "Beevor's Little Lambs", whilst it is almost a tradition of the Battalion that he was one of the principals in the reputed "Ha! Ha! No shave!" incident.

He accompanied the original Battalion to Egypt on *HMAT A11 Ascanius*, and at Mena, in January 1915 his company merged with original 'F' Company and became the new 'A' Company, when he retained command of same, with Captain G E Redburg, formerly of original 'F' Company as 2nd in Command. He landed with his Company from the destroyer Foxhound at the historic landing on 25 April 1915, but during the afternoon of that day was wounded in the foot and forced to evacuate. Referring to his wound, No. 125 Corporal S A Outerbridge wrote:

"All our Officers turned out trumps and nearly all got hit. Major Beevor got wounded in the foot. He was crawling backwards and forwards to the firing-line with ammunition after he was wounded, and left the firing-line only when reinforcements came up. He'll do me."

He proceeded to England and was admitted to the Whitworth Street Hospital at Manchester.

In a small book entitled *"My Landing on Gallipoli"*, with considerable literary skill he has recorded the various experiences which befell him on that occasion.

He returned to Gallipoli on 20 October 1915, and next day took over the Command of the 10th Battalion from Temporary Major and Acting Lieutenant-Colonel G D Shaw.

On 21 November 1915, he accompanied the Battalion when withdrawn from Anzac, and proceeded with it to Lemnos, where it was reorganized with the 8th, 9th and 10th reinforcements.

At the end of 1915 he embarked with the Battalion for Egypt on the transport *Seeang Bee*.

The Battalion was first encamped at Tel-El-Kebir and then moved into the Suez Canal Defences, first at Serapeum and later at Gebel Habieta.

On 19 November 1915, just prior to leaving Anzac, he was promoted to the rank of Temporary Lieutenant-Colonel, and on 1 February 1916, was promoted to the full rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

At Gebel Habieta he received instructions from Brigadier-General E G Sinclair-Maclagan authorising the transfer of about half of the 10th Battalion of all ranks to the 50th Battalion, which was then in the process of formation, and was to become a unit of the newly-formed 4th Division. It was impressed upon him to be scrupulously fair in the changeover, and to include fifty per cent of the troops both in efficiency and numbers.

On 26 February 1916 he saw the old 10th Battalion marshaled for the last time, and before those who were detailed to join the 50th moved off he impressed upon all the necessity of maintaining the traditions of the 10th Battalion, traditions which they themselves had created in Australia, Egypt and Anzac. It was with a sad heart that he witnessed 13 Officers and 490 other ranks march off from the 10th lines to join their new unit. Two days later 6 Officers and 461 other ranks marched in, to bring the 10th up to establishment strength again. He rode out to meet them, and addressed them on the heights overlooking the camp and the defensive lines which they were to occupy. He explained to them in the simplest of terms that as reinforcements they were to become part of a Battalion which had made itself famous at Anzac, and that nothing but the best would do. His adjutant, Captain G C Magenis, then directed them to the various companies to which they had been allocated.

On 4 March 1916, his service with the 10th Battalion terminated, when he was transferred to the 52nd Battalion as Commanding Officer. This unit at the time was being raised, and much organisation and ground work was necessary, the backbone of the battalion consisting of about 500 of all ranks from the 12th Battalion.

On 6 June 1916, he accompanied the 52nd Battalion on the *Ivernia* to France and arrived at Marseilles on 12 June 1916 and within a fortnight his battalion was in the front line of trenches.

Whilst in France, for a short time, he was in Command of the 13th Infantry Brigade.

He was wounded during the Mouquet Farm attack on 2 September 1916 and left his battalion on a stretcher, his headquarters then being situated at Pozieres. He thus relinquished Command of the 52nd Battalion and proceeded to England, where he was admitted to the 4th London General Hospital at Denmark Hill.

He desired to rejoin his unit, and fully anticipated doing so until General Sir William Birdwood wrote to him as follows:

"You have been two years on active service and have been twice wounded, so we will send you back to Australia for a while."

He returned to Australia on the *Orsova*, and arrived back in Adelaide about 16 November 1916, his services with the AIF terminating on 7 December 1916.