

18. Three books from Thomas collection, *Life of Sir Henry Parkes, Fifty Years in the Making of Australian History* (Parkes), and *Wordsworth's Poetical Works* with Henry Parkes' autograph and 'J. Thomas' inscribed on the inside front covers. These three books are original first editions.

19. Gerbera seeds. Major Thomas brought these back from South Africa in 1902. According to various informants, Thomas is accredited with having introduced the gerbera plants to Australia upon his return in 1902. Now on display at Tenterfield School of Arts Museum, J.F. Thomas collection.

20. PMG [Postmaster General] post bag, another Major Thomas item obtained post-WW2 in Australia. Now on display at Tenterfield School of Arts Museum, J.F. Thomas collection.

21. London News, 36 full sheets, 1 half-sheet, 14 April 1900, J.F. Thomas collection.

Conclusion

The flag (No.1) has had preservation work at the University of Melbourne's Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, and is reportedly now in Melbourne. The cigarette case, penny, and Mk V .303 round (Nos. 5, 7 and 8) were forwarded to James Unkles for showing to federal ministers in a review of the Morant, Handcock and Witton appeal. Updates can be found at the <https://breakermorant.com/> website. Some items described here were previously on display at the Queensland Military Historical Society Inc., at the Legion Club, Church St., Fortitude Valley but I am advised that they were later removed to Tenterfield. Others (nos. 18-21) are now on display at the Tenterfield School of Arts Museum in New South Wales.

Notes

¹ See Greg Growden, *Major Thomas: The bush lawyer who defended Breaker Morant and took on the British Empire* (Melbourne: Affirm Press, 2019), pp. 271-2. For media interest, see for example the ABC News coverage of the discovery: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-06-27/breaker-morants-possessions-may-have-been-found-at-tip/8655516>

² See Growden, *Major Thomas*, James Unkles, *Ready, Aim, Fire* (Melbourne: Sid Harta Publishers, 2019), and James Unkles, 'A country lawyer at war' *LSJ Online* [Law Society Journal], 4 October 2019: <https://lsj.com.au/articles/a-country-lawyer-at-war/>

Charters Towers in the Great War

DOUGLAS POTTER

The goldmining township of Charters Towers, 135 kilometres west of Townsville, is a township steeped in Queensland's military history. Established as a municipality in 1873 following the discovery of gold by prospectors and during a period of intense frontier conflict, it had at that time a population of some 4,000 people. The new and vigorous settlement was named after Gold Commissioner W.S.E.M. Charters, a "big man from the Cape, said to be six foot six inches (1.9 metres) tall and weigh[ing] twenty stone (127 kg), hence the "Towers".¹ By the 1890s Charters Towers had boomed with a population of over 20,000 and was known as "The World" by the local inhabitants, as everything one would want was obtainable there.²

Its volunteer defence corps was formed in 1881 following the German annexation of Northern Papua-New Guinea, which added to the residual fear of Russian attack that had prompted fortifications around the Australian coastline. By 1885 Charters Towers had two companies of volunteers, A and E companies of the Northern Division of the Queensland Defence Force, a Cadet Corps and a Defence Force Band. Later a rifle range was established north-west of the town which was shared by the Militia, Rifle Clubs and Police Force.³ So strong was the military enthusiasm of Charters Towers that it became the headquarters of the Kennedy Regiment in 1888 when it was moved from Townsville, where it had been established in 1886.⁴ In 1914 the Kennedy Regiment was one the first to mobilise at the war's outbreak. It was also the first to send troops from the mainland, initially to Thursday Island and then to Papua New Guinea.⁵

By 1914 Charters Towers was the second largest settlement in Queensland with the population of 4,262 in the township itself and 25,000 in the wider district.⁶ It was a community so proud of its military service and loyalty to the British Empire that (as this paper demonstrates) any dissent or protest against the war struggled to be heard.

In June and July 1914, the local papers the *Northern Miner* and *Evening Standard* reported the looming crisis in Europe, with the news of Archduke Franz Ferdinand's assassination and the

consequences that followed. Yet when the outbreak of war was announced on 4 August 1914, little changed in the town, except for members of the Kennedy Regiment who received instructions to mobilise and move camp to Townsville.⁷ Life in Charters Towers went on as normal. Mining, although greatly reduced, was still in operation. There was a rail strike to the north, the more youthful in the town attended the two social dances at the Hibernian and Foster's halls, pictures were watched at the two theatres, on Sunday the town band played at Lissner Park and flowering wattles announced the ending of winter.⁸ The war was being fought in distant Europe, a long way from the North Queensland mining town, which remained set in its day-to-day life.



Figure 1: Postcard, c. 1911, with views of Charters Towers (State Library of Queensland).

On the announcement of war Colonel Robert Huxtable of the 2nd Infantry Regiment (Charters Towers) mobilised his forces immediately and prepared them for departure on 4 August. Messages were relayed to regiment members by placing placards in various places around the town including hotels, churches, the rifle range and shops. Later that day members of the Charters Towers headquarters staff, the machine gun section and A, B and C companies assembled and were examined by the medical officer, Dr William Kelly.⁹ They left for Townsville the following morning, entertained by martial music and cheered off by a large crowd.¹⁰ Interestingly, the troops' arrival in Townsville was quite different: "the comparison was most marked," the *Northern Miner* observed, and "hardly a cheer was

heard" as the troops marched through Flinders Street.¹¹ Clearly not all were as enthused about the war as was the large crowd that had assembled for the 6:15 am send off at Charters Towers railway station.¹² The Towers, it seems, was ready for war before anyone else in Queensland, or for that matter Australia.¹³

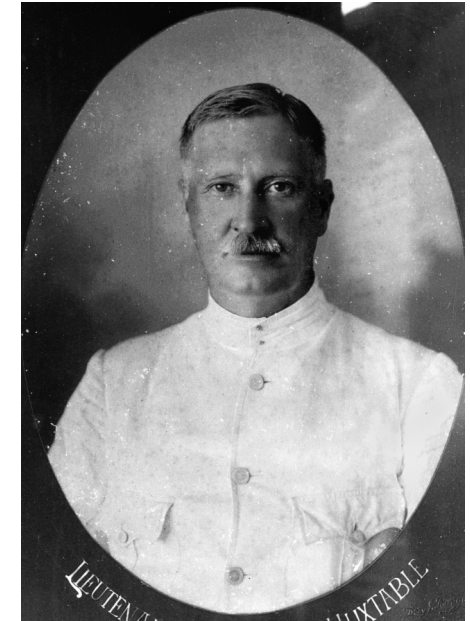


Figure 2: Col. Robert Huxtable (State Library of Queensland).

The same day at a City Council meeting the acting mayor, Alderman B. Toll, suggested that a public meeting be called to address any matters of need that might arise due to the mobilisation. The following day, twenty members of the Charters Towers and Millchester rifle clubs also left for Townsville for service abroad. Their send-off was accompanied by "Rule Britannia" and the national anthem, "God save the King," both of which were "sung spiritedly" and followed by "hearty cheers."¹⁴ The Towers was at war for the British Empire and local support for involvement in the great conflict had little opposition; certainly none was recorded in the local papers. The town was, and still is, a region greatly proud of this achievement in its history.

News from the front of local involvement filtered back to The World, and home was never far from the thoughts of local volunteers as they wrote telling family and friends of events on the front. Charles

Peiniger wrote to his uncle, Angus McCallum, on 2 May 1915 to describe the Gallipoli landing and his letter was later published in the *Evening Telegraph*.¹⁵ For those who went, a fiercely parochial loyalty remained. The pride in being from “The Towers” and North Queensland was as great, it seems, as being identified as an Australian ANZAC. As Charters Towers volunteer C.E. Rowe stated in a letter from Egypt on 16 April 1915, “I have met a lot of Towers fellows since I arrived that joined in other places, old Bob Thompson, Jack Hynes, Rusty Richards and some more good Towers sports. I think I will conclude. I wish to let you know about the boys, and let the people know how we are all getting on. I remain, Old Towersite.”¹⁶ Further letters from Towersites corroborate Rowe’s loyalty to his home town. Private Clyde Lovell wrote to his mother on 21 May 1915 from Gallipoli, and requested that she tell the *Northern Miner* that fellow Towersites, Lieutenant Harry and Captain Walsh had been wounded.¹⁷

Tragically, the newly-promoted Captain Harry and Major Walsh, along with Private Lovell were all killed in action at Gallipoli within weeks of his letter. Three of the Towers “well-built men” had paid the ultimate sacrifice, but they were far from the only ones.¹⁸ The loss of well-known and well-respected locals impacted on the community: with some, it increased the desire to fight for the Empire, while for others it highlighted the futility of war and the senseless waste of life.

At Gallipoli another of the town’s favourite sons lost his life and gave his name to a significant section of Gallipoli’s wartime landscape. Major Hugh Quinn was one of The World’s “well-built men” who became a Townsville auctioneer and insurance agent, but was still revered in Charters Towers.¹⁹ His death had a great impact on Charters Towers, with flags throughout the city being flown at half-mast and a Saturday mass at Saint Columba’s making a special reference to him. The *Northern Miner*’s lengthy column reporting his death, outlined Quinn’s sporting prowess, especially in the boxing ring.²⁰ The loyalty to local community remained even with those who had moved on from these rural communities, and it was a two-way loyalty as Rowe’s and Quinn’s examples show: The World never forgot its heroes. But how did the town regard those who remained at home? How did it regard those who had little enthusiasm for the war?

These are difficult questions to answer with any certainty. Like many communities in Queensland, Charters Towers had residents of German ancestry, with many of these being Australian-born. It seems that Germans were welcomed into the town prior to the war and the jingoistic nationalism it inflamed. To take one example, Frederick Staubwasser from Bavaria worked in the Charters Towers district

from 1893 to 1901 as a miner and a wardsman at the local hospital. Later, in 1900, he began part time training in dispensing at the Friendly Societies Pharmacy, with Mr. J. Wilkinson and was later appointed as a Dispenser at the Diamantina Hospital in Woolloongabba. Staubwasser was a member of the Presbyterian Church, which would have made him more anglicised to Australian eyes. This was not an unusual action as many Queenslanders of German heritage endeavoured to show their loyalty to Australia and to the British Empire. Staubwasser was respected by locals, and by doctors Hare, Huxtable, Forrest, Lister, Vorse, Gladsworthy and Mr. Wilkinson who helped him succeed in his dispensing. He described Dr. Francis Hare as, “my greatest benefactor since I left Germany.”²¹ This isolated example suggests that Charters Towers was not anti-German until the bitterness associated with the war began.

However, this did not prevent anti-German behaviour being observed at the war’s beginning, including the vandalism of the local Lutheran Church which had eight of its windows smashed. The first year of the war saw the congregation decline in numbers from twelve financial members to only one by 1915. This is quite a reduction, considering that there were an estimated 250-300 Germans on the goldfields at the war’s beginning. It is interesting that the congregation numbers declined so rapidly in concert with the increase of anti-German press prior to and after August 1914.²² A factor in the decline in attendance at the Lutheran Church may have been that Germans wished to prove their loyalty to the British Empire by attempting to diminish obvious affiliation with their homeland. An indicator of this trend was Germans anglicising their names, towns and villages early in the war to appear more British, for example, Schmidt became Smith and Gramzow in Logan became Carbrook, German Shepherd dogs became Alsatians, German sausage became Devon. Many young Australians of German descent felt compelled to join up and fight for Australia and the British Empire.²³

The recruiting continued through 1914 and into 1915, with the news from Gallipoli being greeted with varied interest with some volunteers coming from totally different social circles to enlist. On 18 April 1915, in an evening of entertainment at the Baptist Church, the Young Defenders entertained the crowd and following patriotic songs and the national anthem, ten new members were added to the volunteer force.²⁴ The Reverend A.G. Smith called on all to “down the great evil of intoxicating drink,” and went on to say, “those who were taking such a firm stand abroad would willingly be on the side of every Rechabite and Temperance worker.”²⁵ The good reverend was clearly

unaware of discussions that very night among the Charters Towers Rugby Union Club's members, who had received letters from relatives at the front desiring for "a few bottles of Porter's Bull Dog Ale and stout to take to the trenches."²⁶

The town's mayor, Fred Johnson, was a key figure in recruitment in the early years of the war. On the 27 October 1914, six volunteers were announced by the mayor as being the first to have enlisted at the Town Hall. He said that he could not send them away without "some little trifle in their pockets to remember the town by," and presented each with a white silk handkerchief with the seal of the town stamped in the corner.²⁷ By 25 April 1915, the day of the Gallipoli landing, one hundred and seventy-two men had been sworn in at the town hall by Johnson. By the war's end, on 11 November 1918, over 2000 men and women had volunteered to serve and their names were memorialised on the region's eighteen honour boards.²⁸ Yet, in Johnson's view, the number of volunteers were too few and too slow to answer the call. In July 1915, he complained of anti-war sentiments in the Charters Towers region, stating that

one village in Scotland with not many inhabitants had sent nine hundred soldiers to war. Charters Towers with a population of sixteen thousand or seventeen thousand, had only sent one hundred. That one hundred included some fine men, whose blood was calling them to go and avenge their death.²⁹

Johnson was desperate to use means fair or foul to get recruits, appealing to those present to avenge the deaths of those who had gone before and died at Gallipoli. The mayor also compared Charters Towers to other Queensland towns, stating that, "Longreach had sent two hundred and fifty men while they had sent one hundred and ten out of their thousands."³⁰ He attacked the township for not putting forth enough money to help the war effort as well as not volunteering enough men. The mayor's verbal accusations continued as he went on to say, "He was there to shake every man to bedrock; to get every recruit and every shilling."³¹ He spoke of "an undercurrent which was adversely affecting enrolment, and which he strongly deprecated."³² That undercurrent may well have been the news of the failure at Gallipoli and the rising death toll, which by July 1915 was greater than the total of the Boer War.³³ The mayor's calls fell on deaf ears as those who were able and willing to go had gone. Others would follow when restrictions changed, or when they came of age. But many more would not yield despite pressure from the mayor and remained in Charters Towers.

As an Australian born of English parents, Johnson was aggressive in his patriotic nationalism, particularly in his efforts to increase the voluntary enrolment from Charters Towers. His bellicose style eventually led to the end of his mayoral duties after he accused a local bank clerk of refusing to join up when he was young and fit enough to do so. However, the unfortunate clerk had tried to volunteer in New Zealand, earlier in the war, but was rejected due to a knee injury received from playing rugby. Johnson called him, "scum of the earth," and slapped him with an open hand. The clerk did not retaliate, but Johnson was charged with assault. The unfortunate clerk again tried to volunteer but was again rejected for his injured "rugby knee."³⁴ This episode illustrates the not only the pressure that was placed on locals in Charters Towers to serve in the war, but also the pressure instigated by local leaders such as Johnson to boost recruitment in their respective communities.

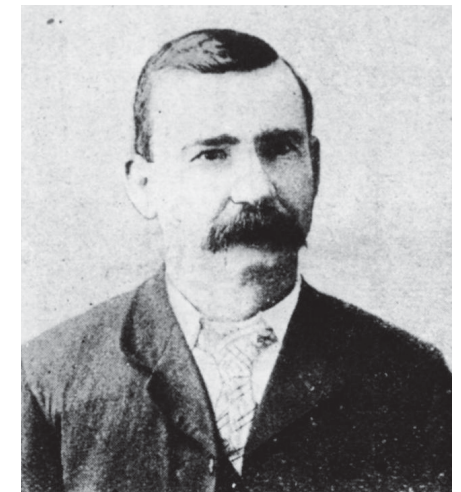


Figure 3: Fred Johnson, c. 1903, mayor of Charters Towers during the 1914-18 conflict (Townsville City Libraries).

Mayor Johnson's efforts were not forgotten. When he died in 1941, his obituary in *The Northern Miner* recalled his wartime efforts as mayor and honorary enlisting officer. It stated that "it was to a large degree owing to the patriotic fervour with which he did his job and his inspiring leadership of the citizens that Charters Towers put up so

notable a record in contributing manpower and money to the cause of victory.”³⁵ His wife Sarah Elizabeth Ross, as lady mayoress, was also prominent in patriotic work forming the Sock and Comforts Fund and was also head of the Red Cross branch, which she organised.³⁶

Yet despite Johnson’s efforts there were many who simply did not want to go to war but did not wish to be labelled as cowards or unpatriotic. Such men applied for exemption. The issue was not just at Charters Towers, it was national matter given that approximately forty-five per cent of eligible men (aged between eighteen and forty-four) did not enlist. While there were 416,809 enlistments, the number only represents thirty-eight per cent of the eligible male population. More than 87,000 men sought exemption from military service through Military Exemption Courts, although many were not successful.³⁷

One such example of this was in Charters Towers on Friday 27 October 1916, the day before the first conscription plebiscite. Where six men applied for exemption, four were refused, one adjourned until 2:30 pm that day, and another granted temporary exemption for fourteen days.³⁸ The frequency of such incidents prompted Vida Goldstein to write, “The exemption courts are doing excellent work in the cause of Anti-conscription. It is safe to say that the treatment of applicants has secured thousands of “No” votes.”³⁹ The exemption courts showed that support for the war was not all-encompassing. Even in a centre like Charters Towers that prided itself on its military efforts and local valour, many citizens saw no need to fight and die for the empire’s cause. However, feelings were such that an excuse was sought to avoid local ostracism.

There were many who attempted to join and were rejected, particularly in the early years of the war. In Charters Towers, those who were rejected went on to form a branch of the Rejected Volunteers’ Association 23 June 1918, two years after Sydney’s branch, but months before Brisbane’s.⁴⁰ Charters Towers were proud of those who served and also those who volunteered but were turned away. This is exemplified in a 1920 Anzac Day photograph proudly on display at the local library which shows a large group of soldiers. Those on the left in civilian clothes are those who were rejected for medical reasons while those in army uniform are those who fought in the war.⁴¹ Michael Brumby’s local history of the war even lists their names.⁴² The town remembers all who would follow or attempt to follow the military way, but there was no such glory for those who applied for exemption, nor was there any mention. Just as with the rest of Australia, Charters Towers’ history remembers heroes and ignores “shirkers.”

But by 1916 there was every good reason to “shirk.” Telegrams delivered to families announcing the death or missing in action of a loved one were all too common in Charters Towers where many the town’s young had been cut down. On 12 September, the *Northern Miner* article ‘We Must Steel Our Hearts’ called on locals to rely “on the justice of the cause for which we fight,” despite the losses that they had suffered.⁴³ This exemplified the paper’s position in showing support for the war, even in the face of horrific losses. The article goes on to mention the need to fight the evils of militarism and states “that the tide of battle is settling strongly against our enemies.”⁴⁴ The *Northern Miner* regularly reported on events in Gallipoli or France, with the headline, “The War”, usually on pages five to seven depending on the paper’s length.⁴⁵ While this kept locals up to date on events from a distinctly Allied point of view, the one thing that could not be glossed over was the “Roll of Honour,” which provided a daily reminder of casualties killed in action, deaths from illness, and prisoners of war.⁴⁶ This was a horrific reminder to Queenslanders, not only of the state’s death toll, but of the deaths of those well known in small communities such as Charters Towers. It was this constant news of the war dead that wearied the people throughout the nation, and ultimately resulted in loss of support for any form of military compulsion. The conscription plebiscite was lost despite the efforts of *The Northern Miner* and influential public voices generally to vote “Yes.”⁴⁷



Figure 4: Sgt. Mackay and 15th Battalion Knitting Club members, Charters Towers, 1917 (State Library of Queensland).

War weariness or simply not wishing to be compelled to go led to being labelled a “slacker” or a “deserter” by the *Northern Miner*. However, articles published in the newspaper about ‘Steeling Our Hearts,’ about preparing for high death rates, and ‘Canada’s Wishes,’ regarding the desire among Canadians that Australia too, should adopt conscription, fell on deaf ears as both plebiscites were rejected.⁴⁸ Large advertisements stating, “If the Kaiser had a vote in Queensland today, he would vote no,” plus multiple advertisements for the “Conscription Campaign,” did not influence the majority of Towersites, as they rejected both conscription plebiscites.⁴⁹ This was despite the *Northern Miner* publishing a the day before the plebiscite a column titled “Casualties who Recover,” in which the Federal Minister for Defence argued strongly for conscription.⁵⁰ This was preceded by two articles on page three, one titled “Inconsistent Antis,” stating that if Antis “could not be faithful to the country, then they should clear out!”⁵¹ and the other announcing the French victory at Verdun. On page two of the same edition there were advertisements for two separate anti-conscription meetings, one for ladies at the Union Hall, the other at a “vacant allotment.”⁵² The timing of the articles and the fact that there were only advertisements for anti-conscriptionists clearly demonstrated that the paper was pro-conscription.

However, the workers and the unions of the town were “antis”, as the anti-conscription meetings were union organized. The ‘radical north’, it seems, would not be bullied by conservative propaganda, and the undercurrent of which Mayor Fred Johnson spoke was in the silent majority.⁵³ In the end the result was overwhelming in the Towers. Even without all votes being counted by Friday the 21st, Charters Towers had spoken with 1,756 votes for “Yes,” but a comprehensive 2,515 for “No.” Freedom of conscience and war weariness carried the day. The conservative elites might have run the town and its paper, but the workers were the majority in this mining centre. Many were not keen to fight in the first place, and constant newspaper reports of the deaths of popular and prominent locals likely led to war weariness in the majority.

Despite the plebiscite result the local press continued to campaign for volunteers and deride those who did not fight. “No Sympathy for Slackers,” was the headline on Anzac Day 1918, regarding an article in the *New York Times* on Irish conscription.⁵⁴ The headline implied that those who did not wish to fight were “slackers.” Little wonder that there is no direct evidence of opposition to the war other than the Exemption Court records and Anti-Conscription campaign notices.

This was followed by an article titled “Pushing the Germans Back,” with the fine print stating the distance was a mere two hundred and fifty yards, with no mention of the lives lost for the small gain.⁵⁵ The final article on that same page and same column has the headline, “Australian Casualties,” but states how small they were, being less than the 5th division casualties at Fleurbaix [*sic*] in July 1917.”⁵⁶ This was somewhat misleading to those locals not up on their French geography, as Fleurbaix is a village near Fromelles, where in 1917 some 1299 Australians died in one of the greatest losses of Australian lives in the war.⁵⁷ In this way, the local reporting of the conflict was at times as much an exercise in deception as it was news.

Charters Towers and District provided over twelve hundred volunteers, with one hundred and fifty-one of these men being killed in the conflict from various causes.⁵⁸ In addition to this were those who were wounded, maimed, or who were victims of what we now call post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but were referred to as having “nerves,” and left to suffer, mostly without acknowledgement recorded. Thus, “war weariness” had its impact on Charters Towers with families, friends and the community left to carry the burden. In an October 1916 meeting of the Charters Towers Chamber of Commerce, the Secretary of the Charters Towers Patriotic Fund requested that a committee be formed to assist the “returned or wounded soldiers in the district.”⁵⁹ The committee-included the mayor, Fred Johnson, representatives from Queenton and Dalrymple Shire Councils, and representatives of the Pastoral and Agricultural Society, the Horticultural Society, and the Chamber of Commerce, which was represented by Mr. C.H. Siemon.⁶⁰ The people of Charters Towers were in support of the British Empire, yet the loss of life, the wounded and maimed had an impact on their views regarding volunteerism and conscription, and on the war in general. Still, they would continue to support the troops and volunteers would still serve.

Charters Towers has a proud history of military service dating back to colonial times. That history impacted on the local press at the time of the war, giving a voice to those in favour of service and conscription, but little except advertising space to those anti-conscriptionists. The latter have little presence in the historical record other than through plebiscite results however the continued operation of the town’s mines, the numbers attending Exemption Courts, and advertisements for anti-conscription meetings at union halls were all indicators of war weariness in the community. Though by and large loyal to the Empire, the prospect of death or maiming on the fields of Flanders was not a preferred option. Clearly, those in power had the

voice, but the workers had the numbers. In a community so proud of its military service any protest against the war was silent and hidden in the ballot box. As Henry Lawson put it, “the local truth dies very young when wed to local merit.”⁶¹ So one reads of heroes, not of “slackers” in the documented history of The World during World War I. In the decades after the war economic recession and then the Great Depression prevented until 1953 the erection of a memorial to those who sacrificed their lives in World War I. Since that time the memorial and local histories have immortalised their efforts for the King and the Empire, but perhaps just as importantly: for The Towers itself.

Notes

¹ Charters Towers Regional Council, *Charters Towers Regional Council – History*, n.p. <http://www.charterstowers.qld.gov.au/history>

² Dianne Menghetti, *Charters Towers* (PhD thesis, James Cook University, 1984), 277.

³ Ellen Danaher, *A Man of ‘The World’: Robert Russell in Charters Towers 1873-1910* (Kirwan, Qld.: E. Danaher, 2016), p. 55.

⁴ Danaher, *A Man of ‘The World’*, p. 55.

⁵ Ian Bell, ‘Australian Army Mobilisation in 1914,’ *Australian Army History Unit Occasional Paper Series, No. 2* (25 November 2015), pp. 17-18.

⁶ *Pugh’s Queensland Almanac, Directory and Law Calendar* (Brisbane, 1914), 805.

⁷ Michael Brumby, *The World’ and the Great World War: Charters Towers 1914-1919* (Charters Towers: Charters Towers Archives, 2017), p. 24.

⁸ Brumby, *The World’ and the Great World War*, p. 24.

⁹ Brumby, *The World’ and the Great World War*, p. 24.

¹⁰ ‘A Patriotic Send Off’, *Northern Miner*, 6 August 1914, p. 5.

¹¹ ‘Charters Towers Troops’, *Northern Miner*, 6 August 1914, p. 5.

¹² ‘A Patriotic Send Off’, *Northern Miner*, 6 August 1914, p. 5.

¹³ Although ready for war, Huxtable did not officially enlist until 3 May 1915, and then it was in the 7th Infantry Brigade, 7th Field Ambulance as a Lieutenant Colonel (see Appendix 3 of Potter’s thesis). A case of leaving the paperwork for later, and getting on with the job at hand? He embarked from Brisbane on 24 May 1915.

¹⁴ ‘European Crisis: Australia’, *Northern Miner*, 6 August 1914, p. 5.

¹⁵ “9th Battalion Cut Up – Towers Man’s Graphic Description.” Charles Peiniger’s Letter, *Evening Telegraph* (Charters Towers) 16 June 1915, 5.

¹⁶ Letter from C.E. Rowe, *Northern Miner*, 28 May 1915.

¹⁷ ‘The European War’, *Northern Miner*, 15 July 1915, p. 3.

¹⁸ Brumby, *The World’ and the Great World War*, pp. 42, 47, 49.

¹⁹ Advertisement, “Hugh Quinn, Flinders Street Townsville.” *Townsville Daily*

²⁰ ‘Death of Major Hugh Quinn’, *Northern Miner*, 15 June 1915, p. 3.

²¹ Owen Harris, *Frederick Maria Staubwasser: German Engineer, Australian Dispenser and Hospital Administrator* (Brisbane: Diamantina Healthcare Museum, 2005).

²² Brumby, *The World’ and the Great World War*, pp. 54-5.

²³ See Ian Harmstorf and Michael Cigler, *The Germans in Australia*, (Melbourne: AE Press, 1985), pp. 123, 128.

²⁴ No names were mentioned.

²⁵ ‘To-Day’, *Northern Miner*, 19 April 1915, p. 4.

²⁶ ‘To-Day’, *Northern Miner*, 19 April 1915, p. 4

²⁷ *Northern Miner*, 27 October 1914, p. 3.

²⁸ *Charters Towers Regional Council: History*, n.p.

²⁹ ‘Recruiting Meeting’, *Northern Miner*, 20 July 1915, p. 7; ‘Recruiting Meeting’, *Northern Miner*, 27 October 1914, p. 3.

³⁰ *Northern Miner*, 20 July 1915, p. 7.

³¹ ‘Recruiting meeting’, *Northern Miner*, 20 July 1915, p. 7.

³² ‘Recruiting meeting’, *Northern Miner*, 20 July 1915, p. 7.

³³ ‘Australian fatalities at Gallipoli.’ *Australian War Memorial*. <https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/encyclopedia/gallipoli/fatalities>, accessed 20 April 2020.

‘Australia and the Boer War, 1899–1902.’ *Australian War Memorial*. <https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/atwar/boer>, accessed 20 April 2020.

³⁴ Brumby, *The World’ and the Great World War*, pp. 57-8.

³⁵ ‘Obituary’, *Northern Miner*, 7 March 1941, p. 3.

³⁶ ‘Obituary’, *Northern Miner*, 7 March 1941, p. 3.

³⁷ Jennifer McNeice, ‘Military exemption courts in 1916: a public hearing of private lives’, *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria* 14, (2015).

³⁸ ‘Military Exemption Court’ *Northern Miner*, 27 October 1916, p. 5.

³⁹ Vida Goldstein, ‘The Exemption Courts’ *Woman Voter* (Melbourne), 26 October 1916, p. 3.

⁴¹ Michael Brumby, ‘Rejected Volunteers’, John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland, 25 May 2016.

⁴¹ See Potter’s University of Queensland BA (Hons) thesis, 2020, Appendix 4.

⁴² Brumby, *The World’ and the Great World War*, pp. 141-3.

⁴³ ‘We Must Steel Our Hearts’, *Northern Miner*, 12 September 1916, p. 5.

⁴⁴ ‘We Must Steel Our Hearts’, *Northern Miner*, 12 September 1916, p. 5.

⁴⁵ ‘The War’, *Northern Miner*, 19 December 1917, pp. 5, 7.

⁴⁷ *Northern Miner*, 21 December 21, 1917, p. 2.

⁴⁸ ‘We Must Steel Our Hearts’, *Northern Miner*, 12 September 1916, p. 5; ‘Canada’s Wishes’, *Northern Miner*, 12 September, 1917, p. 2.

⁴⁹ *Northern Miner*, 20 December 1917, p. 2; 17 December 1917, p. 1.

⁵⁰ ‘The Casualties Who Recover’, *Northern Miner*, 27 October 1916, p. 4.

- ⁵¹ 'Inconsistent Antis', *Northern Miner*, 27 October 1916, p. 3.
- ⁵² 'Anti-Conscription Meeting' (advertisement), *Northern Miner*, 27 October 1916, p. 2.
- ⁵³ 'Recruiting Meeting' *Northern Miner*, 20 July 1915, p. 7.
- ⁵⁴ 'No Sympathy for Slackers,' *Northern Miner*, 25 April 1918, p. 3.
- ⁵⁵ 'Pushing the Germans Back', *Northern Miner*, 25 April 1918, p. 3.
- ⁵⁶ 'Australian Casualties', *Northern Miner*, 25 April 1918, p. 3.
- ⁵⁷ Ashley Ekins, 'Battle of Fromelles,' *Wartime* 44 (2008), pp. 18-23.
- ⁵⁸ Brumby, 'The World' and the Great World War, pp. 146,148.
- ⁵⁹ 'Chamber of Commerce', *Evening Telegraph* (Charters Towers), 27 October 1916, p. 3.
- ⁶⁰ 'Chamber of Commerce', *Evening Telegraph*, 27 October 1916, p. 3.
- ⁶¹ Henry Lawson, 'The Local Spirit', in Leonard Cronin (ed.), *A Fantasy of Man: Henry Lawson Complete Works 1901-1922* (Sydney: Lansdowne, 1984), p. 606.

“Under Active Service Conditions”: Queensland School Cadet Camps in the Second World War

LIAM BARNSDALE

In July 1942, Brisbane's *Telegraph* newspaper published a statement issued by Australia's Department of Defence proudly declaring:

Within the next few weeks hundreds of cadets would enter camp under active service conditions and would be trained in advanced infantry work, tactical exercises, field ambulance, artillery, and instructed in specialised subjects.¹

Twenty-eight Queensland secondary schools maintained cadet detachments between 1939 and 1945, preparing their pupils to, as the *Telegraph* went on to describe, “answer the nation's call, if needed, when they had passed into manhood”.² The camps which the Department of Defence promoted as being so valuable to their training were conducted primarily during school holidays. Varying widely in nature, these camps lasted anywhere between a single weekend and a whole month, and were conducted either on the initiative of individual schools or as inter-school affairs coordinated by the Australian Army. However, all were unified by their intensely martial nature that offered a brief, immersive experience of army life for the adolescent boys who participated in them.

For the “lads” themselves, these camps were often highly desired but made unattainable by the financial demands it placed upon the school.³ “Really I believe a camp would help us on our way,” a cadet from The Southport School wrote in 1945,

But what's the use, I say to you,
Of agitating so?
For to a camp I really fear
We never more will go.⁴

When a camp was organised, however, it “aroused interest amongst all ranks,” as C.D. Mansfield of Brisbane's Church of England Grammar School (CEGS, or 'Churchie') declared in 1943. Just as cadets' desire