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Building 96, Victoria Barracks, Paddington NSW 2021 • Website: www.black-berets.asn.au
email: raacnsw@defence.gov.au • Tel (02) 8335 5209 • Fax (02) 8335 5357 • ABN 49 709 547 198

ARMOUR

Patron: MAJGEN K. W. LATCHFORD AO • President: COL John Haynes OAM • Editor: George Baczocho

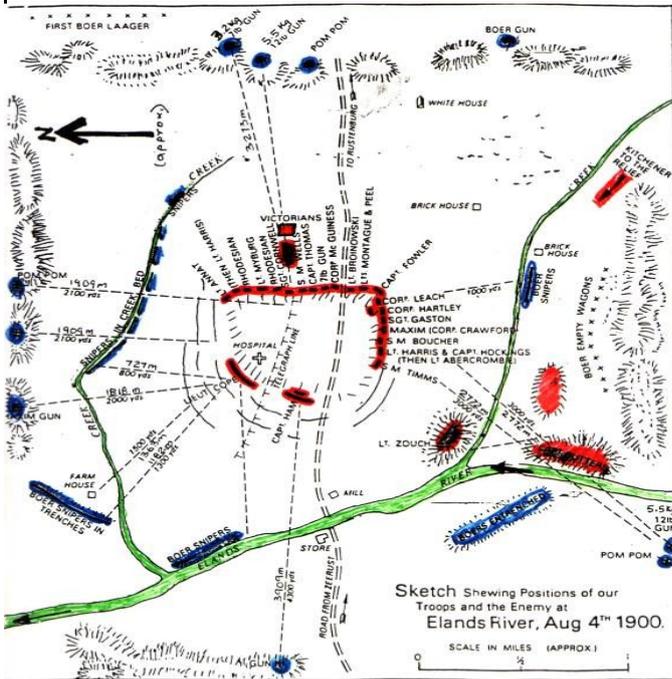
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BATTLE OF ELAND'S RIVER

PLAN DRAWN FROM SKETCHES BY CORPORAL KELMAN AND TROOPER DONKIN, OF MAJOR TUNBRIDGE'S FORCES; FURTHER EMBELLISHED BY CAPT COPE AND CHAPLAIN GREEN, ALL OF WHOM WERE PRESENT. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ALSO ADDED

Redrawn in 1978 by J.F.

THE SIEGE OF ELAND'S RIVER POST SOUTH AFRICA 4th – 16th AUGUST 1900

August this year was the 110th anniversary of the siege, which is a story of outstanding bravery, endurance, mateship and heroism—the very genesis of the traditions of the Australian Army of which we can all be very proud. For reasons which become apparent when reading about the siege the title “digger” was first applied. Much has been written about this famous siege, and so an edited extract from “The Australian Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Zulu and Boer Wars” by Ron Austin of Slouch Hat Publication www.slouch-hat.com.au has with his permission been selected.

..... Continued page 3

Coming Events



1 February, 2011	RAACA NSW	General Meeting	Gallipoli Club, Loftus St, Sydney
5 April, 2011	RAACA NSW	General Meeting	Gallipoli Club, Loftus St, Sydney
25 April, 2011	ANZAC DAY	Post March	Gather at Civic Hotel —cnr Pitt & Goulburn
7 June 2011	RAACA NSW	General Meeting	Gallipoli Club, Loftus St, Sydney

SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL



On behalf of the RAACA NCW Branch Committee may I extend best wishes to all members and their families for the festive season and beyond.



For my part I also would like to thank your Committee for the continuing first class support of the RAACA and all it stands for.

On your behalf I extend hearty congratulations and thanks to Ron Teusner for his hard work in bringing this about

John Haynes



Members will be sorry to hear that Ron Baikie is no longer the Editor of Amour. Ron became the editor moments after the current Committee was elected in 2001.

He has produced some 30 first class editions since then and deserves our hearty congratulation and thanks; these I have extended to him on behalf of all members.

Recently your president had the opportunity to attend the 3/9 SAMR Association RAACA South Australian branch dinner in Adelaide.

Some 150 members and their families attended.

The gathering was the first to be held under the RAACA banner so at last the RAACA has an official presence in South Australia.

John Haynes President

THE SIEGE OF ELAND'S RIVER POST SOUTH AFRICA

4th – 16th AUGUST 1900

By Lt Col Miles Farmer

"ELANDS RIVER POST a small post at Brakfontein on the Zeerust-Rustenburg road, about 40 miles west of the latter town, in western Transvaal. At the time of the battle, it was garrisoned with troops from Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Carrington's Rhodesian Field Force consisting of about 505 men, of whom 301 were Australians (105 were NSW Citizens' Bushmen, 141 Queensland Mounted Infantry (QMI), 42 Victorian Imperial



Maj Tunbridge, CO

Bushmen), plus 198 Rhodesians (South Rhodesian Volunteers), under the command of Lieutenant Colonel CO Hore, who had raised and led the Bechuanaland protectorate regiment and was Baden-Powell's second-in command during the siege of Mafeking.

The role of this post was to protect the passing supply columns from enemy attack. The strength of the post was significantly increased by the arrival of Major Howard Tunbridge and 125 men of the QMI on 21 July, and then by 80 Southern Rhodesian Volunteers led by Captain 'Sandy' Butters, who had previously served at Sekuni.

The rudimentary post was sited on a small kopje close to the Elands River, but overlooked by the nearby hills which were subsequently occupied by the Boers. Fortunately some defense works had been started, and the garrison had been reinforced by the arrival of 11 Victorians who had escaped during the attack on Koster River on 22 July 1900. On 3 August, an 80 wagon convoy arrived at the post, where it was to meet an escort to take the convoy to Rustenburg.



Interior of the makeshift Hospital

At daybreak on the following morning, the camp came under the eruption of artillery and rifle fire from General de la Rey's burghers who had crept close to the post under the cover of darkness. Captain David Ham of the 3rd Victorian Bushmen's Contingent described the initial onslaught of enemy fire; "We heard the whistle of bullets just like a hive of bees swarming, splashing and splintering on the rocks. Soon the enemy found the dense mass of 700 cattle close to us, and two guns and a Pom Pom played into them. The oxen went down, and there was panic among the wounded. They broke loose, and threatened to trample us to death in their wild stampede".



General de la Rey

After being under artillery and sniper fire all day, the garrison spent the night *feverishly digging trenches*. Despite the ongoing bombardment of the post, few additional casualties were incurred due to the *improved entrenchments*. Enemy shell and rifle fire killed almost all of the horses and cattle tethered in the camp. The two small kopjes close to Elands River and held by Captain Butters and Lieutenant Zouch (NSW Bushmen), protected the water carts as they trundled down to the river each night to replenish the camp's water supply. Both these officers held their isolated positions

On 5 August, a relief column led by General Carrington came within sight of the besieged post, and de la Rey was forced to threaten his "30 rather cowardly men with my rawhide whip", before they opened fire on the British advance guard. Incorrectly assuming that he was faced by a substantial force as he had failed to scout the adjoining ridges, Carrington was quickly dissuaded by de la Rey and his 30 Boers to abandon



LT J.A. Annatt

any attempts at relief. De la Rey later remarked that if he had had a larger force he would have surrounded Carrington's column and captured it.



Tpr J.T. Masterson

On 6 August Lieutenant Annatt of the 3rd QMI was killed by Boer shell-fire. During the course of the day, de la Rey offered surrender terms to the garrison but these were summarily rejected. By this time the Boer had significantly increased and, if an all out attack had been made, could possibly overwhelmed the small garrison. Initially it was unwisely assumed by Major General Baden Powell that Hore had surrendered, but when Roberts became aware

through an intercepted Boer message that the garrison was still holding out he ordered Kitchener to rapidly organise a relief force. The British relief column arrived unmolested on the morning of 16 August.

Casualties among the garrison during the 13 day siege totalled 12 killed and 58 wounded, plus about 1,500 horses and oxen killed. The gallant stand made by the Australians was later recognised by awards to Major Tunbridge (CB), Captain Duka (DSO), Corporal William Hunt and Trooper Tom Borlase (DCM). That the Elands River post was able to withstand de la Rey's siege, was largely due to the magnificent efforts of major Tunbridge, supported by officers such as Captains Butters, Duka, Ham and Thomas and their Australian and Rhodesian comrades. The garrison had so courageously withstood the



Capt Duka, MO



Capt David Ham

long siege, that Conan Doyle was prompted to write that the action at elands River: "*....appears to have been one of the finest deeds of arms of the war. The Australians have been so split up during the campaign, that though their valour and efficiency were universally recognised, they had no single large exploit which they could call their own. But now they can point to Elands River....When the ballad-makers of Australia seek for a subject, let them turn to Elands River, for there was no finer fighting in the war*".

Additional Notes:

The Boer Forces: Several Boer Commandos, numbering as many as 4,000 burghers with seven heavy artillery pieces occupied the surrounding hills. De la Rey was not prepared to accept the heavy losses of burghers if they attempted a frontal assault on the position. He intended to capture the stores held in the post by a campaign of attrition. If he stayed in one place too long he ran the risk of being engaged by a larger British column, hence he had thinned out his force by the end of the siege. On two nights he did attempt to over-run Captain Butter's Rhodesians who were holding the kopje protecting the water point but was vigorously repulsed. *Digging-in:* a thin layer of soil was easily removed, exposing hard layers of slate. This could only be removed by breaking into and prising this tough material where it fractured along lines of weakness. This sounds straight forward but there were few entrenching tools, picks or shovels in the post, and so most of the work had to be done using the bayonet. Despite these difficulties the troops worked frantically at night and very soon had developed a very secure defensive position, just as at Gallipoli 15 years later.

Patrolling: The Australians soon established a pattern of aggressive patrolling at night, a tactic which has been followed to this day. The Boers soon realised that the Australians and Rhodesians would be a serious opponent. *Lieutenant J W Annatt:* He joined the Gordon Highlanders in Scotland at the age of sixteen, and was posted to South Africa where he fought in the First Anglo Boer War, where he was wounded at Majuba Hill, here the British were soundly defeated by the Boers. He transferred to the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders and fought in the Zulu War 1883-84. From South Africa he went to Canada and fought in the Indian rebellion raised by the chief Sitting Bull, and was severely wounded at Pine Ridge in 1890. He then went to New South Wales where he was on the staff as an instructor, before transferring to Queensland, also as an instructor. He took his commission in 1895, serving with the 3rd Kennedy Regiment, the Kennedy Mounted Infantry, and was commanding L Company of the Queensland Rifles when he joined the 3rd Contingent of Queensland Mounted Infantry to go to South Africa. It is little wonder that a man with this experience was revered by his troops during the siege. His granddaughter, the well known Brisbane identity, Miss Pixie Annatt MBE OAM, visited his grave at Elands river in 2001 as a guest of the Rustenburg Boer War study Group.

Change of Web site as of 2011

Amour has a new website—as with Trevor Hyde's Black Berets it will continue to cover all units of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps, plus supporting Corps. All positive input from former, present day members and others who have worked with the RAAC during their years of service is welcome. The site name is www.black-beret.org.au and the new webmaster is Michael Martin

All Former members of C Squadron 2/4 Aust armoured. Regiment

**Could you please contact either Eric "Bill" Armstrong
Email: bilarm@tadaust.org.au or contact the RAACA directly.**

Technical Notes & News

Canadian Army accepts modernised Leopard 2 tanks

The Canadian Army has taken delivery of 20 modernised Leopard 2 A4M CAN main battle tanks (MBTs) from **Krauss-Maffei Wegmann** (KMW).

According to KMW, the enhanced Leopard 2s are soon expected to be deployed to Afghanistan in order to provide the Canadian soldiers with a high level of protection and firepower. The Canadian Forces have already encountered very positive experiences with the Leopard 2 A6M main battle tank (*pictured*) in Afghanistan.

The modernisation of 20 Leopard 2s for the Canadian Forces began in July 2009 in order to adapt the tanks to the troops' special requirements in Afghanistan. The main focus of the new design is consistent protection of the crews, who are subjected to enemy attacks with powerful anti-tank projectiles and are in constant danger from mines and IEDs. The starting point for the protection concept is outstanding protection from mines and good all-round protection.

In addition, the tanks now feature a pioneer equipment interface, which allows the troops to carry out more tasks with a single heavy combat vehicle platform. The applicable equipment includes mine rollers, mine ploughs and dozer blades. The modernisation also takes into account the extreme climate conditions of Afghanistan's arid southern provinces.



BAE wins Aussie M113 track contract

BAE Systems has been awarded a \$14 million contract to provide T150F track link assemblies and sprockets that will be used on upgraded M113 vehicles in Australia.

The T150F track is a part of BAE Systems' robust Readiness and Sustainment spares capabilities. The T150F is a double pin track system that improves vehicle performance and durability for the M113 and other lightweight vehicles.

"The new track system provides our customer with lower life cycle cost, greater reliability and improved performance," Robert Houston, vice president and general manager of Readiness & Sustainment at BAE Systems, said. "It is our goal to supply products and equipment that help save lives."

Work on the track shoes will take place at the BAE Systems' Anniston, Alabama facility by the existing workforce and is expected to be complete in July 2011. The contract was awarded by the Defence Materiel Organisation office based in Washington, DC.

The M113 is part of the largest family of armoured tracked vehicles in the world and includes more than 80,000 vehicles worldwide with 40 variants. It can transport 12 troops plus a driver and is capable of amphibious operation, extended cross-country travel over rough terrain and high-speed operation on improved roads and highways.

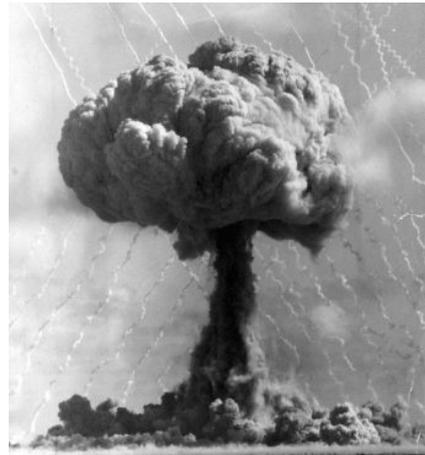


RAACA ATOMIC VETERANS

We need to alert all our Atomic Veterans and any of their widows to the new Veteran's cover which could see widows becoming entitled to the War Widows Pension (WWP).

Here are the names we have found so far. If you know where any are or can add some names, details or location of widows, please inform the office on (02)83355209.

Maj-Gen M. Bradbury RIP widow has WWP
Brig J. Monaghan RIP widow has WWP
Colonel J. Moyle contacted and advised
WO Auchettl
WO J Gilchrist
WO W.C. Jones RIP died of cancer, is there a widow?
Sgt "Sailor" Howell
Sgt Ocatell
Cpl Sayers
L/Cpl L. Sullivan RIP is there a widow?
L/Cpl D.A. King
Cpl C. Greeves
Tpr R. Haywood
Tpr W. Dewhurst
K Coultis
Tpr L. Sullivan RIP is there a widow?
B L Webb
..... Wood?



RESTRICTIONS ON WEARING OF OUR BLACK BERETS

Your Association is concerned about the Chief of Army's decision to restrict the wearing of the Black Beret to ceremonial parades and then only when the CO approves.

We are considering the establishment of a permanent organisation such as an Ironsides Corporation, to fight this and other issues. This to some extent will overcome the disadvantages of burdening incoming Federal presidents of the RAACA with ongoing issues, given that we change Federal presidents every three years.

Latest issue of Ironsides is now available

David Deasey is searching for descendants of soldiers and nurses who served in the Boer War 1899—1902. This is part of a project to construct a memorial to Boer War Veterans in ANZAC Parade, Canberra.

**Contact David Deasey
National Boer War Memorial Association
c/- Building 96
Victoria Barracks
Paddington NSW 2021**

**Email: David.deasey@bwm.org.au
Phone: 0409 585 877**



Message Board

Coming Home Parade – 9 October 2010

On Saturday, 9 October 2010 a celebration to mark the return of the members of the Regiment, who have been on the first operational deployment since 1945, was held. This was followed by a Regimental Ball at the Parramatta RSL .



Letters Received



From Rodger Tingley A Sqn (ARA) 4/19th Prince of Wales Horse Regiment



I offer the enclosed with the thought that it may give some of our CO old and bold a little recall from the days when we were young, gullible and so naive.

Roger Kershaw and I may have jointly held that title , at least within the unit if not the Corps for most days as a duty officer. Not always deserved. However, it did little harm at the time, except to Smersh's love life and I shot more rabbits for little private barbeques with Grunt and/or Arty Duty Officers.

Finding the photo brought back many memories, including one of a now deceased but never to be forgotten loveable rogue. I quietly wrote off bail dollars and bottles of scotch after a mumbled "Y'know, for a wet behind the ears bloody ossifer, your probably nearly half OK –Sir".

With apologies to Frank, one that springs to mind was:

"Oh ...hullo Mr Tingley...ah... its Sgt Richardson.. Yep from Liverp...ah, you seem to have weekends quite a lot... ?? Oh.. Ah.. Yes..well..look...you know I don't like to bother you .. But you said a quiet call... yeah.. Aah.. We have Trooper Goedart in here ... again (preg nant pause all round) ...I know.. Mmm...well...a couple of my constables are rather upset ... new shirts..etc. Well.. Apparently he wouldn't leave the Liverpool Arms (?) when asked... mmm ...several times... did a bit of damage.. Yeah.. When my officers arrived.... Resisted their requests..well yes.. To a degree... well...a bit...No nothing really broken...but well.. Yes ...there was a little blood... hmm... yes .. mostly.. His Too..!! You'll come in... we're happy to do that... we can talk about any paper-work... yes. I'll talk to them... when you arrive... mmm...ok...Thank you... Back then,

Lest we Forget
We regret to advise the passing of the following members

Neil Bretherton, ex 4/19 PWLH	N. R. Gane ex 2/7 AR	Bob Ownens, ex 1 AR
Gorden Butel	P.R. Lipman, ex 2/7 AR	Col F.C. Pearson, ex 2/6 AR
H. Davenport, ex 2/4 AR	B. Manyweathers, RNSWL	R. Wilkinson - Life member
N.J. Denning, ex 2/7 AR	J.B. Milne, ex 2/11 AC R, 2/4 AR	A.G. Bessell

The 1st Australian Armoured Division days at Gunnedah
A book by Cate Clark

Also Ironsides 2010-12-06

In this issue many will receive a brochure seeking donations to fund the printing of "To Fight and Do Our Best". The book tells the story of the early days of the 1st Australian Armoured Division. Any WW11 veterans would be delighted to read of the exploits of the troopers during that time in Gunnedah before going off to WA to protect our western shores from Japanese invasion.

Also consistent with our supplier many will receive a copy of the latest Ironsides, the RAAC Corps Magazine. Should you miss out and want a copy please contact the office on (02)8335209.

HEARTY WELCOME TO THESE NEW MEMBERS SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE

J. (Joe) Sullivan A Sqn 3 Cav Reg
Brig C.N. Kahn MC

We are extremely grateful for the following individuals and associations for their donations to the National Boer War Memorial project between 1 August and 31 October

Sth Hurstville RSL	B Adams	Windsor & District RSL Sub Branch	L & G Day
M Botfield	P Ramm	Brisbane North RSL	E Farmer
N P King	R Webster	C O'Donnel	A & L McGaughey
J Allison	Maj Gen F Poke	The Victoria League	C & B Seakins
B Butcher	J Connell	J & N Mayson	E R Ewers
M Walker	B Cahill	Brisbane City Council	B Ross
R Mitchell	M Taggart	MacAlister Valley- Newry Lions Club	S Turbit
H Ewart	R Fisher	N M Haw	W Hodgikson
B Watt	K Dowell	W B Mackie	Nat Servicemans Assoc Cent Vic
A Crothers	P Seal	W Foreman	V J White
O Clarke	R Adams	Botany Bay Family His- tory Soc	Romsey/Lancefield RSL Sub Bch
M Stubbs	M Womack	Kyneton RSL	N Lee
Camberwell RSL	N Wright	Camberwell Historical Soc	Baden-Powell Lodge 488
R Braybrook	A Argent	W Bell	United Services Lodge 330
P Barker	J Cutler	G Fernando	P T R Buckley
S Ward	J Campigli	R Ryan	Baden Powel Lodge
R Sealey	Cash	Smithfield RSL	R Thomson
R Dalley	Cabra-Vale Ex-Svc Club	R Alderton	E Tonkin
R Preston	Lt Col T C Irwin	S W Watson	R & D Hally
G Keys	Memorial Hall Trust, Orange	D Jess	J. Haynes



NATIONAL BOER WAR MEMORIAL PROGRESS

At last we are well on the way to agreeing to an accepted design for the Memorial. As soon as we receive clearance from the Government we will include an impression of the design in Armour. We will also have details in the NBWMA Web Site "bwm.org.au". However patience is needed as Government processes take time.

Once the design is confirmed an estimated cost for the project will allow us to better target fund raising. While we have been lucky enough to raise sufficient funds for the conduct of the competition including paying some \$130,000 in prizes and costs, we will need much more substantial donations to meet the expected \$3,000,000 plus construction costs.

We have requested financial support from the Government but to date there has been no response.

The Project will need the continuing support of all Members, so please donate if you can and/or offer to help on any of the state and territory committees.

Remember this Memorial is to commemorate the first Australian Troopers to go on operational service for our nation.

John Haynes National President NBWMA

Assistance still needed

IN the News - article from Bob Ferrari



The first of 30 decommissioned Leopard tanks to be gifted to RSLs around Australia was officially presented to Jerilderie RSL in NSW today. As part of Remembrance Day commemorations, Governor of NSW Marie Bashir AO officially handed over the tank to the RSL. Minister for Defence Materiel Jason Clare said Jerilderie was one of 30

RSLs who would receive a tank.

"These seven metre long, 42 tonne tanks were first purchased in 1977," Mr Clare said.

"They were the mainstay of Australia's armoured capability for three decades. They served the Army well and have now made way for the next generation tank – the M1A1 Abrams.

"They have been decommissioned at Defence sites in Puckapunyal, Bandiana and Darwin and will be transported to their new homes at RSLs across the country."

Mr Clare said it is expected that all tanks will be delivered to their new homes by mid next year.

"The RSLs will be responsible for the preservation of this chapter in our military history," Mr Clare said.

"They'll put them on display and keep them maintained so communities across the country can appreciate their scale and power."

So far, 24 RSL Clubs are confirmed to receive a tank are:

Beenleigh RSL, Bendigo RSL, Bribie Island RSL, Bunbury RSL, Canberra Services Club, Collie Cardiff RSL, Echuca and Moama RSL, Echunga RSL, Epping RSL, Esperance RSL and Esperance Museum, Forester-Tuncurry RSL, Ingleburn RSL, Jerilderie RSL, Kilcoy RSL, McLaren Vale RSL, Mount Gambier Community RSL, City of Palmerston RSL, Port Kennedy RSL, Port Augusta RSL, Rutherglen RSL, Seymour RSL, Upwey - Belgrave RSL, Woodford RSL, Yarrowonga-Mulwala RSL.

The remaining six RSLs are in the process of finalising local approval and will be announced once these approvals are given.



CAPTAIN CHARLES ARBLASTER

**8th AUSTRALIAN LIGHT HORSE REGIMENT
and
53rd AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION.**

(Born: Pennyroyal, Victoria, 21 Feb 1895. Wounded in Action, Gallipoli, 26 Sep 1915; Wounded in Action, Fromelles, 20 Jul 1916. Died of Wounds while POW 24 July 1916.)

Charles Arblaster was a graduate of Royal Military College Duntroon. He was posted to the 8th LH (AIF) as Machine Gun Officer. He served in that capacity on Gallipoli until 7 August when he was appointed Acting Adjutant replacing an RMC classmate Chas Dale missing after the charge at the Nek.

Arblaster was wounded on 26 September and evacuated eventually to England. He returned to Egypt in March 1916, but was unable to get a posting with 8th LH, so transferred to 53rd Bn. He was a Company Commander in the 53rd Bn in the ill-fated attack by the 5th Australian Division at Fromelles on 19 & 20 July 1916.

The battalion suffered heavy casualties immediately the attack began. By the time it had reached its objective, Captain Arblaster was the senior officer left alive and unwounded. He reorganised the remnant of the battalion and had it dig in along a line of captured ditches.

The right flank of the 53rd battalion was completely exposed. Arblaster led the desperate fight to hold that flank. For more than 24 hours he and his men held out, but by then the enemy had infiltrated along an unoccupied trench line behind his position. This prevented supplies of bombs and ammunition reaching him. Out of ammunition, Arblaster led a bayonet charge to clear his supply line. It failed and Arblaster was seriously wounded. He was taken prisoner and died in a German hospital four days later. He was 21 years of age.

Quotations in Cameron Simpson, *Maygars Boys*, p.24

“Charlie Arblaster, At the mention of whose name even now our men salute and give earnest tribute to an ungazetted hero and VC.”

“Charlie Arblaster, though only twenty-one was my ideal officer, he was a clear cut athletic and handsome fellow. Had he been spared his career as a soldier would be a brilliant one.”

Both quotations come from J J Kennedy DSO CF, *The Whale Oil Guards*, James Duffy & Co, Dublin, 1919, p.58 and p.35 respectively.

Members are thanked for their response to the request to receive
Armour by email.

Due to that response with this issue we have sent Armour by
email to all email addresses we hold.

If this doesn't suit any one please contact the office and we will
cross you off the email list and send a paper copy.