



FROM THE GALLERIES AND COLLECTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY MUSEUM OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Typically only a small portion of a museum collection is exhibited at any one time. This is due not only to practical consideration of display space but a range of professional considerations designed to protect and preserve the artefact.

This series highlights objects and stories you may have overlooked in the galleries or collection items awaiting the opportunity to be viewed and share their story. Enjoy and explore further.

13 INFANTRY BRIGADE LINEAGE

In its original military usage “brigade” was both a verb and a noun. As a verb it described the grouping together of sub-units in a larger formation (ie *brigaded*). As a noun it was used to describe a collection of field batteries (ie *3 Field Artillery Brigade*). Prior to Federation, brigaded units normally had a descriptive rather than numerical designation (ie *Western Australian Mixed Brigade*).



Group portrait of members of the "1st West Aust Inf Bn (formerly 1st WA Vol Rifles)" at a camp during Easter 1902. Back row, left to right: Private (Pte) H Butt; Pte H Gigney; Lance Corporal H Minchin; Sergeant H W Scannell; Pte W Peters and Pte S Burns. Front row: Pte W Buckman; Pte E Watson; Pte D Nicholson and Pte A E Rowell.

From the Collection #47

The impact of the war in South Africa and the raising of Contingents for service therein gave a tremendous fillip to the Volunteer Movement in Western Australia. Two new Battalions of Infantry were raised and by regrouping and expanding some of the older corps other Battalions could be formed. General Orders issued on 8 October 1900 gave formal approval for the formation of the West Australian Infantry Brigade existing of five Battalions (to include all the existing Infantry corps), organised on the following lines:

Headquarters, Perth. Commandant and Staff.

1st Battalion, Perth. Officer Commanding Major J. C. **Strickland**.

2nd Battalion, Fremantle. Officer Commanding Captain J. A. E. **Humble**.

3rd Battalion, Guildford, York, Bunbury, Geraldton. Officer Commanding Captain W. D. **Cowan**.

4th Battalion, (Metropolitan Civil Service Battalion) Perth. Officer Commanding Major H. J. **Hunt**.

5th Battalion, (Goldfields Battalion of Infantry) Kalgoorlie. Officer Commanding Major H. A. **Judd**.

Immediately after Federation in 1901, the field force units in Western Australia were designated as the *Western Australian Brigade*. The Brigade continued to flourish until 1 July 1903 when it was liquidated by the issue of the new Federal Defence Scheme. Federal troops were divided into two bodies known as Field Force and Garrison Troops, each having a distinctive role. All the corps of the former Brigade (except York) became components, under changed designations, of either of these two bodies, as shown in 1st to 5th Battalions, W.A. Infantry Brigade.

On Federation, military units within Western Australia were grouped together under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Hobbs and became known as the West Australian Mixed Brigade. After the Defence Act 1903, units were designated numerically in sequence of Military District. Numbered Brigades were introduced as part of the reorganisation for the Universal Service Scheme (compulsory military service) for home defence instituted in 1911.



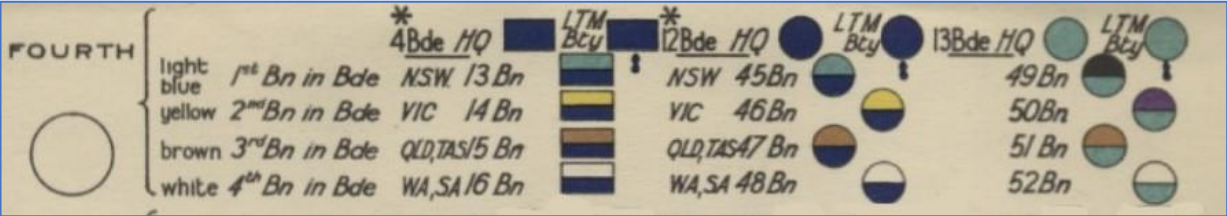
Group of Instructional Corps staff in tented camp, 1912 (AMWA 42664)

The 13th Brigade traces its origins to 1912, when it was formed as a Militia brigade as part of this scheme assigned to the 3rd Military District (Victoria). The first commander of this Brigade was Colonel John Monash. The Western Australian Brigades under the scheme were designated 20 and 21.



Crowd gathers in front of Swan Barracks after War declared, August 1914

Implementation of the Universal Service Scheme was disrupted by the creation of the Australian Imperial Force as Australia’s military responses to the call to arms for what was to be World War 1. Following the evacuation of Gallipoli in December 1915, Australia expanded the Australian Imperial Force by creating three new divisions from the two existing ones. The battalions of the first four brigades were split to provide an experienced cadre for the new battalions formed from reinforcements from Australia. The 3rd Infantry Brigade AIF was divided to form 13th Infantry Brigade, 4th Australian Division.



For the next two-and-a-half years, 13 Brigade AIF took part in the fighting on the Western Front in France and Belgium. Its first major action came at Mouquet Farm in August 1916 followed by Messines and Passchendaele in 1917. In early 1918, the brigade fought on the River Ancre and at Villers-Bretonneux on 25 April 1918. After the German 1918 spring offensive was blunted, further actions included the Hundred Days Offensive around Amiens in August and the Hindenburg Line in September.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

A00006

The Australians advanced beyond the line of German artillery and even captured a large 28 cm railway gun near Harbonnières. The huge trophy was brought to Australia after the war and the camouflaged barrel of the 'Amiens gun' is on display at the Australian War Memorial. AWM A00006

In 1921, following the conclusion of the demobilisation process, Australia's part-time military force, the Citizens Force, was reorganised to perpetuate the numerical designations of the AIF. As a result, the 13th Brigade was re-raised as part of the 5th Military District, headquartered in Perth, Western Australia



The Brigade was mobilised for war service in 1939 after the outbreak of the World War 2. Due to the provisions of the *Defence Act (1903)* it was initially only used as a garrison force for home defence. It was mobilised for full-time service following Japan's entry into the war in December 1941 and undertook collective training at Melville Camp until early 1942.

Detachment at Melville Camp

For the first part of 1942, as part of 4 Division, the brigade was the main formation defending the Western Australian coastline from a potential Japanese invasion. In 1943, after the threat of a Japanese landing subsided, the brigade moved to the Northern Territory as part of Northern Territory Force. The Brigade remained in the Northern Territory until 1944 when it was transferred to the 5th Division to take part in the New Britain campaign.

Arriving at Jacquinot Bay in November 1944, the brigade, from January 1945, took part in the gradual advance towards Rabaul. At the conclusion of hostilities, the Brigade carried out occupation duties until disbandment in 1946.

In 1948, 13 Brigade was re-raised as part of the Citizens Military Force and headquartered in Perth as part of Western Command. In 1960, when the Citizens Military Force was reorganised (Pentropic Division), the brigade was disbanded. It was re-raised again in 1988, and is currently responsible for the bulk of Army Reserve formations in Western Australia within 2nd Division. Brigade personnel have deployed to the Solomon Islands, East Timor and Afghanistan and also to provide aid to the civil community during flood and fire emergencies.



At the Army Museum, simplified orbats, command structures and lineage charts help visitors unfamiliar with terminology track the service of family and relatives. An accurate unit name can help determine time and place. Your personal feedback will help keep our summaries accurate and up to date as official records sometimes no longer exist or are incomplete.

http://www.diggerhistory.info/pages-conflicts-periods/other/army_in_wa.htm