

# Midnight Warhorse



**Guy Haydon on Midnight**

# Chapter 1 Midnight Birth



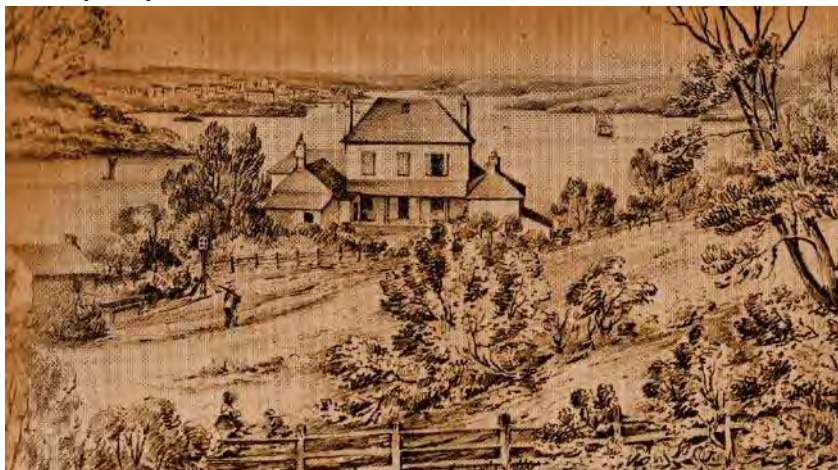
As the clock struck 12 midnight, the much-awaited foal bounced awkwardly but strongly to her feet for the first time. The crystal clear waters of the Pages River flowed around the big bend with its high side cut well into the bank, while the new foal stood on the level, rich alluvial flat on the homestead side of the river.

It was the 31 October 1905, the same day twelve years later she would come to a courageous end in a foreign land in a foreign war. In doing so, she would save the life of her rider, Guy Haydon. They had been coupled for life, they were a partnership, as he had been born just across the flat in the old homestead sixteen years earlier.

There she stood, black like the night as she nudged towards her mother. On her forehead was a small white star with three little peaks like the petals of a tiara pointing upwards. There was a distinctive white triangular peak on the front of her near hind coronet, standing all alone,

matching the upward peaks on her star. She also had a small piece of white on the back of each hind coronet. Her feet were hard, solid black which were prized by bushmen for their strength, durability and toughness as opposed to feet which were white and soft.

It was Moonlight's first foal and she had been retired to strengthen the broodmare band at Haydon Horse Stud, following her career excelling in all the things that had been asked of her. From chasing brumbies in the high country to days mustering cattle and a long hard droving trip to the Gulf. She was ridden between properties and to town as horses were then the only means of transport. Frequent rides were made to Maitland to do the family banking and to catch the ship at Morpeth to Sydney.



Tivoli 1842



**Bloomfield Homestead, Blandford**

She had been bred by Thomas Haydon who had sailed to the Colony in 1836 to join his brother Peter who arrived in Sydney in 1828. Peter lived at Tivoli in Rose Bay grazing cattle along the foreshores of Sydney Harbour, with a wonderful view across the expanse of water to the natural undeveloped harbour foreshores. He was one of the early pioneers of the Upper Hunter and became the original landholder of Bloomfield in 1832. Peter had written requesting Thomas and his sister Matilda travel to the new colony to help Peter run his rural enterprises, which were expanding north from the Hunter Valley.

Thomas settled at Bloomfield and built the homestead from local sandstone. With his wife, Margaret, he raised five boys and two girls.

He spent most of his life in the saddle riding, managing the sprawling properties as more were added. Matilda married Peter Brodie who had settled the property Glenalvon further up the Pages Rivers past Murrurundi.

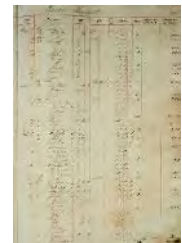
In 1840, Thomas purchased the well-bred stallion Young Dover, who was by Dover, from the Scott brothers of Glendon at Singleton.

Thomas would ride the 92 miles on Young Dover to Maitland, with gold he had purchased from the early gold prospectors from around Nundle and other monies to deposit in at the ANZ bank.



**Dover imported 1836**

The Haydon family are still the bank's oldest continual clients in Australia. The old ledgers with the original entries have been retained all these years by the bank. While there he would enter Young Dover in the Maitland races and on occasions, winning three races in the one day before riding him home again back up the valley to Blandford.



**The Bank's original Ledger**

Moonlight was by a son of Young Dover and Thomas's son Bernard loved riding the mare. He would frequently ride her into Murrurundi to visit and have dinner with the Wakeford family.

William Wakeford had come to help build the new railway tunnel through the Liverpool Range to enable rail transport into the developing areas of the northwest of the State. He later built the Prospect Dam for Sydney's water supply. With his wife Elizabeth he travelled to the colony where his engineering skills were in high demand. However, it was their daughter Blanche that Bernard was keen to see. He had many trips during the courtship before marrying her in 1879.

Bernard further built a strong association with Moonlight when he rode her on the long droving trip all the way to their properties in the Gulf. Bullocks were then walked down from Normanton back to Bloomfield where they were fattened and then driven down over the Hawkesbury River



**The Droving Team at Normanton 1887**

to the Homebush market in Sydney. These were well-travelled bullocks, seeing a lot of Australia from the Gulf, through Queensland across the border into NSW and then on to Sydney.

Moonlight was joined to the Haydon's top sire Tester who was never beaten on the track and became the leading sire of his time. His stock were the undisputed champions of the then popular short distance "Bridle Spurts" when the winner received a bridle. Many were unbeaten like their sire, winning numerous bridles for the family. Midnight luckily inherited her father's speed combined with the stamina of her mother.



**Tester leading stallion at Bloomfield 1888-1904 and sire of Midnight held by Combo Bloomfield**

Moonlight had a strong place in Bernard's heart carrying him during his courting days to the long distances, endurance and hardships of the Gulf.

For her now to produce this lovely black filly by his prized stallion Tester was cause for celebration. Given the hour and her colour he named her Midnight. Little did he know, and it would have been incomprehensible at the time, that this filly would even travel further and achieve more accolades than her mother.

## Chapter 2 Bonding

Bernard's second son Guy Haydon was born on 24 April 1889. He was a strapping sixteen year old when Midnight was born and he formed an immediate partnership with the filly. He handled her as a foal and started her in all her training. He could ride before he could walk, growing up around good horses. He developed into a fine horseman like the rest of the family. He developed strong bush craft and was a crack shot with both a rifle and pistol.



Guy Haydon in a studio child portrait

Guy excelled at his boarding school the Sydney Church of England Grammar School (Shore), especially in sport, winning the 1906 Head of the River, playing for two years in both the 1<sup>st</sup> XV and 1<sup>st</sup> XI, who were GPS Champions in 1906, representing the school in GPS Athletics and was a crack shot.



**Sydney Church of England Grammar School, 1st XV., 1905.**

I. L. LONGWILL.	H. W. ADAMS.	G. B. HAYDON.	MR. I. G. MACKAY.	R. G. FITZGERALD.	M. MACKELLAR.	K. QUINN.
F. G. POCKLEY.	G. C. WAY.	S. G. IRVING.	N. C. LAWRENCE (Capt.)	O. H. DEAN.	P. G. MILSON.	R. W. RUSSELL-JONES.
	W. C. FRANCIS.				C. M. MARSH.	

*Kerry & Co.*

*310 George Street  
Sydney*



1st Crew - Winners of Schools Championship 1906  
 M. Mansfield P. Edwards (cox) C. L. Wilcox (stroke) G. B. Hayden (2)



1st XI. 1906  
 G.P.S. Champions

C. E. Rich (scorer), T. A. Playfair, F. N. Frith (captain), G. B. Hayden, R. J. Massie  
 I. L. Longwell, H. H. Musie, E. S. Walter (captain), F. Blackland, G. P. Edwards,  
 C. J. Tozer, J. T. N. Dixon, F. R. H. Marewether

# 1ST XI 1906 GPS CHAMPIONS



**Major T A Playfair, OBE, DSO**  
 "For conspicuous devotion to duty and most efficient service as Brigade Major, 4th Australian Divisional Artillery, from 15 March 1918 - throughout his service under my command, which includes the trying and anxious period and actions at Albert, Dernancourt and Villers-Bretonneux, and almost continuous and strenuous fighting up to our final withdrawal on 5 November 1918 - the work of this Officer has been marked by consistent application, cheerful and sustaining energy and proved ability"

**Capt. E S Kater, MC and bar**  
 "For conspicuous courage and devotion to duty on 3rd November 1917 at Khauvelen in that by his coolness, discretion and example held onto a forward position with his Squadron, although surrounded on three sides by machine gun fire, and inflicted considerable casualties on the enemy"

**Lieut G P Edwards**  
 C E Bean wrote of the Turkish assault at Mt Meredith, "At 2.30 the enemy, estimated at 8,000, charged with the bayonet on Mt Meredith. Repeated attempts to scale the ... southern slope ... had been frustrated by a handful of men under Lieut. Edwards, who, posted on the crest, shot assailants in large numbers and sent their bodies rolling down the sand"

**Dr C J Tozer, Maj., DSO, AAMC**  
 "... At Hooge Tunnel, east of Ypres, during the operation on 19-23 October 1917, the officer displayed most conspicuous courage and devotion to duty, dressing wounded and organising stretcher bearers. His complete disregard of danger ... is worthy of very high praise"

- |   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Back Row: C E Rich (Scorer),<br>Capt. Naval Air Service,<br>DFC | T A Playfair,<br>Major 7th Brigade<br>DSO, MID x 3, OBE     | Mr F N Frith,<br>Pte, 7th Batt. France, WIA,<br>died as result of wounds | G P Haydon,<br>Lieut. 7 Light Horse<br>Gallipoli, WIA Beersheba | R J A Massie<br>Lieut. Col. 33 Bn, DSO<br>Croix de Guerre,<br>MID x 2, WIA Gallipoli,<br>France |
| Seated: I L Longwill,<br>Cpl 12 Light Horse                     | H H Massie,   | E S Kater (Captain),<br>Capt. 1 Light Horse<br>MC and bar, Beersheba     | F Blaxland,<br>Sgt, 1 Wis Sig. Sq.                              | G P Edwards<br>Lieut. 1 Light Horse   |
|   | Ground: C J Tozer,<br>Major, 1 Fd Amb<br>MID, DSO Gallipoli | J T N Dixon,   | E R H Merewether<br>Lieut, RGA                                  |   |



**Guy Haydon playing polo in 1907**

He spent many hours riding Midnight doing his work around the properties, training her as he went about his tasks. He taught her the basic dressage movements. Backing up and side passing over to open gates and to cut burrs. Cracking a stock whip to make a loud noise so the cattle would run out of the timbered country. Learning fast work blocking and cutting out cattle. Chasing the horses into the yard.

On weekends they would compete in the local Bushman Carnivals and campdrafting competitions. In 1907 as an eighteen year old playing for the Scone Polo Team he won the prestigious Northern Challenge Polo Cup at Quirindi, the youngest to do so.

After the war his brother Barney would have similar success competing on Thora who was from the same family as Midnight, with her mother also being by Tester. Thora established a long line of horses which are still successful in the stud today including the leading stallion Nightwatch.





**Bloomfield Polo Team 1908. Max Wright, Guy and Fred Haydon, J H White**



**Guy Haydon, aged 18, in the Scone Polo Team wins the Northern Challenge Cup in 1907**

This is an extract from the book The History of Scone Polo Club when Scone won the Northern Challenge Cup for the first time in 1907. Guy was only a teenager and was selected for his horsemanship and it paid off.

History repeated itself ninety-six years later in 2003 when David Haydon won the Northern Challenge Cup also at the age of 18 and won the Champion Team of Horses. He grew up at Bloomfield like Guy and had a similar early days with his sportsmanship and horsemanship.

In the early years after 1900 teams from Scone visited Sydney and Quirindi regularly and in 1907 a Scone team in search of the Northern Challenge Cup went to Quirindi in Bank Holiday week.

The players were - Guy Haydon 1  
A.P. Parbury 2  
A.L. Davies 3 (Capt.)  
J.H. Doyle 4

Guy Haydon was an exceptional horseman but he had not done much hitting so the Captain, Arthur Davies - a keen strategist - sent him on the field with a stick but with instructions not to bother about the ball but to keep the opposing back out of play. This he did most effectively and Scone came home with their first Northern Challenge Cup.

## Chapter 3 Off To War



**Guy Haydon on Midnight at Holsworthy Army Camp 1915**

When war broke out, along with this brother Barney, Guy enlisted on 15 February 1915 at Liverpool aged twenty-five. Although Barney was only nineteen at the time his parents relented since Guy promised to look after his younger brother. Cyril Regg their future brother in-law enlisted with them and rode the Bloomfield horse Hughie. He was out of a Tester mare and by The Dane. Their neighbour and friend Frederick Max Wright, aged thirty-two, from Bickham also joined up with them.

On 1 March 2015 the 12th Australian Light Horse Regiment was issued with authority for active service abroad and they marched out of Liverpool camp to Holsworthy. The men were mostly from rural stations, being good horsemen and good shots. The regiment was divided into three Squadrons, each of six troops, with twenty-five officers and four hundred and ninety-seven men.

Their cousin Gordon Haydon enlisted in the AIF but mostly served in the 6<sup>th</sup> Light Horse and completed the entire war returning to Australia in 1919. His brother Stuart Haydon died after the Gallipoli Landing.

The family was shocked when the reality of war hit home when Stuart Haydon died from the wounds he received at the landing of Gallipoli, on 25 April 1915. It is now commemorated as ANZAC Day. He was the first “local” to die in the First World War and Guy’s first cousin. He was a gifted sportsman at cricket, tennis and rugby, a good horseman and crack shot. Such a tragic loss of life. It had not turned out to be the great adventure they thought it would be.

This was the first generation of Haydon’s in Australia to go off to fight a war. Many followed in the Second World War and ironically also fought in the Middle East. There is a family military tradition recorded right back to 1650 when Richard Haydon went to Ireland with Cromwell’s forces and James Wightman was knighted after the famous Battle of Waterloo in 1815.



**James Wightman on the road to Waterloo**

James Wightman's grandson James William Wightman fought in the Crimean War being severely wounded and captured in the renowned Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava on 25 October 1854. He was in the front line of the 600 mounted cavalry who charged at the Russian guns. James is depicted in one of the painting and although badly wounded was one of the survivors of the Charge and one of the 36 prisoners taken by the Russians. He was later repatriated under truce in Autumn 1855 and returned to England, where he died on 23 Feb 1907, at age 72. In the article "Balaclava and the Russian Captivity" published in the magazine, *Nineteenth Century* (May 1892), he described his injuries:

*"A Cossack came at me and sent his lance into my right thigh. ... My horse was shot dead, riddled with bullets. One bullet struck me on the forehead, another passed through the top of my shoulder; while struggling out from under my dead horse a Cossack standing over me stabbed me with his lance once in the neck near the jugular, again above the collarbone, several times in the back, and once under the short rib; and when, having regained my feet, I was trying to draw my sword, he sent his lance through the palm of my hand. I believe he would have succeeded in killing me, if I had not blinded him for the moment with a handful of sand."*

He later writes about "our Annual Commemoration Banquet" with Florence Nightingale who came to prominence in the Crimean War to become known as the pioneer of modern nursing and the Lady with the Lamp.



**The ill fated Charge of the Light Brigade**

Interestingly Guy has a double family connection here with his grandmother being Margaret Wightman and his other grandmother Elizabeth Verney. Sir Harry Verney reputedly proposed to Florence Nightingale and upon her refusal married her sister Frances Nightingale.

A comparison of these two famous charges 63 years apart are strikingly similar from James and Guy's personal perspective but strikingly different in their outcomes. Both were in the frontline of the charge. Both had their horse shot from under them and both were severely wounded. James throw a hand full of sand into his attackers eyes which reputedly saved him while Guy throw a hand full of sand at his mount Midnight in the hope she would move out of danger. James was captured after the failure of the battle and treated by the Russians while Guy was treated by his own side at Cairo Hospital. James had a bullet removed from his knee which they gave to him and Guy had a bullet removed from his back which he then sent home. Both somehow survived and lived on after the war.

The outcome of the battles could not have been more different. James was fighting with the Ottomans and suffered an ill fated defeat. Guy was fighting against the Ottomans and Beersheba was an acclaimed victory.

**This is summary of the family's military involvement compiled by Blanche Haydon's son Robert McLellan;**

### **French Napoleonic Wars 1803-15**

**Sir James WIGHTMAN** (1782 -1848). He served as a Sergeant Major in F Battery of the new British Royal Horse Artillery (RHA), Cavalry. He fought in the following Campaigns:

- Peninsular from 1811-13 including the Siege of Ciudad Rodrigo 1812 and Siege of Badajoz 1812 and the Battle of Salamanca 1812 and Siege of Burgos 1812 and in **lucrative Battle of Vittoria 1813** and infamous **Siege of San Sebastian 1813** and the Passage of Bidassoa 1813 and Battle of Nivelle 1813 and Battle of Nive 1813 where WIA

- Flanders in 1815 including the famous decisive **Battle of Waterloo 1815**, where he was WIA.

He later fought in British RHA in Portuguese Succession Civil War in 1827-28. He was our greatest warrior and knighted. His grandson James Wightman fought in the Crimean War and was severely wounded and taken prisoner at **Balaklava in the Charge of the Light Brigade**.

### **American Civil War 1861-65**

**Henry WAKEFORD** (England; 1829 -1910). He served as a Lieutenant in the Illinois 29th Regiment, Infantry of the Union Tennessee Army. He fought in the following Campaign:

- Mississippi from 1861-62 including the Capture of Fort Henry 1862 and Battle of Fort Donnelson 1862, where he was WIA, and in bloody **Battle of Shiloh 1862** and Siege of Corinth 1862.

### **Boer War II 1899-1902**

**Frank VERNEY** (England; 1874 -1952). He served as a Lieutenant in the British Natal Carbineers Regiment, Cavalry. He fought in the following Campaigns:

- Boer Offensive in 1899 including the Battle of Colenso 1899
- British Counter Offensive in 1900 including the Battle of Tugela Heights 1900 and the Relief of Ladysmith 1900.

### **World War I 1914-19**

**Charles APLIN** (Hunofels, Qld; 1897 -1957). He served as a Corporal in the 12th Battalion, Infantry in Aus Imperial Forces. He fought in the following Campaigns:

- Somme in 1916 including the Battle of Flers 1916
- Passchendaele in 1917 including the Battle of Menin Road 1917, where he was WIA
- Allied Counter Offensive in 1918.

He was a warrior who later enlisted in WWII and served in the Aus Imperial Forces.

**Gerald APLIN** (Southwick, Qld; 1883 -1916). He served as a Private in the 25th Battalion, Infantry in Aus Imperial Forces. He fought in the following Campaigns:

- Egyptian and Flanders Trenches 1916
- Somme 1916 including Aus most bloody **Battle of Pozieres 1916, where he was KIA**.

**Ivor BRISTOL** (New Zealand; 1896 -1947). He served as a Lieutenant in the 2nd Canterbury Regiment, Infantry in NZ Expeditionary Forces. He fought in the following Campaigns and was awarded **Military Cross** for valour:

- Passchendaele in 1917 including the Battle of Messines 1917, where he was WIA
- German Offensive in 1918 including the Battle of Ancre 1918.

He was a warrior who later enlisted in WWII and served in the Aus Imperial Forces.

**Bernard Bloomfield HAYDON** (Bloomfield; 1895 -1978). He served as a Lieutenant in the 12th Light Horse Regiment, Cavalry in Aus Imperial Forces. He fought in the following Campaigns:

- Yemeni Muslim Rebellion in 1915 and famous **Gallipoli in 1915**
- Egyptian from 1916-17 including **the Raid of Maghara 1916**
- Palestine in 1917-18 including the **Battle of Gaza II 1917** and the **Action of Es Salt II 1918**
- Egyptian Muslim Rebellion in 1919.

**Colin HAYDON** (Muswellbrook; 1889 -1972). He served as a Private in Infantry details of the Aus Army before being medically retired twice at Sydney in 1916.

**Gordon HAYDON** (Muswellbrook; 1887 -1957). He served as a Trooper in the 6th Light Horse Regiment, Cavalry in Aus Imperial Forces. He fought in the following Campaigns:

- Egypt in 1916-17 including key **Battle of Romani 1916** & rode in following Charge & Raid of Bir el Mazar 1916
- Palestine from 1917-18 including the **Battle of Gaza I 1917 and Battle of Gaza II 1917** and Raid of Asluj Railway 1917 and the Action of Nahr el Auja as part of the **momentous Capture of Jerusalem 1917** and Attack on Amman 1918 and Action of Es Salt II 1918 and the infamous **Sack of Surafend 1918**
- Egyptian Muslim Rebellion in 1919.

**Guy Bloomfield HAYDON** (Bloomfield; 1889 -1965). He served as a Lieutenant in the 12th Light Horse Regiment, Cavalry in Aus Imperial Forces. He fought in the following Campaigns:

- Yemeni Muslim Rebellion in 1915 and famous **Gallipoli in 1915**
- Egyptian from 1916-17 including the **Raid of Maghara 1916**
- Palestine in 1917 including **Battle of Gaza II 1917 and rode in famous Charge of Beersheba 1917 on Midnight, where WIA**

**Stuart HAYDON** (Muswellbrook; 1886 -1915). He served as a Private in the 2nd Battalion, Infantry of Aus Imperial Forces. He fought in the following Campaign:

- Gallipoli in 1915 in the famous Battle of Landing at Anzac 1915, where he was WIA on ANZAC Day and DOW.**

**Harry MUDDLE** (Sydney; 1894 -1956). He served as a Private in the 17th Battalion, Infantry in Aus Imperial Forces. He fought in the following Campaigns:

- Egyptian in 1916 and Flanders Trenches in 1916**
- Somme in 1916 including Aus most bloody Battle of Pozieres 1916, where he was WIA.**

**Sidney MUDDLE** (Sydney; 1890 -1963). He served as a Lieutenant in the 33rd Battalion, Infantry in Aus Imperial Forces. He fought in the following Campaigns:

- Somme in 1916**
- Passchendaele in 1917**
- German Offensive in 1918 including Action of Lancer Woods 1918 and at Villiers Bretonneux, where WIA**
- Allied Counter Offensive in 1918.**

**Richard WAKEFORD** (Sydney; 1863 -1924). He served as a Captain in the Army Transport Services in Aus Imperial Forces. He initially served in militia artillery in New Guinea Campaign in 1914. He later sailed transporting troops across war zones of world from 1915-17 and survived German attack on HMAS 'Orsova' in English Channel 1917.

**George WAKEFORD** (Sydney; 1894 -1928). He served as a Private in the 52nd Battalion, Infantry in Aus Imperial Forces. He fought in the following Campaigns:

- Somme in 1916 including the Battle of Flers 1916**
- Hindenburg Line in 1917**

**-Passchendaele in 1917 including the Battle of Messines 1917 and Battle of Menin Road 1917 and Battle of Polygon Wood 1917 and Battle of Passchendaele I 1917**  
**-Allied Counter Offensive in 1918 including the famous Battle of Amiens 1918, where he was WIA.**

## **World War II 1939-45**

**Ethel Maud CAY** (Maryborough, Qld; 1920 -). She served in camp hospitals of the Aus Army in Queensland and Papua New Guinea from 1942-44. **Stationed at Koitaki at the end of the Kokoda Track.**

**Blanche HAYDON** (Bloomfield; 1891 -1969). She served as a Driver in Aus Army Transport from 1942-45.

**Frederick (Jim) HAYDON** (Bloomfield; 1916 -1986). He served as a Captain in the 25th Battalion, Infantry in Aus Imperial Forces. He fought in the following Campaigns:

**-Syria in 1941**

**-New Guinea from 1942-44 including the famous Kokoda Track 1942 at Huggins and the Battle of Buna-Gona 1942-43 and Battle of Salamaura-Lae 1943 being first in to capture Lae and Battle of Finisterre Range 1943-44**

**-Borneo in 1945 including the Battle of Tarakan 1945 and Battle of Balikpapan 1945, where he was shot down and WIA.**

**Isabel HAYDON** (Quirindi; 1922 -2011). She served as a Nursing Aide in the Royal Aus Air Force at the Base Hospital, Uranquinty, NSW from 1942-46.

**John Bloomfield HAYDON** (Quirindi; 1918 -2014). Son of Guy Haydon. He served as a Lieutenant in the 1st Battalion, Infantry in Aus Imperial Forces. He fought in the following Campaigns:

**-Syria in 1941**

**-New Guinea from 1942-45 including the famous Kokoda Track 1942 and the Battle of Buna-Gona 1942-43 and Battle of Aitape-Wewak 1944-45. Has Haydons Knoll named after him.**

**Patricia Bloomfield HAYDON** (Quirindi; 1916 -2008). She served as a Nurse in camp hospitals of the Aus Army in Australia and Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) from 1943-46.

## **Vietnam War II 1963-75**

**William LEWIS** (Scone; 1947 -). He served as a Private in the 1st Task Force, Infantry of the Aus Army.

He fought Vietnamese communist guerrillas in hunting expeditions in forest jungle across Phuoc Tuy province in 1969.



Guy and Barney's older brother Frederick was to stay home to run the properties as he had already started his family. The brothers selected homebred horses to take with them to share the upcoming adventures. Usually, it would be assumed that geldings would be chosen however with Guy's attachment to Midnight they reluctantly agreed he could take the good mare. At nine years old she was in the prime of her life. Barney selected the brown gelding called Polo and neighbour Max Wright from Bickham was given a bay gelding he named Fred after his good friend Frederick Haydon. All three were by Bloomfield's top sire Tester.

In a remarkable feat both Polo and Fred survived the entire Light Horse campaign in the Middle East. On his return from the war Max Wright presented Fred with a mounted switch off his horse's tail to mark the achievement and the appreciation of the generous gift. The switch remains in the family's archive today.

Over the years the Haydons bred hundreds of horses for the re-mount trade. Below is a sample listing of some of the horses sold to remount buyers Tulloch and O'Donnell from 1905 to 1908.

The following is a sample listing taken from the Bloomfield Horse Book of some horses which were sold J.Tulloch and F.O'Donnell over the years as Indian Remounts.

.....  
1905:

Sept 26th Punch - black mare by Cooper from Dolly H 2 ribs (T) £40.0.0  
 Unbroken- blk mare by Tester from Bess H 2 nr. thigh (T) 27.10.0  
 Pigeon - blk filly by Cooper from St.Wire H 2 ribs (T) 12. 0.0  
 Unbroken- bay Geld. by Cooper from Actress H 3 ribs (T) 9. 0.0  
 Unbroken- bay Geld. by Cooper from Countess H 2 ribs (T) 14. 0.0

1906:

May 29th. Rainbow - Bk. Geld by Tester from Cassandra H 1 nr.th" 14.10.0  
 Cardigan- Ch. Geld by Tester from St.mare H sh. (T) 7. 0.0  
 Trump - Bay " " " " " " " (T) 5.10.0  
 Bluey - Grey " " " " " " " (T) 11. 0.0  
 Rollo - Br. " " " " " " " (T) 2. 0.0  
 Scatter - Bay Geld " " " " " WK7 (T) 3.10.0  
 Stockings- Bay Geld " " " " " J (T) 2. 0.0  
 Tommy - Grey Geld " " " " " H (T) 2. 0.0  
 - Bay mare " Mazepa " St. wire H (T) 4. 0.0  
 Whistler Br.Geld " Lennox " Whistler ll. H 3 (T) 9. 0.0

1907

Mar.12th - Br.Filly " Tester from Cassandra H 3 thigh (T) 12. 0.0  
 - Br.Filly " Cooper from Phoebe H (T) 14. 0.0  
 " Bk.Filly " " " Frank's mare H (T) 12. 0.0  
 - Bay Geld. " Cooper " " " H (T) 10.10.0  
 Bk.Geld/ " Tester " Bess H (T) 25. 0.0  
 Bk.Geld " Cooper " Dolly H (T) 25.10.0  
 Br.Geld " Tester from Cassandra H (T) 8. 5.0  
 B,Geld " Cooper from Blossom H (T) 12.10.0  
 Ch.Geld " Cooper from Dolly H (T) 10.10.0  
 Ch.Filly" Cooper from Bangleralore H (T) 12. 0.0  
 Ch.Filly" Cooper from Mailguard mare H (T) 10.10.0

1908

Oct.19th Br.Colt by Cooper from Jam Tart H (T) 27. 0.0  
 Br.Filly by Cooper from Frank's mare H (O'D) 15. 0.0  
 Br.Filly by Tester from St.Wire (O'D) 14.10.0  
 Bay Colt by Tester from St.Wire H (T) 22.10.0  
 Bay Colt by Cooper from Bangle H (O'D) 16. 0.0  
 Bk. Filly by Cooper from Tester mare H (O'D) 16. 0.0  
 Bay colt by Cooper from Phoebe H (T) 22.10.0  
 Br.Geld by Tester from PJ mare H (T) 21. 0.0  
 Bay Colt by Tester from PJ Mare H (T) 15. 0.0  
 Bk.Colt by Cooper from Mailguard mare H (T) 14.10.0



**The tents at Holsworthy Army**

They assembled at Holsworthy Army camp on the outskirts of Sydney. Midnight, Polo and Fred had been transported to Sydney by train. They sat proudly on their horses while their official photographs were taken. Sam brown, hat, plums, leggings, spurs, .303 rifle, 43-centimetre bayonet, saddles and bridles all in immaculate polished condition and everything in its exact place.



**Lined up at Liverpool Railway**



**Gordon Haydon**



**Cyril Regg with Hughie - He married Guy's sister Madge**

**Guy's army dog tag disk was engraved with;**

319  
G B Haydon,  
B 12<sup>th</sup> L H  
C of E.



**Picnic before leaving Holsworthy**

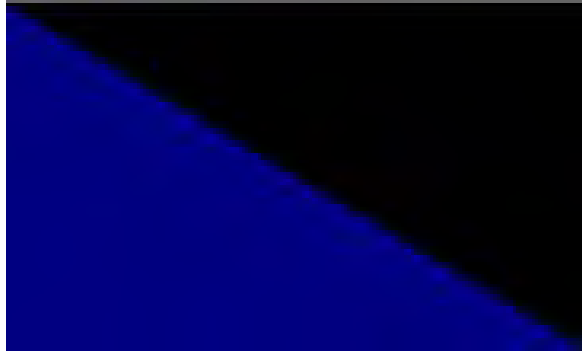
Whilst in camp Guy married Jean Hindmarsh on 5 March 1915 at Strathfield. He received official notification that he had permission for leave to organise a property transfer and to get married. Everyone knew her as Bonnie and Guy called her Bon. She was a member of an old north coast pioneer family from near Lismore. The original Hindmarsh arrived from England in 1822 acquiring land initially at Gerringong. Bonnie was raised on a farm out of Lismore and her father was a member of the NSW Parliament. She was a friend of Guy's sister Madge Haydon, often staying with her at

Bloomfield, describing it as a wonderful, welcoming place where the young had many great times. She was attractive, outgoing and Guy soon became very keen on her.

Before departing they had to line up for their vaccinations. Apparently it nearly killed them, making them very sick. Illness was ever present with some men even dying on the ship before they even reached the battlefields of the Middle East.

The group were ready to depart. Close to Guy were Barney and Max Wright. His cousin's Gordon and Stuart Haydon had also enlisted. Tragically Stuart was shot in the shoulder at the Gallipoli landing and was buried in Egypt. He represented the first casualty of the war for the area. His brother in law Cyril Regg joined and the Ralph Purcell from their Scotts Creek property completed the group.

The calibre of the men that enlisted and their leaders proved to be exceptional. General Sir Harry Chauvel was given command over the entire British combined Desert Mounted Corps. Lt-Colonel Donald Cameron who became Commanding Officer of the 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse was a local from Rouchel in the Upper Hunter Valley, proved a distinguished leader being awarded a DSO and Bar.



**12th Light Horse Regiment colour patch**



**Lt Barney Haydon on Polo by Tester. In a remarkable feat they both survived the entire campaign.**



**Barney at the horse lines**



**Midnight and Hughie at the lines**



**Guy Haydon army portrait**

The 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse had a spectacular parade in Sydney riding in a long column through the streets to the cheering crowds. The streets were packed with well-wishers and Guy felt very proud to be riding Midnight on such a grand occasion.

They departed Australia on the steamship Suevic on 12 June 1915.



**The 12th Light Horse, Sydney, June 1915**





**Suevic departing**

Guy wrote from Port Adelaide 5 days later to say that they had been ordered to unload the horses and proceed on without them. He said how “rotten” it was to be leaving them behind but hoped they would be reunited with them later.

On the trip over Colonel Abbott, their Commanding Officer mentions in his diary that Guy Haydon and F Bell were tying off for first place in the shooting competition held on the boat. Both had scored 49 out of 50. They shot off another 4 times but were still even. He had to then announce them as joint titleholders.



**The Suevic**



♣ B Squadron, No. 3 Troop ♣  
**12th Regiment Australian Light Horse, Australian Imperial Force**

□ ■ □  
EUROPEAN WAR, 1914-15.

W. A. SHEARON  
130 PHILLIP STREET  
SYDNEY

Lt Guy Haydon fourth from left in the back  
row and Lt Barney Haydon third from the left  
in second back row.

## Chapter 4 Training at Cairo

They landed in Egypt arriving at Suez on 23 July 1915. They proceeded to Heliopolis near Cairo by train and then spent weeks in training, starting with reveille at 4.30 am. Under the backdrop of the Pyramids they practiced combat drills with their horses and their horse holders. They got to know the area and Cairo, which was so foreign to them. They played polo on both horses and donkeys and held races.



Training in the desert near the Pyramids



The training exercise called "Titling the Rings"



Guy got to play polo again on both horses and donkeys



The Donkey Polo Team - Guy Haydon, Jack Davies, Basil Copper and Len Williamson



A challenge race

## THE DINKUM DONKEY DERBY.

A Sweepstake of P.T. 3 with P.T. 10 added. The Stakes will be cut 85%, 10% and 5%.

P.T. 10 will be awarded to the best rider of the day.

Nominations WITH FEES will be received by Secretary up till noon Thursday, 27th inst.

### CONDITIONS:

1. — Riders must be members of the Anzac Mtd. Div. and must wear boots leggins and strides.
2. — No whips, spurs or donkey boys allowed.
3. — No electric batteries allowed.
4. — Officers may nominated but not ride.
5. — Weights:— 8 st. 7 lbs. minimum, including iron rations.
6. — The Jonk must be *ridden* the full distance.
7. — The distance will be decided by the Stewards and will not exceed 7 miles.
8. — Any corrupt practices will be immediately dealt with by the stewards.
9. — All Protests must be accompanied by a fee of P.T. 5 within five minutes of passing the post and will be forfeited if the protest is considered frivolous.
- 10.— A.J.C. rules strictly adhered to. Also any rules the stewards may see fit to make.

**RUN: Sunday September 30<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m.**  
at ZEITOUN.

Judge: ELTON, C.

Stewards: WILSON R.W., HARRIS, V.E.G.,  
MOUNT. R.V., HAWTIN, C.  
Clerk of Course: WARDLAW, R.W.

Starter: WARDLAW, R.  
Time Keeper: HARRIS, V. E. G.

Hon. M.O. . . . J. SIMPSON, M.D.

Sec.: STEVENSON, R.

# Chapter 5 To Gallipoli



Anzac Beach

The brothers found they were to be again separated from their horses and sent to Gallipoli as reinforcements on 28 August 1915 attached to the 2<sup>nd</sup> LH Brigade. Their Brigade Commanding Officer Colonel Spencer-Browne addressed them before leaving saying “You are fit to meet the enemy after only four weeks training in Egypt. No other regiment has left this country with less than three months training. I am proud to have commanded such officers, non-commissioned officer and men. I believe Australia has never sent out a finer brigade.”

They went by train to Alexandria and sailed to Lemnos Island landing at Anzac Cove at midnight while occasional bullets hit the transport.

E.T. No. 1. COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA. No. OFFICE DATE STAMP

POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, NEW SOUTH WALES.

*Cable* ~~TELEGRAM~~

This message has been received subject to the Post and Telegraph Act and Regulations. All complaints to be addressed in writing to the Deputy Postmaster-General.

Station from.	No. of words, check, and time lodged.	Remarks.
<i>Via Eastern 18 Cairo sub</i>	<i>7. 23<sup>1/2</sup> 3.25pm Y. C. O.</i>	<i>Daydon. Blanaford. H. S. H.</i>
		<i>Leaving FOR front. good bye.</i>
		<i>Barney.</i>
	<i>9.25'</i>	<i>Landed Gallipoli 29 Aug. 1915 Early in the morning</i>

NOTE.—The figures at the bottom indicate the time received at this office.

Barney's cable home before landing at Gallipoli

The Australian's were gallantly hanging onto their precarious positions on the peninsula's beach and cliffs against the entrenched Turks. Guy was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant and put in charge of B Squadron. Earlier their cousin Stuart Haydon had been killed in the landing at Gallipoli being the first local casualty of the war.



**Guy in his "dugout" at Gallipoli**



**Get together in the trenches**

They fought there until the troops were withdrawn. The conditions were very tough, with sleepless nights and they did not relish the idea of fighting on through a harsh winter. It was freezing at night and lice shared the dugouts with them. In Guy's letter home titled "In the Trenches-Gallipoli" he writes..... "the trenches are 7 feet deep...it is impossible to get hit by a bullet if you keep your head down. I can assure you we do.....we dig little rests in the side of the trenches to sleep in and as long as it doesn't rain we will be fairly comfortable.....dysentery is playing the devil with the man.....the smell is pretty awful as there are scores of bodies unburied lying out beyond the trenches....we can see bodies of dead Australian and Turks lying together...they had been there for about a month...it is getting cold here now and if we are here for winter we'll have a pretty rough time of it as it rains heavily at that time." As the weather changed to winter and storms raged across the Anzac positions men all over the peninsula suffered from exposure and frostbite. In November the snow fell.



**The ammunition carts at Gallipoli**

They were very relieved to hear it was time to depart and continue the fight against the Turks on another front. They helped with the elaborate plans to deceive the Turks that they were leaving. The plan worked well. Tins full of water were tied to the triggers of their rifles which were pointed at the Turks. A small hole was punctured in the bottom so the water would drip out slowly and then release the trigger to fire a shot towards the Turks. The seemingly impossible had been accomplished without a single casualty. It was one of the great military and naval achievements ever accomplished. A German called it "a masterpiece" as they had no idea of the plans to evacuate.



**The trenches at Poppy Gully**

Their efforts were effective and their departure was without any more loss of life. Although the 19-20 December 1915 withdrawal proved quite a remarkable military feat, the Australians had already suffered 28,150 casualties and had shown great resilience to hold on to their precarious positions on the cliffs.



**The Last Party to leave Gallipoli**

## Chapter 6 Reunion with Midnight



**Guy taken in his tent**

The 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse were re-assembled and re-mounted at Heliopolis near Cairo. They were allocated horses and Guy was so disappointed when another horse was assigned to him. He spread the word and his heart leapt when a fellow sidled up to him saying he had found his mare. He said he noticed the Haydon brand on her near shoulder. This well-known brand is the oldest continuous registered brand in Australia.



**Midnight held by the trooper who returned her to Guy. She had lost a lot of condition.**

Intense preparation, training and manoeuvres were enacted daily to prepare the light horse for the demanding desert campaigns which lay ahead. The men were grouped in sections of four with one man allocated as the horse handler. Being Mounted Infantry, they could then get off their horses and fight similarly to the foot soldiers, as the handler held the horses away from the gunfire.



**Guy riding and holding Midnight**

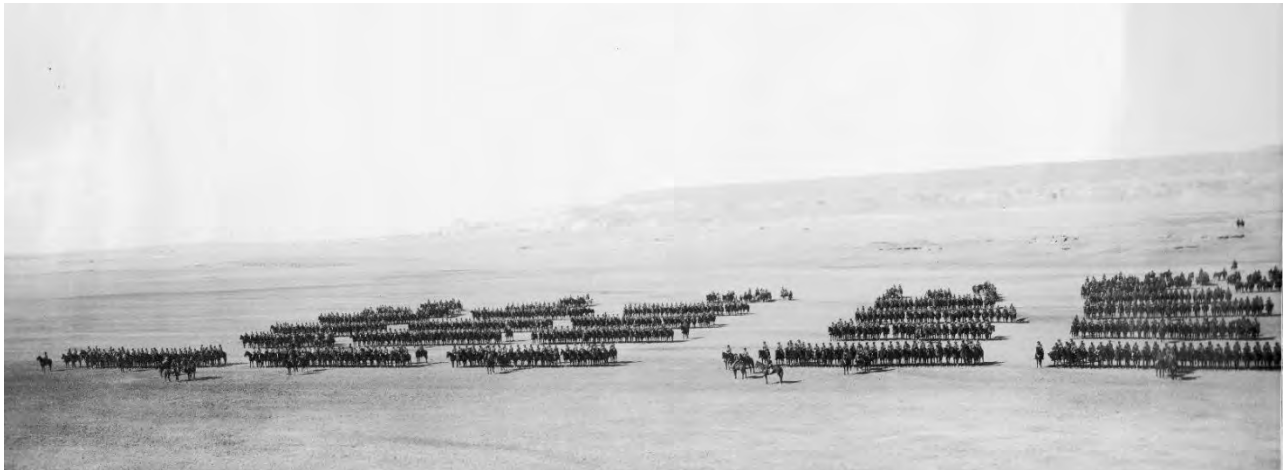




## Chapter 7 Desert Olympics

During this period, intense rivalry occurred between the Australian and British Calvary about who had the best horses. To settle the score a competition day was arranged between the two armies.

With Guy and Midnight being the 12<sup>th</sup>'s standout combination, they were chosen to represent Australia against the best of the British. Three events were to be contested which was dubbed the "Desert Olympics". The events were to test horses' ability, the rider's ability and their combined ability.



Light Horse on Parade taken by Zola, Cairo

The first event was a short distance sprint race over a quarter of a mile. Little did the British know that Midnight was by the champion sire Tester whose stock were rarely beaten in the short distance Bridle Spurts back in Australia. Guy and Midnight won the event at a canter, easing down at the finish after establishing a commanding lead. **Australia 1 England 0.**

The second contest was a utility Flags event involving obstacles and using their swords completing tasks against the clock. Again, Guy and Midnight prevailed winning the event with a clear round in the quickest time. **Australia 2 England 0.**

The third event was an equitation test involving the dressage movements which the British thought they had cornered, as at home they did a lot of this type of riding school training. They thought the Australia's with their laid-back approach would be easily beaten in these more formal equine movements. Again, they underestimated Guy and Midnight. Guy being a fine all round horsemen had trained Midnight in her early education while riding her back on the farm. She would move off his legs while performing the bush tasks such as opening gates, to stop, back, extend and to do flying changes. To the astonishment of the British he won the point score event but only by a narrow margin. **Australia 3 England 0.**

The Australians were jubilant to win all three events and to be the clear winners of the Calvary Desert Olympics. Guy and Midnight were the heroes of the Australian Light Horse. It created a cultural shift in the respect the British Calvary had for the Australian's and as the desert campaigns evolved, they acknowledged the tougher bush reared Australian horses had come into their own. In fact, they rated the Walers to be some of the finest cavalry horses ever seen.



Guy Haydon photo Cairo 1916

## Chapter 8 The Desert Campaigns



Guy on Midnight in the desert camp

The 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse moved on from Cairo under the remarkable leadership of Lieutenant General Sir Harry Chauvel, who was appointed Commander of the entire Desert Mounted Corp in the Middle East. This was a huge honour for an Australian to be elevated to such a position ahead of his British contemporaries who were now under his command. Time proved he was the leader of the most potent cavalry in history and the most successful battle commander in the Middle East War of 1914-1918.

Holding the Suez Canal was vital for the British, but they had to push north to lessen the hold of the Ottoman Empire, who had controlled the region for over 400 years and had now sided with the Germans in the war effort. It meant fighting the Turks in many of their entrenched strongholds and they wanted to dispel the bitter disappointment of their failure at Gallipoli.

They were to follow the ancient routes of armies of the Pharaohs, the Persians, Alexander the Great, the Roman Legions, the Crusaders and Napoleon's army.



Horse Lines in the Desert



### Watering the horses

The troops revelled in the space which was so different from the confines of the trenches and the wire of Gallipoli. They took great care in the welfare of their horses, making sure they were well groomed with attention to their backs. The Australians had very little back problems compared to the 70 percent incidence of sore backs suffered by their neighbouring English squadron. They made sure their saddles were evenly balanced and that their quart pots and water bottles were firmly secured so they did not rattle.

One report illustrates how the Walers outperformed the camels who were used to carry their water. “After 80 miles of sheer desert in thirty-seven hours, the men and horses finished fresh and strong, but the pace set was excessive for the camels who were greatly exhausted.”

Holding the Suez Canal was critical. The British had set up headquarters at Romani which was only thirty-seven kilometres from the canal and setup an outpost to the east at Katia. On the 23 April 1916 the Turks attacked and defeated the force at Katia after a bitter fight. The British then abandon Romani and return to the canal. In response the Australian Light Horse crossed the canal at Kantara moving east into the Sinai Desert setting up camp at Hill 70 just 11 km from the canal. The Turks had withdrawn back to Bir el Abd so the Light Horse moved on and reoccupied Romani which was a good site to defend the canal. Temperatures had now soared to 50 degrees in the shade with a hot furnace type wind, with millions of sand flies making it nearly unbearable with many suffering sunstroke and heat exhaustion. It was a blinding sun with sandstorms making the fine sand feel like red hot needles against the skin. The Australian used spear point pumps to quickly find water for the horses in likely low lying areas.

On 19 July the Turks with a force of 20,000 men amassed outside of Katia for their attempt to take control the canal. On 3 August fierce fighting commenced as they entered the Katia area. The Turks had to advance or fail while the Allies could win by defending. The Light Horse would retreat and then take up new positions. The German officer wrote “they fought in an exemplary fashion and many times we cursed those active and agile horseman”. They then attacked the Turkish flank capturing many Turks as many more retreated. On the 7 August they occupied

Katia and on 9 August General Chauvel attacked Bir el Abd. The Battle of Romani proved a triumph for the horses and how they had persevered under such extreme conditions.

They were outnumbered ten to one but managed to resist the Turkish attack. Winning the Battle of Romani changed the British thinking from defence to attack and marked an early turning point in the campaign as they went on to win the attacks on El Arish and Raffa.

They did long marches at night, so their horses were not out in the oppressive heat of the day, taking advantage of the cooler night time temperatures. The Sinai Desert proved a harsh environment on both men and horses with its heat and ever blowing wind and dust. The Sinai Campaign lasted 10 months from 15 May to 20 March 1917, including the Raid on Magdhara Hills on 13-19 October 1916, deep in the Sinai Desert behind enemy lines, attached to the Camel Column.



**The 12th fighting at Magdhaba**



**The 12th column on the move again after Magdhaba**

Magdhaba was a fortified railhead town. The column marched all night navigating by the stars. The 12<sup>th</sup> rode around to the north while the 11<sup>th</sup> attacked the centre. They galloped across the narrow flat and dismounted advancing up the range coming under heavy fire from the Turks on the commanding hill. The hilly rough terrain made it difficult, but the town was overrun and many prisoners were taken.

They were rested back at the canal at Ismailia reforming a new Brigade with the 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Regiments. On the 20 March they began the trek to Khan Yunus above Rafa via El Arish on their way to the advance to Gaza, arriving on 11 April. On the 18<sup>th</sup> they were involved in fierce fighting at Atawineh Ridge losing 30 percentage of their men under heavy fire and shrapnel bursts, before digging in for three days.



**At "The Beach"**

They moved back to “The Beach” at Marakeb for a rest.

In one letter home Guy addresses it as from “The Beach”. They camped 50 yards from the water’s edge, enjoying their weeks rest. They swam the horses every day and it did them a power of good. He records Barney took his leave in Cairo catching up with the girls he knew were there nursing including Jess Cobb. Guy received a cable announcing the birth of his first child Patricia Bloomfield Haydon on 3 March 1916. He also received some photos of “Paddy” as she became to be known. His wife Bon had them taken in Sydney and sent them over to him. He reflects, “I wish I could see them”. He also appreciates the parcels he received, especially the honey.

While there they acted as a protecting force to engineers successfully destroying many kilometres of railway and bridges. They also did reconnaissance in the vicinity of Beersheba. The conditions were very trying with the all pervading dust and flies. They made pools out of tarpaulins to have “bathing parades” which helped greatly in the health of the men.



“Bathing Parade”

This was followed by the Palestine Campaign with the 12<sup>th</sup> LHR attached to the 4<sup>th</sup> LHB from the 11-24 April 1917, including the Battle of Gaza. Guy then fell ill but was returned to the 12<sup>th</sup> LHR for the next Gaza II Campaign from 9 June 1917. The first attack on Gaza was bungled by the British Command. The defences at Gaza were strengthened which made the second attack even more difficult and unsuccessful. It was an unqualified failure.

Midnight displayed the stamina and endurance typical of the Walmers when during the Gaza Campaign she remained continually under saddle for 7 days and nights. Guy only averaged 3 hours sleep a day and she was still going well and held her condition. They would often sleep lying in the shade of their horses twisting the reins around one foot and then drop off to sleep. Often the men would fall asleep in their saddles catching much needed rest as the horses followed along in procession.



**12th Light Horse camp**

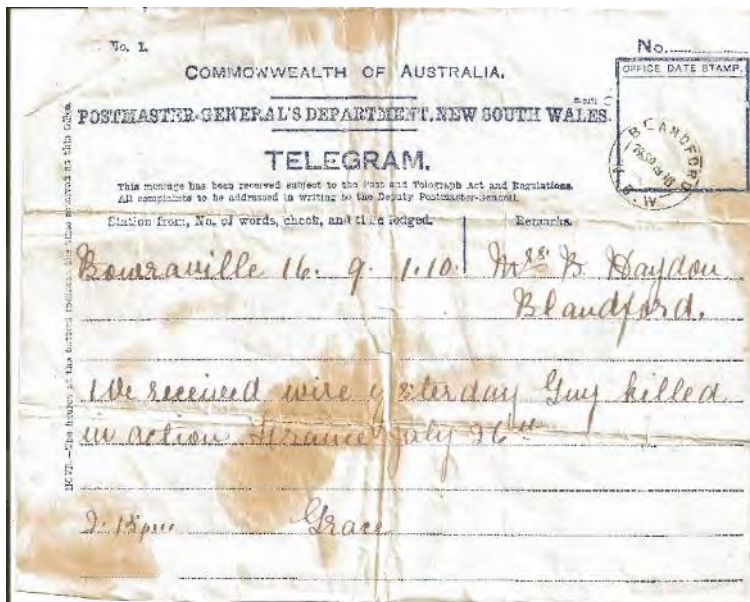
The Light Horse were involved in many successful battles clearing the Turks from Romani, El Arish, Magdhaba and Rafa but firm resistance slowed the Allied progress around Gaza. Guy got a friend to take a letter home of his account of the Gaza offensive which meant he could give a lot more detailed account of the battle than he would normally have been able to in his posted letters via the Army. He called it the “big fight”. As they advanced, they dismounted with the handlers holding the horses out of the firing line. As they proceeded towards the trenches on foot he said “The fire was terrible,

rifle, machine gun and shrapnel swept the ground and it was so dusty that at times one could only see about twenty yards. There we lay with our noses glued to the ground and the shrapnel ripping all amongst us, then we got the order to move forward again...how the devil any of us got out alive the Lord only knows. This was the hottest fight of the lot and I’m proud to say we did splendidly” They held their position until dark and 70 of their 220 men were killed or wounded.

They withdrew with heavy casualties and the British also suffered heavily. The old hands say, “that it is the heaviest scrapping we have had, worse than the landing on Gallipoli and even worse than in France”. He further reports that “Max Wright’s horse Fred was wounded by an aeroplane bomb a few days ago but will get over it. A splinter from the same bomb scratched Max on the chin. Max is a great soldier and takes to it like a duck to water.”

“Our horses didn’t have their saddles off for seven days and nights. They had a rough time but we didn’t lose one, and the old black mare is still going strong.” Fred survived his wounds and Midnight came through the harrowing experience with flying colours.





At home they had received the dreaded telegram informing them that Guy had been killed in action on 26 July 1916. However, it was an encoding error but still very bad news for the family. The word Guy should have been encoded as Gerry. It was referring to Gerry Aplin who was the brother of his brother Fred's wife Grace. Gerry Aplin was killed in the Somme campaign in France in the bloody Battle of Pozieres. Guy continued with the campaign to conquer the Turks in the desert.



Guy resting at an oasis



This is Guy Haydon's remarkable map above with the handwritten information about all the wells and their suitability, which is enlarged below.

WATER SUPPLY.					WATER SUPPLY				
No	LOCALITY	QUALITY	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	No	LOCALITY	QUALITY	QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION
3	54 Bir Iftin	running water	1,000 camels	Well Stone lined, 60 feet deep.	56	54 Bir Iftin	running water	1,000 camels	Well Stone lined, 60 feet deep.
4	48 Bir el Gebair	Good	300 gal. daily	Well Stone lined, 30 feet deep.	57	48 Bir el Gebair	Good	300 gal. daily	Well Stone lined, 30 feet deep.
4	49 Bir Abu Irqay	Bad	Plentiful	Well Stone lined, 60 feet deep.	58	49 Bir Abu Irqay	Bad	Plentiful	Well Stone lined, 60 feet deep.
13	41 Khirbit el Sufi	Plentiful	1,000 camels	Well Stone lined, 30 feet deep. 1' of water.	59	41 Khirbit el Sufi	Plentiful	1,000 camels	Well Stone lined, 30 feet deep. 1' of water.
17	5 Abu Yahia	Good	9,000 gal. daily	Well Stone lined, 10 feet diam., 40 feet deep. (Very good)	60	5 Abu Yahia	Good	9,000 gal. daily	Well Stone lined, 10 feet diam., 40 feet deep. (Very good)
X	30 Beerehba	Fresh	Unlimited	Several wells. Government pumping station to tank above town.	61	30 Beerehba	Fresh	Unlimited	Several wells. Government pumping station to tank above town.
41	46 Bir Hassan el A'ntam	Plentiful	Well	Report missing	62	46 Bir Hassan el A'ntam	Plentiful	Well	Report missing
42	40 Bir Selim Abu Inqay	Bad	Well	100 feet deep.	63	40 Bir Selim Abu Inqay	Bad	Well	100 feet deep.
43	39 Bir el Hammam	Fresh	Well	Stone lined, 5 feet diam., 100 feet deep.	64	39 Bir el Hammam	Fresh	Well	Stone lined, 5 feet diam., 100 feet deep.
45	37 Bir Imshah el Bah	Good, but slightly bitter	1,500 camels	Well Stone lined, only one open. Stone lined, 60 feet deep.	65	37 Bir Imshah el Bah	Good, but slightly bitter	1,500 camels	Well Stone lined, only one open. Stone lined, 60 feet deep.
50	11 Abu Ghalyun	Sweet	200 gal. daily	Well Stone lined, 20 feet deep. 1 foot water.	66	11 Abu Ghalyun	Sweet	200 gal. daily	Well Stone lined, 20 feet deep. 1 foot water.
23	12 Akhass Araba	Fair	1,000 camels	Well Stone lined, 10 feet deep. 3 others blocked.	67	12 Akhass Araba	Fair	1,000 camels	Well Stone lined, 10 feet deep. 3 others blocked.
23	13 Bir Ibn Turbia	Bitter	Plentiful	Well Stone lined, 10 feet diam., 40 feet deep. (Very good)	68	13 Bir Ibn Turbia	Bitter	Plentiful	Well Stone lined, 10 feet diam., 40 feet deep. (Very good)
X	14 Bir Arara	Probably good	1,000 camels	3 wells	69	14 Bir Arara	Probably good	1,000 camels	3 wells
X	15 Et Raheba	Fresh	Plentiful	Stone lined, 15 feet diam., about 400 feet deep.	70	15 Et Raheba	Fresh	Plentiful	Stone lined, 15 feet diam., about 400 feet deep.
26	6 Um Gasuma	bitter	Unlimited	Shallow well - 10 feet deep. 2 feet water.	71	6 Um Gasuma	bitter	Unlimited	Shallow well - 10 feet deep. 2 feet water.
X	10 El Hannu	—	—	Blocked.	72	10 El Hannu	—	—	Blocked.
28	10 Abu Zatat	Fair	1,000 camels	Well Stone lined, 50 feet deep. 1' water.	73	10 Abu Zatat	Fair	1,000 camels	Well Stone lined, 50 feet deep. 1' water.
29	19 Geleib	—	—	30 feet deep untreated.	74	19 Geleib	—	—	30 feet deep untreated.
30	10 Ibn Musalari	—	—	Blocked.	75	10 Ibn Musalari	—	—	Blocked.
31	21 Bir Anlat	Fair	300 gal. daily	Well Stone lined, 30 feet deep.	76	21 Bir Anlat	Fair	300 gal. daily	Well Stone lined, 30 feet deep.



Midnight- feed time in the desert



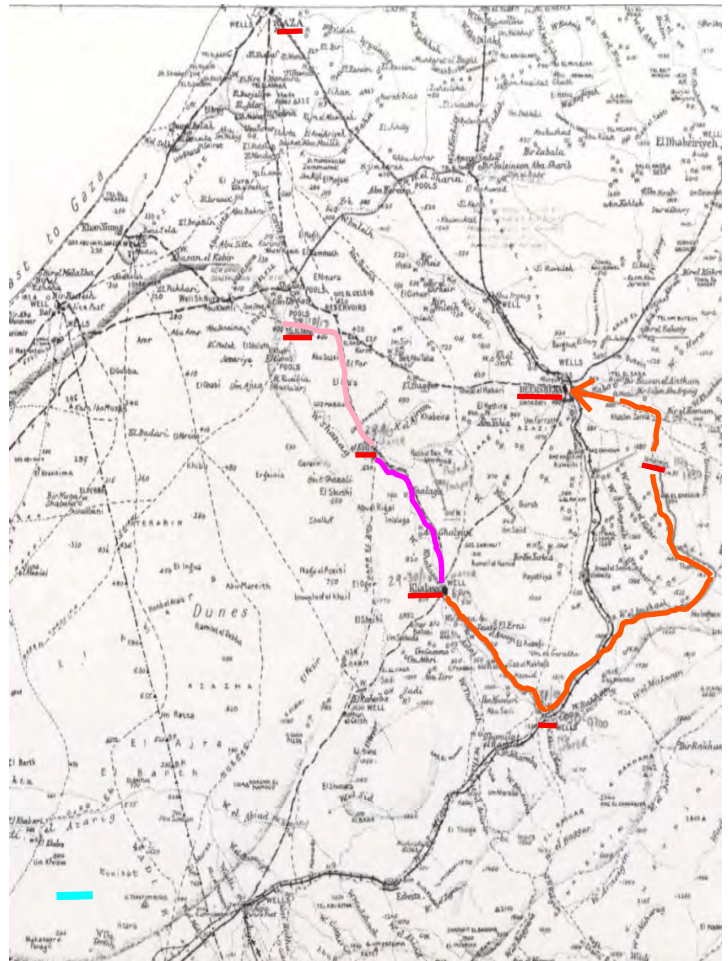
## Chapter 9 Midnight Ride

With General Allenby appointed as the new commander of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force he was keen to overcome the Gaza failures. With the resistance encountered at Gaza they decided to perform an outflanking exercise on the Turks so they could capture Beersheba and in doing so enable their push north to continue against the stronger Turkish lines at Gaza. They set a plan to let the Turks know they were planning another major offensive on Gaza, while assembling their strength to attack Beersheba. By taking Beersheba, it would open the way to Gaza and beyond to Bethlehem, Jerusalem, the Jordan Valley and right up to Damascus. However, they had to capture Abraham's Wells at Beersheba before they could be destroyed by the enemy or they would face the unthinkable prospect of no water for their horses.

In Guy's collection on one of the maps of the Beersheba area he has written in red an updated description of all the wells in the region showing their quantity and quality of water. This would have been an invaluable source of information as they rode for Beersheba.

They rode out from their Fara Camp on the evening of 28 October 1917 riding across the desert for 5 hours to the southeast for 12 miles to Essani, under bright moonlight. They fed and watered the horses and continued riding across the desert southeast on the evening of 29 October for 11 miles taking 4 hours to Khalasa. They rode out at 6 pm on 30 October across the desert southeast to Asluj, under a full moon, and then turned northeast to arrive at Iswaiwin outside Beersheba, 40 miles taking over 17.5 hours.

They had ridden all night in the moonlight heading for Beersheba. It was a full moon and so light you could read a printed page. Somehow the mood was different as they grasped the significance of what lay ahead. They halted and spread out along a wadi about four miles from the town and waited. They could see the white buildings of Beersheba and the tower of the mosque. The trees they later discovered were Australian gum trees. The B squadron officers Guy, Roy Lindeman and Aubrey Abbott had a scratch meal while their squadron commander Cuthbert Fetherstonhaugh went off to headquarters to find out what was happening. When he returned, he called out "get your men mounted".



The ride to Beersheba

## Chapter 10 The Charge of Beersheba

### “The Most Famous Calvary Charge in History”



It was the 31 October 1917. They waited and waited in the wadi. Light was wanning and the horses had not had water for 36 hours.

There seemed only one alternative. That was to capture the wells at Beersheba or perish. The order came through “Mount Up”, they had to capture the wells at “All Cost”. Five minutes later, the 4<sup>th</sup> on the right and 12<sup>th</sup> on the left, Australian Light Horse Regiments were on their way. 800 riders charged across the open ground. As they came to the trenches the whole of the 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment dismounted continuing the fight on foot while members of the 12<sup>th</sup> swept on into the town.

Guy gave this following account of the charge in his letter to his family back at Bloomfield;

#### Letter written by Guy Haydon from Cairo Hospital

*“You will know from my Cable that I am in Hospital here with a rather nice wound, a bullet about 2 inches to the left of the crupper bone. I will try and give you an account of exactly what happened from the start of operations until I was knocked out.*

*We left our Camp at Tel-al-fare on the night of the 29<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m. and marched to a place called Essani reaching there about 11 p.m. and camped there the night and all next day. About 3 p.m. an enemy Plane came along but was driven off by our planes. At 5 p.m. we moved off again and marched to Khalassa reaching there at 10.30 p.m. and camped. At 2 p.m. the following day the enemy plane again endeavoured to fly over our lines but was*

*attacked by two of our Bristol Fighters and much to our satisfaction they succeeded in shooting her down with their machine guns.*

*At 5 p.m. we were off again and marched all night and on until 9 a.m. next day when we halted in some broken country 4 ½ miles east of Beersheba. The previous instructions were that the mounted troops were to attack Beer-sheeba at 10 a.m. and we all quite expected to do so as the infantry were due to attack on the other portions of their line at that time, but 10 a.m. came and went and nothing doing, everyone wondered what could have gone wrong. Had the Infantry failed or had the attack only been postponed for a few hours.*

*Our Brigade was in reserve and we knew that if any hot job happened along, we would get it. At 4 p.m. orders came to mount, and we marched along to within 3 miles of the town until we could go no further without being in full view, then we got the shock of our lives, the order came back "All pack horses, excepting Hotchkiss rifle packs, fall out and remain behind".*

*Then followed a few moments later the order,*

*"The 12th. & 4th. L.H. Regiments will charge Beersheeba on Horseback, the town is to be taken at all costs" and five minutes later we were on the way.*

*We trotted for the first 2 miles then the Turks opened fire on us from a line of redoubts about half a mile out from the town and we could hardly hear anything for the noise of their rifles and machine guns. As soon as their fire started we galloped, and you never heard such awful war yells as our boys let out, they never hesitated or faulted for a moment, it was grand.*

*Every now and again a rider would roll off or a horse fall shot but the line swept on. As we neared their trenches, our men were falling thicker and thicker and the pace became faster. 30 yards from their trenches were some old rifle pits and as soon as my eye lid on them I wheeled my horse round and yelled to the nearest men to jump off, let their horses go and get into the pits and open fire. Just previously I had seen Major Fetherstonhaugh's Horse go down killed, the Major get up and run for cover only to fall again shot through both legs. A few seconds afterwards a bullet hit me high up in the left buttock, just under the belt, lifting me clear off my horse and dropping me sprawling on a heap of dirt that had been thrown out of a rifle pit, and I rolled down into the pit and into safety.*

*But all this time, really only a few seconds, the charge went on, men raced their horses through and over the trenches and while some of us were still engaged in hand-to-hand fighting in the trenches, the remainder had charged through the town and went on to the high ground a mile beyond. The town was ours.*

*It is impossible to describe the charge, I was talking to a British Cavalry Officer in Hospital who had arrived 3 days previously from France, he went to France with the first batch of English Cavalry and had been there ever since, and he said "I have seen every action in which the British Cavalry have taken part, but the charge of the L.H. at Beersheeba yesterday, is the finest thing that I have ever seen mounted troops do." Our Brigadier received a wire from the G.O.C. congratulating him on the brilliant work his Brigade had done.*

*It is impossible to describe one's feelings, but for myself although it is the heaviest fire I have been under, I never felt less afraid, and I was terribly disappointed in being shot before reaching the town.*

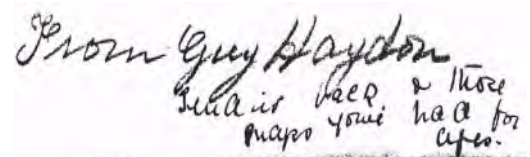
*We took 2,000 Prisoners and their trenches were full of dead. Two Regiments of the first Brigade also had a charge, but they were further round on our right and we didn't see them, anyway we had the town before they got there. I will give you my experiences from the time I was hit until my arrival here.*

*I lay in the hole for about 2 hours listening to poor devils groaning all round me, and then an M.O arrived with a lantern and some sandcarts, he planked the lamp down near me and the stretcher bearers brought in the wounded from all points of the compass to be dressed, after being dressed the worst cases were loaded into carts and sent off to the Ambulance, 4 of the poor chaps died there within a yard or two of me, but it did not worry me, I had got past worrying.*

*At last there was only me and 1 man left, and we had to lie there all night. One of the boys got me a blanket off a dead horse but it was terribly cold, and I shivered all night long and in the morning my wound was so stiff that I couldn't move. About 7 a.m. a sandcart arrived and I was taken to the Field Ambulance where my wound was carefully dressed, then, we went per car to Beersheba then on to the rail head to a big casualty clearing station, where we spent the night. At 9 a.m. we were loaded onto the Hospital Train and reached El-Arish about 2.30 p.m. that afternoon. We spent the night there and left the next day at 12 a.m. for Kantara which we reached about dusk. The next day at about 11 a.m. we boarded the train for Cairo and finally reached the 14<sup>th</sup> A.G.H. (The best spot on this side of the water). At 4 p.m. today I was X rayed and the bullet was located about half way up my back and about an inch to the left of my spine, it must have hit a bone and turned at right angles, otherwise it must have gone right through my belly a wonderful streak of luck, am not suffering much pain and don't know when they will operate on me, but hope it will be soon as I don't want to be stuck in here any longer than I can help.*

*I can't get any correct estimate of the killed and wounded in the 12<sup>th</sup> yet but may hear in time to put it in this letter yet.*

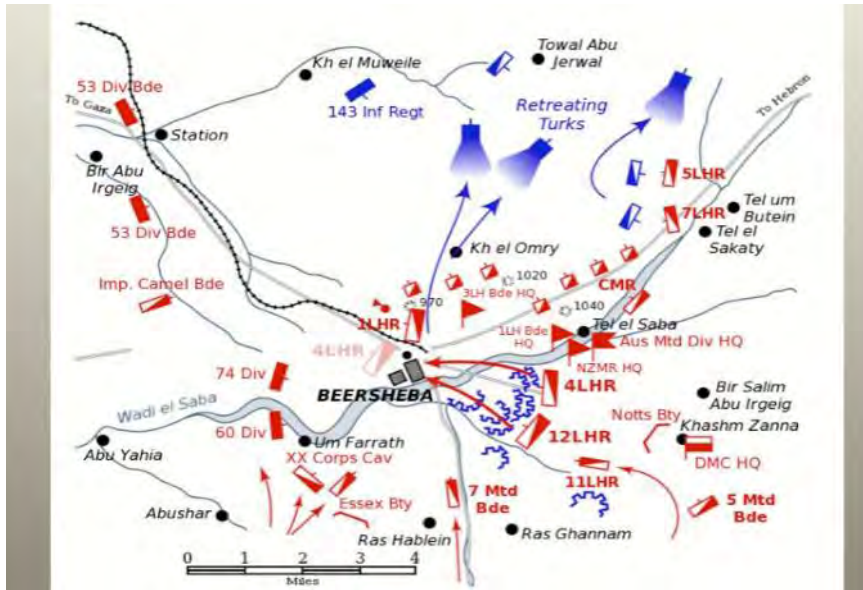
*LATER. Was operated on the day before yesterday and bullet removed, am sending you the bullet for a Christmas Present by the same Officer who takes this letter. Am having very little trouble with my wound except at night when it aches a lot, but it is nothing to what some of the poor devils must suffer. Poor old Nearguard was killed, I was awfully sorry about him, he was such a good Soldier, fearless. Roy Whiteman and Maclean both have commissions. Roy did splendidly, so well in fact that he was paraded to the Divisional General Hodson and promoted on the field of battle. Major Fetherstonhaugh got a D.S.O. He is the bed opposite me. His wife nearly went mad when she heard about it. As far as can gather, there, there must have been about 27 12<sup>th</sup> L.H. killed in the charge and about 15 wounded. A very high percentage of Killed."*



*From Guy Hayden  
Send a beer & three  
maps your hat for  
aces.*

Guy later told his brother Barney that after he was knocked off his horse she came back and stood over him. He was worried she would get shot again so he a grabbed handful of dirt and threw it at her to get her to move out of the gunfire.

During the clean up after the battle, the Australians were amazed to find the sights on the Turkish rifles were still set at long distances. They had not dropped back their sights as the Australians got closer. The orders to wind down their sights could not keep up with the speed of the galloping horses. It meant the speed of the attack had got the Australians under the enemy fire. The bullets were landing behind them. The speed of the courageous, galloping horses had won the day. In Guy's words "they never hesitated or faulted for a moment, it was grand".



The attack on Beersheba showing where the 12th Light Horse charged across the trenches to capture the town.



Dead horses after the battle



Beersheba after the charge





**The horses getting a lifesaving drink at Beersheba after the charge**

In the Haydon Archives is a letter written by Captain Jack Davies of the 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse to his brother. He carried a sword was one of the first to enter the town. He describes how he was so lucky to be on the extreme left flank of the charge.....

“Providence guided me that day and I rode into the town as if I knew all the roads leading into it.....I’ve seen some surprised people, but those Turks were certainly not expecting us, not just then.....they got out in such a hurry that though they had the wells and the Railway Station and the approaches to the town mined, they forgot to let them off, or when they tried and they failed to explode properly they did not try again.”

He continues “I counted my little lot of prisoners and sent them away under escort (it was a beautiful moonlight night and I counted them like a lot of sheep with Marnie and Haft keeping tally. 647 and 38 officers was the number as well as I remember the odd figures - the other right (4th Light Horse got 350 odd more and we collected about 30 strays during the night).....He mentions the commendations.....Colonel Cameron (long on from Rouchel) got a D.S.O, Featherstonhaugh and Hyman a D.S.O each. Robey and myself an M.C, three D.C.M.s and 5 MM's. Grant our Brigadier got a bar to his D.S.O. Bouchier of the 4th a D.S.O., one of his Majors a D.S.O. and two Captains M. C's, 2 D.C.M.s and 4 Military medals. Not bad going for an hour's job, more especially as Allenby personally gave Grant his bar next day and gave his orders for the immediate decoration of us other lessor lights. They were all though inside four days i.e. by the 5th November. I was jolly pleased that Featherstonhaugh got a D.S.O., because he thoroughly deserved a recognition for the splendid cool way he deployed the Squadron in action, when his horse was wounded the first thing he did was shoot his horse out of pain, shortly after he was hit through both legs...he's a great old bird....when General Hodgen was giving out the ribbons he made a general speech to us all. When he came along to me he said “Captain Davies has done excellent work. I hope soon to have the pleasure of pinning a D.S.O. along side that.” And he tapped the M.C. he had just put on. Well I don't mind taking one you know, but I am not anxious to be winning one again.”



**Turkish prisoners at Beersheba**

## Chapter 11 The Bullet



The bullet removed from Guy Haydon's back - taken at the Bloomfield Archives

The bullet is still in the Archive Room at Bloomfield after Guy sent it home to his parents as a Christmas present. It is still in its Queen Mary Christmas container. It was a memento of his close shave with death.

When examined the point of the bullet is still sharp and intact as if it had not hit any solid object on its way through. It passed through Midnight's stomach killing her. It then passed through the back of the saddle, and then the saddle roll, through Guy's left buttocks lodging in the flesh next to his spine. Another inch and he would not have made it. The mare had saved his life absorbing the initial point blank shock of the bullet.

Guy was left lying in agony in the pit with the bullet wound in his back. There was carnage all round him. Four of his mates died right next to him. He humbly accounts that there were others worse off than him, given the groans of agony he could hear. His beloved mare was lying dead just near the pit. It was a long freezing painful night. The longest in his life.

Major Featherstonehaugh writes "Guy would not allow them to take him in that night as there were others he considered worse cases than him, so he stayed out all night.....you will all be very proud of your gallant, self-sacrificing son. God bless him for staying out all night so that other cases could be attended to.....he deserves a decoration."

On the fifth night Guy finally arrived at the hospital in Cairo. This was after travelling by car to the casualty clearing station at Beersheba. They had captured the train so they were then transported by rail to El Arish, then to Kantara, finally getting the train to Cairo.

In Cairo, they operated to remove the bullet. They were surprised to find the point of the bullet was still sharp and intact. It had not hit anything hard to blunten the point. The bullet had lodged just a hairs distance from his spine. It was fortunate that it was the early days of X-rays and they could locate the bullet and remove it. A fraction further and he would have died along with his gallant mare. She had miraculously saved his life but his war was over.

Three days after removing the bullet they had to operate again to drain the septic wound and insert a tube to drain the puss out. This was before antibiotics were available to stop the infection. He had very high temperatures above 103 and was in a very serious condition for another two days fighting for his life. The cut in his back was 6" long and 2 ½" deep. Another was 3" deep and 2 ½" deep and would take a long time to heal, requiring six weeks in bed.

He was sent back to Sydney for further treatment arriving on 31 January 1918 three months after the charge. Infections would be a problem for the rest of his life, he had a hole in his back you could fit a fist in.



**Guy in hospital**



**"Midnight's Last Charge"**

**Painting of Guy and Midnight jumping the trench by Jennifer Marshall**

**"Midnight's Last Charge"**  
78.5 X 60 cm Original Pastel on Matt board by Jennifer Marshall

Lieutenant Guy Haydon and his magnificent black mare Midnight, came from the property "Bloomfield" in the Hunter Valley NSW, and joined the 12th Light Horse Regiment in 1915. While the Australian Light Horse were training in the Egyptian desert, they were chosen to represent Australia against the British in a friendly equestrian competition and the "Bloomfield Mare" won the Sprint Race, Flag Race and Equitation Test.

Guy Haydon was parted from his beloved black mare when he was sent to fight at Gallipoli. When he returned to Egypt he was allocated another horse. But no horse could replace Midnight, and he searched for weeks amongst the thousands of army horses, until he found her allocated to another Regiment. Negotiations between the Commanding Officers of both regiments to swap horses, soon reunited Lieutenant Haydon and Midnight. During the failed second battle for Gaza, Midnight remained continuously under saddle for seven days. A testament to the endurance and stamina of this wonderful horse, as well as to the care she received from Haydon.

Lieutenant Guy Haydon and Midnight served together until sunset on the 31st of October 1917, when the 4th and 12th Regiments of Australian Light Horse charged the Turkish stronghold of Beersheba. Lieutenant Haydon led his men riding Midnight, and was one of the first to reach the Turkish trenches outside the town. As Midnight leaped the trench a Turkish bullet passed up through her body, through the saddle and up into her rider's body where it lodged in his back beside his spine. Midnight was mortally wounded but while Lieutenant Guy Haydon survived, he was incapacitated and returned to Australia. He died some years later, his life tragically shortened by his injuries.

Jennifer grew up in country New South Wales where she developed a great love and appreciation of the Australian bush and rural life. She was within the top 10 art students in the 1973 New South Wales Higher School Certificate, but chose to do a Dip.Ed. in General Primary Teaching at Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education in Lismore, (now the Southern Cross University) rather than go to Art School in Sydney. Jennifer was accepted as a "Master Pastellist" by the Pastel Society of Australia in 1994, and in that year and in 1995 she tutored pastel classes at James Cook University.



**Photo of one  
of the wells**



**Watering the horses at Beersheba**

### **The Wells of Beersheba**

Emu Plumes on a felt slouch hat and a rifle 'cross their back  
Eight hundred Aussie horsemen, many learnt to ride outback.  
They swept towards the Turkish lines across the Sinai sand  
To Beersheba, where the Turkish troops did elect to make their stand.  
It was the secret to this desert war, the only water to be found  
And five thousand British troops had failed to take the town.  
These Australian Light horsemen had a commander named Chauvel  
Whose orders were impossible, they were, to take the well.  
Six thousand yards to the Turkish line must these gallant horsemen ride  
At full gallop they must go till they reach the Turkish side.  
Artillery shells flew overhead, as across the sand they raced  
Not fast enough were the Turkish guns to check their lightning pace.  
As they cleared the Turkish trenches, machine gun bullets filled the air  
But they sped on to Beersheba with the Turks now in despair.  
With bayonets drawn, they charged the town, they were a fearsome sight  
But they had fulfilled their orders, they took the town by night.  
And forty gallant horsemen paid the ultimate price to see  
The fulfilment of God's prophecy, to set Jerusalem free.

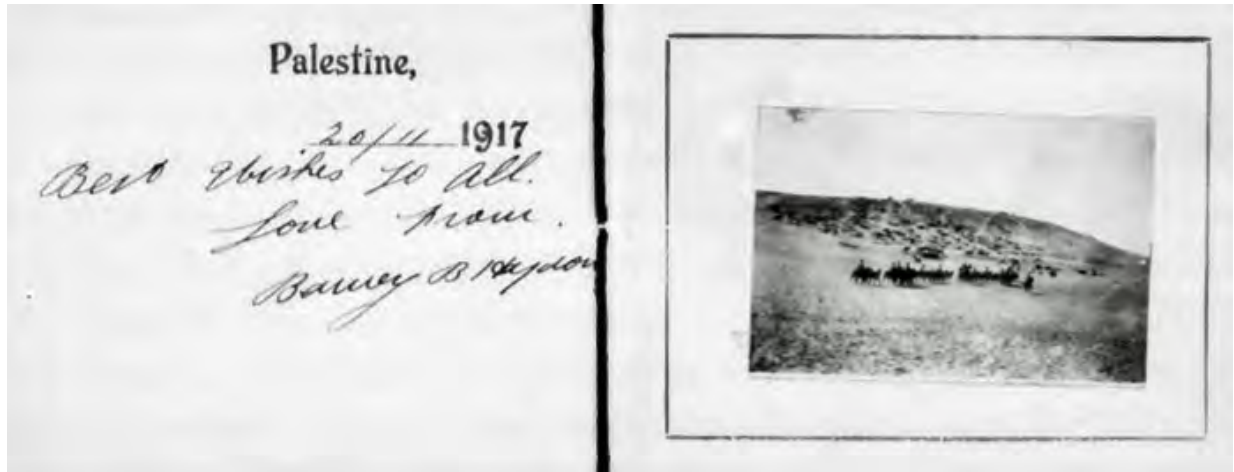
By Warren Eggleton, July 1998

General Allenby addressed the troops a few days later with these memorable words;

**“You did something that teachers of military history say could not be done. You galloped over strongly defended positions and demoralised the enemy. He’s finished. His cavalry will never face you again. You have put new life into my army and you rank with the finest cavalry the British Army has ever had”**



**Buildings at Beersheba including the railway station and bakehouse**



Barney's Christmas Card he sent home



Abraham's well as it is today in Beersheba



## Chapter 12 The Road to Damascus

The Australian Walers were the envy of the entire cavalry world.

An account by an English cavalryman paid this tribute to them:

"They had covered 170 miles since the 29th October and the horses had been watered on an average of once in every 36 hours, the heat had been intense, their ration was 9 1/2 lbs of grain per day without any bulk food. Indeed the hardships endured by these horses were almost incredible. On one occasion they had only had water three times in nine days, at intervals of 68, 72 and 76 hours respectively. They carried on average 12 stone of soldier, another 9 1/2 stone for saddle, ammunition, sword, rifle and clothes, totalling 21 stone. They carried this all day every day for 17 days, on half rations and only one drink in every 36 hours. It is no doubt these Australian horses make the finest cavalry mounts in the world".

Ion Idriess was there and witnessed the charge giving this firsthand account in his book the "The Desert Column". "All the Turkish guns around Beersheba must have been directed at them. Captured Turkish and German Officers have told us that even they never dreamed that mounted troops would be madmen enough to attempt rushing infantry redoubts protected by machine guns and artillery. At a mile distance their thousand hooves were stuttering thunder, coming at a rate that frightened a man—they were an awe-inspiring sight—horse after horse crashed, but the massed squadrons thundered on—a heart-throbbing sight—the horses leaping the redoubt trenches as the Turks thrust up at their bellies—whirlwind of movements—dense dust as troops poured into the town.....Beersheba had fallen".

The battle had been won by the ferocity and courage of the Australians. Often termed "insanely courageous". It had weakened the Turkish defences so they could push onwards to take Gaza. The Australians then rode onto Bethlehem where they watered their horses at Solomon's Pools. Their reputation now preceded them as a fearless fighting force. They rode through Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley as the Turks retreated, which become to be known as "The Great Ride".



Light Horse Stature in Beersheba

Barney had a lot of close shaves but luck seemed always on his side. One of the closest was when he was looking through a metal hole out from a trench. He turned away to speak to someone just as a bullet flew through the hole. His number was not up yet. He often wrote on the top of his letters home “The Promised Land” or “Dinkum Desert” and always maintained the sense of humour he was known for.

The Light Horse pushed onto Damascus being the first to enter and capture the city. Apparently, this honour was to be bestowed upon Lawrence of Arabia to triumphantly claim the city but the Arabs held back until it had been firstly secured by the Australian Light Horse. As they rode past the Hall of Government, Major Olden dismounted, entered the hall and received the official surrender of Damascus from the Governor on behalf of the British Army.

They were the “First to Damascus”.

As it turned out the decision to hand Damascus over to the Arabs was an unmitigated disaster with looting and their inability to operate things like the hospital, water and with all other infrastructure failing to function.

They had pushed the Turks right back to near their border when the war ended on 31 October 1918 exactly one year after their Beersheba charge. They had reached Homs and there was now no need to continue onto Aleppo.

They had saved the Suez Canal and had overseen the defeat of the Ottoman Empire. The boundaries were redrawn and the modern state of Israel formed. All such significant events in historical terms.



**General Allenby oversaw the Egyptian Expeditionary Force**



Grass...the horses grazing by the Jordon River



## Chapter 13 The Last Ride

Barney and Max tired, battle weary and with exhausted horses were glad to hear the news of the armistice. The war was won and over. Polo and Fred were there at the start and they were there at the end, a remarkable achievement. They had the unique distinction of completing the entire Desert Campaign. The Tester genes had done them proud.

The official Government policy was that their horses could not return with them back to Australia and were to be sold to the local people. The horses had to be handed into the Remount Depot. The soldiers had witnessed firsthand the ill treatment of horses throughout their long journeys in this harsh foreign land and there was no way they would leave their beloved animals to be subjected to such a life.

They took an unofficial “one last ride” with their horse, returning to the depot with only their saddle and bridle to hand back in. It was one of the toughest things they had to do. To say goodbye to their horse with tears in their eyes and a pistol in their hand.

The poem “**The Horses Stayed Behind**” epitomises the men’s feelings;

“I don’t think I could stand the thought of my old fancy hack,  
Just crawling round old Cairo with a Gypo on his back.....

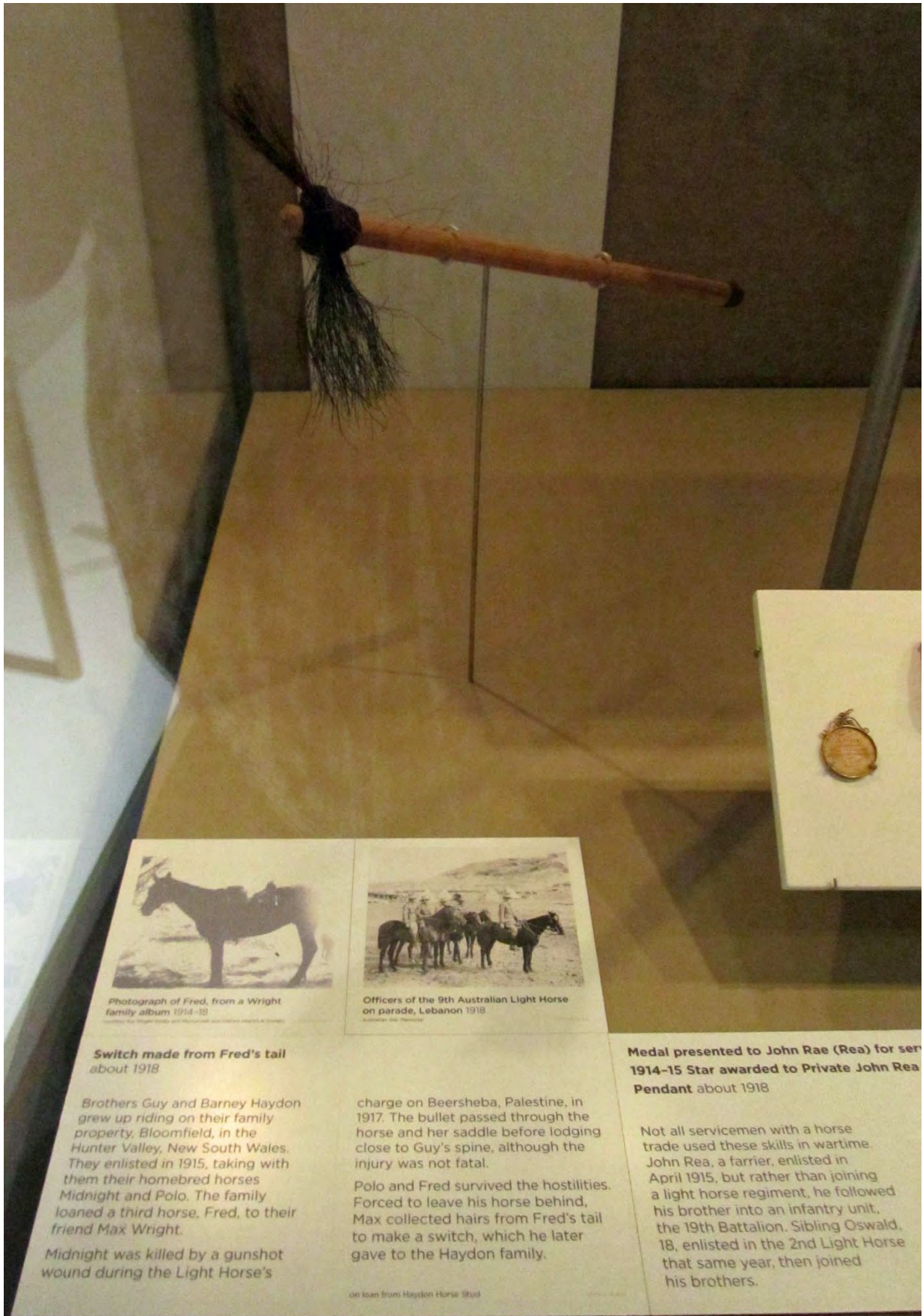
No, I think I’d better shoot him and tell a little lie,  
He floundered in a wombat hole and then lay down to die,  
Maybe I’ll get court-martialled, but I’m dammed if I’m inclined  
To go back to Australia and leave my horse behind.”

Many others had expressed their views and the war was well documented with soldiers keeping diaries, including that of one trooper Ion Idriess. Banjo Patterson at 51 years of age joined the remount unit in charge of training the horses and kept his writing going throughout the campaign.

Max collected a piece of Fred’s tail and put it in his bedroll. When he finally returned home he mounted the switch of hair with leather on a short piece of cane and presented it to his long time friend and neighbour Fred Haydon, in memory of his courageous horse by Tester. Max Wright had a distinguished war. He was Mentioned in Dispatches by General Allenby on 16 January 1918, awarded the Order of the Nile on 28 February 1918 and the Military Cross on 3 June 1919.



Fred's tail hair switch



Photograph of Fred, from a Wright family album 1914-18



Officers of the 9th Australian Light Horse on parade, Lebanon 1918

**Switch made from Fred's tail about 1918**

Brothers Guy and Barney Haydon grew up riding on their family property, Bloomfield, in the Hunter Valley, New South Wales. They enlisted in 1915, taking with them their homebred horses Midnight and Polo. The family loaned a third horse, Fred, to their friend Max Wright.

Midnight was killed by a gunshot wound during the Light Horse's

charge on Beersheba, Palestine, in 1917. The bullet passed through the horse and her saddle before lodging close to Guy's spine, although the injury was not fatal.

Polo and Fred survived the hostilities. Forced to leave his horse behind, Max collected hairs from Fred's tail to make a switch, which he later gave to the Haydon family.

on loan from Haydon Horse Stud



**Medal presented to John Rae (Rea) for service 1914-15 Star awarded to Private John Rea Pendant about 1918**

Not all servicemen with a horse trade used these skills in wartime. John Rea, a farrier, enlisted in April 1915, but rather than joining a light horse regiment, he followed his brother into an infantry unit, the 19th Battalion. Sibling Oswald, 18, enlisted in the 2nd Light Horse that same year, then joined his brothers.

Fred's switch on display at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra

reach should to keep their length. Very  
 hot & muggy down here 1200 feet  
 below sea level & we hope to be  
 relieved by men more suited for the con-  
 ditions. - Good luck Made & kindest  
 regards to everybody at Bloomfield  
 Yrs sincerely  
Max Wright

P.S. old Fred still going strong & one of the best of the best. (M.W.)

Two of Max Wright's letters to Bloomfield mentioning his beloved mount, Fred. PS "Fred still going strong & one of the best" and "Old Fred still on his feet & looks well. I ride him everywhere."

kindest regards to everybody  
 at Bloomfield -  
 And thanking you for Xmas  
 parcels.  
 Yrs sincerely  
Max Wright

Old Fred "is still on his feet  
 & looks well. I ride him  
 everywhere - (M.W.)

Barney now war hardened was very upset to take his last ride on Polo. They thought they would proudly ride their beloved horses down the main streets of their hometowns when welcomed home. However, this was not to be, and they felt badly betrayed.

After the Turks surrendered, he then went with the 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse when they were called back to operational duty to quell the Egyptian revolt, which was restored in little over a month. On 19 July 1919 he returned to Australia with his brother in law Cyril Regg.

Together Fred and Polo, these two geldings by Tester and bred at Bloomfield, had survived the entire Middle East campaign. An incredible achievement.

Of the 136,000 horses taken over only one came home. Major General Sir William Bridges was killed at Gallipoli and his horse Sandy, after three months of quarantine in England was shipped back to Australia. He saw out the rest of his days grazing at the Central Remount Depot at Maribyrnong in Victoria.



**Sandy the only horse to be returned to Australia**



**Memorial at Port Said and Albany**



**The Sculpture in Tamworth**



## Chapter 14 Life Back Home



Beersheba today in the far background showing the country where the Light Horse made their charge.

Life would never be the same for Guy. He needed a long period of convalescence to recover from the bullet wound and time off from working. He and Bonnie had another daughter Isabelle and son John, who went on to fight with distinction in WW2.

They both helped in raising money for the Patriotic Fund and Guy was appointed to the local committee advising the government on settling returned servicemen on the land.

He gradually recovered and continued life as a grazier living at Warrah Ridge on the Liverpool plans. It is a magnificent piece of country with their house on the ridge with sweeping views out across the plain. Rated as some of the best farming country in the world it was also good for fattening stock.





**Guy at the 12th L H reunion in Sydney in 1926, sitting on the front left table five positions around to the left.**

He was heavily involved in the community being a councillor on the Tamarang Shire, a director of the Tamworth Pasture Protection Board and a member of the Local Land Board. He judged at many shows and Bushmen's Carnivals and passed on a lot of his horse knowledge as a strong supporter of the pony club.

In 1956 Guy and Bonnie went on an extensive tour of British Isles and Europe. During the 1960's his health began to fail and he died on 1 August 1965 aged seventy-six. His ashes were spread out across the plain.

Barney went onto be one of Australia's leading horse judges officiating for many years at the Sydney Royal Easter Show and numerous other venues around the country. He lived at Greeneyes in Murrurundi working the country he had at Scotts Creek and Warrah Ridge. He married Ethel Cobb from Ellerston whose brother Hunter Cobb served with him during the war. They had no children. He had a great sense of humour and was always the life of the party. He stayed on in Egypt after the war in a peacekeeping force. His nephew Jim Haydon purchased his Scotts Creek country, which the family still owns. He died on 29 April 1978 aged 84.

The wider Haydon Family had an incredible thirteen of its sons serve in WW1, with Stuart being killed in the Gallipoli landing.





## Chapter 15 Midnight's Legacy

The horses today at Haydon Horse Stud have the unique direct recorded line back to the horses at Beersheba and in the Light Horse. Midnight's family lives on through the Stud's renowned Thora Family. As well most of the horses today are descendants of Tester mares. Ten generations later her family is going as strong as ever, being one of the most sought after families in the studbook. They are still used to do the stock work around the property and are competing in events all round Australia and the world. They are playing polo overseas and a son is standing at stud in America. Haydon Nightwatch was a successful sire for the Stud. In 2009 Peter Haydon rode a descendent Haydon Celestial, leading the Scone Horse Festival Parade as the Festival VIP.



**Peter Haydon Scone Horse Festival VIP in 2009 riding Haydon Celestial in the parade. A descendant of Midnight's family**

The family's fine horsemanship tradition continues to flourish.

Guy's daughter, Isabelle's (Tink Haydon's) son Guy Haydon Walter was one of Australia's leading racehorse trainers, winning all before him with the champion Tie The Knot. On one occasion, he trained the first three horses' home in the Doncaster at Randwick. He trained 36 Group 1 winners and over 120 stakes winners.

Guy's sister Pearl's daughter Judy Mackay was an internationally recognised dressage rider and was the first ever outside woman to be invited to ride at the Spanish riding school.

Guy's older brother Fred was affectionately known as "The Father" of the northern bushman carnivals" which have grown into such major campdrafting and rodeo events now throughout Australia. His two sons, Hilton and Jim were very accomplished horseman. Jim's son Peter continues the Stud on today, as one of the oldest continuous family horse studs in the world. In 1989 he was appointed to manage the polo stables at Windsor Castle for HRH The Prince of Wales. In 2009 he was the Scone Horse Festival VIP. The stud bred Hall of Fame mare Haydon Angel Jewel, who traces back to the Tester mare Bangle and was by Australian Champion Three Year Old Drawn. She is the only horse to have ever won every major polo tournament in the world and was played by the world's best player Adolfo Cambiaso. She played in Australia, England, Spain, America and in Argentina won the prestigious Triple Crown. In 2017 she was inducted into the ASHS Hall of Fame.

Peter and Alison's sons Henry, Nick and David all ride and play polo. Their grandchildren represent the seventh generation of Bloomfield riders.



**David Haydon riding leading stallion Haydon Nightwatch at  
Ellerston**

Horses from the stud are still used by the modern day Light Horse for exhibitions and ceremonial parades, especially on the official Beersheba Day the 31 October each year.



**Haydon Bandanna on  
parade carries the  
flag**



**Haydon Sun Charm in  
complete Light Horse  
gear**



**The modern day Waler-Haydon Bandanna in 2010**



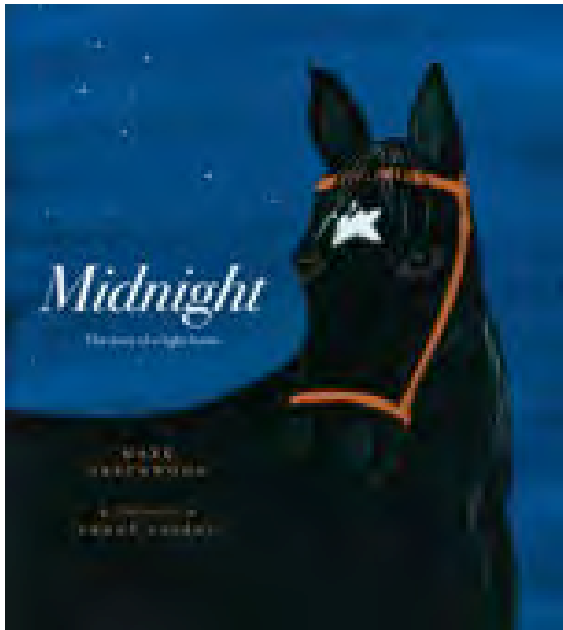
**Haydon Warhorse 2014 – born with the identical markings to his descendant Midnight**

On 5 September 2014 Haydon Moonstruck from Midnight's Thora family foaled a colt who was born with the identical markings as Midnight..... "On her forehead was a small white star and she had a distinctive white triangular peak on the front of her near hind coronet, standing all alone". A horse that has white markings on its feet normally has the white going all the way around so it is very rare to have just this isolated triangle of white just above the coronet, standing alone in the front of the foot. When Haydon Warhorse was branded as a yearling he was given Midnight's Haydon brand on the near shoulder but by a totally random twist of fate he was branded 12/4 on the off shoulder. The 12 being for the 12<sup>th</sup> horse branded for those born in 2014, while the 4 represents the year he was born.

This meant not only did he have the identical markings of Midnight he was branded 12/4 and it was the 12<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiments that charged Beersheba! So, he is now officially registered as Haydon Warhorse and will see out his days here being used for station work, polo and Light Horse parades.

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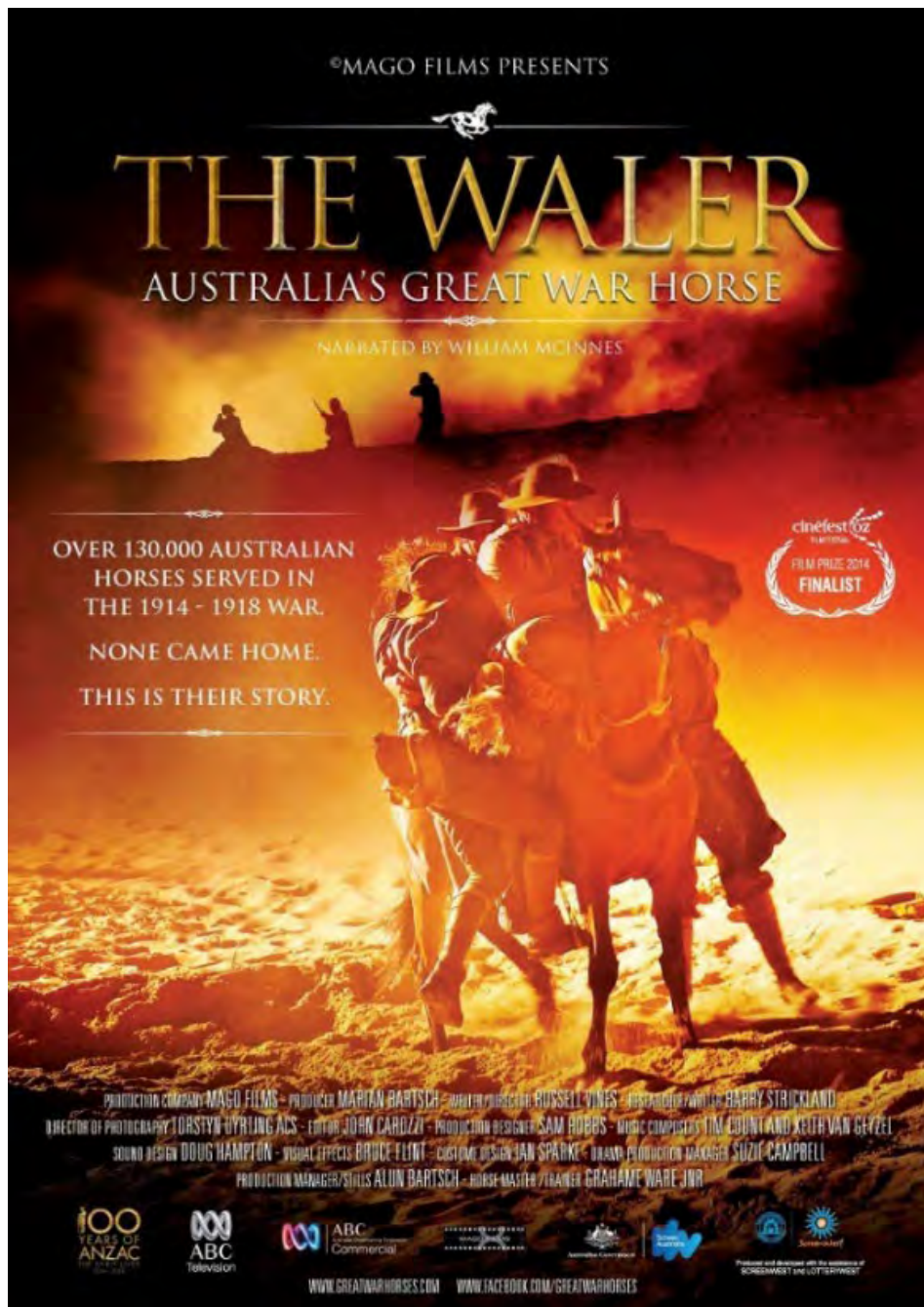


The story of Guy Haydon and Midnight has been made into an award winning children's book by Mark Greenwood and illustrated by Frane Lessac. It is called "Midnight - The story of a light horse" a very popular book, which has also been released in America.



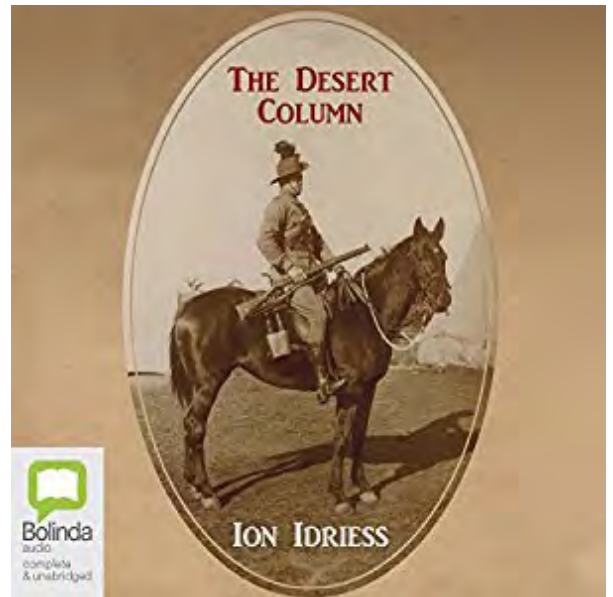
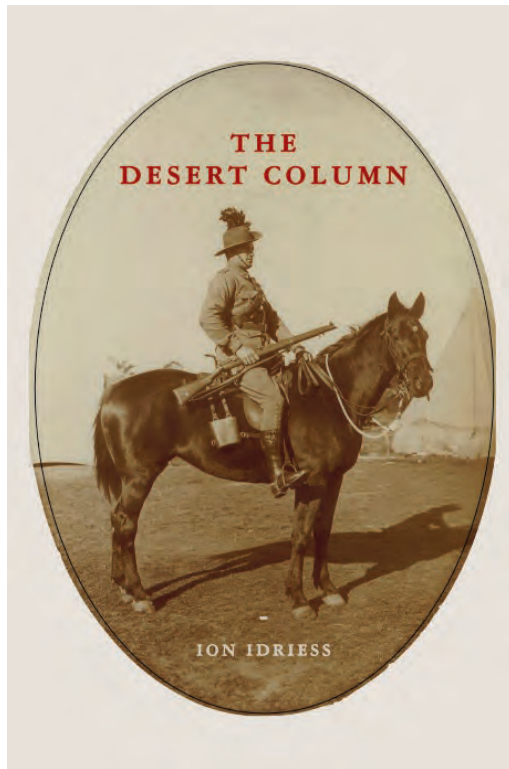
**Peter Haydon on Haydon Secret Night a descendant of Midnight's family and her sire Tester with Kevin Taylor on his book "lookalike" Midnight at the Scone Horse Festival Parade 2014.**

Mago Films have produced the very successful documentary for the ABC called “The Waler-Australia’s Great War Horse”, which includes the Midnight story. It was a finalist in the 2014 Busselton Film Awards, see photos below.

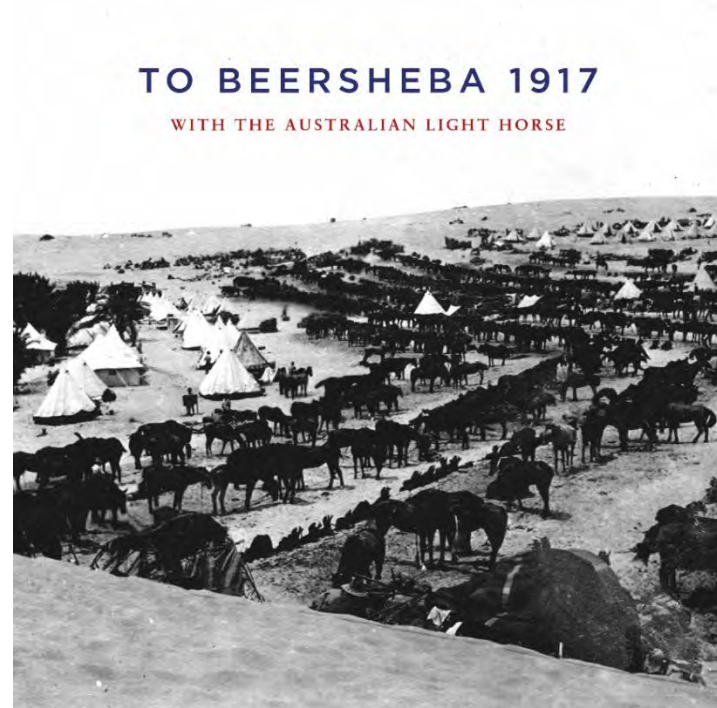




Tom Thompson has used the famous photo of Guy on Midnight on the cover of the re-launched Ion Idriess book “The Desert Column” and it’s accompanied audio version.



Tom also collected over 800 of Guy and Barney’s photos from the Bloomfield Archives and painstakingly scanned them. He used a selection of these photos to produce his book “To Beersheba 1917” for the 100 Years Anniversary in 2017. In 2020 he published a colourised edition.





Peter Haydon holding the bullet

# The Scone Advocate

Serving the people of the Upper Hunter since 1887

Thursday, April 23, 2015 www.sconeadvocate.com.au

## ‘Waler’ from local stable

By Cathlin Andrews

THEY often say a dog is a man's best friend, but when it comes to the Battle of Beersheba and those long days and nights on the Sinai Desert, one would definitely argue that a horse is a man's best friend.

Stories from those 36 hour spells without water where many horses perished, when the horses carried on average 12 stone of soldier plus saddle, ammunition, sword, rifle and clothes covering more than 170 miles with rations of grain, will be told in Scone tomorrow evening.

The story will capture the real life involvement of local horse 'Midnight' and local man Guy Haydon in the Battle of Beersheba, as seen on the Australian documentary 'The Waler - Australia's Great War Horse' and illustrated in an award winning children's book 'Midnight', written by Mark Greenwood and illustrated by Franc Lescaac.

The great mare 'Midnight' was bred at the home of the Haydon family - 'Bloomfield' which has been in the family since 1882 and is now operated by Guy Haydon's great nephew Peter who will use horses from the Thora Family, 'Midnight's' bloodline.

'The Waler - Australia's Greatest War Horse' was shown on ABC on Sunday night and will be screened by Scone Films tomorrow evening, when Peter Haydon will be on hand to answer questions and share his family's history.

Mr Haydon will also showcase the bullet which killed 'Midnight' when it passed through her stomach, then passing through the back of the saddle, saddle roll and through Guy's left buttocks lodging just next to his spine.

Once the bullet was removed in hospital, Guy sent it home to his parents and it still remains in the family archive at 'Bloomfield'.

A very talented horseman, Guy Haydon was 25-years-old when he

TESTER

HERITAGE: Bloomfield's 'Bloomfield' owner Peter Haydon with 'Haydon Secret Night', a four-year-old mare that is a double cross of the 'Thora' family standing in the original stable of the champion sire 'Tester'. Peter is the great nephew of Guy Haydon who took 'Midnight' - the progeny of 'Tester' and from the 'Thora' family to the Battle of Beersheba.

Scone tomorrow evening.

The film was the only documentary short listed in the Busselton Australian Film Awards last year, and parts of it were shot at 'Bloomfield' and the Haydon's Scotts Creek properties.

Mr Haydon said from all accounts 'Midnight' was a pretty special mare, the sort of mare you'd love to have today.

"We still have those same bloodlines today as we have 10 generations of the mare lines that have bred right through."

Mr Haydon encouraged people to go along to the event tomorrow and learn all about the local involvement.

For details on the Scone Films screening turn to page 11

## Chapter 16 Centenary Commemorations 2017

Extensive centenary commemorations were undertaken around the country during 2017 to honour the 100 years of the famous Light Horse Charge. Below are some of these events that were held from on site at Be'er Sheba in Israel, to Sydney, local Murrurundi, Rouchel and Muswellbrook events and to the Jericho Cup race meeting in Warrnambool.

### The Be'er Sheba Centenary Commemorations

In Israel they hold the battle in very high esteem as it led to the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the eventual establishment of today's Israel.

On the exact day of the centenary the 31 October 2017 both Australian and Israeli Prime Minister's made moving speeches on site, at the Be'er Sheba commemorations. The Haydon Family felt very humbled to have mentions in the Prime Minister speech in paragraphs three and six as shown below.



Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull,  
31 October 2017 at Be'er Sheba Centenary



Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, 31  
October 2017 at Be'er Sheba Centenary

### SPEECH AT THE CENTENARY OF THE BATTLE OF BE'ER SHEBA COMMEMORATIONS BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA MALCOLM TURNBULL

**31 October 2017**

Extracts:

Well thank you very much and Bibi thank you so much for your warm address and your warm welcome. Thank you, joining us here with Sara and the Leaders of Israel. Thank you to the Governor- General of New Zealand representing our Kiwi brothers and sisters and of course, I'm here with Dan Tehan, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs.....

The Leaders of our three nations are here assembled and we are here assembled because we are

---

honoring an extraordinary battle, an extraordinary campaign, which made history, which fulfilled history.....

**“A tale of incredible courage, of men and horses. Horses that came, many of them, from a part of New South Wales that Lucy and I know very well; the Hunter Valley. Indeed the horses were called Walers, I think there's some of the Murrurundi team up there, I reckon. A few Haydons in the stands, I would say.”**

**“And then of course, Guy Haydon, who like so many of the young Australian bushmen, came with his own horse, Midnight, who was killed at the Battle of Beersheba, leaping over a Turkish trench. The Turk fired up through the horse, wounding and killing the horse, killing Midnight and wounding Guy.”**

A contingent of Australian riders attended and re-rode the Light Horse route as shown in the photo below.



**Australian riders at the Be'er Sheba centenary commemorations**



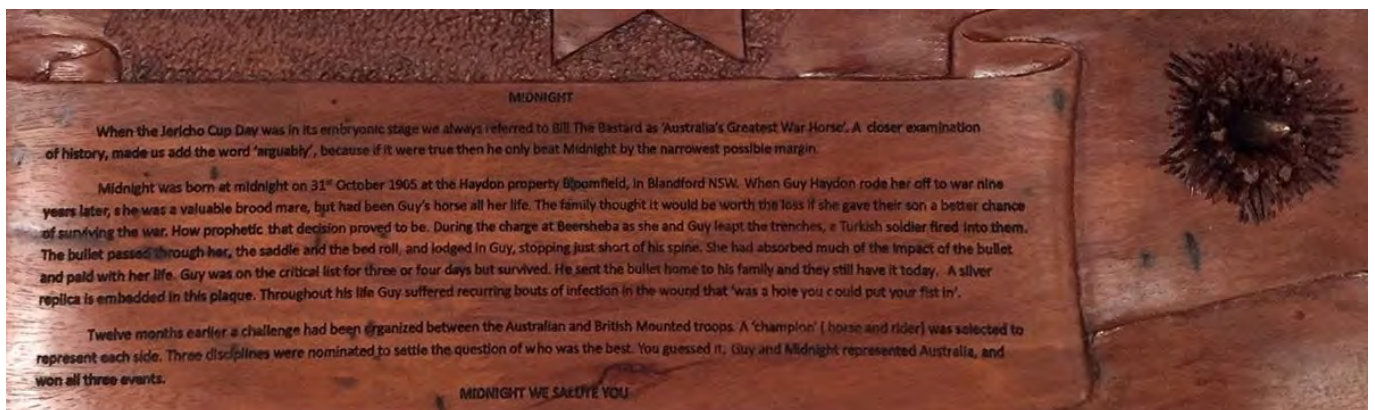
**A stone collected at the centenary site at Be'er Sheba. It was presented to the Haydon Family and is now in their Archives.**

# The Jericho Cup

In 2018 the first Jericho Cup was held at Warrnambool Racing Club, the mastermind of benefactor Bill Gibbins. At this monumental and highly successful race meeting, all races were named honouring the Light Horse men and their horses.



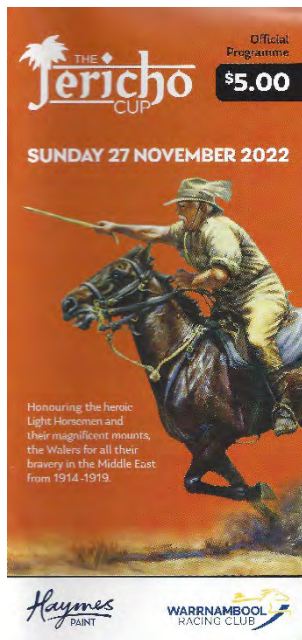
Peter Haydon attended this first meeting and presented the magnificent Midnight red gum Trophy and Portrait. Bill's attention to detail, can be seen on closer examination of the trophy below, as he especially got made a copy of the bullet which can be seen emerging from the wood in the bottom right corner.







Midnight Portrait Trophy



**The Jericho Cup Race book**

**The story of MIDNIGHT**

By Bill Gibbins

When Jericho Cup Day was in its embryonic stage, we always referred to Bill the Bastard as 'Australia's Greatest War Horse'. A closer examination of history made us add the word 'arguably', because if it was true, then Bill only beat Midnight by the narrowest possible margin.

Born at midnight on October 31, 1905 at the Haydon property at Blandford NSW, Midnight and Guy Haydon rode off to war nine years later. Midnight was a valuable brood mare, but she had been Guy's horse all her life. The Haydon family thought it would be worth the loss of her if she gave their son a better chance of surviving the war. How prophetic that decision was to be.

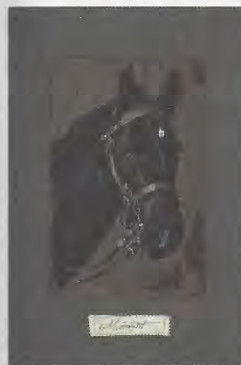
During the Charge at Beersheba as Midnight and Guy went over the trenches, a Turkish soldier fired into her. The bullet passed through her, the saddle and into Guy, stopping just short of his spine. Midnight had absorbed much of the impact of the bullet and paid with her life.

Guy was on the critical list for three or four days but survived. He sent the bullet home to his family and they still have it today. A silver replica of the bullet is embedded in the plaque that is being presented today. Throughout his life Guy suffered recurring bouts of infection in the wound that 'was a hole you could put your fist in'.

Turns out twelve months earlier a challenge had been organised between the Australian and British Mounted troops. A 'champion' was selected to represent each side. Three disciplines were nominated to settle the question of who was the best. You guessed it, Guy and Midnight represented Australia, and won all three events.

*Midnight, we salute you.*

**MIDNIGHT MADNESS FILLIES & MARES BM70**



Midnight Madness print and plaque, presented to winning owners.



Two 1oz silver coins within the plaque, one stating "Many never Returned." the other, "We will Remember them". Also includes a silver replica of the original bullet that killed Midnight.



Peter Haydon and Bill Gibbons with the Midnight Trophies at the Jericho Cup. The Sign is made of local hand crafted poppies organised by Warrnambool stalwart Marg Lucas

## The Murrurundi Events

Guy Haydon's hometown Murrurundi still has its local 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment which does the annual national Beersheba Day of Remembrance and ANZAC ceremonial parades as well as competition days. Below is a listing of the events held for the 100 Years.



### 100 Years of Beersheba

Saturday & Sunday 28 - 29 October 2017  
at Murrurundi, NSW



#### Events:

- 12<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Ceremonial Parade-Murrurundi Oval Saturday 28 October 11 - 12 am
- Followed by Lunch at Bowling Club, display, 3 pm showing The Waler movie
- Exhibition - Historical Society & Museum Hall commencing 28 October 2017
- Midnight book stand with author Mark Greenwood-RSL Hall 10am-4pm
- Frane Lessac original Midnight Book Paintings-RSL Hall 10am-4pm
- Schools paintings inspired by the Midnight book-RSL Hall 10am-4pm
- The Waler Documentary showing White Hart Hotel-Big Screen by the River 7 pm Saturday 28 October
- Tom Thompson book stand with his new book "To Beersheba 1917" and "The Desert Column"-RSL Hall 10am-4pm





The local schools displayed their artwork in the Murrurundi RSL Hall based on the Midnight book written by Mark Greenwood and illustrated by Frane Lessac, pictured



Midnight book inspired paintings



## Muswellbrook Statue Unveiling

On the 31 October 2017 in Brook St, Muswellbrook the Shire unveiled their Beersheba Memorial in a special “Dedication of the Battle of Beersheba Memorial service.



## The ABC Landline Documentary: The Last Charge

The ABC in their search for authentic Walers found the Haydon horses today had a direct recorded heritage back to the horses in the Charge of Beersheba. A unique claim. The horses ridden today go back to Tester mares, the sire of Midnight. The Stud's horses are registered with the Australian Stock Horse Society which officially now records these horse's pedigrees. These descendants represent the "modern day Walers".

The ABC Landline crew filmed their documentary on site which was beautifully put together, including drone footage, and has become their benchmark programme shown every ANZAC day.



Warhorse being filmed. He is a direct descendant of Midnight's family and remarkably has identical markings to her. He was randomly branded 12/4. It was the 12<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> that charged Beersheba.



Peter with Tom Thompson looking at Guy's photos and the reconnaissance map he did prior to the charge.



Reporter Emma Brown meets some baby Walers



Peter being filmed with horses in the paddock



## The Australian Newspaper Feature

The Australian Newspaper did a feature front page story about the Midnight legacy.



When Peter and Ali Haydon bridle a horse in the corrugated iron stables of their sprawling property at Bloomfield in the upper Hunter Valley in NSW, they are handling direct descendants of Light Horse brigade animals that took part in the famous World War I charge at Beersheba on October 31, 1917

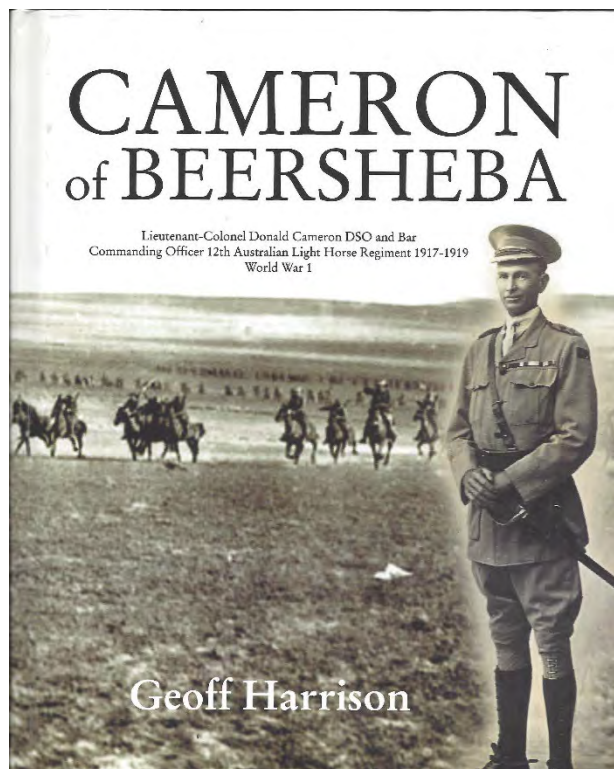
PHOTOGRAPHER: JOHN FEDER



## Cameron of Beersheba.

On the 31 October 2017 Peter Haydon attended a special Service of Remembrance held at the grave in Rouchel Cemetery in the Upper Hunter, of the Commanding Officer of the 12<sup>th</sup> Australian Light Horse Regiment, Lt Col Donald Cameron.

In the time honoured tradition, a saddled horse was paraded with the boots facing backwards. Geoff Harrison also produced his book Cameron of Beersheba.



## General Sir Harry Chauvel Foundation

Peter Haydon has joined the General Sir Harry Chauvel Foundation. Its aim is to promote, support and inspire service to the community by building public awareness of the attributes, dedication and accomplishments of the Australain Light Horse and their greatest commander.



## **Centenary of Light Horse Charge of Beersheba, ANZAC Memorial, Hyde Park Sydney.**

Peter Haydon's son Nicholas Haydon and his three daughters attended the centenary service at the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Park, Sydney.



**Nicholas Haydon with daughters Ruby, Issy and Lulu with their Midnight book, with National President AWW, Rhondda Vanzella**

## Chapter 17 Monuments

Many monuments recognising the historic feats of the Australian Light Horse have been created in many shapes and forms. Some of these are shown below:



The ANZAC Memorial, overlooking Gaza. The shape is supposed to represent a capital 'A' as well as a charging horse.



**Dirranbandi Memorial**





Caloundra RSL





**Silo Art**





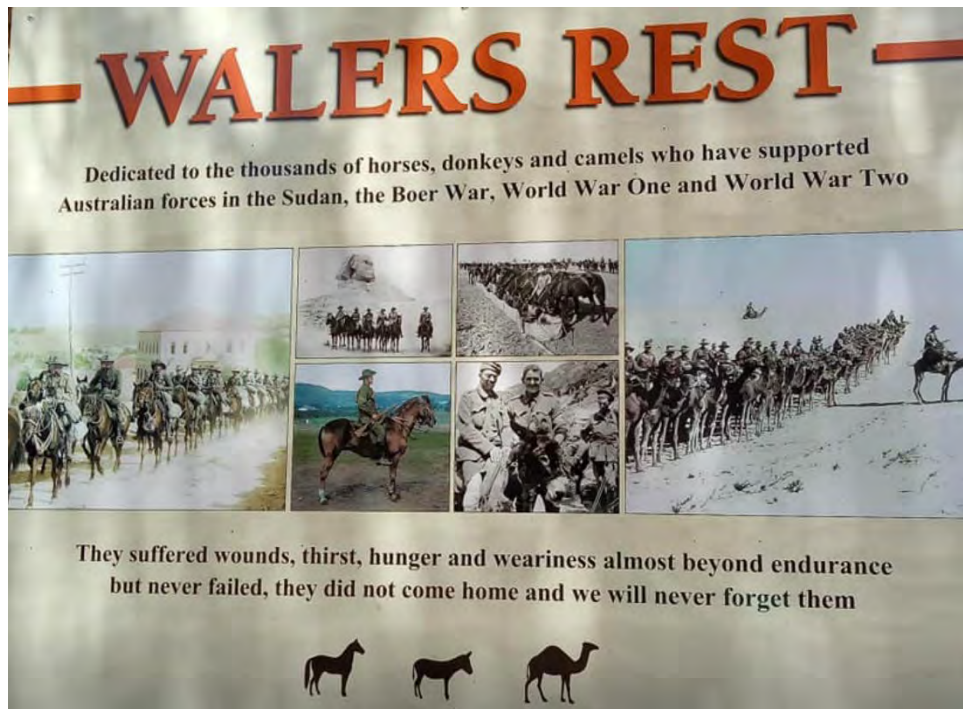
**Bill The Bastard, Harden, NSW**



**Newcastle, NSW**



**Warwick, Queensland**



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