



C.E.W.BEAN AT TUGGERANONG



War historian Charles Edwin Woodrow Bean and his secretarial staff occupied the 65 acre property, residing in the homestead and other cottages on the site from October 1919 until April 1925. The team of historians, draftsmen and secretaries recorded the Official History of Australia in the War of 1914 – 1918. In 1921 Bean and his associates built a cricket pitch (now the oldest concrete pitch in Canberra) and established the tradition of regular cricket and tennis matches at the Homestead. While living at Tuggeranong Charles Bean married Ethel Young, a nurse from Queanbeyan. He was transferred in 1925 to Victoria Barracks where he completed further volumes of the work over the ensuing decades.

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BACKGROUNDER # 60

C.E.W.BEAN AT TUGGERANONG

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BEAN at TUGGERANONG
Writing Australia's first official war
history
By Chris Coulthard-Clark

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the author.)

The legend of Anzac which occupies such an important place in the Australian sense of national identity was, in many ways, the creation of just one man: C E W Bean, the former Sydney journalist who edited and wrote much of the official history of Australia in the Great War of 1914-18. For such an exercise in 'making' history, naturally Bean needed the heroism and achievements of the men who served the Allied cause on the Gallipoli peninsula, in the Middle East and – most of all – on the central battlefields of France and Belgium. Nothing can diminish the great and enduring name which the Australian Imperial Force – the first AIF – forged for itself in the war. Nonetheless, the process of shaping the legend and giving it voice was carried on most notably by Bean. Not for nothing did Denis Winter, perhaps the most prominent scholar on Bean at present, give his recently-published volume of selected writings by Bean the title *Making the Legend* (University of Queensland Press, 1992).

We have cause to recall the team of historians who laboured under Bean's direction to produce the multi-volume work which recorded the deeds of the AIF and ensured that the years of the First World War – Australia's most searing experience of international conflict to date – did not fade from the national memory. In 1993 there is additional interest in this aspect, given a long-running local controversy about which the rest of the country has heard very little.

This concerns the fate of the farmhouse in the ACT where Bean and his team began their historic writing task, and the future uses to which this piece of national heritage might be put. The continued preservation of Tuggeranong homestead, once the focal point of a remote sheep station but now standing amid a carpet of urban development, is not really in question – despite years of government neglect which allowed the place to fall into partial disrepair.

The ACT government says it is now committed to ensuring the house is retained,

although the uses to which it will be put seem uncertain. Also at issue is the extent to which further development should be allowed to encroach on the environs of the homestead. Some of the options being canvassed have encountered concerted resistance from several community groups, including MOTH (Mindors of Tuggeranong Homestead).

Suggestions that the Australian War Memorial should take an interest in establishing some sort of museum at Tuggeranong homestead commemorating the official history project have not struck much of a chord. Despite this, the story of Bean's residence there deserves to be more widely known in view of the national importance of the work in which he and his team were engaged.

In May 1919 Charles Bean arrived back in Melbourne, after five years spent abroad as official correspondent reporting the activities of the Australian Imperial Force during the First World War. At the time of his appointment in 1914 the Defence Minister, George Pearce, had expressed to him the hope that he would, after the struggle then just beginning was ended, undertake the writing of a full history of Australia's part in the war.

By 1918, with the war in its final stages, Bean was turning his mind to such a task and began formulating an outline plan for the project. Anticipating Government endorsement of this scheme, in the early months of 1919 he took a party back to Turkey, to walk the ground at Gallipoli and collect first-hand material. Once back in Melbourne, he sought formal acceptance of the proposal he had drafted for what would become the nation's official war history and began assembling a staff.

At this point he encountered the view that his concept was regarded as too narrow. In July it was pointed out that the six volumes he was planning, apparently predicated on an expectation that he would only write about operations in the theatres where he had been, ignored the achievements of the Royal Australian Navy, the Australian Flying Corps, and even the Light Horse in the Middle East, and did not cover the Australian expedition to capture German New Guinea or events on the home front.

Accordingly, the number of volumes finally authorized in October 1919 was doubled to twelve, including a volume of photographs. In deference to Bean's feeling of a lack of expertise, and to keep his role within manage-

able bounds, other writers were brought in to undertake the additional volumes under his general editorship. Among these were fellow-journalists F M Cutlack, who would write the AFC's story, A W Jose (the Navy) and H S Gullet (the Light Horse in Sinai and Palestine). A medical history in three volumes was subsequently added in 1923, to be written by Dr A G Butler also under Bean's supervision.

With the project's shape settled, Bean discovered he had another problem in attempting to begin work at Melbourne's Victoria Barracks. The Barracks were awash with returned soldiers on leave, or simply awaiting demobilization, who had time hanging heavy on their hands;. The official history team found their offices constantly invaded by many of these individuals who filled their idle hours by dropping in for a friendly chat. Arthur Bazley, a member of Bean's staff, later remarked that, 'From some of them we were able to obtain information that was to prove of value later on, but our present work was being brought nearly to a standstill by these happy interruptions.'

Reportedly from the outset it had been Bean's hope that, on national grounds, he would be permitted to install himself at the then unbuilt federal capital to begin the task of writing. Spurred on by the expectation that the remoteness of Canberra would provide the quiet needed for concentrated research, Bean adopted a suggestion from his secretary, Erskine Crawford, who had recently visited the site. Crawford drew attention to the fact that the homestead at Tuggeranong, about twenty kilometres south of the planned city centre, was standing vacant and offered an ideal choice.

Legislation passed in 1910 had foreshadowed the Commonwealth's intention of eventually acquiring all private land in the Federal Capital Territory. Under these provisions, Tuggeranong had been purchased from its owners, the Cunningham family, for a wartime purpose which never materialized. In 1915 plans had been developed to concentrate all the nation's munitions factories in one big arsenal on federal territory. A site was selected on the eastern bank of the Murrumbidgee River, and this was approved by Cabinet early in 1916.

Under the scheme for the proposed arsenal, Tuggeranong Station was intended for use as administrative offices, and large stocks of plant and materials were accumulated there. Plans were also made for construction of a branch railway line to run from the Tuggeranong

siding in the hills five kilometres from the homestead to the construction site. Eventually it was expected that a complete town housing the arsenal's workforce and their families would cover the Murrumbidgee plains in this area. The Federal Capital Director of Design and Development, Walter Burley Griffin, even drew up a detailed plan for a town of 4 000 residents.

The future of the arsenal had become increasingly doubtful from 1917, due to changed war needs, and was finally abandoned altogether in mid-1919. As a result Tuggeranong homestead was suddenly available for other uses, and Bean was able to obtain approval to occupy it at a small rent. A couple of his staff were sent in advance to get the place habitable, obtaining furniture and other items from another defunct wartime establishment within the federal territory; an internment camp built to house German nationals deported from China but who never arrived.

By the end of October 1919 the official history team was in residence at Tuggeranong, accompanied by the crates and boxes of records and maps needed to start its mammoth task. Initially, Bean had a staff of four clerks – Crawford, Bazley, John Balfour and George Lowery – and four draughtsmen: H. Rogers, J B Sutcliffe, C H Brown and T T Robinson. The latter, however, were only engaged for a period of months, to finish drawing the base maps that were required for the various volumes, and were gone by the beginning of the next year. Thereafter, the mapping work was done by an ex-AIF gunner Peter Wightman.

The homestead was soon found to be ideal for the team's purposes. It was large (eighteen rooms, with separate servants' quarters attached) and in relatively good condition, having been renovated and extended only in 1908 by the former Cunningham owners. In a talk to the Canberra and District Historical Society in April 1959 Bazley described the house's lovely garden: a 'little overgrown when first we saw it but with two lovely almond trees, rose bushes, a few plum trees, a medlar, a pomegranate, all partly surrounded by a hedge. Beyond was a tiny front paddock containing a few pine trees and shrubs and an antbed tennis court...' (1)

At the back of the house was a 60-acre (24 hectare) paddock where the team's horses were run, along with a few sheep for meat and a cow or two for milk. Water was pumped from the

willow-fringed Tuggeranong Creek which ran past one corner of the homestead. While the homestead provided living quarters, as well as offices, for most of the staff, two of the married men (Balfour and Wightman) lived with their families in small cottages located 400 metres away down the 60-acre paddock, in what was dubbed the 'suburbs'. This jocular description takes on, of course, entirely different significance with the present-day controversy.

Domestic needs at the homestead were met by two elderly sisters who provided cook and maid services, and a rouseabout. The little community at Tuggeranong became largely self-contained in other ways as well. Bazley recalled that Bean installed a piano and billiard table in the entrance hall, with its two marble-fronted fireplaces, to provide the staff with evening entertainment. In a talk to the Royal Australian Historical Society in February 1938, Bean himself nostalgically referred to the peaceful atmosphere which sustained the team's work in this period:

"In the country air our nerves were easily refreshed by an hour's ride. The garden of Tuggeranong (sic) under its beautiful trees, became one of the sights of the Capital. In summer, by Crawford's suggestion, we arranged our own daylight saving scheme, and had tennis every evening."⁽²⁾

Tennis proved to be the medium which changed Bean's own circumstances. He first met Ethel Young, a nursing sister at the Queanbeyan hospital, when she visited Tuggeranong during 1920 to join in the staff matches, and he married her in Sydney in January the following year. Although Bean died in 1968, his wife – who survived him by more than twenty years – remained a living link to the district.

If the life at Tuggeranong seemed idyllic, this description concealed the heavy pace of the work – especially once the decision was taken to write a very detailed account, entailing much time-consuming checking, revision and editing. Bean later admitted that his initial expectation when embarking on the project had been that it would take five years. In this belief, he had 'continued, as during the war, to work late each night and throughout the weekends...Later, when it was obvious that the work must last for many years, we came to work more or less regular hours.'

The fruits of Bean and his team's labours were evident in the appearance of five volumes over the first five years. Bean was the author of two

(those covering the Gallipoli campaign) which appeared in October 1921 and at the end of 1924. The other three were all published in 1923, and included the photographic record (which Bean edited) plus the volumes written by Gullett and Cutlack. While the authors of the later volumes in the series worked independently of the official history team, usually from their homes or offices in Melbourne or Sydney, several of them occasionally visited Tuggeranong for discussions with Bean.

Bazley could not recall Gullett coming to Tuggeranong, although he later visited Canberra frequently (and finally fatally) in his capacity as a parliamentarian. (He was a minister in the Menzies government when he was killed in an air disaster near Fairbairn in 1940). Among the authors who several times did visit were Jose, Cutlack and Butler. Bazley recalled one such visit by the last-named, who travelled from Brisbane using the rail service. This saw the doctor (then in his 50s) deposited at the remote little siding in the hills during the early hours of the morning, and left to walk the rest of the way to the homestead. Not wanting to disturb people at an unreasonable hour, he dosed down under one of the almond trees in the garden to sleep. When the rouseabout came upon him later, he took Butler for a tramp and roughly woke him demanding to know his business.

Aspects of the rural life at Tuggeranong could sometimes also seem less than congenial. In the summer months the house frequently found itself with unwanted visitors in the form of snakes making their way down to the creek. Two or three got into the homestead, Bazley remembered, and on one occasion the cook had a fainting spell when she came across one curled up beside her sugar bin. The cottages in the 'suburbs' were connected to the house by telephone, using wartime Turkish handpieces which the Director of the War Memorial (who had lent them) laconically noted were probably taken from a typhus camp – and sometimes it was Mrs Balfour who sounded the alarm. Then, Bazley recalled, thoughts of Lone Pine and Quinn's Post were temporarily cast aside while a party armed with sticks and a double-barrelled shotgun rushed down to dispatch the intruder.

Apart from diversions of this kind, and outings such as picnics to Pine Island and other local spots, another major outlet which emerged was cricket. After Wightman, the draughtsman, supervised the laying of a concrete pitch (still in evidence), the Tuggeranong Cricket Club

came into being in 1920. Players were drawn from the surrounding district as well as the official history team, although the team remained under the captainship of Balfour, and eventually enthusiasm to join was so great that two teams were mustered. All-day matches on a Sunday became a regular feature, played either on the home pitch or at Canberra, Queanbeyan or Michelago.

The official history team remained in residence at Tuggeranong until May 1925, when considerations of Bean's health necessitated a move. After bearing a painful kidney ailment for some years, during 1924 he had gone with his wife to England for treatment which resulted in removal of a kidney. Following this surgery, doctors advised that he find a milder climate than the Murrumbidgee high plains. In consequence, the official history team packed up its office and records and transferred to Sydney, where work on the project was eventually completed at Victoria Barracks more than fifteen years later. The move was in Bazley's words, not without 'some misgivings...after an experience that none of us would have missed for worlds'.

The work which Bean ultimately completed was a monumental legacy of four million words. There had been nothing quite like it anywhere, and it was certainly unique in Australia where 150,000 of its volumes had been sold by 1942. Bean's special achievement had been to infuse the writing of war history with a more democratic spirit, shifting the focus away from the lofty viewpoint of commanders, solely, to depict the face of battle through the eyes of soldiers in the frontline. Military history in Australia, and elsewhere, has never been entirely the same since. Both Bean's legacy, and the story of the First AIF to which he devoted so much of his life in telling, has now become inseparable from the question of Tuggeranong homestead's future.



CANBERRA, ACT. 1920-12-12. THE FIRST VOLUME OF THE OFFICIAL WW1 HISTORY PACKED AND READY FOR TRANSPORT



C. E. W. BEAN AND HIS WIFE EFFIE AT TUGGERANONG (1921-4)

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{By ED: Article provided by Margaret Kaye VGAWM}

Bean, Charles Edwin Woodrow (1879–1968)

by **K. S. Inglis**

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Charles Edwin Woodrow Bean (1879-1968), historian and journalist, was born on 18 November 1879 at Bathurst, New South Wales, eldest of three sons of **Edwin Bean** and his wife Lucy Madeline, née Butler, of Hobart Town. The Beans were an Imperial family. Edwin was born in Bombay, son of a surgeon-major in the army of the East India Co. and Charles was named after Henry Woodrow, who had worked in India under Macaulay. They were also a family for whom Thomas Arnold's innovations in schooling were important. Woodrow was the original at Arnold's Rugby of a character in *Tom Brown's Schooldays* who protects a smaller boy against bullying. Edwin Bean was among the first pupils in 1862 at Clifton College, one of the new boarding-schools founded to diffuse Arnoldian education. When Charles was born his father had been in Australia six years and was headmaster of All Saints' College, Bathurst. Charles entered its preparatory school in 1886. In 1889 his father was forced by ill health to resign and took the family to England.

For two years the Beans spent summer in Oxford and winter in Brussels, where Charles learned French and drawing. In 1891 his father became headmaster of Brentwood School in Essex, which his own father had attended. Charles was a pupil there in 1891-94 and then entered Clifton.

He was a schoolboy in love with England and Empire. In its thirty years Clifton had become rich in Imperial tradition. Such old boys as Douglas Haig and **William Birdwood** were serving in the Bengal Lancers and the Egyptian Army; and while Bean was at school another old boy, Henry Newbolt, published the verses in which the cry 'Play up! play up! and play the game!', learned on the school cricket field, saves the day on the field of battle. Bean acquired at Clifton, he recalled, 'a real interest in literature, & in the classics', and played much cricket. He was known at first as 'The Rum 'Un' for his Australian accent; in his last year he was made head of his house.

In 1898 Bean won a scholarship to Hertford College, Oxford (B.A., 1902; B.C.L., 1904; M.A., 1905), where he read classics (preferring history to philosophy) and simplified his prose style, having 'determined never, if possible, to write a sentence which could not be understood by, say, a housemaid of average intelligence'. He graduated with second-class honours and, like his father before him, missed a place in the Indian Civil Service; had he got a first or a place in India (he reflected later), he might never have returned to Australia. He studied law, still living on his scholarship, and in 1903 was called to the Bar of the Inner Temple. He taught briefly at Brentwood, travelled to Tenerife as a

tutor, and sailed for Sydney in 1904. He was admitted to the New South Wales Bar that year.

While waiting for clients he was an assistant master at Sydney Grammar School, and wrote some articles for the *Evening News*, edited by **Banjo Paterson**. As associate to **Sir William Owen** and two colleagues he saw much of New South Wales on circuit in 1905-07. He wrote a book, illustrated by his own drawings, about Australia as seen by a returned native. 'The impressions of a new chum' could not find a publisher, but the *Sydney Morning Herald* printed eight articles out of it from 1 June to 20 July 1907, under the general title 'Australia', by 'C.W.'. He saw Australians as the best of Britons, and celebrated the bushman rather as Kipling sang of other outriders of Empire.

Bean resolved to live by writing rather than teaching or the law, and on Paterson's advice went to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which took him on as a junior reporter in January 1908 after he had spent eight hours a day for four months learning shorthand. In August he was assigned as special correspondent in H.M.S. *Powerful*, flagship of the Royal Navy squadron on the Australian Station, to report the visit of sixteen American warships—the Great White Fleet. Bean wrote a book based on his reports, with photographs, drawings and a water-colour frontispiece by the author, and had it published at his own expense. *With the Flagship in the South* (London, 1909) was among other things a plea for an Australian navy.

In 1909 Bean was sent to the far west of the State to do a series of articles on the wool industry. He was unenthusiastic, he admitted later. 'And then it flashed upon him that the most important product of the wool industry was men; it was responsible for creating some of the outstanding national types'. He savoured the difference between Englishmen and Australians, and between rural and urban types in Australia. He liked the tough, resourceful boys of the outback. The articles were published as *On the Wool Track* (London, 1910). The assignment produced another series of articles, based on a journey down the Darling in a small steamer, for the *Sydney Mail*. These too became a book, whose title referred jocularly to a great Imperial preoccupation of the day: *The Dreadnought of the Darling* (London, 1911). Bean was to cherish a passage which began with an account of comradeship in the back country and ended with a prophecy that if ever England were in trouble, she would discover 'in the younger land, existing in quite unsuspected quarters, a thousand times deeper and more effective than the more showy protestations which sometimes appropriate the title of "imperialism", the quality of sticking ... to an old mate'.

Bean had started at the *Sydney Morning Herald* on £4 a week. By 1909 he was earning £9; two other papers made him offers, which he declined. He took to writing leading articles, and paragraphs for the *Mail*, as well as carrying a heavy load of reporting, and nearly collapsed from over-work.

In 1910-12 Bean represented the *Herald* in London, living with his parents. He reported the building of the battle-cruiser *Australia* and the light cruisers

Melbourne and *Sydney*. His book *Flagships Three* (London, 1913) incorporated these reports and much of his first book, *With the Flagship*. Early in 1913 he returned to Sydney as a leader-writer. He disliked the job, and managed to get several assignments out in the country. From late June 1914 he was writing a daily commentary on the European crisis.

In September the Imperial government invited each dominion to attach an official correspondent to its forces. (Sir) George Pearce, minister for defence, invited the Australian Journalists' Association to nominate a man, and in a ballot of members Bean won narrowly from (Sir) Keith Murdoch of the *Melbourne Herald*. Pearce expressed to Bean the hope that he would later write the history of Australia's part in the war.

He travelled to Egypt with the first contingent of the Australian Imperial Force, as a civilian who was regarded as a captain for such purposes as precedence in the mess. He wrote a booklet, *What to Know in Egypt ... A Guide for Australasian Soldiers* (Cairo, 1915). An early dispatch, explaining why 'a handful of rowdies' were being sent home, aroused resentment. A savage set of verses accused him of 'wowsastic whining' and declared that he could not be an Australian. Early in April he left Egypt with the main body of the A.I.F. which joined the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.

Bean went ashore at Anzac Cove on Gallipoli about 10 a.m. on 25 April 1915, some five and a half hours after the first landing. Two weeks later he accompanied two Australian brigades in a costly and unsuccessful attack at Cape Helles. For the help he gave to wounded men under fire on the night of 8 May he was recommended for the Military Cross; as a civilian he was not eligible, but was mentioned in dispatches. His bravery became a legend, and erased whatever hostility remained from his dispatch about the first of the returned soldiers. Australians at home read a detailed account of the landing in the papers of 8 May. It was not by Bean, whose first dispatch was held up by the British authorities in Alexandria until 13 May, but by the English correspondent Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett. Both accounts were much reprinted. Bean's was the more precise, for he had seen more. The English reporter betrayed surprise that untrained colonials had done so well; Bean was seeing what he hoped confidently to see: the Australian soldiers, as he described them, were displaying qualities he had observed out in the country.

He was the only correspondent to stay on Gallipoli from April to December. On 6 August he was hit by a bullet in the right leg. Determined not to be taken off to a hospital ship, he hobbled to his dugout and lay there until 24 August, having the wound dressed each day, until he was well enough to get out and watch the fighting. At the evacuation he carried off writing and drawing by soldiers which he edited as *The Anzac Book* (London, 1916). Bean contributed photographs, drawings, and two pieces of verse: 'Abdul', in which the Turkish enemy is honoured for having 'played the gentleman', and 'Non nobis', an affirmation that although we cannot understand why the dead have died and we live, there must be some beneficent purpose which all the destruction of war is serving. In 1946

these verses, set to music by **Dr A. E. Floyd**, were included in the Australian supplement of the Church of England's *The Book of Common Praise*.

In 1916-18 Bean was in France to observe every engagement of the A.I.F. Some dispatches were published as *Letters from France* (London, 1917). The historian's task grew larger in his mind. At first he thought of one volume, but in France he conceived a grander work which would be literally a monument to the men of the A.I.F.—'the only memorial which could be worthy of them', he decided, 'was the bare and uncoloured story of their part in the war'.

Late in 1918 Bean took leave in the south of France and wrote *In Your Hands, Australians* (London, 1918), an Australian version of the world-wide hope that the survivors of war would perform peaceful deeds which justified the years of death. The last and longest chapter was about education. Early in 1919 he went back to Turkey on a journey described in a book eventually published as *Gallipoli Mission* (Canberra, 1948). He studied the field of battle as the Turks had seen it and reported to the Commonwealth government on how the Australian graves should be disposed and maintained. In May he returned to Australia, writing on the way home his recommendations for the official history and for a national war memorial which 'for all time' would 'hold the sacred memories of the A.I.F.' The government accepted his proposals. Late in 1919 the historian, his staff and their crates of records moved into the homestead of Tuggeranong near Canberra, to create *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918*.

On 24 January 1921 at St Andrew's Cathedral, Sydney, he married Ethel Clara Young, a nursing sister at the Queanbeyan hospital whom he first met when she visited Tuggeranong to play tennis. The ceremony was conducted by the dean, **A. E. Talbot**, who had been a chaplain on Gallipoli.

The first two volumes of the history, *The Story of Anzac*, appeared in 1921 and 1924. Bean had been suffering pain for several years from a kidney ailment, and in 1924 he went with his wife to England for treatment; a kidney was removed. Doctors advised a warmer climate; so the Beans left Tuggeranong for Sydney, where they lived at Lindfield in a house named Clifton, and the staff and records moved to Victoria Barracks.

Bean himself wrote six volumes about the infantry divisions: the two on Gallipoli, and four on France. He edited eight more, and he and a colleague annotated the volume of photographs. The last volume appeared in 1943. The series contained nearly four million words. In Australian historical writing nothing had ever been done on such a scale; and there had been no military history anywhere quite like Bean's.

'Its theme', he wrote, 'may be stated as the answer to a question: How did this nation, bred in complete peace, largely undisciplined except for a strongly British tradition and the self-discipline necessary for men who grapple with nature ... react to what still has to be recognized as the supreme test for fitness to exist?' His answer, in plain prose dense with personal detail, had been

foreshadowed in a passage of *In Your Hands, Australians*: 'the big thing in the war for Australia was the discovery of the character of Australian men. It was character which rushed the hills at Gallipoli and held on there'.

Bean brought a democratic and colonial scepticism to bear on the assumption that the dispatches of high commanders were the best source of information about what actually happened when men went into battle. His own diaries (226 note-books) were full of the evidence about 'what actual experiences, at the point where men lay out behind hedges or on the fringe of woods, caused those on one side to creep, walk, or run forward, and the others to go back'.

Bean's approach differed from that of the British war historians, whose work was official not only in sponsorship but in texture: history written by generals, not by an honorary captain. The British volumes had no biographical footnotes of the sort that were essential to Bean's method because he wanted to show that the participants were 'a fair cross-section of our people ... that the company commander was a young lawyer and his second in command and most trusted mate a young engine driver and so on'.

The *Official History* was published by Angus & Robertson, Sydney, and paid for by the Defence Department. The government accepted Bean's request that it be uncensored, though he had to yield when the Australian Commonwealth Naval Board insisted on removing critical passages from *A. W. Jose's The Royal Australian Navy*. Each volume had to go to the minister for defence before printing, but only once (outside the naval volume) was a passage questioned, and 'the matter was easily settled'. By 1942, 150,000 copies had been sold—an average of some 10,000 a volume. Bean's one-volume abridgement of the series followed, as *Anzac to Amiens* (Canberra, 1946).

The Story of Anzac ended with a declaration that 'it was on the 25th of April, 1915, that the consciousness of Australian nationhood was born'. That view of the nation was embodied not only in Bean's writings but in the Australian War Memorial, which rose in Canberra as a storehouse for the records of war, a popular museum for its relics, and a temple to honour its victims. Bean saw it opened in 1941, was made chairman of its board in 1952, and lived to see it become the most popular tourist resort in the national capital, visited by more people than ever opened a page of the war histories on sale in the foyer.

His attitude to warfare changed. Before 1914 he had regarded war as an evil but awesome thing, not to be welcomed, but not to be flinched from. Looking back later, he saw that when politicians and the press asked a young man whether he was prepared to die for his country, that 'splendid question' helped to blind civilized nations to the folly of warfare. Bean became an active member of the League of Nations Union, believing in the league as guardian of peace. Horror of war led him to support Chamberlain's conciliation of Hitler. He went on hoping that Hitler would keep his pledges — would play the game — until the German invasion of Czechoslovakia; and on 21 March 1939 a letter from Bean appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* under the heading 'Recantation'.

In Sydney he founded the Parks and Playgrounds Movement of New South Wales, which tried to make the city a little more like the country, and was involved in the Town Planning Association. These activities gave him his first experience of local politics, and led him to dismay at corruption. The Depression shook him: his own salary, fixed by contract, was unaffected by the reduction imposed on public servants, including his associates on the *History*; but he insisted that his pay be cut too. Until he saw the mass unemployment of the 1930s he was a virtual stranger to the socialist tradition. Now he became interested in planning to reduce inequalities, and grew curious about the Soviet Union.

In the new war Bean did several jobs. He wrote a pamphlet, *The Old A.I.F and the New* (Sydney, 1940), and was employed in 1940 by the Department of Information to provide liaison between the chiefs of staff and the press. He became chairman in 1942 of the new Commonwealth Archives Committee, and did more than anyone else to create the Commonwealth Archives. In 1943 he published *War Aims of a Plain Australian*, deploring the failure of his people to enact the ideals for which World War I had been fought. As in his tract of 1918 his answer was 'Educate, and educate!'

In 1947-58 Bean was chairman of the promotion appeals board of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. He and his wife visited England in 1951. They returned on a migrant ship on which he was employed as a migration officer. He wrote a commissioned history of the 'independent and corporate' schools of Australia, using as title words from a poem by Newbolt about Clifton chapel: *Here, My Son* (Sydney, 1950). Earlier works found new readers when *On the Wool Track* (1945, 1963, 1967) and *The Dreadnought of the Darling* (1956) were republished.

In his last book, *Two Men I Knew. William Bridges and Brudenell White, Founders of the A.I.F.* (Sydney, 1957), Bean told the story, related also in volume VI of the *Official History*, of his own 'high-intentioned but ill-judged intervention' on behalf of White and against Sir John Monash when a successor to Birdwood as commander of the Australian Corps was being chosen in 1918.

The sense of values established in boyhood remained steady; the opinions derived from it went on changing. Before 1914 Bean had employed serenely the notion of an English race, and briskly defended White Australia. By 1949 he was arguing for admission of immigrants from Asia rather than perpetuation of 'a quite senseless colour line'.

More than once Bean declined a knighthood. He accepted a D.Litt. in 1931 from the University of Melbourne and an honorary LL.D. in 1959 from the Australian National University, an institution which he had been one of the first to foresee. In 1930 he was given the Chesney Gold Medal of the Royal United Service Institution.

In 1956 he and his wife moved from Linfield to Collaroy, to another house named Clifton. Early in 1964, aged 84, Bean was admitted to the Concord

Repatriation General Hospital, and died there on 30 August 1968. He was cremated after a memorial service in St Andrew's Cathedral. He had not been a regular churchgoer, believing (he said in 1948) that 'the question whether God existed or not could make no difference to conduct'. The congregation sang his verses of 1915, 'Non nobis', and heard Angus McLachlan speak of the 'devotion, amounting almost to worship' that he won from friends.

An author at Gallipoli described him as 'Captain Carrot' because of his hair colour, a man 'with the face of a student ... He was rather tall and rather thin, with a peaky face and glasses'. He had a light voice, and an accent close to standard English but retaining the Australian 'a'.

The Australian War Memorial has his portrait by **George Lambert** and a bust by John Dowie.

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Reports by war correspondents at the landing

Biography – Charles Edwin Woodrow Bean (1879–1968)



Charles Edwin Woodrow Bean, historian and journalist was born on 18 November 1879 in Bathurst where his father was headmaster of All Saints' College. In 1889, his father resigned owing to ill health and took his family to England.

In England, Charles attended Clifton, a school rich in British imperial tradition, and in his last year he became house captain. In 1898 he won a scholarship to Oxford where he studied classics. He graduated with second-class honours and then studied law and was called to the bar of the Inner Temple in 1903. He taught briefly at Brentwood School in Essex where his father was headmaster and then sailed to Sydney in 1904. He was admitted to the New South Wales bar that year.

While Bean was establishing his practice, he wrote some articles for the *Evening News*, a paper edited by A B 'Banjo' Paterson, and worked as an assistant master at Sydney Grammar School. Finding that he preferred writing to teaching or law, Bean became a junior reporter on the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1908. In 1909 he was sent to write a series of articles on the wool industry in the far west of the state. This assignment influenced his perceptions of nationality and the differences between urban and rural Australians as well as between Englishmen and Australians. During this time he wrote a passage about comradeship in outback Australia and he finished with a prophecy that if ever England were in trouble she would discover in Australia 'the quality of sticking ... to an old mate'.

Between 1910 and 1912 Bean lived with his parents in London while he represented the *Herald* over there and reported on the building of the three Royal Australian Navy cruisers: *Australia*, *Melbourne* and *Sydney*. In 1913 he returned to Sydney but disliked his job as leader-writer and took several assignments out of the country. From June 1914 he wrote a daily commentary on the European crisis.

In September 1914, each dominion was invited to attach an official correspondent to its forces. Bean narrowly beat Keith Murdoch of the *Melbourne Herald* in the Australian Journalists' Association nomination ballot and was elected to be Australia's first official war correspondent.

He travelled to Egypt with the first contingent of the Australian Imperial Force in 1914, as a civilian with the honorary title of captain. While he was there he caused some resentment both in Australia and Egypt when, under instructions from General Bridges, commander of the Australian forces, he sent an early dispatch about the rowdiness of Australian soldiers.

In April 1915, Bean sailed from Egypt with the main body of the AIF. He went ashore at Anzac Cove on 25 April about five and a half-hours after the first troops. Despite that, Australians didn't read his dispatch about the landing: it was held up by the British authorities in Alexandria until 13 May. Instead they read a more sensational account written by English war correspondent, Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett. One army private wrote to his mother in July 1915:

I have been reading some Sunday Mails to hand with the pictorial honour lists and account of our doings in Gallipoli. They are fairly accurate. Bean's is more accurate if not so graphic as Ashmead Bartlett.

[Letter, Private John Sloan to his mother, 4 July 1915, PR00035, Australian War Memorial]

Bean accompanied two Australian brigades during an unsuccessful and costly attack at Cape Helles two weeks later. He was recommended for the Military Cross for the help he gave to wounded men under fire on the night of 8 May but as a civilian was ineligible so was mentioned in dispatches. His bravery was well known and he was the only correspondent to stay on Gallipoli from April until December, despite being hit by a bullet in the right leg on 6 August 1915. Instead of being evacuated to a hospital ship he lay in his dugout until 24 August having the wound dressed each day until he was able to go out and watch the fighting again.

After the evacuation of Gallipoli Bean edited *The Anzac Book* (London, 1916) which he compiled from drawings and writing by the soldiers.

The seeds of the official history series were sown when he was in France in 1916–18 with the AIF. Conscious of his responsibilities to the men, he decided that:

The only memorial which could be worthy of them was the bare and uncoloured story of their part in the war.

[Charles Bean, quoted in B Nairn and G Serle (eds), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 7, Melbourne University Press, 1979, p 227]

Even earlier, at Gallipoli, Bean had noticed the Australians avidly collecting battlefield relics and it occurred to him that there should be a war museum in Australia.

When the Australian War Records Section was set up in London, John Treloar who headed the section, together with Bean and others, organised collecting stations for relics from the Western Front. Australian troops went into the field carrying labels to attach to the more than 25,000 relics which they collected. Official war artists and photographers were commissioned to document Australians at war. John Treloar, who became the director of the Australian War Memorial in 1920 and remained there for thirty-two years, did more than anyone to ensure that Bean's vision was achieved.

In 1919 Bean returned to Gallipoli where he studied the battle from the Turkish perspective and reported to the Commonwealth Government on the disposal and maintenance of the Australian graves. In May he returned to Australia and recommended an official history and a national war memorial which 'for all time' would 'hold the sacred memories of the AIF.' The government accepted his proposals and later in 1919 the historian, his staff and

all their records moved into Tuggeranong homestead near Canberra to write *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–1918*.

In January 1921 Bean married Ethel Clara Young, a nursing sister at the Queanbeyan hospital. Padre Dexter, a chaplain who had been on Gallipoli, conducted the ceremony.

The first two volumes of the official history – *The Story of Anzac* – appeared in 1921 and 1924. Bean himself wrote six volumes about the infantry divisions – two on Gallipoli and four on France – and he edited eight of the other volumes. The huge project contained nearly four million words and the last volume appeared in 1942, 23 years after he started the project.

His theme, Bean wrote:

May be stated as the answer to a question: How did this nation, bred in complete peace, largely undisciplined except for a strongly British tradition and the self-discipline necessary for men who grapple with nature ... react to what still has to be recognised as the supreme test for fitness to exist?

[Charles Bean, quoted in B Nairn and G Serle (eds), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 7, Melbourne University Press, 1979, p 228]

Bean's diaries (226 note-books) were full of the men's experiences and what caused them to react differently in battle. Bean wrote of the AIF and the ordinary soldiers:

A fair cross-section of our people ... that the company commander was a young lawyer and his second in command a most trusted mate a young engine driver and so on.

[Charles Bean, in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 7, Melbourne University Press, 1979, p 228]

His approach brought a colonial scepticism to the traditional British style. He wanted to produce an account that could be read by everyone and he was also very conscious of his responsibility as a war correspondent:

The war correspondent is responsible for most of the ideas of battle which the public possesses ... I can't write that it occurred if I know that it did not, even if by painting it that way I can rouse the blood and make the pulse beat faster – and undoubtedly these men here deserve that people's pulses shall beat for them. But War Correspondents have so habitually exaggerated the heroism of battles that people don't realise that real actions are heroic.

[Charles Bean, personal records, 'Ashmead Bartlett and a crisis', item 892, 3DRL/6673, Australian War Memorial 38]

The Official History was paid for by the Defence Department and published by Angus and Robertson in Sydney. Despite Bean's request that it be uncensored, critical passages were removed from *The Royal Australian Navy* volume, at the request of the Australian Commonwealth Naval Board and one other passage was questioned and 'easily settled'.

Bean's view that 'the consciousness of Australian nationhood was born' on the 25th of April 1915 is embodied in both his own writings and in his vision for a war memorial. He envisaged a monument to honour the victims of war: a place where families and friends could come and grieve; a museum for war relics and safe storage for the records that would contribute to an understanding of war. The long-awaited Australian War Memorial was finally opened in Canberra in 1941.

During these years Bean was also working hard to create the Commonwealth Archives and in 1942 he became chairman of the new Commonwealth Archives Committee. He declined offers of a knighthood but did accept honorary degrees from two universities in recognition of his achievement with the official history series. In 1952, Bean became chairman of the Australian War Memorial board.

Bean had travelled to England for medical treatment in 1924 and he and his wife moved to Lindfield in Sydney when they returned. In 1956 they moved from Lindfield to Collaroy. Eight years later he was admitted to the Concord Repatriation General Hospital. He died there on 30 August 1968 aged 88.

SOURCES:

'Charles Bean', in B Nairn & G Serle (eds), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol 7, Melbourne, 1979, pp 226–229.

Dr Charles Edwin Woodrow Bean, personal records, manuscript: 'Ashmead Bartlett and a crisis', item 892, 3DRL/6673, Australian War Memorial 38.

Private John Sloan, letters, PR00035, Australian War Memorial.

CHARLES BEAN

Presentation by Peter Burness to Voluntary Guides at Tuggeranong Homestead 5 June 2002

Charles Bean was born in Bathurst on 18 November 1879 where his father (Edwin) was headmaster of All Saints' College. In 1889 the family moved to England where Charles attended his father's school, Clifton College, before going to Oxford.

Clifton College was an advanced public school (ie private school), known for producing young men for officers in the Army or possible the foreign service. Old boys included Sir Douglas Haig and Sir William Birdwood; both of them field-m Marshals of whom Bean would write at length.

Another old boy of Clifton was Henry Newbolt who wrote verse including that in which is the cry - *play up and play the game*. A cry that is learned on the cricket field and saves the day in battle. Bean was greatly attached to his old school – he called his home(s) *CLIFTON*.

The British public school shaped Bean and the direction of his life. Until the First World War, he spent about half his life in England. From the public school background he drew his inspiration and ideals.

Charles Bean was an idealist. He believed that moral standards, courage, and honour in individuals shaped a nation. He believed that the British were the great civilising influence on the world, and his personal values were those derived from the English public school system. The Britisher was a gentleman, brave and honourable. This found its great expression in the gifted amateur – so often depicted as the winner on the field of war or sport (especially cricket).

After a very English schooling, Bean was a young adult when he returned to Australia in 1904. After three years he settled on a career in journalism; he began working for the SMH. Within two years he was back living in England, returning to Australia in 1912.

While with the SMH he travelled into the far west to study the wool industry, and later went down the Murray on a small steamer. Two books resulted; *On the Wool Track* (1910) and *Dreadnought of the Darling* (1911). It was during this period that he also redefined his Imperial views. In short he came to see the Englishman in Australia as the best of the British race.

Bean celebrated the Australian bushman for his independence, endurance, and democratic spirit. More particularly, it was the quality of 'mateship' that was vital. It was the Britishers' qualities, transferred to the rural pioneers, that carved out the new Australian nation. Even the city man, he felt, drew his inspiration from the bush.

In 1914 the Australian Journalists' Association nominated Bean as the official correspondent to the AIF. He duly sailed with the 1st Division Headquarters with the first volunteers to the war.

In Egypt Bean quickly gained the confidence of the senior AIF leaders. Even then he considered that he would write the history of the AIF once the war was over. However he did not gain the confidence of the ordinary soldiers quite so well. He did not like the ways of some of the worldly-wise old soldiers, and he criticized the poor behavior of some troops on leave. The result was that soldiers called him a wowsar and, some claim, he was carried off and thrown into a latrine pit.

The ugly attitude towards Bean soon evaporated on the battlefield. He landed on Anzac beach on 25 April only a few hours after the first troops had struggled ashore. He remained on Gallipoli throughout the rest of the campaign. Day and night he hunted out stories, conducted interviews, observed actions, and visited sites, to ensure that he had an accurate account of the fighting there. He risked his life on a number of occasions, and was wounded on 6 August, but refused to be evacuated.

Here is an example of an entry in his diary early in the campaign (Krithia):

There was one chap I could see wounded ... so I nipped out ... and ran to help him back. As I ran back the brigadier said: "Look here Bean, if you do any more of these dam' fool actions I'll send you back to HQ". A few minutes later he was doing the dam' fool action himself. He jumped up on the parapet (and) said: "Now then Australians – Come along Australians". The men jumped up ... into very heavy rifle fire. The Australians went on like a whirlwind. Then I remembered that I had left (my camera). So I missed the finest war photographs that have never been taken.

Throughout the Gallipoli campaign Bean observed his Australians closely. He saw what he wanted to find; that these men from the young new nation possessed a spirit of dash, enterprise, and mateship, and they could fight as well as the great regiments of British history. He glimpsed a noble quality. It was of course something that he wanted to find, and already believed in. The Anzac now replaced the bushman as his Australian ideal.

On Gallipoli Bean had envisaged writing 'the book' of Australia's role after the war. He was duly appointed the official historian to the AIF. He would write two volumes, totalling more than 1500 pages, just on the Gallipoli campaign. His first volume took the story only up to the end of the first week of the fighting.

However his early reports were not the first accounts of the Australians actions to be published in the Australian newspapers. Some of his early stories were passed over for the more exaggerated and colourful writings of other correspondents. But as the awfulness of the war began to be seen it was not long before his work was being appreciated for its accuracy and lack of sensationalism.

On 18 December 1915 Bean's diary records:

So I have left Anzac. In a way I was really fond of the place. I have certainly had some quite enjoyable times there in my old dugout, yarning to friends and going around the lines. I can't pretend that I ever liked the shells or attacks but one came to put up with them much as one does with toothache.

We must now fast-forward to France and Belgium. It only needs to be said here that he followed the AIF to most of the worst battles. War here was fought on a scale, and with weapons, far beyond what was seen on Gallipoli. But it was also here that Bean began to bring into effect his idea for a war museum and archive in Australia after the war. He was also anxious to ensure that extensive records be preserved. He put his ideas to the Minister for Defence in November 1916. Eventually the Australian War Records Section would be established and this would incorporate the appointment of war artists and photographers, as well as the collection of museum material and records.

Bean remained driven by his admiration of the Australian soldiers; by this time they were referring to themselves as *Diggers*. But the legend that these troops established on Gallipoli was a fragile thing. Could it survive three more years of fighting, including more defeats and reverses? Also recruitment for the AIF, which was voluntary, was declining and the force risked just fading away.

The Western Front was no place to try to overcome machine guns and massed artillery with just courage, character and mateship. Soldiers also had to be skilled, well trained and disciplined. Fortunately the AIF rose to its greatest achievements in the final months of the war. The legend was not only preserved, but enhanced. Still, it was a close thing. Bean wrote a separate volume of the official history for 1916 and 1917, and a final two volumes to cover 1918.

Charles Bean observed the *Diggers* throughout the war. His admiration never diminished, although his views were becoming more sober and qualified. It was the inclusion of the exploits of ordinary soldiers that marks his official histories from all others.

After the fighting at Pozieres, he wrote in his diary:

Soldiers aren't the fictions which war correspondents have made them ("heroes") but ordinary men and for an ordinary man ... to go into it again in spite of his natural state of mind and do all they would do is a hundred times finer than the heroics that have been written about the past.

As much as Bean admired the ordinary troops he was not one of them. He was always most comfortable with men of his own kind. He moved mostly among the senior officers and the headquarters. He was always uncomfortable when trying to mix with soldiers. It was not until 1918 that he realised that he had not got close to the soldiers and their day-to-day experience out of the trenches.

He wrote in his diary:

I have been shy of those men – have done my work from outside as a staff officer, as it were. I don't know if I should have mixed with them more if the unpopularity I gained at Mena had not made me shrink from living among the men. Anyway, I am too self-conscious to mix well with a great mass of men.

So at Brewery Farm, near Querrieu (Somme), where he sat discussing the future of his war museum, he also undertook a study of the soldiers' life in billets. His observations, written into his diary, were later transcribed almost as they stood into a chapter of the official history. It is a unique contribution.

Bean had his heroes, and his great men are to be found in his writing. He also had ideas of the ideal soldier – it often included a private school education, a sportsman, and even 'sons of clergymen'. The young Duntroon officers were admired, and there were great heroes such as Harry Murray and Percy Black. Bean's confidants were Generals Gellibrand, and White. Bean also admired Birdwood, with some qualifications, and had his respect.

Unfortunately Bean went too far with his favourites in 1918. When the selection of a replacement for Birdwood fell to a choice between Brudenell White and John Monash, Bean strongly supported the former. To Bean Monash was not a Britisher; although he was Australian born and bred. It was an episode that did not reflect well on Bean – it was a matter that should not have involved him (or Keith Murdoch). He worked hard to not have Monash appointed because he saw him as quite unsuited. Bean was wrong, and later admitted it.

Bean was the storyteller of Australia's part in the war. No matter how well he did his job, it still relied upon there being a great story to tell. He said as much at the conclusion of publishing his final volume (*Bulletin* – 27 May 1942).

He wrote:

In my own work, the theme that moved me most was, I think, the situation of the 6th Brigade at Bullecourt in the closing dusk of May 3 1917, when its remnant was left alone facing whatever was to come. Next to that, perhaps, the charge at the Nek in Gallipoli ..., or the fight of young Arblaster and his men on the exposed flank at Fromelles, or the marvellous story of Mt St Quentin and the last fight of all at Montbrehain; and, of course, the records of the Anzac landing and the frightful experiences of Pozieres team with matter that could not help stirring their historian.

It was not victory that stirred Bean, but fighting quality and character. Young Arblaster (a Duntrooner), just mentioned, was one of Bean's young heroes. Throughout his volumes we find many of his others – Sir Brudenell White and Sir William Bridges (he later wrote a book about them – *Two Men I Knew*); Sir John Gellibrand; The Leane brothers; the Howell-Prices; Percy Black and Harry Murray VC. All these possessed his Britisher-Australian spirit.

Charles Bean saw his life as a pursuit of *The Truth*. If he sought Truth in organised religion, he was obviously disappointed. He was not a conventionally religious man. He certainly sought truth in his writing. He was meticulous in his research of detail. He discounted Frank Hurley's great war photographs because they were not 'truth' (Hurley had to set many of them up).

This quest for 'truth' was a continuing one, and sometimes reveals him to have been a bit of an eccentric. He probably enjoyed attention for the opportunity it gave him to project his views; otherwise he was quite shy. He rejected offers of a knighthood, but accepted doctorates. Money seems to have meant little to him and, as a consequence, he was quite short in his later years.

Although a driven man, he did have the intellectual flexibility to seek new directions and to be able to change his opinions. Some of his earlier expressions could have branded him racist or elitist today; but as his journey unfolded he modified his views, and became wise in many of his attitudes.

Bean was interested in the 'ordinary' Australian. His Official History mentions 8000 men and women in his narrative; many of them junior officers and other ranks. Without looking, I do not expect to find a single private soldier mentioned in the British official history.

Many said that he paid too little attention to the work of the staff, and he said too little about the strategy, technology and tactics. This may be unfair. To me it seems that all this can be found. However it is a bit lost in the enormous level of detail that Bean provides on the area on which he concentrates; the Australian soldier and the frontline action. By whatever measure you use, I believe that Charles Bean's histories serves its people far better than any one else's history does for them.

Of Bean and the War Memorial, I think that his greatest work was done before the Memorial actually opened in 1941. It was a 20-year effort to get the Memorial accepted, approved and open. Quite simply, without his vision and drive, the Memorial would not have come into existence. Of course he harnessed support in high places, and he was greatly aided by many people, most of them ex-servicemen, but is doubtful if any of them would have said anything other than it was his guidance that finally bore fruit.

There is an underlying tragedy in Charles Bean's later life. He was a man with high expectations of his Australians when they went off to face (what he called) *the great test* of war. He believed that he found his great stories and his mighty young heroes. But ideals and vision must have been hard to maintain throughout the carnage on the Western Front.

Bean's brother was wounded in the war, and a favourite cousin and many friends were killed. On 24 August 1916 he wrote of his cousin:

Jack ... brought the shocking news that Leo was dead. It is too sad and dreadful for words. A man of the open air – the tennis court, the cricket field – Leo is gone. He was never quite suited to the family office – a hard man to find the best profession for. But he found it as a soldier. He was a born leader... (and) a perfect gentleman. When we saw his coffin laid in the ground in a French wheatfield miles behind the battle with great trees on distant hills ... with six more or less close friends standing by the grave and a French farm labourer leaning on his sythe and a French farm woman ... dabbing her eyes with her handkerchief, I couldn't help wondering if it was worth it; whether there is anything gained in this war that justifies such sacrifices.

As the war progressed many of his young heroes were killed – Leane, Gilchrist, Howell-Prices, Black, McSharry, Edgerton, Arblaster, Hammond were some on the long tragic list. Even when he wrote a book of his two heroes – Bridges and White; he was writing of men killed in the two world wars.

There is little doubt that Bean became haunted by these losses and particularly how much Australia had lost with the deaths of these men, and that generation. He became absorbed in his memories. For him the First World War never ended.

His own death was slow and sad – he was admitted to Concord Repatriation Hospital in Sydney in 1964; he died on 30 August 1968.

If Bean had not been appointed to accompany the AIF in 1914, he may not have achieved any fame at all. Thank goodness he did not decide to pursue a career in the British Army, and that he decided to come back to Australia, and changed his mind about seeking a job in the Indian or South African civil service.

Whatever we make of Bean's greatest achievements, the Official History, and the Australian War Memorial, we must see that these were not simply the product of a good (even great) historian. Charles Bean was a man with a mission and he worked tirelessly. In his life's work, he provided Australians with something we needed. He has teased out a story from the hardships of pioneering life, and from the horrors of war, that has helped provide us with an identity, a national pride, and a history.

Peter Burness

PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE EXHIBITION OF RELICS AT THE



In late 1952 the AWM Board of Management agreed that there should be no display within the Memorial relating to atrocities or war crimes, but there was a difference of opinion about the tokens of Japanese surrender. Eventually these particular relics were removed from display without public comment.

The imminent arrival in Australia of the first Japanese diplomatic mission since the war in March 1953, provided a focus of substantial anti-Japanese feeling in the community. In this instance the AWM was criticised for having removed various Japanese relics off display in an apparent attempt not to give offence to the Japanese. These accusations were strongly denied by the AWM.

CEW Bean then the Chairman of the Board, regretted the controversy, and while he also regretted the change in established Memorial practice, he accepted the majority view of the Board and the surrender items were returned to display.

Bean now recognised that he could not simply assume that Board members and key members of staff understood the principles on which the Memorial had been founded. He alone remained of that band that had created the Memorial and need to set down the guiding philosophy or else increasingly the Memorial would depart from the spirit which had made it unlike any other war museum. Bean undertook to draw up a series of principles that would regulate Memorial policy relating to exhibitions and he presented this document to the Board meeting on 16 April 1953. ("Here Is Their Spirit A History of the Australian War Memorial 1917-1990." Michael Mc Kernan)

The eleven principles drawn up by Bean and which remain extant at the AWM today are detailed below:

" 1.The collection is one of 'relics' and not of 'trophies' (i.e. articles exhibited merely as emblems of victories). It commemorates the brave sacrifice of those who fought, not their conquests - Gallipoli was a defeat but infinitely worthy of commemoration by both sides.

2. Anything tending to glorification of war, or boasting of victory, is therefore contrary to the spirit of the Memorial.

3. So is anything tending to perpetuate enmities which time would heal, or under-rating the qualities of former opponents, or making fun of them.

4. Propaganda labels, such as 'Hun' for 'German' must not be used in captions or guide-book.

5. If an exhibit illustrates some heroic deed by an opponent this should be referred to in terms similar to those which would be used concerning our own people.

6. The language or guide-book and captions should be simple, avoiding exaggeration but letting the facts tell the story.

7. Care must be taken that the point of interest in a relic is not missed in caption or guide-book. In most cases the accession register will give the clue to this point. In some cases research may be needed.

8. Pictures of events drawn or painted by eye-witnesses or participants are records (or even relics) as well as being pictures, and the captions and guide-book should mention that the artist was present or took part in the event depicted.

9. Captions, guide-book descriptions, explanatory markings on plan models, etc., which have met their purpose for a generation which remembers the events should be revised when those events recede in memory. If possible the cases or 'windows' dealing with a campaign or other phase should contain a nutshell account, and small photographs, maps, etc., if these can make clearer the 'background' of that group of exhibits.

10. The system of indexing, identifying, locating, and keeping track of all relics and other exhibits should be made, as far as possible, mistake-proof; and in any movement of them special precautions should be taken by a senior officer to ensure that the change of location is duly recorded against each item in the accession register. As soon as possible the register should be duplicated.

11. The staff should include at least one senior officer with deep and wide knowledge of the history of Australia's wars, who should be responsible for advising as to the interest or importance of relics. "{*Guide Post* June 2001)