ANZAC HERO, POLICE LEGEND

An adventure like no other

Laurence J Harvey
ANZAC HERO, POLICE LEGEND

The True Life Story of William Harvey, MC, JP

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Preface & Introduction

It had been a wet winters day in the year of 1964, rainstorms were sweeping the small sleepy and isolated city of Perth, Western Australia. I was in my bedroom finishing my day’s homework when I heard the telephone ring, followed by my father’s voice.

Hello, Ted Harvey speaking, oh hi dad, how are you going!

After a brief conversation with his dad my father came to my room and asked me if I wanted to go and see old Granddad.
You bet! I replied with excitement.
It was always a treat to visit my dear old Granddad with my dad because they always talked about cool stuff and I could just hover in the background and listen!
Within half an hour of that phone call my father and I were standing at Granddad’s front door and my life was about to be enriched forevermore.

Old Granddad was a humble and gentle white headed old man.
You know the sort! The same old guy who might be your Grandad!
This dear old man was the sort of man of which we don’t seem to hear of anymore!
He was a man of a long gone era, an era when people did life just a little different to the way we do it today.

WILLIAM HARVEY, MC was a gentle man with the unbelievable ability to meet life’s little and big challenges as they came and went.
William’s nickname, to those who knew him, was “BIG BILL.”
I am sure that by the time we have finished this true story you will agree that “BIG BILL” was an appropriate name for this toughest of tough men.

William asked that his life story not be told, quote. “Till long after I’m gone.”
That wish has been granted.
The following story is true and is as correct as can be determined through our research which included many interviews with his living relatives, historians, authors and many other folk from overseas, here in Australia and in particular, here in Western Australia.

Research into Will’s life has taken us on a trip of some 15 years duration, it has been full of adventure, curiosity, sadness and pleasure and it has given us a total respect for those who have come before us in this great land.
The other side of our research involved travelling to the beauty of where most of his life evolved.
Western Australia has a particular raw beauty about it, from the southern township of Albany with its coastline being a spectacular awakening of the senses. Then of course there is the far away and stunning outback area known as the ‘Mid West’ and naturally very much more. This story will also take us to the once forbidding giant Karri forests of the southwest whilst taking us through a most turbulent time in world history in the far away southwestern towns of Western Australia. I hope the following description of Western Australia will fill your mind with wonder and I hope the following story helps you with your understanding of the old Australian character.

William Harvey, MC was a member of a very exclusive club of less than 3000 Australians and his life story is one of true Australian greatness, yet he sought no notice.
His name stands with the names of other great Australians. Australians like His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery, AC, CVO, MC Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and General Peter Cosgrove, AC, MC.

His life records, family and friend’s memories, and this story are what are left of William Harvey, MC.

Two meanings behind the names William and Harvey are:
“Resolute guardian” and “Eager for battle; strong and worthy”

“There just may be something in that!”
Chapter One
Where did he come from?

William Harvey was born on the 21st of December in the year of 1886. He was one of eleven children, seven boys and four sisters, William was third born and lived and grew up in the ‘East End’ of London in the later years of the Victorian era of the British Empire.

He was a bright young student who was meticulous in his affairs and he had a fantastic outlook on life. He was to show great restraint in his life and he would remember only getting ‘really angry’ just once in all of his 77 years of life on earth.

It all started for real in the year of 1904 when Will (as he was to become known to his family) was 18 years old and waiting to see what the world had to throw at him. One thing is for sure! He could not have imagined his life ahead in his wildest dreams! Or maybe we should say his ‘wildest nightmares?’

He was the son of a well respected London Metropolitan Policeman and he was very well educated for an ‘East Ender’ of the times, his Father and his Grandfather were also named ‘William.’

William had served an apprenticeship as a bookbinder and machine-ruler and he was employed by the ‘Essex Times’ office. He worked at his trade in London and Hertford however, he had always dreamed of a life of adventure rather than the life of a bookbinder living in a place that he described as “Dirty old London” in the late Victorian era.

Living in East London could be extremely tough and demeaning with a very rough reputation, however it could still produce gentlemen amongst the rabble and hard done-by that the East End had become infamous for! Will was to carry self-discipline with him for his entire life and he would become known as a strict disciplinarian when at work, however, he was kindly in his nature.

He also had a keen sense of humour that he later developed to fit into the Australian way of life. His interest in military matters in the days of his youth had always harboured a deep dream within his mind, a dream to get out of Britain and have a taste of adventure in the then opening new world. A new life away from the dirt of the coal fires that powered the then modern but dirty old city of London and its surrounding areas.

William would be away from West Ham, County Essex and his loved ones for 9 years in his first stint abroad, he would return a man who had completely lost
his innocents, for what he was about to endure would almost certainly mentally and physically kill or severely wound a lesser human.

Around the year of 1906 two things would be released onto the world stage, one being the ‘Lee Enfield Mark-3 .303 rifle’ the other was 20 year old William Harvey, both were to become very familiar friends, and very soon.

For now though Will was in the photographic studios of his friend’s father; old man Curzon owned ‘Curzon studios’ situated at 115 The Grove, Stratford, Will was well dressed to show that he was indeed a handsome young man. Dressed in the suit of the day he stood a tall ‘six foot one inch’ in his youth.

With a style showing impeccable dress sense including gold fob watch and chain it was obvious that this young fella meant business and he was going places. It was in the studio where Will was to let his ambitions be known to the old photographer. When viewing the resulting photograph later in life he would remember back to this time with a small laugh at how naive he was at that point in his past life. He would remember back and say that he should have listened to old Curzon.

Well, well, young William, where do you think life is going to take you? Asked the old man.

Hello Mr. Curzon. I have spoken at length with my father and we agree that it is time for me to see a bit of the world!

Well where do you think you are off to then? Curzon asked.

I have joined ‘His Majesty’s Armed Forces’ and the word is we will probably end up in India! India! Replied a startled Curzon.

Are you sure that is what you really want to do? Asked the photographer! Well yes, I think I need to get out of England and broaden my horizons, or I will be stuck here forever! At least they will feed me in the Army he replied with a laugh.

I can tell you through my own experience young William that it is indeed a tough life in the Army, but knowing you, you will survive!

Yes Sir, it may not be an easy life but I really am bored with life as a bookbinder and I cannot see myself growing old doing that!
William! Listen to me! This is the point! At least you have good odds at growing old as a bookbinder!

Quite possibly, however I will take my chances because I feel that if I don’t go now I will be trapped here forever!

Ok then but for now we must live for the moment, so please step up to the stage and we will get under way and see if we can preserve some memories for your grandkids aye!

Then with a flash of magnesium the date with the photographer was over and that photo memory was now a frail, but treasured item.

After picking up his photographic memory the following week young Will reported to the local recruitment office and received his training orders. He was to be in the 3rd Essex Volunteer Battalion. This Battalion had its HQ at “The Cedars”, Portway, West Ham (now part of London) that had been by coincidence; the home of the prison reformer, Elizabeth Fry.

It seems Will served one or two years in the Volunteers before departing overseas for full time service around 1906-1908, by then the 3rd Volunteer Battalion had become the 6th Battalion, Essex Regiment (Territorial Force) at which point the Volunteers became known as the Territorials, William was now a full time regular soldier attaining the rank of Sergeant.
Chapter Two

India

For the first time Young Will and his fellow soldier chums where aboard a steamer and on their way to an exotic port via the Suez Canal, so at last adventure was a reality.

He acquired a steel sea chest around this time and that chest travelled with him around the world for many years to come. It started its life full of his personal military gear and ended up as a very special chest full of his life’s memories, but more of that later.

It was around this time that William became great friends with many of his army mates, and in particular one young bloke who had grown up in a place of dreams, wonder, mystery and hope.

That place was “Western Australia” and in particular a town north of Perth named Newcastle that was a small farming town in the Avon Valley through which the beautiful Swan River gently meanders. Newcastle (Toodyay) was about 50 miles north east of Perth, and Perth was on the Western seaboard of that mysterious “Land Down Under”. This young ‘rat bag’ Aussie was to influence William and redirect his life until the year of 1914. All that is known of this handsome young man is that his surname was Strahan. ‘Handlebars’ was his nickname and he was an upright young man of 6ft 1 and a ½ inches. He had the most piecing ‘brilliant blue eyes’, and of course that wonderful waxed moustache that was to encourage the nickname “Handlebars”

A young ‘Handlebars Strahan’ was a very attractive personality to many of his army mates, the young ladies of the day also had a liking for him as much for his different outlook on life as for his ability to make light of a situation. He also possessed that wonderful Australian humour with sayings that the English boys and girls had never heard before. At times he would say things that would make all persons around him stop what they were doing and just look at him until he explained what he had just said. Things like “strike me blue cobber”, “Yeah mate, that would be bonzer”, “stone the bloody crows” etc. He was different in a way that the British Army was not at all used to. If he got a bee in his bonnet he was prone to let fly at any officer whom he judged to have misguided views, so young Strahan’ was in for a ‘bit of bother’, British
army style. It was this attitude that would get him and our William into trouble just a few times.

The Essex Regiments movements in William’s time can be traced back through the following records, however where he went and what he did in this time of his life is largely unknown but for just a few snippets and memories.

The 1st Essex movements in the period 1908-11 were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26/12/1906</td>
<td>Arrived Thayetmyo, Burma. 2 Companies detached to Meiktila and 2 Companies detached to Mandalay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/11/1908</td>
<td>Detachments embarked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/12/1908</td>
<td>Rest of Battalion embarked at Rangoon on the &quot;Hardinge&quot; for Calcutta en route for Sitapur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/12/1908</td>
<td>Arrived Sitapur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/03/1909</td>
<td>HQ and half Battalion at Ranikhet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31/10/1909</td>
<td>HQ and half Battalion at Quetta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/11/1909</td>
<td>Remaining half Battalion left Sitapur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/11/1909</td>
<td>Arrived Quetta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/11/1913</td>
<td>Embarked Karachi, half Battalion to Mauritius on the &quot;Soudan&quot;, other half to Durban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/08/1914</td>
<td>First World War. Mobilization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This same regiment would see active service on Gallipoli in 1915!!

With very few records of the time remaining it is impossible to trace exact movements so maybe it went a little like this.

Finally their ship arrived at the exotic port of Rangoon in Burma so at last they were away from mother England and ready for the adventure of a lifetime. It must have been around this time that the boys had been recruited into the famed British Army’s ‘Royal Horse Artillery.’ Excitement along with shock and numbness would have been with them as they took their first steps into the
mysterious ‘Far East’, never before had they seen such sights of poverty combined with English wealth of the times amongst so many people.

From the wharf they where marched to the train station along with horses, food, medical supplies and ammunition etc as they were now heading to the northwest, straight into no mans land for a white person. North in India for the troop in those days would Sitapur in the very north of India then onto Quetta not too far from the infamous ‘North-West Frontier’.

The ‘North-West Frontier’ was and still is a very hostile place that sits at the western end of the Himalayas and has been a main trade route over many centuries, however the mountain passes of this area are a trade bottleneck! That trade bottleneck encouraged the ‘War Lord’ mentality of robbers, thugs and thieves who have traditionally taken to others with a stick or gun and seized goods by pillaging traders for all time in the Afghan area. The border region of Afghanistan, Pakistan and India today was then the only land trade route to Europe from India and all land trade had to go by way of the infamous ‘Khyber Pass’.

Through to the ‘north eastern side’ of the Indian Sub-Continent by rail, the humidity would have been an unreal experience for the Englishmen new to the ‘Far East’. Everything would move along a ‘well oiled’ military path with stopovers for more training and supplies as the British Army moved around the Sub Continent and surrounding areas.

‘Training bloody training’ complained Handlebars! Little did they know that it was here that William in particular would learn two things that would help shape his destiny! Day in and day out it was training on horseback using the lance for pig sticking through to the expert handling of artillery carriages and above all, how to use a handgun and a rifle.

Once the boys were trained up to handle horses in all conditions it was off to pistol training. Week after week went by and still the lads hadn’t even fired a pistol in India. The unit commander was always instructing the boys to point the finger at the target and say bang. ‘Yeah, yeah!’ Strahan would say but when are we going to shoot a bloody real pistol in this man’s army? Strahan! You won’t need a pistol in this mans army because the way you are going you’ll be spending all your time in the cooler, my dear friend from the “Colonies!”

Over a period of time they moved further north and still further into the unknown aboard steam trains that travelled at speeds of about 25 miles an hour for days at a time. This was an eye opener for the young men of the unit for it was the first time they had seen this sort of countryside, and what a sight it would have been! Through the Punjab (land of five rivers) and huge fertile
plains that would stretch from horizon to horizon, the likes that Will had never seen or had imagined before!

The train would rattle along day after day with the same sound occasionally broken by a bridge or tunnel. They had travelled across wide rivers and through mountain passes and had now left the humidity of the tropics way behind them. Within weeks the troops were in ‘no-mans-land’ and finally they were near their destination.

‘Bloody Hell’ exclaimed Handlebars as they surveyed the horizon. I don’t know if I can live here for long!

Dust in their hair, dust in their uniforms and worst of all dust in their throats! It was here that Will and the boys of the Royal Horse Artillery would operate to protect British interests. Day after day it was the ‘same thing’ that sameness without certain comforts then turned into month after month of the ‘same thing’, then year after year with nowhere to go outside of the isolated camp area, nowhere to go but out on patrol. However, it was in this camp that the men had a lot of fun both on and off duty practicing with the lance at the noble sport of pig sticking which was the trooper’s term for hunting food whilst on horseback with a long spear designed to kill an opponent.

Pig sticking was the practice that would put white-faced fear into the darkest skin of any opponent! This was serious stuff as it was giving the men vital skills that had been a British Military tradition for many centuries.

Will and ‘Handlebars’ had many good laughs together as some men would unexpectedly ‘come a cropper’, leading to much delight, laughing and clapping by the onlookers, however they all knew it was potential war and the lance was designed for one reason. It was around this time that William had a splendid large black and white photograph taken of himself in his red tunic and pith helmet standing, lance in hand, beside a beautifully toned horse. Unfortunately that and many other photographs have been lost to time.

The army would purchase goats, sheep and crops from the native people so most relationships with the locals were friendly and warm however, the thugs were ever present and they would terrorise many of the local peasants so there was always work to be done.

Then there was the competition and friendly rivalry of both the rifle and pistol range. Understanding and realizing that the last means of your personal defence would be the trusted army issue .38-calibre revolver would also help to ensure good results.

William, being a particularly bright individual soon realised that to know how to use a handgun at the highest level would serve him well no matter what
would confront him in the future and that was a very wise thing for him to do.
At this time in history a gun and a good knife were a part of the kit that a world
adventurer would carry. To know firearms was a necessity in untamed lands and
the boys knew that sooner or later the big one would come and they could be
fighting for their lives.

Early one morning the bugle awoke the camp and as per normal it was out of a
stretcher in a tent and onto the dirt parade ground for the morning parade. Out
front was the Sgt/Major and it seemed that ‘the old bloke’ was in a grumpy
mood. You Watson, straighten up that jacket! Get back Ford and don’t move
forward until I tell you, do you hear me? I’ve had enough of you girls! In future
if you are not on parade on time and not spick and span then a few of you are
going to have a taste of the cooler! Stunned silence for a time, then as clear and
as crisp as the morning air came a reply in a strong Aussie accent. Yak, Yak,
Bloody Yak! That’s all you bloody well do is Yak! A distinct Australian voice
from the ranks! Suddenly there was a riotous uproar of laughter from every
soldier on the parade ground. That is every soldier but the Sgt/Major. Right
‘that’s it’ yelled the Sgt/Major with an obvious unhappy snarl in his voice. Who
said that? Silence fell upon the troop as everybody tried in vain to control fits of
laughter. ‘I said’, who said that? Again no answer as the men composed
themselves whilst standing to attention with broad smiles on their faces with the
odd giggle coming from the ranks. Then the answer came in the unmistakable
Australian twang ‘I cannot tell a lie, sergeant bloody major, it was bloody well
me! Strahan! I’ve had enough of you, so you my man are going to visit the
cooler for fourteen days! ‘Oh’ what, uproar from within the ranks as the boys
saw the joke as just that. From that day on the men saw the raw and harsh
discipline of the Sgt/Major. Two weeks! Oh come on Sar-Major that’s too steep
exclaimed Will in a rare show of defiance to his next up in the ranks! Shut up
Sgt Harvey or you will end up in there with him.

The weather was freezing cold in winter with rain, snow and freezing a wind!
Wind cold and cutting which was something that William could barely handle,
however for the Aussie the cold was helping him make a decision, a decision
that would eventually lead Strahan and his mate William to do something that
would change the course of their lives forever.

It is believed Will’s horse artillery battery had the task (possibly with the
cavalry) of protecting a section of the British railway, which was most prone to
attack. It was commonplace for the tribesmen to blow a track with explosives or
to attack a train with old muskets and an assortment of modern arms and
explosives attacking both on foot and horseback.
However, it was the artillery that the bandits most feared so the British made sure that the threat of mobile guns was always there! Pulling heavy cannon and ammunition through a primitive environment would have been tough work and no doubt one would imagine many men would walk away from it all just for a change of scenery and a new lifestyle! The “British Raj” was infamous for its iron fist rule and for its discipline of any soldier or soldiers caught stepping out of line and it was well known that its punishment could have fatal results for anybody who even thought about going against the rules!

It was said that the boys could see no future in being in India chasing and fighting primitive tribes for the empire whilst being such a long, long way from the modern world for years at a time, so they hatched a plan to go A.W.L, ‘Absent Without Leave’. A.W.L carried a huge stigma back then so it was a subject to be aware of for the rest of your natural life.

It was suggested that Strahan talked Will into making a break for it by implying that the pair should head for Australia. This break for freedom must have been a huge undercover effort just to get to the nearest port (one may suspect that they simply had an extended break that may have become an overdue leave?) This escape to the new world of Australia would be William’s life long secret and he kept this matter to himself and his closest family until three months before his death, however his life was extremely full and India during his days in Australia was just a very small part of his life. At the time A.W.L was a very serious matter to the British brass and the men knew that their decision was not to be taken lightly. If it had been desertion in the face of the enemy then that would have been another matter altogether, the English army had been known to execute men for committing such an offence and they also had a long, long memory.

The plan was developed and executed to perfection and soon the two men were in a Sub-Continent port and on their way by steamer to Australia, Albany on the south coast of Western Australia to be precise!
Chapter Three
The Outback, Down under

From now on we can trace Will’s movements with much more certainty due to archived Australian records and personal contacts, however we have not been able to find his name on shipping records of the time.

In the year of 1911 both Will and Strahan were disembarking the steamer at the most magnificent natural harbour their eyes had ever seen. The boys figured that they had seen the end of ‘old sour puss’ (Commanding Officer) and the fact that they would never see him or the British Army again pleased them to no end!

With a few pounds in their pockets the boys enjoyed a free life in a free country so after a few good days exploring the history of the beautiful town of Albany they were ready to explore more of this huge open land.

Railways, like most countries in the modern expanding world were linking Australia so it was by rail that Will and Strahan would travel to Perth. Northwest to Perth from Albany in 1911 was forest for the entire trip of some 250 miles (450Km approx), forest, forest and more forest with huge stands of trees the likes of which William had never seen before, in fact he had never even imagined such forests possible.

Strahan would tell Will of far larger trees to the west of the rail line some 100 miles away from them.

These monster trees were commonly known as Karri and the mighty Karri is a legendary hardwood that only grows in the southwest of Western Australia and was then a common height of some 60-80 meters.

Little did William know then but he would live amongst those Karri forests for ten years in his later life!

For now though the part day and part night trip to Perth was one of looking over their shoulders until the reality of what they had pulled off had sunk in. There was no need to worry about A.W.L in Australia for the people in this land were very different from those folk that Will had become accustomed to. These Aussies were carefree and were also free of the troubles that had always happened ‘over there’!

Finally the city of Perth came into view and Will was a little shocked to find this tiny outpost of the British Empire nothing more than a large town of some 60 thousand people (Statistics 1909).

Gold had been discovered in the desert parts of this huge baron state instantly triggering a large population explosion as many adventurous and desperate
people from all corners of the globe were lured to this tiny ‘frontier outpost’ of civilization. William mentioned to Strahan that he really thought the North West of India was as far away as you could get! But Perth! Wow! This was unbelievable. After a few weeks in Perth Will started realizing that he was made for this unexplored free land so he and his mate found their way to the developing wheat belt areas north east of Perth and began working as contractors for local farmers. Digging wells, building dams by hand and land clearing (scrub rolling) with bullock teams was ‘bloody hard work’ but it was good honest old fashion work so it was suiting these two single men right down to the ground.

Handlebars Strahan introduced William to members of his family of which one member was an older man some 17 years Will’s senior. His name was William Henry Strahan and ‘William Henry’ was a true blue Australian character of whom William would become very attached to. Born in 1869 William Henry had been in one of the first Australian ‘Light Horse Battalions’ in Western Australia, however in 1911 he had retired from the Army and was now an orchardist with some ten children living on a small farming property named “Strathavon.” His property was situated near a small town in the Avon Valley to the north east of Perth; this town was named Newcastle and it would change its name to Toodyay in 1911 so as not to be confused with Newcastle in New South Wales. William Henry’s wife’s maiden name was Ruth Ellen and her grandmother was the first white woman to set foot in the Swan River Colony in the year of 1829.

William had dreamed of farming a ‘free land’ so he was working hard to buy a farm to grow wheat and that was going to be that! Whilst working and living in the bush William once asked Handlebars if he would bring some vegetables back from the next trip to town because he was getting sick of kangaroo meat for every meal. Handlebars reply was a strong and serious “You will have to toughen up if you want to survive in this country Will”.

In the years of 1912-13 William was employed by the Coomer family farming at Wongan Hills, he also worked in Government employment in a survey party working in rail gangs in the district of Wongan Hills (250 kilometres north east of Perth) and he, like the others worked through the virgin bush to Mullewa to the northwest of ‘Wongan’ on the new rail link to join those two wheat towns. With a small crew of ‘well disciplined’ men William would work from sun up till sundown seven days a week with the only breaks being around the campfire at night. All day swinging an axe, blasting stumps and using horses and bullocks to dig up and clear away the debris of the Australian Mallee bush.
(known to have very stubborn root structures) would be tough going with modern machinery, let alone by hand! These people were tough and hardy like we modern people may not fully understand?

After that job was finished William found himself back on the land contracting to farmers and dating young ladies from Wongan Hills down to Goomalling about 50 kilometres to the south.

By now Will was keener than ever to buy land and spend the rest of his life as a quite wheat farmer because he understood the value of grain to the empire and a life of peace and quite would suit him right down to the ground. It was a great dream, just didn’t quite work out that way!

Very soon 1913 became 1914 and Will appears to have had a love interest in a young lady from Goomalling, although he had only been in Western Australia a short time he had become a very popular young man with many of the local people which will become evident as his story unfolds. Work and play went on for most of that year but the Aussies were becoming concerned about the European situation as all but the ‘Black Fella’ had their origins from that area and many Aussies had families living in England and Europe.

Drought had hit the land very hard in 1914 in the West Australian wheatbelt. In fact the year of 1914 was the driest season on record in WA and it held that unenviable record for the rest of the twentieth century. Life as people knew it was about to change for the Aussies and the rest of the world because all nations were soon to be in it up to their necks. Unfortunately it is around this time in William’s life that all traces of “Handlebars Strahan” are lost to history.

Then war was declared! “Well that’s torn it now” remarked Strahan for without warning and out of the blue came the call, young and old men were called upon to enlist to protect and save mother England and her Kingdom.

Well Will, that’s it, in for a penny in for a pound! What do you reckon? ‘Yeah’ I’m in, said Will.

With a bleak outlook on the land many men would join up just for a job and that ever-present human trait of adventure. One can imagine the saying ‘what we need here is a bloody good war’, that will deal with the drought!
By now William Henry Strahan was forty five years old and he had decided he would like to do his bit by offering to train the younger men to prepare for war however, because he had a wife and ten children he wished not to leave Australia. He had just wanted to do his small bit for the country and mother England by instructing recruits in Australia. This was to be a fateful decision.

So off they went to Perth for the first call, William Henry Strahan (Army No.199) is believed to have made it to the recruitment centre with the belief that he would not be leaving Australia or his family, however Will didn’t get there in time so he missed out on that first call-up.

One would imagine that the recruiting officer who signed Strahan up was of the belief that the 45-year-old man was only to be accepted for the sole purpose of training younger men. William Henry was to be betrayed by the authorities because they made him a Sergeant then put a rifle in his hand and sent him off to war. William Henry Strahan had been betrayed by the officialdom of the time.

Will hung around for while wondering what was going on, then within two weeks and completely out of the blue came the second call “more men wanted,” so now Will was in and a new adventure was about to begin.
Chapter Four
Off to war

William Harvey was to become a private in the original 16th Battalion AIF and he would be trained as a signaller. Facts point out that the West Australian 16th Battalion had something like 10 thousand men pass through its ranks in the four years of bloody slaughter to come (1915-1918) and very few of the original men would survive this ‘encounter with fate’ to tell their story. William would be in the war from 25th April 1915 and he would still be standing tall on the last day and unbelievably he would still be in total control of his body and his mind; human endurance to the upmost as there can be no greater stress on any human being than 4 years of mindless bloody slaughter.

It was now time for William to cover his past tracks because part of the statements required on his enlistment form was whether he was or had been a member of the British Armed Forces. It seems it may have been a time when the Government could be fussy so it may have been possible that the army put a local age limit of 25 years of age on the call up at this station for those who would be serving overseas?

Will’s enlistment records show that he had crossed out some answers and somehow his age was put down as 25.9. Years. The 5 then being changed to 4 and his birth date was written down as 21/12/88. In fact his birth date was 21/12/86. This fits nicely with a 25-year age limit for those who were destined to become combatants and/or he was covering his tracks?

As is common knowledge these mistakes seem to fit with the times when a lot of men had nothing to lose but their lives, so they simply changed a few things to ensure that they were accepted.

Question 10
Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty’s Forces, with Ignominy, or as Incorrigible and Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or with disgrace from the Navy?
Answer. Yes. Crossed out and replaced with No.

Description of …William Harvey …… on Enlistment

Age…. 24 years 9 months                      Distinctive Marks
Height...6.... feet…. ½…. Inches.              Mole right shoulder.
Weight…. 142...lbs.                             Small tattoo (rose) left forearm.
Complexion…. Fair…
Eyes….Grey….
Hair…. Brown.
Date......... 21/9/1914
Place...Black Boy Hill Camp.

So once again a soldier! This time Australian soldier Number 376
What of the future now?
Will it be all over by the time we get there? Will I ever see my folks again?
All of the expected emotions!
**Australian Imperial Force.**

**Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.**

**No.** 376  
Name: Harvey, William  
Unit:  
Joined on: 21.9.14

**Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.**

1. What is your Name? Harvey, William  
2. Is or were you born in the Parish or Town of  
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalised British Subject?  
4. What is your age?  
5. What is your Trade or Calling?  
6. Are you, or have you been an Apprentice?  
7. Are you married?  
8. Who is your next of kins? (Address to be stated)  
9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power?  
10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with disgrace or any other reason, or have you been dismissed with disgrace from the Navy?  
11. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Navy, the Militia, the Military Reserve, the Territorial Forces, or the Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge.  
12. Have you stated the whole of your previous Service?  
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service?  
14. (For married men and widowers with children)  
   Do you understand that no Separation Allowance will be paid to you either before or after embarkation during your term of service?  

William Harvey  

I, William Harvey, hereby declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.  

*(a) No.  
(b) No.  
(c) No.*

Date: 21.9.14  
Signature of Person Enlisted.
Within days Will and William Henry Strahan would be going their separate ways so it was party time for the next few days then Will and Henry and the others of the Sixteenth Battalion left Blackboy Hill training camp in Western Australia by steamship for Broadmeadows in Victoria. Will was posted to learn the art of signalling while old William Henry was to be trained as an infantryman.

A soldier would have a short life expectancy as a signalman in those days of primitive communications that tended to put any and every signaller in grave danger! At that time in history for an enemy to score a signaller was most definitely a job well done! If the signal was interrupted by whatever means then an army could win or lose the upper hand depending on who does what. It would be a simple case of shoot the messenger to stop or hinder an advance or disrupt the enemy. Signallers would have to lay cable over open ground for the then new technology of field telephone communications exposing them to all sorts of danger.

William would learn how to stand on a hill and send signals with two flags. Probably, just probably, if you did that you may attract unwanted attention.

He also became an excellent communicator with good speech and a very good understanding of the written word; in fact he passed first class at the first Commonwealth School of Signalling at a later date.

Within three months of joining the Australian Army at ‘Black Boy Hill’ the boys set sail for Egypt (22/12/14) aboard HMAT A40 “Ceramic”.

By now Will was a Lance Corporal and Signaller in charge of watch on the bridge of that troop ship.

From Melbourne to Albany, the Ceramic had then joined the armada of other ships loaded to the hilt with troops, horses, feed, fuel, ammunition and above all hope. The ships final stop with their cargo of soldiers would be Alexandria in Egypt. It was in Egypt where William would write many letters back to Australia.
Dear Will,

I'm sure you have heard that the second contingent are camped at Helipolis, which is four miles from Cairo, and about thirteen miles from Giza, and the Pyramids.

This is the suburb of Cairo, practically a new town, and unlike most Oriental towns, very clean. All the buildings are good, some small and mean, and some of them, such as the Church, mosques, hotels, are very fine indeed.

The Heliopolis Palace Hotel is a magnificent building, built for Yankee millionaire visitors by the hand of it, now used as a military hospital.

One of the South Australians of the 16th died there last week, that is the second since we left Melbourne. Now of the West boys in this battalion have rolled up yet, they are unwilling to do that before we get to Germany or Turkey.

We have had a small amount of gas and nightfiring.
Training since we landed, we started ten weeks behind the first contingent. Now we are in the same Division as the New Zealand first contingent, (NZ. & A.) in the same Army Corps as the 1st Australian Division.

There are hundreds of Turkish prisoners in Cairo, and the two pontoon boats captured on the Canal the day after we passed through on the "Ceramic.

I went out to the camp at Alexandria soon after we came here, saw Jack Coomer and several others from the West.

They disappeared from Cairo about a fortnight ago, have not heard where they went yet. The bulk of the first crowd are still at the Pyramids, I will probably go with us.

They gave us orders to sharpen our bayonets last week, that looks like business, hope it will be soon. All the boys are getting fed up with the dust and sand storms. Here, except the "Broken Hillites" who tell us that "you want to go to the Hill" to see dust, this is nothing, but I am satisfied.
Have seen all the sights in and around Cairns, and am quite willing to leave.

There are several Worgan "yes" in this crowd. Walker, from Balli, is a signaller in N. Qld. Ogden, a youngster who was working at Tlorish's, played football against Worgan is a cyclist attached to us at Balli. We got on well as a signaller. Peter Jackson, who did that clearing for Teton, several others are all here.

Edgar is tip-top, the best shot in his boy. I'm happy as a dog with two tails. He wishes to be remembered to you. Hayes is still sick.

Hope Forest Glen is still improving. Nearly time you had all that timber burnt up. Have you struck oil yet.

Will be pleased to hear from you at any time, don't be afraid to put small details in, they are all interesting to us.

Sorry to have kept you waiting so long for this, I have been too busy. Spending the 'two bob' a day they allow us to draw here. The "Wousers" don't run the show.
Like many other soldiers of the time William would write of his daily life in one of four handmade leather bound diaries recording the day to day battles that he would face and live through. (These diaries were later handed to the Returned Services League, Anzac House in Perth after William’s death for safe keeping, never to be seen again.)
Meanwhile, William Henry Strahan was a bit of a poet and he was to write the following Hymn at some stage before or on his way to Gallipoli?

As is now Australian legend the men did what had to be done in Egypt and William was promoted to full corporal. Soon it became April under the pyramids and the pace of life was starting to pick up even more than it had in the past few months.

The word was that it would be the ‘Turks’ that the Aussies would face however, very little was known of the ‘Turk’ and few Aussies had ever seen such a person from this part of the world until their arrival in the Middle East.

Only in the shipping harbours and on the odd occasion in the outback of Australia would an Aussie ever come eye to eye with a Turk or peoples from the east.

The rumours doing the rounds were predicting the Anzac troops would move in April! Those rumours were pointing to the later half of that month and for the first of the forces it would be the 25th of April 1915.
Chapter Five
Gallipoli

The first dead men William saw on that first immortal day were two men covered in blood and lying on the bow of the destroyer “Ribble.”

In the late afternoon on that day No 376 Cpl William Harvey along with many other Anzacs scrambled down the side of the Ribble into wooden and metal rowboats and within seconds they came under intense machine gun fire from the cliffs of the place that was to become known as ‘Anzac Cove’. As the men stood ready to go to the rowboats at the side of the Ribble one digger was over heard saying that the machine gun bullets hitting the side of the armour plating of the destroyer sounded like a ‘Sydney hail storm on a tin roof’. Most of the 16th Battalion infantry were to be with Will and his signallers throughout that fateful long afternoon of the 25th April 1915.

On the way to the shore the men could hear the intense sound of the massive battle going on ‘all over the place’. If you could hear it whistle it had probably gone past you, however there was the ever present deep and dull thud of a large amount of energy in a small heavy package that would rip deep inside the flesh of his mates sitting with him.
He would recall later in his life the horrible and helpless feeling of having his back to the enemy above and behind him. To see the men sitting in front of you lose the top of their heads as machinegun and rifle fire raked across the small wooden and metal craft being rowed to shore must have been horrendous. He recalled keeping his head as low as he could as he rowed at full speed sneaking a look to the side whenever he could.

At one stage of the trip ashore he looked sideways to see what was snagging his oar. To his horror he saw a lifeboat with all aboard dead, smashed to pieces and covered in blood and guts with the whiteness of bone vivid in his mind for many years to come.
The other boat was splintered into what seemed a thousand pieces and the surrounding sea was scarlet red with bullets ripping at its surface as if a pack of sharks were in a feeding frenzy.
A pilot above another landing would report, “The sea was red with blood as far as 50 yards from the shore” such was the terrible carnage of Gallipoli.

Finally Will’s rowboat hit the shoreline, he scrambled over the side and fell straight into a large underwater hole that swallowed him whole. With heavy metalled hob nail boots and being top heavy with his gear he could not get a
grip on the smooth underwater rocks and stones and he struggled for his life just to get ashore. Many other diggers never made it ashore as they drowned in very similar circumstances to Williams landing. Will was soaked to the bone. The only thing not to get wet was his treasured tin of fag’s. Like many other men of his time William had become a chain smoker, full strength of course and that mixed with mustard gas in France would end in a very serious throat condition that would plague him in the following decade. However more of that later!

As he scrambled ashore amongst the dead and dying he could only take refuge in a small V-shaped area in a cliff with just enough room for one man and almost out of sight of the snipers above. Within seconds of his arrival another digger pushed beside him. Sorry mate, I had nowhere to go but here!

Keep down! There’s a sniper up there having a crack at me yelled Will. Just after speaking these words the poor bugger beside him copped one in the chest. He had spotted the sniper above and thought he would get him so he exposed himself for just a brief moment to blaze away, he hadn’t even taken his aim when thud, the force of a bullet flung him backwards and sat him up against the dirt wall of the small shelter.

He had been shot through the lung and as he sat motionless bubbles of blood began frothing from his mouth. Damn! His had it, thought Will. The digger was now bleeding profusely from the chest and mouth, then without warning, he jumped to his feet and ran like hell from their position to a safer part of the beach and he lived to tell his story. As the digger ran along the beach the sniper above shot rapidly at him causing him to take his sight and mind and sight off of William. This was Will’s chance. He sighted his .303 rifle, took careful aim and squeezed the trigger. Just another gunshot amongst many gunshots but his shot hit the Turkish sniper in the head giving Will the opportunity to get up and run at the steep cliffs and hills that lay before the Anzacs on that frightening day.

The Aussies had hung on and they pushed the Turks back enough to gain control of a small beachhead. Slowly that first afternoon crept into an surreal dusk that would eventually turn into a terrifying long, long night of exposure amongst the cliffs and valleys of this strange land. William along with others of the 16th had pushed on up the cliffs and had stopped at a place that would become famously known as Pope’s Hill.

As the first men of the 16th approached the top of one of the many cliffs a Turkish machine gun opened up from the right and was immediately on target
and Aussies started to fall by the dozens. William was pushing ahead when a man came tumbling down a cliff and stopped at his position. This digger had been hit by machinegun fire and had fallen some 5 meters, his body being stopped by a scrubby outcrop. Will grabbed him knowing that he was a goner and rolled him over to see what could be done for him. As he moved this limp digger, he looked into his glazed eyes and was struck cold with the face of his mate Arthur Sullivan (Arthur had been one of his friends from his farming days in the Wongan Hills area). This was the first time that the two mates had laid eyes on each other since their signup days. Will was shaken by this surprise meeting and called for a medic a number of times before he rested Arthur’s head down, blessed him and then quickly moved on. William had gained a great dislike for the machinegun from that day on and later he would take his fury out on such a weapon.

That first terrifying day passed into history only to be followed by the terrifying night of counter attack after attack. The 16th Battalion took the further most inland position of “Pope’s Hill” and found themselves right in the middle of the enemy with Turks to their sides, in front of them and worst of all, Turks behind them. Nowhere was safe and Diggers were constantly falling from the deadly Turkish fire all day and all night.

Corporal William Harvey was promoted acting Sergeant in the field sometime the following day being the 26th April 1915. “Owing to the Signal Officer becoming a casualty on the first day I was in sole command of the 16th Battalion Signallers on Gallipoli as a Sergeant for the duration of my time on the peninsular.” These words came from Will’s official documents and were written in his own hand. At this time it was a fact that a signaller’s life span during this war to end all wars was just days and the likelihood of any signaller getting through four years of carnage was one in a million, such was the carnage of this most vicious conflict.

With days of intense fighting the Aussies were being hit from all angles by Turkish snipers and nowhere was safe. A small group of men from the 16th Battalion were exposed on the side of a hill when a number of Aussies fell like stones. This was the area where old William Henry Strahan was and he had caught sight of where the offending gunfire...
was coming from. His widow Ruth heard later about his heroism.

“Well boys I’ll get that sniper, or he’ll get me” he said as he went out alone.

William Henry Strahan got his man but in turn he was also killed within seconds. The army listed him ‘killed in action’ on the 25\(^{th}\) April 1915, however his family and friends report that he had died on the 27\(^{th}\) April 1915, confusion reigned supreme in those hectic early days of this campaign so only God knows when Henry met his end!

William Henry’s death filtered through to William and the cruel realities of war hit home once again with the death of his old mate, a mate who had taken him into his family and who had been a brother and a father all rolled into one. This kind and gentle 45-year-old man who just wanted to train the young fella’s in Australia was now dead and his wife and her 10 kids no longer had a husband or father.

Within weeks the word had filtered around the trenches that the little fella Simpson (the man with the donkey) was gone. Simpson had been shot in the back by machine gun fire while he was on his way down Shrapnel Gully from the front lines with a wounded Digger on his little donkey. Right next to Simpson at the time he was shot was a signal post so no doubt Will heard the news up front. This machinegun thing was becoming a bit of a thing of hatred for Will so he always respected and learned from them, however he harboured ill will against them for all time (a terrible thing! he would later say).

The 16\(^{th}\), 15\(^{th}\) and the 13th Battalion were to take their positions on the Peninsular at the places known as Pope’s Hill and Quinn’s Post and these famous places would see some of the fiercest fighting of the campaign to knock Turkey out of the war. William who was now known as ‘Big Bill’ Harvey to his mates would spend most of his time at these two front line positions working as the main source of communications between the different trenches that had developed almost over night. Defending these precarious outposts with full force when they were to come under almost continuous Turkish attack was a ‘day to day’ event at Anzac in 1915.

Running with messages from line to line was one of the most dangerous occupations at Anzac but it had to be done. If you were a message runner then you had to dodge every Turkish sniper in the area as the Turks were very well respected as being crack shots when it came to the art of sniping and they were also very well known for hitting a moving target with seeming ease at a range beyond 1000 meters. If Will was not running between hot spots then he was at the parapet shooting Turks as attack after attack was the norm both day and
night in what would have seemed like forever for the tired, shocked and ever increasingly sick Aussies and Kiwi’s.

Quinn’s Post was one of the most forward advanced outposts at Anzac and was located on the northern most ridge of the Anzac line and it, along with Pope’s Hill were the key to the main gullies of “Monash” and “Shrapnel Valleys.” If the Turks had overrun these forward trenches then the entire Anzac position would have had a stake driven into its heart.

Quinn’s Post was first taken and held by the Anzac’s during and after the landing on the 25th of April. The name Quinn’s Post came from Major Hugh Quinn of the 15th Battalion who was shot in the head and killed whilst repelling some Turks who had fought their way into the post and had taken a small foothold on the 29th of May.

“Come on Australia” came the call and the Aussies would repel the determined Turkish invaders over and over again (Turks invading! Meaning invading the invaders position.)

As mentioned earlier the first two months of the campaign saw Quinn’s Post held mainly by the 13th, 15th and 16th Battalions with some Kiwi’s and British Royal Marines thrown in for good measure. At a later date the trenches were to be occupied by the ‘Australian Light Horse Brigades’ who would be decimated in unnecessary attacks over no mans land.

Within two weeks of the landing the Sixteenth Battalion morning parade went from around 1000 fit and strong men down to some 250 odd, injured, sick, tired and shocked soles. (This was the first battering of many that the ‘Old 16th’ would take).

Quinn’s Post was to see some of the most horrific and savage man to man battles of the entire Gallipoli campaign as the opposing trenches were just meters from each other and in late April and early May the Turks launched a number of ferocious and determined attacks against the Anzacs which resulted in mass slaughter on both sides. The defending Aussies were able to beat these charges back time and again and the official Australian war historian C.W. Bean described the holding of Quinn’s Post as among the “Australian Imperial Forces” finest feats.

The bombing battles of this slaughterhouse named Quinn’s Post are now legendary in the deepest annals of Australian military history and are often referred to as the ultimate meaning of that great Australian character thing called “mateship.”
For some time the Anzacs had not been issued with any bombs at all, the Turks on the other hand had what is now termed ‘hand grenades’ but where then known as bombs. With the opposing trenches a mere 15-18 feet (5-6 meters) apart the Turks always had the upper hand as Quinn’s Post was at a lower level than the Turkish trenches and as such it was one of the most exposed areas to enemy fire on the whole Gallipoli Peninsula.

What could you do in the Aussie trenches because as soon as you poked your head over the top of the trench you were instantly dead. Even crouching in the bottom of the trenches at Quinn’s was never safe as any movement or sound would bring a hand thrown bomb from the Turkish lines.

In the early days however, the Turkish bomb fuses were timed long enough for some of the bombs to be hastily jumped upon and hurled straight back in the direction from which they came. Stories abound of Australian diggers throwing sandbags or great coats or whatever could be found over the ready to explode bomb to lessen the shrapnel fragments expending their full potential energy into human flesh and bone.

In a number of incidents it was reported that some diggers closest to a smouldering bomb would throw their bodies over the thing so as to protect their mates, unfortunately this practice usually resulted in fatal injuries to themselves. Others would simply pick bombs up to throw them back to the opposing trenches only to have them explode as they left the diggers hands.

Due to intense fighting many an Anzac would walk alone and in shock to the nearest medical aid posts or sometimes down to the beach for help with a bloodied stump where there was once a hand.

Bombing duels were a part of everyday life at Quinn’s and one of Will’s letters home gives front line evidence of the day-to-day life of the many bombing duels between the enemies at Quinn’s Post.
Gallipoli Peninsular
July 25th

Dear Will,

Have survived three months of it and still going strong.

Edgar & I landed in the afternoon of April 25th, & had a fairly warm reception.

Edgar got through the roughest part of it including the 2nd & 3rd of May which this Bn were well in. Peter Jackson has been missing since then & I am afraid he is not a prisoner.

Edgar was a bit too close to a bomb when it exploded about May 7th & got hit in half a doz places by splinters, the worst wound was one that went in his chin, broke all his teeth & lodged in his neck, he was in hospital at Alexandria for six weeks & came back with no teeth, a scar about five inches long and a lump of bomb in his neck. The Doc sent him away again he was a wreck.

Alec & Jack Coomer were trying to pot Turks when I saw them a couple of weeks ago.

Jack is minus a joint on one of his fingers.

J. Wallis from Balli was hit on May 3rd, in the neck & out the back below the ribs, a nasty wound but he is lucky to be alive, it went between his windpipe and jugular.

I tied him up & saw him off to the Hospital ship but have not heard from him since.

Arthur Sullivan went out on April 25th, the first of our Bn to take the count.

I think our Bn can claim to be the first of the Australians at Constantinople, a couple of our officers were captured by a ruse within an hour of landing, & we have heard since that they are being well treated at the Turkish capital.

Pleased to hear that you are getting the place into working order, it seems to me that the clerk of the weather is going to be kind to you. I have arranged not to open the Dardeneilles until you have sold your wheat?

Remember me to all my Wongan friends, & Mr P.W. Lyon if he calls on you.

Hope that Mrs W.F. & yourself are quite well,

Will
William would remember:
I looked over to the digger opposite me in his small cave dugout. He was sitting in a foetal position, his knees tucked into his chest with his hands rubbing his dusty, dirty and blood splattered face. I knew what he had been through so I was cautious with my words when I spoke to him. His name was Macca and he was one of the first Australians I had met when I first arrived in Wongan Hills some four years prior.

Macca was a big lad, no Macca was a huge lad, he stood a good six foot three and the boys reckoned he was built like the side of a barn and at just twenty-three years of age he was a man of great gentleness and kindness but he was tough like few other men I had ever met. He was a man who would not shy away from any task on the land, however things were now different very different indeed, for this giant of a man was now just a broken shell of a once happy go lucky mate to many of the folk on the land back home.

It all started a long two days ago but it had only now just started to sink into this hulk of a man. We were in our trench when a Turkish bomb arrived without notice. I was to the left of Macca and his younger brother Mattie was just feet away from him to his right. I saw the bomb first and called out to the boys. Young Matty was in the best position to do something about it but he froze for just a split second.

Macca made the first move but his younger brother reacted soon after as he yelled “I’ll get this one”. He pushed Macca to one side and to our shock and horror he flung his youth onto that Turkish bomb without thought of his own mortality.

The last we heard from this brave ‘eighteen year old’ lad was of him calmly calling to his brother to tell mum ‘I love her’ Macca! Then things seemed to run in slow motion until the muffled and deadly sound of the bomb exploding underneath our dear and cheerful young mate.

Macca was screaming “no Matty” but to no avail. We were both hit with warm blood as Mattie’s youthful body was lifted slightly by the explosion. This young fella gave his life so we could live but now his older brother was starting to come out of shock and I knew I had to talk to him.

Macca was a mess as he sat in that dugout on that hot and dusty day so I spoke gently to him with as much respect and understanding as I could muster because I knew first hand just what he was going through.
I lit a fag and leaned over to him and said Macca, here you go my friend have a drag on this. He slowly removed his shaking hands from his face and turned towards me with sunken eyes like death itself. I could see the whiteness of his face where his tears had cleansed the red blood and dirt from his once handsome and youthful young smiling face.
This mighty man was now a gibbering mess and I suddenly had a flashback to the two brothers at their going away party back in Wongan, back when Macca promised his mum and dad that he would look after his younger brother and how he would bring him home as fit as a fiddle. My mind was also flicking to my own four brothers who at this time were in France serving in the British forces.

This once strong and mighty man was now shattered and he started to sob heavily as he tried to explain to me that his mum and dad would never forgive him.
Bill, I can’t go on, I just can’t go on he continually muttered to me. Then he would burst into a full howling session as he once again tucked his head into his knees. For my part this was just the beginning of my experiences of seeing grown men breakdown through seeing their own flesh and blood destroyed by this horrible and bloody war.

Macca got over this sickening period of his life very quickly for shortly after our talk we were attacked again by Johnny Turk and once again it was a fight for our own survival.
I can never forget young Macca or Matty to this day, probably because they were the first brothers I had seen destroyed by that conflict but many more would follow in the next three years and I like many others would become almost immune to it.
Suddenly we were dragged from our diggings and thrust into the front line for an attack. This was the historic, ill-starred “demonstration” of the 28th of June. We in the trenches did not know then that this so-called attack was to be merely a “demonstration’ to keep the enemy on our front while the 29th Division at Cape Helles made one more shot at capturing Achi Baba. It failed, but the Tommies on that front gained a thousand yards, and that was some victory for the Peninsular.

We attacked. Once out of the cover of our trenches and sap heads, and hell was let loose. Remember we made this attack after three weeks of strain and drudgery, incessant trench warfare, listening-post duties, sentry duties, with every faculty on edge, existing with the perpetual head-busting crack of snipers’ bullets, the everlasting zoom and crash tearing the nerves... We went into the attack crazed and stupefied with the heat, the stench, the fumes and dirt belching shells. We were mad, stark raving mad-out for blood, anybody’s blood, anything to break the strain of that frightful tension.

It was the sort of thing that cannot be described. We met withering fire from the strongly entrenched Turks. We met newly wired positions. Men were trapped in the entangling barbs and shot to pieces while they struggled to untangle themselves. We leapt into a narrow gully and into it from underground trenches poured a massed horde of Turks, for the entire world as if vomited out of the bowls of the earth by some volcanic eruption.

Thereafter an inferno of slaughtering underground with cold steel, an exhibition of savagery by tormented bodies, clusters and little groups at each other’s throats in a confined area which so cramped our actions that we fought at the crouch, jabbing and sticking, yelling and cursing, choking the cries of “Allah! Allah!” with bayonet thrusts trampling dead and wounded while we went forward to meet more and more figures coming out of the earth, till the ground seemed literally spawning with Turks.

It was a swift, incredibly ferocious attack that availed us nothing-nothing that is so far as we who participated in it could see, for we were commanded to retire, to fall back to our own lines. It was not to be an attack, but a demonstration! We got back to our own lines and cursed our commanders for sending us out there merely to bring us back again. We were told it was to help our mates
down south. That victory down there by the 29th Division cost us in the north a few hundred more casualties. We might have been excused for wondering what the hell it was all about. I am convinced that war-worn and weary Anzacs were never quite the same after those demonstrations.

As everyone now knows, Anzac was the key position of the whole Peninsular, for it faced the narrow waist leading to the narrows of the Dardanelles. The 29th Division, together with the Naval Division and the French armies, beat themselves to death attacking six different and almost impregnable positions on the toe of the Peninsula!

Thousands of men were thrown away in order to hold an utterly useless position. Instead of demonstrating at Anzac, we should have concentrated our main attack there and used the worthless Cape Helles position for feints and demonstrations. Once astride the Peninsular from Anzac to the Narrows, all the Turks in the south right down to the toe would have been trapped, cut off from their base and source of supplies.

Instead of which we frittered away our forces on no fewer than nine different fronts from Sulva Point in the north to “S” Beach in the south. That victory of a thousand yards could not be followed because of those responsible were starving the Gallipoli campaign of both men and munitions.

It began as a muddle and it went on in the same fashion. More than a month was to pass before that victory could be followed up. During that time Johnny built himself new and stronger trenches, and generally fortified his position. He did more. He rebuilt his army. The beaten and war-weary troops were withdrawn and reinforcements from the very pick and flower of the Turkish Empire took over the task of keeping the Allies hanging perilously to the edge of the cliffs round the coast.

With that demonstration at Anzac we started up trouble. At midnight of June 29-30, Johnny made his counter attack. Enver Pasha sent an army of 30,000 strong “to drive the foreigners into the sea” the foreigners being us, the Anzacs, “The savages from the South Seas,” as we learned from some of our Prisoners.

They began the attack with a terrific artillery bombardment. The night was hideous with screaming shells and the bellowing explosions. It seemed as if the whole of the world’s Turkish artillery was concentrated on our lines. Never before had they pounded us with such a blasting volume of shot and shell. Some of our underground works were stoved in; parapets were blown away in dense clouds of dust and flying debris. The fumes from the shells were so thick that
men could not see - could not use their eyes, for they smarted and watered as if in a gas attack. Johnny was throwing all he had at us. We knew what that meant. He was going to attack.

We were standing to on the fire step, waiting.... It can be agony, that waiting, while the shells shriek and roar and crash all round. It can be hell. It was a date one long to be remembered. It was a hellish date as bad as anything that ever happened in my little orbit of the campaign.

Then they came - with “Allah” on their tongues and fiendish lust in their black eyes - dense masses of them racing towards us over No Man’s Land, shoulder to shoulder. We bombed them, shelled them, shattered them with rifle fire, shot great gaps into their massed ranks. They broke, wavered, and went down in thousands. Others came up and took their places, tumbling and staggering over the dead and wounded, yelling their faith, screaming every sort of dirty imprecation at the Christian dog that they would now drive into the sea.

And all we had to do was to stand firm and pot at them, knock them over like grotesque dummies in an Aunt Sally stall. There never was such slaughter on any front, never were so many killed and wounded in the short space of one night. It seemed to us in those dark hours before the dawn that we could not kill fast enough, for swiftly as we shot them down there were others to take the gaps. They came on, drew nearer our lines. They were most definitely advancing. It appeared at one time that nothing could hold back that massed yelling horde. Hundreds were brought to their knees within a few yards of our parapet. Bombs were thrown back and forth.

Our tunnelling had not been in vein. We had at that time a number of “T” saps shooting out from under our front line trenches into No Man’s Land. Each of these was built by mining underground straight out for several yards, then opening up with a cross head, the head of the letter “T”. The enemy stumbled into these camouflaged sapheads as they neared our lines and were terribly butchered before they had time to get over the surprise.

This underground fighting at Anzac was a little war of its own. It was a war in which the unwary Turk never had a chance to hit back. He fell in - in heaps; we clubbed him before he could rise to his knees. In some parts of the Anzac front there was a network of tunnels, an entirely new sort of firing line prepared underground and complete with barbed wire entanglements. Bunches of the enemy were trapped with their unwary entry being the signal for a shower of bombs that blew them sky high. By dawn it was all over. Johnny retired. His
wonderful army of 30,000 strong was utterly defeated with the loss of a quarter of its strength—between seven and eight thousand killed and wounded. For many days afterwards we could hear the screams of the wounded, slowly dying out there of thirst and torturing wounds. Wherever there was movement a merciful shot went home, another son of Allah went to his maker.

It was there that Turkey’s famous 18th Regiment was wiped out and Mustafa Kemal, who later became leader of Turkey, was disgraced by Enver Pasha.

From then onwards Gallipoli was an open graveyard. It stank. No man can recall that campaign without sickening again at the stench. Dead lay around in trenches and between the lines, friend and foe rotting in the sun. The incessant tunnelling of both sides had drawn us close together. In some parts we were less than 80 yards from each other. That meant a never-ending watch, never to relax for a second. Sentry duty at these points was a ghastly nerve strain, a perpetual agony with every faculty on edge so that men had to be relieved at very short intervals.

And as summer advanced the conditions grew worse and worse. Dysentery took a very heavy toll. Water was scarce and strictly rationed. There were increasing cases of jaundice. There were septic sores, unclean ulcers, rat bites that nothing seemed to heal and lice beyond human control. The trenches were always full of black flies. We cursed the sun and the flies and the lice as enemies more terrible than the Turks. Despite all our energetic efforts at keeping our habitations in the ground clean, we could do nothing against those rotting bodies out there, could do nothing to combat the insanitary conditions under which the Turks and their Arab irregulars lived.

Within time a replacement officer was sent to replace the 16th Battalion signal officer who had become a casualty on the first day. William would remember that he was a young man in his early twenties and fresh out of officer training school. As the young officer approached Will and his signallers he asked them who they were. When they told him that they were what was left of the 16th Battalion signaller’s the young officer immediately ordered them to their feet. This fresh young man straight out of officer’s school had no idea what these brave men had been through. Well, well he exclaimed! What a poor looking bunch I have inherited here.
Oh, piss off replied one of the battle hardened men as the Lieutenant turned to climb a small ladder. He suddenly stopped in his tracks, turned and yelled, you watch your mouth private, he then resumed climbing the ladder until one of the men grabbed his sleeve to stop his progress, don’t do that, exclaimed the digger. The young officer turned and glared at him and told him straight, don’t tell me what to do, you are only a private and as an officer I will give the orders. He then proceeded to climb the steps in an attempt to look over the top of their trench. As soon as he peered over the top of the trench he was shot in the forehead and his lifeless body was flung back to the bottom of the trench with eyes and mouth wide open and stone dead. The private who had tried to stop him casually looked at the young officer’s body, then looked at Will and just as casually remarked ‘Well Bill it looks like your still the boss’. William was to lead his battalion’s signalmen without an officer replacement for the duration of his time on Gallipoli.

Within weeks the battle on the peninsula was at a stalemate and life became one of hardship with little food, a few men reported that some of the food was from the Crimean war, but how true that was is open to discussion! Clean water was also in short supply and the only supplies up front were for drinking. It has been written that the “bully beef” was unloaded from the ships and left in the hot Turkish sun on the beach, when the diggers opened the cans all they found was a runny hot liquid substance. How Big Bill longed for the Kangaroo meat and a good cup of Tea from those long gone happy days again. This muck and dog biscuits were to be the staple diet for many months to come.

One thing that the army had overlooked was dentistry. It is said that as the diggers bit onto the dog biscuits they would break their teeth or dentures and found that they had to powder up the rock hard things with the end of an entrenching tool before they could eat them. One thing is for sure! The politicians and the system of the time had let these men down dreadfully due to a huge lack of understanding of just what they had got these men into.

With hundreds of dead men lying just meters from them in the hot sun the flies would be a constant pest and before long strong healthy men were to become ill with dysentery, scabies and other forms of illness and diseases. The wounded and the sick were at times taken to the beach and laid out in the sun all day because there were so many casualties that they had nowhere else to put the injured before their evacuation. A nurse aboard a hospital ship remembered seeing the wounded being raked by Turkish machinegun fire from above. Cruel indeed, but that is the way it goes in war.
On one particular day Will sent out 13 runners with messages and only 8 returned. Life had to be lived one second at a time because nobody knew who was next.

Over the top time and again with enormous losses, life at Gallipoli really was in the hands of the gods as to who would return from a charge or ‘stunt’. Many times the signallers would feed out a new telephone line only to have it cut by the Turks time and again so more runners would have to be dispatched to other areas of the Anzac lines with messages, or worse still they would have to go out and repair their broken or cut telephone lines. When a runner would run across open areas the diggers would cheer and yell encouragement as the message carrying man tried to avoid being shot dead.

Soon came the time known as the August offensive which would centre on the Anzacs attacking the heights of the Sari Bair Ridge (also known as “The battle of the Nek”). Others would attack Hill 90, the Q Hills, Chunuk Bair, Hill 60 and Battleship Hill. The British were to land a huge force at a place known as Sulva Bay some five kilometres to the north of Anzac Cove. The Brits were to push up the ‘valleys and hills’ and link up with their Digger allies so the Anzacs had the job of diversion attacks and to capture and hold the Sari Bair ridge.

At 22 hundred hours (10pm) on the 6th of August the British forces landed at Sulva Bay while the Anzacs, and in particular the 1st Australian Brigade attacked over a 200 metre frontline at the place known as ‘Lone Pine’ in the Anzac sector. The Turks had their positions well defended in that area with some of their frontline trenches roofed with heavy logs making them almost impenetrable.

The Aussies however, had tunnelled underground in no-man’s-land with the tunnels running parallel to the Turkish firing lines. As soon as the signal to attack was given the roof of this hidden trench was pulled down allowing the Aussie soldiers to seemingly rise from the earth almost on top of the Turks.

Strangely enough the by now blooded Australians had to have military policeman in the back lines to hold back the many volunteers who where not meant to attack but who wanted to get up front so as not ‘to miss the show’. The battle raged for around 48 hours in and around the Turkish held positions. Hand to hand fighting forced the Turks to surrender parts of their trenches as they suffered heavier casualties than the attacking Diggers which in itself was a very unusual event in WW1 warfare, some seven Victoria Cross’s were to be awarded to Australian soldiers for their ‘small bit’ in the ‘big show’.
Sadly the 1st Light Horse Brigade now at Quinn’s Post and the 3rd Light Horse Brigade were to attack a place called the Nek in the early hours of the morning of the 7th of August.
The Nek was a narrow area just wide enough to allow about 150 men through at any one time.
Chosen for the attack on The Nek was the as yet untried 3rd Light Horse Brigade. The 3rd Light Horse had not yet experienced full on battle as the eleven or so weeks that they had been on the Peninsular had consisted of water carrying and trench digging tasks.
The forces to be used in the coming stunt were to be the Victorian 8th Light Horse and the 10th Light Horse from Western Australia. The Nek was a narrowing ridge which was defended by eight lines of Turkish trenches and more than sixty saps. The Anzacs believed that it was lightly defended, however later assessments found that this area was very heavily defended and nothing more than an almighty death trap.

**Regimental orders for the 8th Light Horse**

I*st* line reads as follows.

First line will consist of troops already in fire trenches and saps. On a given signal, silently and without rifle fire, it will rush The Nek (A1) and with bayonet and bomb engage the enemy, taking possession of the flank, communicating and advanced trenches (A9, A5, A8, A11), paying special attention to the machine-guns, which must be sort for and rushed, and to the trenches overlooking the cliff north of The Nek and to those on the southern flank of same, so as to prevent flank interposition by the enemy—mine fuses and ‘phone wires to be sort for and cut.

At this stage there was no premonition as to the appalling disaster about to unfold.

Another 3rd Light Horse order for the coming conflict was to describe battle dress as such.

‘Shirt sleeves, web equipment, helmets, 200 rounds, field dressing pinned right side inside shirt, gas helmet, full water bottle, 6 biscuits, 2 sandbags, (4 periscopes per each line and gas sprayers to be carried by 4th line), wire cutters, rifle (unloaded and uncharged), bayonet fixed’.

Carrying unloaded rifles; the four lines of Aussies were totally defenceless during the attack until they reached the Turkish lines where they were to use their bayonets only.
The allied command had made a number of terrible mistakes in their planning and they had got things horribly wrong with this attack. Their artillery bombardment stopped some 7 minutes too early. The diggers did not leave the safety of their trenches in fear of being caught by another bombardment but they waited too long. When they did attack the Turks were out of the safety of their hiding places and ready and waiting for the oncoming charge. They would cut down almost every opposing Australian soldier who appeared above the trenches in a ferocious close range hail of gunfire killing and wounding many hundreds of good young men within 30 seconds or so.

Just a few minutes later the order was given for the 2nd line of the attack to commence, sadly this too resulted in the same drastic end as the first charge with even more men dead or dying within seconds of going over the top. Unbelievably the 3rd (10th Light Horse) and then the 4th wave of good men where sent to their death due to somewhat silly misunderstandings and orders from the brass.

The flower of West Australian youth had been decimated with many young men being the sons and grandsons of many West Australian pioneering families, now nothing but wasted lives in a horrific killing ground far from their homeland.

Over 400 wonderful men and boys died within an hour or so of that fruitless bloody attack. The only survivors where the men who were hit as soon as they climbed above the safety of the trenches and who then fell back into the relative safety of the trenches that had become their homes.

The total casualties for the first two lines of 300 men were:
12 Officers and 142 other ranks killed with 4 Officers and 76 men wounded.

The last two lines of the 10th Light Horse lost 9 Officers and 129 other ranks and 7 Officers and 73 other ranks killed respectfully.

William and his group were trying to take control of the area known as Sari Bair ridge just to the north of The Nek when they heard the yelling, followed by the massive roar of gunfire from the area that had just killed hundreds of their mates. Every man looked at each other with dismay, somehow knowing that something had gone terribly wrong over at The Nek.

Will and his infantry mates had the job of breaking out of the Anzac sector to attack and take control of the Turkish defences on the Sari Bair Ridge over the 6th and 7th of August. By one o’clock on the first morning most of the Turkish
outposts had been taken and enemy resistance had been completely silenced so the main ANZAC force could now advance. It was now that the main advance ran into difficulties and things had started to go horribly wrong.

The right flank line of one of the battalions got lost in the dark and unforgiving terrain of their area causing the other battalions to wait for them but time ran out and the remaining soldiers could wait no longer so they had to push on up the steep terrain without their mates. When they got to within 400 meters of the summit of Chunuk Bair they started to be cut down like daisies in a field by heavy Turkish gunfire. Further allied artillery and ship bombardments finally came in at 10.30 in the morning but by then the Turks had three hours to reinforce their positions at the top of the ridge so when the final rush to the top by the Allies was launched the opposing forces were so strong that the attack came to a standstill after just 100 meters.

Soon the right flank had its reinforcements in place and some of them finally reached the top of Chunuk Bair and found no Turks in the area. It didn’t take long however before the diggers came under heavy fire from the Q Hills to the north and Battleship Hill to the south, later that evening the troops had to beat off a number of very furious and determined counter attacks by the Turks. The following morning revealed many men slaughtered unmercifully in what had been a most ghastly struggle when the Turks had turned on the remnants of the Anzac force and beat them back over the top of the ridge and down the slopes and valleys again. Men had death grips seized upon each other in deadly man on man duels. Scrub fires broke out and burned wounded men to death without discrimination. Some Anzacs had the misfortune of having to shoot their own wounded when they cried out in agony as the fires swept all before it. They say that the fighting here was so ferocious that white bones were piled thigh deep even years after the event. The survivors fought on in groups, sometimes dropping their weapons and flying at Johnny Turk with bare hands aimed at the opposing soldier’s throat in an insane attempt at survival.

Nothing is as loathsome as the sight of human beings who have forgotten they are humans. They rolled about in the dirt locked in death grips, they used rocks and sticks as clubs, knives, rifle butts and bare fists, anything that they could lay their hands on, men were like snarling beasts in a burning and smouldering jungle of twisted and tangled bodies. Good honest men were seen frothing at the mouth with gurgled shrills of laughter as they killed and were being killed. In spite of the overwhelming Turkish odds against them, Johnny Turk was beaten.
to a standstill again and again until he could not drive the Anzacs any further
down the hill.
The whole battlefield landscape was left with many thousands of dead and
dying men from both sides lying all over the hillsides. In the end, four days and
four nights of enormous slaughter had gained nothing.
The allies had lost some 16,000 men killed, wounded or missing in this area
alone. For many days after the survivors would live in filthy trenches with
regiments of dead comrades surrounding them. They had to eat, drink and sleep
amongst them. It was one thing to have to live amongst the dead covered with
flies but quite another to get rid of the many rotting bodies. Old friends staring
lifelessly from contorted bloodied and blackened bodies which only days earlier
were the cream of Australian and New Zealand’s youth. The British had also
suffered the same fate as the Anzacs and were in no better position after the
fight.
It was reported that many captured Turkish prisoners would ask their Aussie
guards if the Australian God was named ‘Bastard’ as this is what the charging
Anzacs would yell in the fury of their many attacks. Likewise the Turks would
call ‘Allah’ in their attacks so it may have been logical for them to think that
Bastard was the Australian God.

The August offensive had destroyed the lives of some 45,000 men. The medical
staff that had been unable to take the necessary measures to cope with such
numbers had been completely overwhelmed. At a certain moment the situation
was so bad that even private yachts had to be commandeered from England to
help evacuate the wounded.

**August 9-30, 1915**

**I had to shoot my friends**

**Insane Carnage on a Gallipoli Farm by Digger Craven**

*By heavens! I believe they’ve got it!*

Red looked like nothing on earth. He was incredibly dirty, splashed with rubble
and dust, and his eyes were almost as red as his hair. I suppose we were all in
much the same case. But the news that came down to us on the lower slopes that
the summit had been taken heartened us beyond measure. It might be another of
those rumours but we were ready to believe anything by then.

*Even as we staggered over the ruined fields of The Farm-they were ploughed as
if a giant tractor passed over them we became aware of the intensified struggle
up and beyond us. The fire ceased. We could hear again the wild cries of the*
Osmanlis, the bleating yells of breathless men calling their maker. All was not well, something had misfired.

We were to learn that after our own had blasted the advance column, the victors had reached the summit, the Turks turned on the remnants, slaughtered them unmercifully, beat back over the top and down again. In that early morning light we were witnesses of the most ghastly struggle. Men were at death grips with each other in deadly duels, a hundred individual scraps, while back and back our men fell. Turks broke through them. They were lost, crushed, trampled, literally swept to death as the mass hordes came over the hill and down towards “The Farm”.

Away on the southwestern section of the ridge the line held, but in the front of us in the vicinity of The Farm, there began the bloodiest battle of the whole campaign. It was throughout that fateful ninth of August. Attack after attack was repulsed. But the Moslem fanatics, the Turks and their Arab brethren, came on again and again, gathering force in this frightful conflict for a hilltop.

Slithering and stumbling about the slopes, we fought through the whole of that day from the eerie light of early morn till darkness fell over us like a dropped curtain.

We had been fighting for three days and three nights. We were weary beyond human conception.

In all, we were some five thousand men on Chunuk Bair and within a quarter of a mile of its summit at The Farm. And against us were Turks’ reinforcements—some fifteen thousand men. They descended upon us in a dense black, screaming mass, so thickly ranked that they could advance shoulder to shoulder, and six to eight deep. They came and we sprayed them with machine gun bullets, threw bombs in the packed mass; tore gaps into them with volley after volley of rifle fire. From our miserable holes and bits of breastworks we annihilated their advance line. Against appalling odds we then rose to meet the second with bayonets, knives, entrenching tools, we cut and battered them to bits despite their overwhelming superiority of numbers. The din of battle was deafening—the cries of infuriated men, the screams of shells, the hoarse blood-curdling screech of a bunch of mules blown to pieces, the stuttering crackle of machine-guns, and the raucous bawling of those Osmanlis who came into battle with Allah on their lips all created an inferno of sound, a tumultuous uproar that is past belief.
They came upon us in storming waves. The third line broke us, forced us back on our pitiful apology for trenches, leapt into our holes and hacked right and left into a confused jumble of destruction and death. The remnants fell back to the second line of trenches, rallied, stiffened, fired into the charging wall of men, killing and wounding hundreds in a deathly hail of musketry. But we could not hold them. Nothing could stop that dense multitude.

We were thrust out again—but not beaten, men formed in groups and charged, killing again and again, forced the mass to waver, to stand and fight, struggling and striving body to body. Giant round bombs bounced into our lines, burst, sent a shower of steel in all directions.

The Farm of Chunuk Bair that no man who was there and survived will ever forget. The story of that grim plateau, and the nullahs surrounding it which for years afterwards were found to be ‘thigh-deep’ with human bones is one that can never be told in anything like comprehensive detail as every man’s view was different, for each saw in it only that which came within his own little orbit.

When the British force rallied on that historic ground all organized formations had disappeared. Brigades which had been split up, almost annihilated, became a confusion of units, companies were intermixed, English and Irish, Indian, New Zealanders, Aussies and Turks were inextricably commingled in an ensanguined free-for-all melee that has no parallel in military history. The losses in officers, from generals downward who fought side by side with the troops were terrible.

But the men fought on in groups, dropping their scientific weapons and flying at each other’s throats. The imagination boggles at such an insane vision. Momentarily it had ceased to be a war. We clutched at each other then, fiends out of hell, no longer human, Christians and Moslems in a wild and reckless abandon of roughhousing.

Nothing in the world is as loathsome as the sight of human beings who have forgotten they are human beings. It is no mere expression to say we caught one another by the throat. We rolled about the dirt locked in death grips. We used stones, knives, bayonets, clubs even fists were hurled upon one another in a fiendish bestiality. And the hullabaloo we set up was the concerted snarling of wild beasts in the jungle around ‘C’ Farm.
In spite of the appalling odds against us, Johnny Turk was beaten to a standstill. He could drive us no further down. He went back to his point of vantage on the crest of the ridge. He left thousands of dead and dying all over the hill-sides—but the hilltop was still his. Four days and three nights of wholesale slaughter had availed nothing. We had to let him retire up the hill because we could not climb any more. We beat at his stragglers, clubbed them to death and bayoneted them from behind as they turned from this hideous, maniacal conflict. I saw men wielding rifles like clubs, saw their foaming mouths and heard their shrilled laughter.

We did not drive Johnny Turk from The Farm. He forsook it as if it were some plague spot peopled by the raging spirits of darkness. We too forsook The Farm. It was left to the dead and dying and the carnivorous birds of the air. Chunuk and its road to victory were not for us. We had fought from Friday night to Tuesday evening in a wilderness of tangled scrub and precipitous rock and innumerable gullies, in blazing sun and pitch darkness, without rest, with very little food and an appalling lack of water, on hills afire and crags that rotted to our tread; and in all that effort of pain and blood and sweat and wasted gallantry we gained not a single position of tactical or strategical importance.

We knew that the Turks were shaken, that another battle would break them; but we were too fed, too sullen, too exhausted to care what happened then. We had neither guns men nor munitions for further effort. We had lost 16,000 men killed, wounded and missing. All that dreadful night of the tenth we lay in the dirt, sleeping by fits and starts, listening sometimes to the incessant rumble and clatter of the moving column of wounded and stricken being conveyed down the line. To be wounded meant to be seriously wounded, for none of us had escaped wounds of one kind and another. We were all of us scarred and blood-smeared and incredibly filthy.

For days afterwards we lived in trenches with regiments of dead. We ate, drank and slept among them, for the reconstruction of our lines was a Herculean task, and there were so few in the grand total to tackle it. The dead British, Arab, Turk and Indian were with us so long that we came to know them. In the daily activities of the trench warfare which followed, while carrying rations, water and ammunition, we would pass bays or broken trenches where the dead must be left to rot until enough men could be rounded up to remove them. One knew those crumpled shapes. They were always black with flies. One came to recognise them—the grotesqueness of a rump, an arm, a head and the torn and tattered scraps of rags left by rodents.
These regiments of dead lay not merely over No Man’s Land, but sprawled horribly on the parapets along the whole front, heaped up like logs in places, in others laying half in and half out of trenches.

It is one thing to have several thousands of men slain in battle, but quite another to get rid of bodies. It all seemed as if we had them all, Johnny’s as well as our own! All through the sweltering days we would look up and see them there. As the trenches were deepened and strengthened many of them were buried under the earth that was thrown out; and that was pretty grim, even for Gallipoli. Moreover, the ever-busy Turkish snipers made it impossible for us to do much with those that looked, uninvited over the parapets. We had to get between them with our periscope rifles and keep a section of the enemy busy while others removed these things that seemed to stare down on us with their sightless eyes-reproachfully, which caused the most callous of us to break into nervous sweats.

Nights were nights of horror. These were burial fatigues. We had to drag them away from the lines in the dead of night, often under fire and cover them hastily with a few scrapings of earth. Johnny Turk was somewhat chastened during the few days that followed the big battle. We were labouring through the nights at burying the bodies. It was hellish work, but it was even more hellish to have them staring at us. We went to it careless of sleep or rest. We must get rid of the flies and the stench and the creeping horror of it all.

**STENCH OF THE DEAD**

It was eerie work. We took turns at heaving them out of holes we wanted to use into other holes we didn’t want and could hastily fill in. Many of them in the open graveyard of No Man’s Land had to stay there, but in the immediate neighbourhood of the trenches we worked like galley slaves night after night. We used gas masks, but found them too hot and stifling. Besides, they seemed to carry the smell of the dead within them, or was it that we had the stench in our lungs and couldn’t get it out?

We came upon old pals, then, fellows we’d known for months. We hardly recognised them. They had turned black...reeked.... were hideous, and the creatures that had fed there were shot away even as we tumbled them into crude graves. A man would kick his foot angrily at the fleeing rat and blaspheme. That one’s own pals should be reduced to carrion meat in no short time...
After that there were a few days of respite for soul-weary men, so that we were able for a few hours each day to slip down to the beach, shed our filthy clothes and dive into the cleansing waters of the sea. It was heavenly. I, naturally, kept a wary eye on the bursting shells. I didn’t want another packet like the last one, or the mob would be saying I did it on purpose...Then came another red date, another break from the monotony of trench life. It seemed there were gaps between us and the line at Suvla. We had the trifling task of capturing the Turkish stronghold of Hill 60. Once that was accomplished the line from Anzac to Suvla would be impregnable, and then we could settle down to the less strenuous game of trench warfare again. We knew our Hill 60, but anything for a change.

Hill 60 was never taken. After all the lessons and experiences and fiascos and disasters

Of the Peninsular, the attacking force was called upon to open this crazy offensive by crossing the wide plain of an exposed valley continually swept by enemy’s guns from higher ground, and in broad daylight! It was the last straw!

Hill 60 was a low, flat-topped mound girdled by trenches at the summit. In an attempt to take this position the South Wales Borderers, Connaught Rangers, a Ghurkha brigade, old campaigners and men of the New Army, co-operated with the New Zealand and Australian contingents. After a preliminary bombardment by the artillery at about three of a blazing afternoon the force went in three waves, advancing across an open valley under a terrific heat haze and loaded with picks and shovels in addition to the usual weight of equipment—we must have carried not less than forty pounds weight on our backs.

Red could still grin as we ran, dodged, doing a double at the crouch, while shells whistled and wailed and exploded and filled great spaces with blackness, clods of earth, falling fragments. They came over with the shriek of all the devils in hell. Bombs (enormous fellows) bounced towards us, ricocheting and careering crazily, exploding with a deafening roar. Streaks of glare from the shells shot through the thick haze and then kicked up dust. Bullets from rifle and machine-gun droned and piped over us.

INSANE ATTACK ON HILL 60

The automatic guns opened up on us before we had gone a few yards. We dropped, fired in a few rounds, then up again, pushing another yard or two. It is damned hard in the open and in broad daylight, especially when your enemy is securely entrenched. They swept our advance line as with the swathe of some
gigantic scythe. Clouds of dense smoke hung heavy on the haze of that hot afternoon. In a measure it saved a great number of us. Just the same, men were dropping like rotten sheep all over the place.

A score of times we dashed for cover in that monstrous charge, using boulders, clumps of scrub, dead men, anything, anywhere for a breather. For as much as a whole minute at a time we’d stop, crouching low while officers yelled themselves hoarse. Critics may say what they like about this insane attack on Hill 60, but the fact was there was no heart in the troops anymore. They were through. When a fellow stood up to his full height and ran into it, we knew he was fed up with it all and wanted to go home. Hundreds did during that sunny afternoon. Hill 60 was an anti-climax and every man knew it was. Of all the death traps this was the biggest. Men muttered and cursed in desolation of this hopelessness.

“If ever I get out of this, I’ll be court-marshalled before I’ll stand-to for another!

**BLOOD AND FILTH OF BATTLE**

Red’s face looked awful as he muttered those words. His face was grey and haggard, scarred and patched with blood. Even his hair had ceased to bristle. His eyes were dull. This giant of a man was now just an elongated framework of bones on which his clothes hung. Even in the middle of all that blood and filth of battle I could still look towards Red. We were never far apart. Instinct kept us close. It seemed we had been together for years, in and out of trenches, chasing Johnny or being chased, and always with that tumultuous roar of fire. We had an idea that if we really got separated it would be the end of us! That’s why I didn’t believe Red when, in the heat of that holly scramble, he growled about desertion rather than face another spot.

We were crouching under a little ridge topped with bush. In half an hour there wasn’t anymore left of that first wave of men who had charged Johnny’s trenches. It was as if they’d never been. Every man Jack of ‘em was gone from our view-killed or captured or lying wounded in front of those accursed ditches which bristled with rifles and machine-guns. There were only the smashed and dying.

Then the shells started burning up the scrub again, and what worried us in that third wave of the advance was that fire was spreading, crawling and crackling over the earth like a prairie fire. We’d seen some fires during the campaign, Red and I dashed through a few of ‘em. But this one topped them all. The scrub and undergrowth was as dry as tinder.
The fire licked its way over the vast areas of the ground. The men in front were caught in the flames. It was spreading fan-wise over the lower slopes of the hill. It crawled over the earth like some evil thing, a holocaust come to convince us—did we need any convincing that we might batter ourselves for ever against these fiery mounds of Gallipoli and we should batter in vein.

We stared in horror at the expanding carpet of fire. We saw wounded men crawling and scrambling from the flames, and as they got clear of the fire, they were shot dead by the jeering Turks. Those who were too badly wounded to make the attempt were burned alive. The stench of it all hung on the thick haze. Volumes of smoke rose, until it seemed that the entire world was afire.

Coming atop of all the other reverses and repulses and defeats that overspreading fire rendered us helpless and hopeless, destroyed utterly the last remnants of faith and confidence brought the final touch of despair to war-sickened and weary men.

Everybody knew we should never gain the summit of Hill 60. Our disillusionment was complete. That fire not only changed the face of the earth, it changed everything in that little world in front of Anzac.

But at least we had the satisfaction of knowing that we’d put some of our comrades out of their misery. How could we lay there, a little party adrift under a ridge and watch those fellows burned alive?

To see them squirming and struggling to get clear of the licking flames and to hear their screams—it was more than we could stand. We took aim...even as the flames licked about them, setting fire to their clothing.

“GOD forgive us!” muttered Red. His blood-shot eyes were wet. I am not ashamed to admit that mine were too.

I’d seen many die in all sorts of weird ways—but never like that. Even where we lay some hundred yards away, we could feel the singeing heat of that ghastly fire.

Men swore that the ground had been prepared. That Johnny Turk had been out of a night with a hose of petrol pouring a stream over the crackly scrub and bush.

Certainly it blazed with intense ferocity, travelling over the ground like liquid fire so swiftly did it spread, destroying everything in its trail, leaving a vast parched blackness over which could be seen those who failed to escape, blackened, smouldering heaps of debris, broken rifles with charred butts,
tangles of rag ash that once had been a long time ago-uniforms with buttons and insignia of regiment industriously polished, and all for what? Just to become these little heaps of black dust.

Things stood out over that burned-out waist-tarnished metal, jags and strips of shells, tangled wire, rifles, bayonets, entrenching tools, little heaps of cartridge cases-where men had lain or crouched to fire, where they had died at their posts and left naught but these tell-tale bits and pieces to mark their passage.

It is thought that it was some time during this stage of the campaign that William was to run to the British lines with a message for the eyes of a British Commander.
Off he went with all the speed that the tall man could muster, past old and new faces both dead and alive, over the many ridges and through the many gullies. He would sometimes stop to say a quick hello to some of the troops in their positions and then he would head over an opening that was full of dead, the Turkish gunfire was horrendous but the big fella ducked and dived until he got through. After surviving that most dangerous run he finally hit the British lines with a feeling of elation. He was to report to the British Commanding Officer so he was led to a sandbag bunker with a canvas sheet as a door and with two guards standing either side of it.
As he was led through the doorway he saw an officer at a desk made of ammunition containers, his head was down low and cupped in his hands.

Sgt Harvey from the Australian lines reporting with a message for you sir! The English commander slowly looked up with a drained and worried look on his face to look at the Aussie.
As he looked into the steely eyes of Sgt Harvey he hesitated, then with shock and bewilderment his face changed to anger. You! You are absent without leave. William realised as soon as he saw the English Commanding Officer that this was his old CO from India.
Guards! Arrest this man and lock him up! He is absent without leave from “His Majesty’s Armed forces!”
You wouldn’t read about it, after all these years the old British CO had still harboured ill feeling towards Will and Strahan.

Soon word had got back to the Aussies that ‘their man’ was being held by the “Poms.” All hell broke lose back at the Aussie lines as man after man wanted to go and forcibly take him back. (Family interviews)
At this time of life William Harvey was an extremely likeable man and admired by all who had the pleasure and many said ‘honour’ to serve with him. The
Australian command sent a message to the English that said something like, “we are in the middle of a bloody war here” and you bloody drongo’s are worried about something that happened ages ago. Release the Sgt immediately as he is a member of the ‘Australian Imperial Forces’ and as such you have no right to hold him! Before long William was back in his own lines and things slowly started to get back to normal (if mass killing could be called normal).

When reflecting on life at Gallipoli Will would remember that one digger had joined up after fashioning a personal suit of armour, so as to be safe from enemy fire. (It would be highly unlikely that the suit ever made it to Gallipoli, however such is naivety). One could imagine a Ned Kelly image.

After the failed attack on the Sari Bair Hills William and his men were back home at Quinn’s Post and Pope’s Hill when they found that one of the men had come up with a piece of armour plating from one of the ships. This piece of plate was about a foot and a half across and had a small hole in the middle of it; the men would use this armour plate to get a look at the enemy. After a while the plate had bullet dents all over it but it was one of the few devices that would allow a view of the battlefield.

William was looking through the plate when he noticed two Aussies bending over to help a wounded mate onto a stretcher. He noticed the man at one end of the stretcher bending over and exposed to enemy fire.

As this digger bent over to help the wounded soldier, a Turk fired and the digger fell to the ground. He had been shot from behind and the bullet had ripped up his backbone, paralysing him at once. This was cruelty at its lowest point in this cruelest of places.

It is said a white flag appeared from the Turkish trenches and a large Turk appeared and walked across no-mans-land to the wounded Australian soldier, bent down and picked him up, he then carried him to the Aussie trenches and lay him within reach of his digger mates. Astonished men from both sides just looked on in shock and bewilderment, not a shot was to be heard during this one lone act of humanity. A number of similar acts by both sides were also reported from ANZAC.

With the burden of being in charge of his men came the sad task of going out from the Aussie lines of a night to dig some of the soldiers out from their hiding spots beneath the scrub. William’s words still echo in my ears to this day, “They were not all heroes on Gallipoli” (remember some of these diggers were boys in their teens and Will could not blame them at all). Somehow this blooded soldier would first locate them under the scrub or in hidden holes and talk the young blokes out of hiding and take them back to their positions with no
penalties or stigma attached. These trusting skills would serve him well in the future.

Around this time came more Turkish attacks on ‘Pope’s Hill’ and ‘Quinn’s Post’ in which Will and his mates would defend these most vital areas and they would never lose their positions under many intense onslaughts. How one could keep his chin up and his mind clear in such a situation is beyond human comprehension.

He was to survive all encounters at Popes Hill and Quinn’s Post and the hand-to-hand battles at Bloody Angle and Sari Blair (The Sphinx). One Turk reported seeing two men; Aussie and Turk, both had bayoneted each other in the chest but had remained standing, both ‘frozen in time’ and very much dead.

The vicious fighting of the August offensive was now over, so with very few of the original Anzacs left it was time for a bit of a rest. At a later time in life Lt Colonial H Pope (Pope’s Hill) the leader of the 16th Battalion would speak of William and his cool, calm and cheerful character and recommend him at the highest level during and after the war.

A break from the fighting would mean a chance for a swim down below in the sea, nicknamed ‘The City’.

This activity was of high importance as the diggers were absolutely filthy after many weeks of battle at the front. The whole area was nothing less than a human sewer and the only place for relief was the sea. Every time he swam down there it would bring back the memories of the shock of the landing and where it had got them.

Even though the men were in the water a Turk reported to be over a mile away would pick off on average one swimmer a day, so even though they were behind their lines they were still a target, nowhere was safe.

Will had contact through writing with a lady back in the West Australian bush town of Goomalling. Her husband and male members of her family were also on Gallipoli. She had sent a telegram to William’s army superiors in Australia as to Sgt Harvey’s health and said that she was happy to know that he was ok.

The reply in Australia was that they were unaware of Sgt Harvey, and stated that they had no record that ‘376 Corporal Harvey’ was or had been promoted to the rank of Sgt.

They also got straight to the point of letting Mrs Coomer know that if she knew so much about this soldier then they needed to know how she got her information. (One would imagine that William along with other Signallers had
communication with folks back home however, this information would not be known to an army officer sitting in an office in Australia). Fact was that many of his friends back in ‘Wongan Hills’ had heard that he had been fatally wounded.

By now most of the old timers on Gallipoli were, either dead, wounded or starved of good nutrition and many of the survivors were falling ill at an alarming rate.

The stalemate that followed the slaughter of that August of 1915 left many previously good strong and healthy young men including William very ill and Will knew that he had contracted the dreaded dysentery (Gallipoli trots), he had also contracted scabies (the itch) and a massive flu. Like many other Anzacs William would not give in and he was finally ordered to leave the front lines for medical treatment a few days before the remnants of the 16th were given leave.

By this time he and most of the original Anzacs were mere skeletons dressed in filthy, torn and ragged clothes.

He was so ill that he had to crawl and be carried to the hospital ship (H.S. Formosa) in a critical condition to be evacuated to the nearby island town of Mudros on the Greek island of Lemnos.

“The battalion had its orders. It carried them out. The loss in going forward or holding on was always great, but retirement at any of the critical periods in April and May or August would have meant annihilation. Such bravery as was shown by officers and men in these engagements could hardly be conceived as being possible in human nature. It was that bravery which saved the troops at Anzac from disaster.

Excerpt from “The Old Sixteenth.”

From there it was on to Alexandria on the 21/09/15 and then he was admitted to the 1st Aux. Hospital Cairo, then on the 5/10/15 another move to N.Z. and Aust Hospital at Helouan, still with dysentery, flu and scabies and in a dreadful condition. One thing William Harvey had done religiously was to keep personal diaries of all these events; he also carried a small German expandable camera with which he recorded his experience in photographs. He recorded daily events as they happened and very few of the original men would live to the end of the war to do that.

As soon as he was fit enough to return to duty he was assigned to the “School of instruction” on the 16/10/15.

Now back on his feet and with the evacuation of Gallipoli imminent he settled down to training new men in general warfare, as he knew it.
From December of 1915 until June 1916 he was to instruct at Zeitoun, Egypt under Colonel Colven, Grenadier Guards and then in France. As signalling instructor during that period he instructed squads of Officers, N.C.O’s and men from various British and Colonial Units. For a short period, he acted as Drill and Musketry instructor at the detail camps of Tel-el-kebir (Egypt) and Salisbury Plain (England).

This poor man had taken a beating that few would be able to endure, the physical change that a lack of protein and vitamins coupled with starvation, contaminated water and disease would bring to this man was astounding. We can only imagine how wonderful the food must have been after the biscuits and hard bully beef of the trenches for so many months.

Before long the rest of the boys had been ‘successfully removed’ from the Gallipoli Peninsula and the ANZAC’S would lick their wounds and reform their ranks for transport to France for years more of the same hideous torture.

All up the few surviving original Anzac’s left behind some 9000 of their mates on the Gallipoli Peninsular, plus, the tens of thousands of wounded and sick men unable to carry on the fight who were evacuated back home to Australia.

The year 1915 turned to the year 1916 and the old thought that this war would be over in six months was now nowhere to be heard. At least Will was to see some of his family back home in England for the first time after eight to nine years abroad so it was not all bad.
Chapter Six
The European experience

Once he had rejoined his battalion in France he attended the Fourth Australian Division’s school for N.C.O’s at La Chausee and obtained highest marks at final exams of drill, musketry, physical training and lectures on military subjects etc.

In his 30th year this man had lived two ordinary lifetimes and he had so far survived the odds and he had shown that he had more lives than a cat, however in reality this was but the start of his life’s little dramas.

Records show that Army No. 376 William Harvey was highly intelligent and unlike many soldiers of the time he remained sober and had shown that he had excellent judgement, plus he was humane, caring and compassionate to his fellow man and many of his mates would testify to this in later life.

On the 10/2/16, he joined the Fifth Officers Cadet Battalion (Trinity College England). Whilst in England he grew strong and worked hard at keeping busy. Being based in England meant that he could head straight home to his family for rest and recreation and enjoy just a touch of the peace and quite of normal life.

Then out of the blue something happened that would change his life again. He would meet up with his older brother Laurie and the two would share their experiences.

Laurie was married to a young lady named Helen and together they would introduce William to Helen’s elder sister. Her name was Margaret Hartnett and the two immediately struck up a special relationship between themselves. Margaret had been married for a short time before the war, however now she was a widow. With sadness and despair she would explain to Will that her husband went to France at the opening of hostilities and within five weeks he was dead (killed on the Somme).

Will would do his best to help Margaret through her pain and likewise she would help to see him through the tough times ahead.

At last this [thirty year old] man had a love worth staying alive for and he was to make the most of it.

Every leave he took from the front would also lead him back to England and it was here that the culture of the man would be shown. Instead of ‘pissing it up with the boys’ at the many London or French pubs this by now ‘tough old bastard’ would book tickets for stage opera’s, one of his favourites being the
four year run of “CHU CHIN CHOW”, a hardy ‘Arabian Night’s pantomime, later to be turned into a movie musical in 1934. He was in and out of the front lines in France and Belgium again and again fighting many battles between his times in England and he had thus far survived, however life had now become more deadly than the Gallipoli veterans could ever have imagined and many more Anzacs were being sacrificed like never before.

At this point of the story it may be of interest to understand the Australian soldier and his ways and attitudes of the time. The “Diggers” were very different to many other fighting forces of that era and whilst they may have been seen as undisciplined by the British they were absolutely ruthless when it came to war.

'During the war the English suddenly became aware of a new kind of man, unlike any usually seen here. These strangers were not Europeans; they were not Americans. They seemed to be of the one race, for all of them had something of the same bearing, and something of the same look of humorous, swift decision. On the whole they were taller, broader, better-looking and more graceful in their movements than other races.

Yet in spite of so much power and beauty they were very friendly people, easy to get on with, most helpful, kind and hospitable. Though they were all in uniform, like the rest of Europe, they were remarkable in that their uniform was based upon sense, not upon nonsense.

When people asked, who are these fellows, nobody at first knew. The strangers became conspicuous in England after about a year of war. They were preceded by the legend that they had been "difficult" in Egypt, and that they had to be camped in the desert to keep them from throwing Cairo down the Nile. Then came stories of their extraordinary prowess in war. Not even the vigilance of the censors could keep down the accounts of their glory in battle. 'Since that time, the Australian army has become famous all over the world as the finest army engaged in the Great War. They did not always salute; they did not see the use of it; they did, from time to time, fling parts of Cairo down the Nile and some of them kept the military police alert in most of the back areas. But in battle they were superb. When the Australians were put in, a desperate feat was expected and then done. Every great battle in the west was an honour and more upon their banners. 'No such body of free men has given so heroically since our history began.’ English Poet and writer John Masefield.
Until this very day military strategists impress on officers the value of discipline among the troops. Almost unanimously is the thought that only disciplined soldiers are ready for war. Undisciplined men won't fight well. They are nothing but disobedient troublemakers.

It seems that one of the great experiences of the First World War - and a true heritage of that Great War - is going to be forgotten. The Australian lesson is worth remembering - not only in Australia, and not only in military circuits. The Australian lesson teaches that discipline has nothing to do with dedication, and very little with training. The keywords here are: collective discipline and individualism - words that sound like curses in the ears of many a commanding officer.

**Reputation**

In the First World War the Australian soldiers earned an outstanding reputation. They fought in many of the great theatres of war - Gallipoli, Damascus, Gaza, Somme (Pozières), Fromelles, Péronne, St. Eloi, and Ypres.

Right from the beginning, English officers complained about the undisciplined way the Australians behaved. Their officers and soldiers did not keep the necessary distance, they dressed improperly, even with nonchalance - some didn't even shave everyday. And some soldiers even dared to object if they had to carry out a task they did not like. The rumours very soon reached the War Cabinet and the Prime Minister in London. It seemed obvious: With such slovenly troops you cannot win a war! So the War Cabinet sent Secretary, Sir Maurice Hankey to Gallipoli to investigate what was going on. Sir Maurice visited every corner of the peninsula and spent a good deal of time in the Australian trenches, even in the front line. He was deeply impressed and wrote to the Prime Minister: "I do hope that we shall hear no more of the 'indiscipline' of these extraordinary Corps, for I don't believe that for military qualities of every kind their equal exists. Their physique is wonderful and their intelligence of a high order."

**In France**

At Gallipoli the Aussies landed on the wrong beach and suffered terrible casualties in a rugged and confined war theatre. But it was worse in France where, in hellish conditions, young men were led to pure slaughter. But there too, they fought like no one had ever seen before.
The Australians began to arrive in France from the Middle East in March 1916. At the end of that month Commander-in-Chief Field-Marshall Douglas Haig inspected the 2nd Division. Afterwards he wrote in his diary, "The men were looking splendid, fine physique, very hard and determined-looking. The Australians are mad keen to kill Germans and to start doing it at once!"

The Australians had their first European battle experience on July 20th, in the Battle of the Somme. They took the village of Pozières. However, their claim to reach the Windmill proved untrue. Prompt German counter-attacks made their position very delicate. Haig wrote, "The situation seems all very new and strange to Australian HQ. The fighting here and the shell-fire is much more severe than anything experienced at Gallipoli. The German, too, is a very different enemy from the Turk!"

The Australians, like their British comrades, were learning the art of war the hard way. They learned amazingly fast - and their morale stayed terrific. More than once Haig intervened personally when he thought the Aussies were going too fast. Haig wrote in his diary, "The Australians had said at the last moment that they would attack the Windmill again without artillery support and that ,'they did not believe machine-gun fire could do them much harm'. We arranged that the original artillery program should be carried out. The Australians are splendid fellows but very ignorant."

Behaviour

But in the trenches their ignorance and innocence soon disappeared. An Australian soldier wrote home: "There, dead lay everywhere. The deeper one dug the more bodies one exhumed. Hands and faces protruded from the slimy toppling walls of trenches. Knees, shoulders and buttocks poked from the foul morass..."

And the German learned to fear Australians, because they were reckless, ruthless - and revengeful. During Third Ypres, on October 3rd 1917, the Anzac's (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) met the Germans on high ground, in front of Polygon Wood. That evening the official communiqué read, "One Anzac Corps obtained all its objectives and took 3,900 prisoners. The other Anzac Corps took all its objectives and met the Prussian Guards who they had met before at Pozières on the Somme. This Corps took no prisoners."

But there are also accounts of downright cruelty - of even war crimes committed by Australians against the enemy. The British officer Robert
Graves quotes (in *Goodbye to all that*, 1929) an anonymous Australian who told him,

"Well, the best joke I ever made was in Morlancourt, when we took it for the first time. There were a lot of Boches in a cellar, and I said to them: 'Come out lads!' So out they came, about twelve of them, with their hands up. 'Turn out your pockets!', I said to them. They turned out their pockets. Watches, gold, all 18 carat stuff. Then I said: 'And now back into that cellar, you bunch of scum!' Because I didn't need anything else with them. When they were all safe and well downstairs I threw six or so handgrenades after them. I had my capture and we took no prisoners that day.'

It is uncertain whether stories like this ever reached the staff. But they certainly contributed to the reputation of the Australian soldier.

**Admiration**

As the war continued Field-Marshall Haig's admiration for these notable soldiers grew, though they never ceased to puzzle him, as they did most British officers - and ordinary Tommies too.

During Third Ypres, Lieutenant P. King of the 2/5th Bn. East Lancashire Regiment, was stuck with a small left-over of his company in the mud near Poelcapelle. The men were exhausted, had been under constant fire for two days and desperate for relief. But no one seemed even to know that they were there.

LT. King already began to wonder whether his company had been secretly chosen to be a suicide force. King remarked.

"Suddenly, to my great surprise, I heard voices behind me and I looked back and there were three very tall figures, and one was actually smoking. I could hardly speak for astonishment. I said, 'Who the hell are you? And put that cigarette out, you'll draw fire!' He just looked back at me. 'Well, come to that, who are you?' I said, 'I'm Lieutenant King of the 2/5th East Lancashire Regiment.' At which he said: 'Well, we're the Aussies, chum, and we've come to relieve you.' And they jumped down into the shell-hole. Well, naturally, we were delighted, but of course there are certain formalities you've always got to carry out when you hand over, and I was a bit worried about that. So I explained, 'There are no trenches to hand over, no rations, no ammunition, but I have got a map. Do you need any map references?' He said, 'Never mind about that, chum. Just fuck off.' They didn't seem to be a bit bothered. The last I saw of them they were squatting down, rifles over their shoulders, and they were smoking, all three of them. Just didn't care!"
So much trouble

Behind the lines, the Australians had modes of behaviour which conflicted totally with their British counterparts. In February 1918 Haig wrote a letter to his wife, "We have had to separate the Australians into Convalescent Camps of their own, because they were giving so much trouble when along with our men and put such revolutionary ideas into their heads."

Haig was convinced that far too many problems were caused by General Birdwood's relaxed disciplinary methods. Sir William Birdwood was an "Imperial" (English officer who commanded the Anzac Corps and later the Australian Corps), and he never found great favour in Haig's eyes.

The truth is that Birdwood was one of the very few senior British officers who possessed the rare "touch" to command Australians, and he was able to exploit their best qualities. One of the differences between Australian and other troops was that Aussie officers always explained the objectives before engaging in battle. Even ordinary soldiers knew the strategy that was behind it. If they became cut-off they still knew what the goal was and what to do. Unlike their British colleagues, common Australian soldiers were not treated like ignorant fools, but like individuals who will function better in a team when they know their collective aim.

The Australian lieutenant-General Sir John Monash, the successor of Birdwood, said, "Very much and very stupid comment has been made upon the discipline of the Australian soldier. That was because the very conception and purpose of discipline have been misunderstood. It is, after all, only a means to an end, and that end is the power to secure co-ordinated action among a large number of individuals for the achievement of a definite purpose. It does not mean lip service, nor obsequious homage to superiors, nor servile observance of forms and customs, nor a suppression of individuality... the Australian Army is a proof that individualism is the best and not the worst foundation upon which to build up collective discipline."

Strazeele

An example of the clashes between the two conceptions is what happened at the camp in Strazeele (Belgium), where the Australians were encamped on the other side of the road from the 10th Royal Fusiliers. The Tommies were shocked and impressed by the Aussies' casual attitude to war - or at least to the Army. Tommies thought it hardly right for privates to address their
commanding officer as 'Jack', but the Fusiliers heard them do so with their own ears.

For their part, the Australian 'Diggers' as they were often called, were equally disapproving of certain rites observed by the Fusiliers. As Private C. Miles of the 10th Btn. Royal Fusiliers recalled, "The Colonel decided that he would have a full dress parade of the guard mounting. Well, the Aussies looked over at us amazed. The band was playing, we were all smartened up, spit and polish, on parade, and that happened every morning. We marched up and down, up and down. The Aussies couldn't get over it, and when we were off duty we naturally used to talk to them, go over and have a smoke with them, or meet them when we were hanging about the road or having a stroll. They kept asking us: 'Do you like this sort of thing? All these parades, do you want to do it?' Of course we said, 'No, of course we don't. We're supposed to be on rest, and all the time we've got goes to posh up and turn out on parade.' So they looked at us a bit strangely and said, 'OK, cobbers, we'll soon alter that for you.' The Australians didn't approve of it because they never polished or did anything. They had a band, but their brass instruments were all filthy. Still, they knew how to play them. The next evening, our Sergeant-Major was taking the parade. Sergeant-Major Rowbotham, a nice man, but a stickler for discipline. He was just getting ready to bawl us all out when the Australians started with their band. They marched up and down the road outside the field, playing any old thing. There was no tune you could recognize; they were just blowing as loud as they could on their instruments. It sounded like a million cat-calls. And poor old Sergeant Rowbotham, he couldn't make his voice heard. It was an absolute fiasco. They never tried to mount another parade, because they could see the Aussies watching us from across the road, just ready to step in and sabotage the whole thing. So they decided that parades for mounting the guards should be washed out, and after that they just posted the guards in the ordinary way as if we were in the line."

**Wagon wheel**

To the Australian troops it seemed that the British Army were obsessed by discipline. They would never stand for it! On several occasions Australian soldiers sabotaged the Field Punishment No.1 that Tommies were sentenced to for offences as small as being found drunk, or for wearing dirty clothes when off duty.

Field Punishment meant that the soldier had to parade in full pack. Then he had to take the pack off and Military Policemen strapped him up against a wagon
wheel. It looked like he was crucified. This happened twice a day, an hour in the morning and an hour at night, and for as many days as the soldier was sentenced to.

It happened that Australian troops, incensed by the sight of a man undergoing Field Punishment No 1, cut the man loose again, and again, and threatened the MP's - with loaded rifles, daring them to truss poor Tommy up again.

**No executions**

The Army Staff did not know what to do with these and other Australian crimes. The mutinies in the French Army made some high-ranking officers nervous. They feared that the casual attitude of these troops would have a deleterious effect on the more docile British troops under their command.

They felt the reputedly high crime rate of the Australians played a significant role. A rather high number of Aussies were put behind bars. In the winter of 1918, for instance, an average of 9 per 1,000 Australian soldiers were imprisoned. Canadians, New Zealanders and South Africans had an average of 1.6 per 1,000 men behind bars.

Some punishments, however, were not carried out on Australian troops. Though liable to be executed for mutiny, desertion to the enemy or treachery, the 129 Australians (including 119 deserters) that were sentenced to death during the war (117 in France) were not shot.

The 1903 Australian Defence Act stipulated that the Governor General of Australia had to confirm the sentences passed by courts martial, and he never did. Although Haig made strong representations for the power to inflict the extreme penalty upon Australian soldiers, that sanction was continually denied him. A major consideration was the Australian soldier's status as a volunteer, and that as such, they should not be subject to the extreme penalty. After all, weren't enough men killed already? More than 61,000 Australians died in this war, mostly on the Western Front. Australia's casualty rate was, relatively, the highest of all allied nations.

In 1917 William was posted to E company, Number Five Officer Cadet Battalion, St John’s College, he would also be educated at Oxford/Cambridge University. His company consisted of 200 specially picked N.C.O’s drawn from
British and Dominion Regiments. At the final Examinations for Commissioned rank, he obtained 3rd place.
On rejoining his unit as a Commissioned Officer he was placed in command of a platoon in action and training. He then attended the Anzac Corps School at Aveluy, Somme, and was appointed signal officer in charge of 16th Battalion signals.

Meanwhile a petrified Margaret was in England hoping and praying that William would get home in one piece. The agony of losing one man to war would be enough but the possibility of losing two men to war would tip her over the edge.
At this point in time he had attended Trinity College and Cambridge University etc so he was indeed a very well educated man in military matters however, it was getting serious in France and it was time to go up front yet again.

William and his men were to see many more bloody actions at Messines, Ypres, Polygon wood, Passchendaele, Hebuterne, Villiers Brettonaux, Vaire wood and the Battle of Hamel.
In one of these battles he and his men were gassed and William would suffer the effects of that gassing for many years to come. This gassing may have also contributed to his death by heart failure many years later?

On the 8/8/1918 the morning dawned with a heavy fog covering the low valley into which the Anzacs were to do battle that day, everybody surveyed the scene then the ‘Old Sixteenth’ moved silently to the starting point of the Battle of Hamel. The Aussies were pushing the Germans back that day until they gained control of an area, they would then regroup and push on even further at a staggering rate.
Moving with the frontline of the attack the infantry and signallers would clear many trenches and small villages. It was near such a demolished small village named Morcourt that Will’s men came under constant fire as they moved forward with the infantry to identify the big German guns and report back by phone to bring their own artillery fire to a given target. His men were about 100 meters past the remains of captured trenches when three of his men suddenly dropped like stones. The Germans had a tunnel and bunker system in the area and had hidden themselves deep inside until it was all clear; they then reappeared, set up their machine gun and opened fire. Three of Will’s men were hit in the back and fell to the ground instantly. The entire 16th Battalion had been caught in a heavy crossfire from the front, rear and both flanks thus putting the Aussies in desperate danger. Now was the time!
This was to be the one time that William would later remember ‘true anger’ overwhelming him.
This gentle but humorous man was to lose his temper for the one and only time in his entire life, and when he got angry, he got really angry!

As he looked behind he could see a machine gun spitting fire and death from the ruins of the village and he instantly had flashbacks of his dear mates dying on Gallipoli at the hands of these evil machines.
Without fear or hesitation he called to his men to get down and cover him. Armed only with his .38 calibre revolver and grenades that he had been using often in his trade he jumped to his feet and charged towards the machinegun nest, he was by now full of anger and rage and yelling the words ‘no more’.
From out of nowhere he appeared firing and yelling until he fixed his sights on the man behind the machine gun. Dropping to one knee he pulled the pistol up, aimed and fired, within a split second the bullet struck home and the machine gunner and the gun fell silent. Within seconds he was within throwing distance to use a grenade (Mills bomb). Now, with every last live German in the ruins firing at him he launched a grenade.
Boom!

Lt William Harvey is brought to notice for his continuous gallantry and devotion to duty during the period 17 September to 31 December 1918 while carrying out the duty of Battalion Signal Officer. In the operation against the village of Le Verguier - which was carried out by this battalion - a very essential factor for the success of the operation was close liaison and communications between companies and headquarters and it was due to the unselfish and devoted efforts and organising ability of this officer that communications were effected and maintained which so largely contributed to the ultimate success of the operation.

This officers has always been extremely reliable, gallant and unselfish in his work. During the operation on 8 August 1918 at Mericourt Marcpourt (Somme) he without though of personal safety, followed up the foremost advancing troops almost continuously under fire, and maintained telephone communications with the rear which enabled our gunners to bring fire on enemy strong points within a few moments of their being located.

His always cheerful spirit set a fine example to those around him and he is strongly recommended for distinction.

Recommendation - AWM 28, Item No. 1/254
promulgated The London Gazette, 3 June 1919
reprinted Commonwealth of Australia Gazette 15 September 1919, p.1371
Once the concussion hit him, he instinctively knew that this was the time to run forward and catch them whilst they were dazed. He ran and jumped up a mound of rubble and as soon as the smoke and dust had cleared he fired at a German who had pointed a rifle at him. As he trained his sights on six of the enemy survivors he called to his men to come. It is said that all up he had taken out of action some twelve of the enemy with only a handgun and a grenade. Lucky for him he had control when his mates got there because he had used up all of his bullets. His men were ecstatic as they watched the whole thing unfold. One was to later report that in the 4 years of hostilities he had seen many brave things but never had he seen such a feat, truly inspiring! The captured German officer surrendered his Luger pistol to him and William would keep that as a war trophy for the rest of his life.

This was one of the many advances that would help the allies to finally break the German lines. At the time the feat of knocking out the machinegun nest was just part of the job so as the Diggers advanced forward his mind was taken off of that small incident and the battalion moved on to its next objective. Little did he know that from a distance others would see this ‘incident’ and mention him in despatches and they would recommend that he be awarded for such a superhuman effort? The official ‘Australian War Historian’ C. E. W. Bean was to write that the signallers were the real hero’s of the war. Modesty of the times is noted in the recommendation for the Military Cross.

After so many long years of fighting it was now more than ever a time to stay alive and see it through, it was almost over, however the trick was to survive just a few more months. Back home Margaret was to know little of this action until notice of the award came by post after the war.

Soon after this battle Will and his men were in camp and while happy to be alive his men were showing signs of uneasiness and sadness for the boys who had copped it. Will went to the ‘Officers Mess’ and relieved the bar of one case of ‘Johnny Walker Red Label Scotch Whisky’ at his expense, and carried it down to his men. The mood changed immediately, the boys were over the moon and with thanks all round they got stuck ‘into it’, the conversation moving to the battle in which their Officer had put his life on the line for his boys. That conversation was mostly about the man who was their leader and what they had all survived and every digger had a good nights sleep that night to say the least!
Over the next half-century Will would receive many letters written to him from war colleagues including a German chap who Will had saved from drowning somewhere along the line. The German fella would write until his death in 1959 thanking Will for his life, (full story unknown).

Within the last twelve months a lot of sights had passed through his eyes and years later he would tell some of his grandchildren of the dog fights that the men would witness almost daily. More than once he witnessed things like the famed Red Baron’s “Flying Circus” in their famous red ‘Focker Tri-planes’ dog fighting with allied planes above the moonscape that was the French and Belgium battlefields.

He also told of his emotions as he was going to the front line one time! He was moving forward when he came across a fellow who had had his two legs blown off. His mates up front had tied empty sandbags around his remaining stumps with barbed wire and sent him on his way to the rear. This man was crawling along by digging two bayonets into the mud and dragging himself to perceived safety. Will and his men could do nothing for him as they were needed urgently up front. Will said all those who passed this digger felt extreme helplessness but they encouraged him along with good luck messages as they passed him by. It was the will to live that they all had and this was a demonstration of that will at the highest level. William would never find out the fate of that man and he wondered for the rest of his life if he had made it.

As he did his tours of duty in France he tried to find Margaret’s first husband’s grave, however as thorough as he was it appeared that there was no evidence that this man had ever lived. This is despite having a good knowledge of where to look. He surveyed every battlefield cemetery in the area of the Somme until 1919 without success.

Day in and day out, the noise of battle had become part of the norm for the old Anzacs so William decided that when this war was over he would propose to Margaret and get to hell out of Europe. Back to OZ and some peace and quite was all that the Aussie’s wanted and the crushing amounts of men on the ships heading for home after the war would be just testimony to their homesickness.
11/11/18 and that was it, the greatest and cruellest war up until then was over. The scramble to get back to England was overwhelming and took time. William had had many thousands of bullets fired at him and tons of artillery rounds fired in his direction and yet he had survived where many others had not, he had killed countless numbers of the enemy and he wished that he would never, ever have to kill again, unfortunately that wish was not to be.

Finally Will and Margaret were together at last and most importantly without the fear of war. Together they had not known peace so now they could plan a future together, a future ‘without war’!

Will was adamant that after they married he must return to Australia, Margaret would follow at a later date and they would make a new start together. After the war he had 75 days leave, so the couple planned to marry on 23 March 1919 in London.

At last they had time to be together and Will would often talk about Australia and the mighty people who made that nation. He was by now a ‘true blue’ and nothing was going to keep him in Europe.

Things were again starting to get busy as he was advised that he was to be awarded the ‘Military Cross’ for valour by ‘His Majesty King George the Fifth’.

Weeks past and all was prepared, Lt. Harvey was to front up to Buckingham Palace to receive his award. Margaret was so proud of her husband that she insisted on being there, naturally!

As he walked past the ranks of heroes that day ‘King George the Fifth’ congratulated many men and stopped at Will to discuss the events that had led to his Military Cross award. Both men would look into each other’s eyes and both would wonder what each other’s lives were like, it was then onto the next poor sod for the King.

The presentation day came and went and soon the couple would learn that they were to become parents. Within a blink of an eye 1919 was almost over and Margaret gave birth to a son.
Lawrence John Harvey was born on 24/12/19 just three days after (Will’s 33rd birthday) and he was named after Will’s brother Laurie. Laurie had also served in the Royal Horse Artillery in both India and France and had also been decorated for bravery; awarded the Military Medal for an unknown act of bravery in France. In fact Will was one of five brothers to serve in France at the same time.

Meanwhile back in Australia one of the Coomer girls who knew Will very well would write of her experience on hearing of the end of the war.

The following is an account, by Ethel Coomer (daughter of Michael), who worked at the Union Bank in Northam, when peace came in 1918.

**HOW WE WENT MAD IN NORTHAM WHEN HOSTILITIES CEASED**

“On Friday, the 8th November, about 9.20 word came through that the Germans had signed the Armistice. Then things were only middling. Everyone went mad. I think it was mostly the reaction after four years of war, and then to think that it was over. Every shop shut almost immediately, but of course we poor things in the bank had to stand to our posts (mine was the front door, when I was not flying up and down the street in a car) because we could not shut without authority from Perth. Of course there would have been no delay had it
been Official but just as everyone got nicely worked up it transpired that it was not official. Still that didn't make any difference. We knew it would come sooner or later, (the official part I mean). Needless to say no work was done in the bank. The Manager was in the street somewhere, The Accountant had gone down to Perth per car as soon as word came through, the boy was up on a lorry blowing a whistle, so that only Mr Jones and yours truly in the bank, but as I said before I was on the front steps, and needless to say Mr Jones was there too. You would never think Northam could collect such a crowd in so short a time. We shut the Bank at 3 o'clock sharp and then went off to the procession. Talk about yell and laugh and scream, nothing seemed silly enough to do. The procession was 3/4 of a mile long, and the best that Northam had ever seen, and the crowd? Everyone was shaking the others hands, and saying "but its not official yet". We arrived home somewhere about 6 o'clock, and the day being too much for this little chick, she promptly fell of the bed in a faint. I always said I would turn a somersault when the fighting was over, though not quite that sort of one. Anyway it did, though the worst part about it was that I was put to bed and was not let to go to Church Service that was held at 7.30, or the meeting outside the Town Hall at 8 o'clock. All the others went and Elma came and stayed with me until they came back. Next day I was as right as rain and ready for another "Day" but this time word had come through about the Delegates just crossing into France and we would not know until Monday Night whether they had signed the Armistice or not.

There was a lull the three following days, and it was decided that if the Delegates had signed the Armistice and word came through Monday night, the Town whistle would blow and let everybody know. Well I was sewing that night, and Miss Brockway had come up to ask if I would go back and sleep with her as she was alone. Just as we were about to start, that whistle blew, and you ought to have seen us run. We never reached the street so quickly before, and already the crowd had gathered. All the people streamed out of the Picture Theatre when the whistle blew. Men were up in cars trying to give a speech, but I guess not one word was heard, everyone was yelling and the kids were hitting kerosene tins, and the Army Band was playing everything that it knew, from the "Doxology" to a ragtime. People whom we thought had not an ounce of emotion in them simply went mad, and a crowd of them danced and danced round singing every patriotic song they could think of, to the Band playing. I never thought Northam could not think of anything else than that our dear old boys were not actually fighting, and perhaps never would again.

Miss Brockway and I landed home about 12.30. I do not think the celebrations stopped all night, anyway every time I woke up, which was fairly often, the
whistles and tin cans were still going.

Next day we all went to work, just as a matter of form, because we knew nothing would be done. Anyway word came through for us at the Bank to close until Thursday. It took us exactly 1 1/2 minutes to get out of that door. We had a Church service at eleven, and you ought to have just heard us sing. I really thought our throats would burst. We chose a suitable Anthem "Break forth into Joy" and my word we did break into Joy. It was the loveliest service imaginable, and we thanked God from our very hearts.

After lunch we all trooped down the street to see the other procession. That turned out to be somewhere near two miles long. Such a beauty. Just as I was enjoying it Mr Hunter came up to me and said Elma (sister) wanted me, so I had to get up into the car with them, much against the grain, because being small I could not see over the heads of the crowd, even in the car.

Then after they had seen everything we went for a lovely spin right out the Goomalling Road, and then home. The others had not arrived so I made the fire and had a cup of tea ready for them when they did come. We had a rowdy te, and then off to church again. After that we went down the street to listen to a meeting, and I got squashed in the crowd, and never heard a word because someone was blowing a whistle in my ear.

We met Roy Ackland there, he had come in from Wongan that afternoon. He was very much amused because in the crowd a woman had put her arms around him, from the back, thinking it was her husband, and had kept them there for about five minutes when she discovered her mistake, and he heard her telling her husband. Roy didn’t mind, in fact he had his arms round me protecting me, because a small person is at such a disadvantage in a crowd. Dinkum. We went with the crowd after the meeting and discovered ourselves in the Palace Theatre at an impromptu dance. Talk about laugh, there were we girls done up in our best costumes, gloves and hats on. Off they came, and we had a ripping time for about two hours. It was absolutely packed, and we invariably ended up with a different partner from the one we started with. We were happy I can tell you. Arriving home about 12.30, tired and weary and excited. Next day there were sports on but we could not go, absolutely done up. At night there was an open air concert on the Esplanade (do you know where that is?).

Father had arrived through the day, so he escorted we girls down to the green. It was very nice, and afterwards Father "shouted" the lot of us at "Mannerings". You bet we didn’t kick up a row for a long time. I think that is about all I can
remember. Of course there were a lot of little side shows that caused some merriment, but on the whole things were kept in splendid order, and I think there was only one fight, between a slacker and a returned man. We are getting ready for Peace Celebrations of that week I have spoken of.

This is only what Northam did, everywhere else did likewise in proportion, Perth I believe was lovely. Anyway it didn’t matter where we were at the time, we would have done just the same anywhere. And we would do the same tomorrow again. I cannot understand how there were no accidents, because people were absolutely mad, and the motors were whizzing past each other at a terrific rate.

I thought I would type this out, and let you know just what we did (or rather what I remember?). I will keep a copy of it for myself, not that I will ever forget it, but in years to come the grandchildren (?) will be very interested. Nothing like looking ahead you know, and I didn’t say they would be my grandchildren either.”

William, Margaret and their young family set sail to Australia in early 1920 aboard the captured German ship that was originally named ‘Bismarck’ but was now renamed the Friedrichsrüh and by all accounts the trip home was a nightmare as an Australian newspaper would report.

TROOPS BY FRIEDRICHSRUH.

Treatment Complained Of.
FREMANTLE. Sunday. – The food, accommodation, and general conditions of life on the transport Friedrichsrüh, which arrived from England on Saturday afternoon, have given rise to numerous complaints from the troops, and a report has been prepared for submission to the executive councils of the Returned Soldiers League in the different states. Troops, when interviewed, stated that the conditions had been most trying. The food had been seldom good, and often unpalatable, and the accommodation had been cramped and unhealthy, while the latrines and the steam pipes in the corridors had leaked and caused unhealthy odours. The sergeants’ wives, who were entitled to second-class accommodation, had been quartered in the poop, and in proximity to the tuberculosis isolation ward and the butchers shop. Complaint was also made that long-sentence men and other bad characters had been allowed liberty on board.
This trip would be the beginning of Margaret’s new life in the far away land and it was not a very promising start. The trip on this ship would be nothing more than a small hardship for Margaret because the years to come would test her spirit and her soul far beyond anything that she could ever have imagined during her times in comfortable England. In fact Margaret would not adjust immediately, she gave birth to another child (Ursula) and then she decided to return to Britain, she would be away from her husband for almost two years.
Chapter Seven
Back to Australia

The sea voyage was to take almost 6 weeks and then after almost six years away from Australia Will stepped ashore at Fremantle to try to continue his dream.

Within days of arriving in Perth and finding accommodation for his young family he would front up to the Western Australian Police Force. There could be no doubt about the fact that he certainly had what it takes to uphold the law, however with many young ex soldiers, sailors and airmen looking for work the competition was stiff as many veterans where strong and fit young men and Will was by now almost 34 years old.

The process started as such.
Who are your closest relatives?
William & Martha Harvey, West Ham, London East

Have you been convicted of any offence?
No.

Past and present occupation
Contract for myself - 3 years & 6 months 1911-1914
Military Service AIF - 5 years & 6 months 1914-1920.

Description was given as,
Hair. Dark brown.
Eyes. Dark brown.
In fact his eyes were not so much brown but more a blue grey, at least when I knew him in his old age.
Complexion: Fresh.

Then came calls for testimonials, not less than three originals to be submitted, one of which must be from the last employer.
With the insistence of some famous Australian military men of the time William nominated these other great diggers for reference as to who he was and his fitness to serve.

Major General E Drake-Brockman CB.
Colonel - H Pope CB.
Major Ross Harwood DSV.
Colonel Tilney.
It would be a fair bet that the Police officer who first interviewed William and the officer who interviewed the referee’s would have received a very welcoming shock when these legends of Australia explained who William was, they also explained a little of his background and a lot of his smooth calm character.

In those days recommendations from such highly regarded men were very few and far between. Imagine if you will, the absolute backup that these men had given each other throughout four long years of bloody slaughter. They were without doubt great mates that had stood together, shoulder to shoulder, through the grimmest of times and none of those men had flinched or failed in their duty of mateship.
Application No. 9794

Chief-Inspt McKenna

Perth

A man named William Harvey
of State Street, Victoria Park
has applied for admission to the Western Australian Police
Force and states he is known to the following:

Major General E. Drake Brockman, C.B. Perth.
Major R. Harwood, War Service Homes, Perth.
Col. Tilney, Repatriation Dept, Perth.

will you please cause inquiry to be made as to his
character and fitness for enrolment?

[Signatures]
I respectfully report having interviewed Majors General Broadman, Pope, Norwood, and Colonel Stoney as character and fitness of applicant, William Morsey.

All those gentlemen speak in the highest terms of this man, stating he is sober, honest, and reliable. Major Norwood under whom the applicant served for 12 months in France as a signaller says that he can vouch for the applicant's ability and trustworthiness more so than any other man that served under him.

There is nothing known against the applicant by the Police.

15/4/20

Chief Inspector

Commissioner of Police, Perth.

For your information.

Perth, 15.4.'20.

CHIEF INSPECTOR.
“Major Harwood can vouch for the applicant’s ability and tactfulness more so than any other man that served under him”. Please remember how many men would have served with William and his superiors!

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**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA.**

**Form of application for employment in the Police Force.**

(To be prepared in the handwriting of applicant.)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Name in full</td>
<td>Harvey, William.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Surname first)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Postal address</td>
<td>State St</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Victoria Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Date of birth</td>
<td>21-12-1876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Registrar’s certificate of birth, or duly stamped declaration as to date of birth must be attached)</td>
<td>Birth Certificate Produced (3/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Ham, London E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Place of birth, giving city, township, parish or village and nearest postal address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Standard VII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Educational standard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Religious denomination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Height without boots</td>
<td>6 ft 1 in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(To be filled in by examining officer)</td>
<td>Aprt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Weight</td>
<td>11 st. 8 lbs. Chest measurement 36 in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(To be filled in by examining officer)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Married or single</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. If married, number and ages of children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>one child, age 3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Have you previously applied for employment in Police Department. If so, particulars and date</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Have you at any time been employed in the Police or other Government service. If so,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Name the force or service.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Length of such service.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Date service terminated.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(d) Cause.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Can you swim?</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) State length of experience with horses and bush work.</td>
<td>10 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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80
The landlord had placed a light upon the table, and was engaged in drawing the curtain of the window. The speakers, when they had heard were two men, who had a pack of cards and some silver money between them, while upon the screen itself the names that had played were scored in chalk.

The man with the rough voice was a burly fellow of middle age, with long black whiskers, broad cheeks, a coarse wide mouth, and bald neck, which was freely displayed, as his short collar was only confined by a loose red neckerchief. He wore a hat, which was of a brownish color, and had beside him a thick knotted stick. The other man, when his companion had called Isaac, was of a more slender figure—stopping, and high in the shoulders—with a very ill-favoured face, and a most sinister and most villainous squint.

William Harvey.
Then it was official.

POLICE, WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

FORM OF ENGAGEMENT.

I, William Harvey, engage and promise that I will well and truly serve our Sovereign Lord the King in the office of Constable without favour or affection, malice, or ill-will, until I am legally discharged; that I will see and cause His Majesty's peace to be kept and preserved, and that I will prevent, to the best of my power, all offences against the same; and that while I shall continue to hold the said office, I will, to the best of my skill and knowledge, discharge all the duties thereof faithfully according to law.

I further agree to accept and abide by such rules and regulations as may from time to time be made by the Governor, under Section 9 of the Police Act, and that such rules and regulations shall be incorporated in and form part of the terms of my engagement, and that I shall at all times be liable to and bound by them.

Signed before me this 8th day of April

One thousand nine hundred and Twenty

Chief Inspector of Police.
Now William had a steady job so he could telegram Margaret to let her know when to book the passage. From here on in it was hard work and he had many dreams of seeing his beloved wife, young son and soon to be newborn girl. Police number 1303 Constable William Harvey, MC was to do about 24 months of duty in Perth and Victoria Park. Because of the intensity of policing, studying and training the time would fly by and soon 1922 had finally arrived and William applied for his first leave.

As is evident on his first application for leave it is obvious that this was to be a good leave and it would ensure that he would meet Margaret as her ship berthed.
So it was onto a train once again and William was heading back to Albany, however this time it was the most exciting trip there yet. One can only imagine the emotions of that day in Albany when he finally spotted the ship from the lookout atop Mt Clarence. As soon as the ship had appeared at the harbour heads he would run the odd mile or two through the scrub of the Mount to the wharf below to watch the ship berth. Then as if by magic she was there and at last he saw his daughter for the first time as a proud mum held her high near the railing of the ship. This was it, at long, long last. All he had had up until then were letters that were always at least 7 weeks old. Now here they were, almost able to touch each other, however they would be forced to endure another hour or two before that first touch in two years would become a reality.

Finally, Margaret and the Harvey kids were ashore; and trying to embrace husband, father and luggage without a great deal of success. A kindly middle-aged woman stepped in “please allow me to look after your children for a few minutes so you two can get to know each other a little better!” Feelings became overwhelming as the two embraced and it was very evident that the couple were in love as they hugged and kissed one another on that far away wharf, so long ago. Margaret was at the beginning of a life long adventure in Australia and she would not see mother England again for another thirty-five years. William would never see England again!

With only a couple of weeks remaining on his leave pass the two had to move fast as he was to be in charge of his own Police Station in the outback of Australia. Outback Policemen in the 1920’s were still outback pioneers in their own right, their patrols were still done with ‘horse and camel’ and those patrols would last from weeks to months just like the old pioneers had done before them as they opened up the outback in the early twentieth century.
Chapter Eight
Outback Lawman

That Police Station was in a town named “Youanmi” (pronounced “You-an-me”).
Youanmi was a turn of the century gold town in the rugged and unforgiving outback of WA. It was the sort of town that wasn’t there one day, and then “Gold!”

At one time the district boasted some five thousand people, however the dwellings were at best Spartan to say the least, with many of the buildings being of corrugated iron, white washed Hessian and/or constructed of the local stone.
Within weeks Will and Margaret and their beloved kids were on their way to that place with the funny name and located in a very isolated part of the world.

Once loaded aboard the train to Geraldton (about 300 miles to the north of Perth) the family were away through the beautiful back hills of the city of Perth, through the Avon valley and north to Moora and beyond.
The train trip was to take a full day and it was evening with the sun setting over the clear waters of the Indian Ocean when they finally stepped foot in Geraldton. Geraldton was situated on the western side of the Central Western Police District and it was the headquarters that commanded a huge outback district.

A quick nights stopover in a hotel in Geraldton then it was up before the sun to board the slow train to Mt Magnet some 250 miles to the East.
As the train wobbled east towards Mount Magnet the Harvey’s witnessed a spectacular outback sunrise, which, along with a cooling breeze, comforted the travellers for their first morning in the wilderness of Australia. However the land quickly warmed and hardened from the dry coastal sands to the rock hard red dirt of the interior. It would prove to be hard days ahead for this couple in this strange land and those hard days would start from this particular train trip!
A person can’t help but to wonder about the couple’s thoughts as they were heading into that very stark and remote region of the vast outback, that place with little available water and with more than just a few desperadoes.

The trip was to be very slow and the train would stop more than a few times for different reasons, the passengers generally thought these stops a pleasant time to stretch the legs and have a look around the strange landscape and maybe they might even get a chance to boil ‘the Billy’ and have a cup of tea.

Night soon followed that first warm day and the breeze created by the movement of the train once again comforted the travellers as they rolled on through that first dark and mysterious night.

The following day the travellers were to see yet another beautiful sunrise with orange and red rays bringing life and warmth to the rocky and sparsely vegetated “Marscape” and then finally in the late morning Mt Magnet would come into sight which would delight and relieve everybody onboard.

The ‘Mount’ was the hub of the Mid-West and it was the last real town inland from Geraldton that many travellers of the day would see when heading east, the town itself resembled an old wild west American desert town made famous in many Hollywood movies but this town was very much Australian.

East from the ‘Mount’ was “No Man’s Land” and it was definitely “No Woman’s Land,” it was tough, tough like few white women or white men could ever have imagined.

Mt Magnet was, and still is a long way from anywhere; and Youanmi was and still is a very distant 100 ml/160 km to the south east of ‘The Mount’ and there is absolutely nothing in between those two outposts but outback scrub!

Amongst the commotion of people alighting, unloading and searching for luggage Constable Harvey was approached by one of the Mount’s Policemen who was showing an eagerness to meet Bill Harvey, he would also fill William in on the area that he was about to become “The Sheriff” of.

As soon as the Harvey’s needs were organised Will and Margaret were shown to the transport for the next leg of their journey.

The transport in this part of the world in the 1920’s was still the same as it had been for all the previous years of white settlement in the outback of Western Australia; it would cater for movement of both material and human cargo to and from the very outer fringes of the then expanding gold towns of the region.
As the Harvey’s looked east yet again they were shocked to see eight camels hitched to a large wooden wagon that was the once a fortnight transport service to Youanmi.
Margaret was dumbfounded. She just stood and stared at the sight that confronted of her.
The large wooden wagon was loaded with many items of need including furniture and animal feed and it had just enough room for “the law and his family.” This was definitely the pioneering ‘Wild West’ confronting one London lady and one pretty wise Aussie man.
Margaret slowly turned to a sheepish Will, stared at his sparkling eyes and burst out laughing. ‘I love you’ she said with excitement and laughter in her voice, however when I said I would follow you to the end of the earth I didn’t think such a place existed.
Will was almost as bewildered as Margaret, the two stood there for a moment and looked at the camels then gazed to the distant east in astonishment and then back to the camels.
Nevertheless we are free!
Margaret’s voice broke the trance like state that the two had momentarily been in.
Free William!
Free from the noise and madness of that horrible place! So lets go!
With little hesitation the two climbed aboard the wagon and settled amongst the odds and sods and bad smells and awaited instructions from the driver, then with a jolt they were on their way to Youanmi and they expected a 3-4 day journey if all went well.
Arrival time would depend on how well the camels would pull the heavy wagon and its load through the parts of the track that were particularly sandy or boggy, and if it rained? Well then they might get stuck in one place for goodness knows how long!
Slow progress was the norm so all aboard that old wagon got to know each other quite well.
The driver was from Turkish/Afghani extraction and he had been in Australia working with camels for many years. One might wonder how Will slept at night with ‘Johnny Turk’ so close beside him?
Late every evening those on the trip would build a fire, cook and eat, then after the dishes were done and things were packed away it was all around the campfire for a chat.
Poor Margaret had hardly ever seen a bug in her life and now it seemed the outback was alive with them. It was to be the same everywhere so one can
safely assume that Margaret’s soft delicate skin would have been covered in large red welts for many weeks at a time. 
Up and over outback hill after outback hill, the journey would go on and on, thankfully it was pleasant enough weather although the sun still had a bite in it and Margaret’s fair English skin burned easily.

Wildlife in the outback was everywhere and soon it would be ordinary to see grey and red kangaroos, emus, wedge tail eagles, wild horses, camels, assorted parrots and many other bird species, not forgetting the many species of desert snakes including the ‘Death Adder’ and the many varied species of Australian goanna etc.’

Abdul the driver was aware of the bush telegraph and it had told him that William Harvey was a war hero and he was “coming outback to get you Abdul.”
This was the joke as Abdul left Youanmi with his camels to pick up the new cop and his family. Abdul shared a good and welcome relationship with all peoples in the area and he would pass information to Will on that trip inland and from then on.
The trip went on and on until finally Abdul yelled with excitement, “Just over the hill good peoples and we are home.”
Then, there it was!
“Youanmi”.

Youanmi was right off the beaten track and it was just as well William knew horses well as he was expected to keep control of an area larger than some countries. One lone lawman in the desert whose duty it was to control some ‘pretty tough cookies’ as well as survive the fickle outback.
Police back up was a ‘non issue’ out there as the nearest police stations to Youanmi were some 100 ml/160 Km’s away.
If you were to knock someone off out here you had a lot of time to blend in and move on.

The family stayed in one of the hotels until their furniture arrived some three weeks later, they then moved into the Police house which like the Police station was constructed of iron sheeting and in reality was no more than a shed. Margaret and Will ‘got into it’ and the couple soon had a cottage that was peaceful and for the first time ever, it was home, in fact it was to be the first of a number of Harvey homes!
William found his way around the district and learned many new things about the outback by asking questions and listening to everything that was of use to him as a policeman. In his day he had seen and knew the effects of alcohol on men and women so the pubs were a place to be looked at every day but in no sort of pattern.

He was also exposed to the local Aboriginal desert people whom he saw as a good source of information and they were not so different to him so he became very fond of many of them and he would always admire their resourcefulness in a tough land.

Remember we are talking the years 1922-1925.

He would always laugh and joke with the Aboriginal kids as he rode down the street, back straight in the saddle and aboard a beautiful strong Outback Gelding.

The black kids would run alongside him calling out ‘give us ride will yah Mr Boss’. The Elders looked upon ‘Boss man Bill’ as a friend and an honest man as he would consult with them as to the punishment that should be applied to their own and in many cases by their own. At times he almost broke that rule in an effort to protect a perpetrator from being speared in the thigh or worse. Justice in the outback can be a debilitating thing, if your skin is broken and open to infection without proper treatment one can only imagine the problems that could befall a victim. That said one would imagine that if a youth were to see this justice carried out they would generally try not to become a victim or a perpetrator.

With gold being the main attraction in the area there were all kinds of people from all backgrounds trying to scratch a meagre living from the dry parched red earth and there were those who would service the ones hunting for the elusive gold!

Youanmi townsite was founded near a rich golden vein running through an area of rock that was more or less standing on its end and buried deep within the subterranean earth.

The pubs always did good business because they were one of those places where a man could get a drink and spend his hard-earned money and they were also the mainstay of accommodation in all small towns.

Within weeks of the Harvey’s arrival the pubs would become the scene of some near fatal performances and Will would have to be very tough on some people to ensure that the town was kept peaceful for the good folk of that outback area.
As a dry winter passed into spring two doggers (dingo hunters) who would spend months at a time living off the land tracking, killing and skinning dingos to claim a state bounty were working in the area. It was on a bright sunny day around eleven in the morning; Will was at his desk when he noticed two men (who had obviously just walked out of the desert) slowly walking towards the Police Station with two pack horses laden with dingo pelts. If you were a hunter of dingos back then you would take the pelts to the police station and the officer would pay you so much a pelt. Will greeted both of these hard scruffy Bushmen and listened to their story, he then told them to go and get cleaned up and he would have cash for them within the hour. He was almost through counting the pelts on the front veranda when the two clean-shaven men approached him again to collect their dingo bounty.

The doggers showed obvious delight because it had been a long time between drinks and they were glad to have a fist full of money in their hands for the first time in months, now they were ready for a drink. So what are you boys up to while you are in town? Questioned Will. Oh! We’ll just have a few drinks and see what happens. Ok! But please, no trouble! Replied Will. Who us! The answer came as the two tough’s walked away laughing. Hey boys! Will called out. I mean it, ok! Will popped into the pubs a few times that afternoon and all seemed well so there was no great need to worry about the two new strangers in town at that time.

With the onset of the twilight and with all being quiet on the police front he grabbed the chance to have his evening meal with Margaret and the family. After he had helped with the dishes he, the little lady and the kids sat outside on the front veranda of the small police home, delighting in the wonderful clean outback evening air and remembered about their previous lives back in England and their future plans whilst enjoying the stillness and peace of that perfect evening.

Meanwhile the doggers were in one of the pubs down the street getting drunk and they had started ‘mouthing off’, they were also becoming a little threatening but the barman had things under control and no harm was being done. Yet! A little later in the evening however there was a loud BANG. The crisp clear air was snapped by the unmistakable sound of a gunshot.
Damn! Exclaimed Will, he jumped up and went into action talking to Margaret as he went inside and armed himself with the police issue handgun. I’ll be back in a few minutes so take the kids inside and stay there.
‘Be careful Will’ were her last words and those very last words in Margaret’s goodbye to her husband would come to haunt her for much of her remaining life.

Sure enough, the dingo trappers were by now very drunk and they had been booted out of the pub by the barman for threatening the local drinkers. They staggered out shouting that they would be back to get him.
Yeah, Yeah, exclaimed the barman as he walked back to his job without much more thought of the two as this sort of alcohol talk was always common when drunks were evicted from the premise.

As Will made his way to the pub more shots rang out, he then slowed when he came within sight of the front of the pub, BANG again, this time with the sound of glass shattering. As the Policeman looked towards the pub, there he was, the older Dogger was standing outside the pub door with a rifle at his shoulder. Then, without noise, Will put the barrel of his service revolver into the dogger’s ear and warned him to put the rifle down. Now!
That must have been quite a sight as the dirt street would have been lit with lanterns and little else. Carbide street lanterns from the mines were installed around that time so it would have been pretty still and dim with a surreal-ness that only the outback can offer. The dogger froze at the door as he felt the cold steel of the handgun in his ear. Now he was no longer the big wheel holding all the cards and it was now his life in danger.
He hesitated in fear then dropped the rifle and pleaded, “Please, don’t shoot me, Please.” A puddle of wetness trickled from the Doggers trouser leg onto the pubs wooden veranda as his legs trembled uncontrollably.

As Bill took control of the situation all those in the pub slowly came out of their hiding places looking startled and shocked as Big Bill ‘handcuffed his man’. An onlooker from the other side of the street would later report seeing the policeman standing straight as a pole, side on with his right arm outstretched, rock steady and meaning business.
The younger dogger took off to the north, said one of the patrons. Ok, I’ll settle this one down first and then I’ll go after him was the calm reply as the Policeman focussed into the darkness.
Are you all OK? Yeah, came about 12 answers, all was well but there was a lot of damage, including a very old and expensive bar mirror, now full of holes and cracks.

As he walked the prisoner to the lock up Will asked one of the patrons to summons up Jackie (the local black tracker) to meet him at the stables for a job. Before Will had saddled up a horse, Jackie was there.

What is it boss?
Will told him the story and Jackie was quick to agree to go with him, saying “that grog, no good stuff boss”.

As the Policeman mounted his horse and pointed the way their figures quickly faded from the town lights as they moved into the darkness of the outback.

By sunrise there were two prisoners in the Police lockup and Margaret had her man home and safe in bed. Another days work done!

Outback Policeman in those days were as fit as ‘mallee bulls’ and Policemen all over Australia would, like Bill, be or become expert horsemen.

With Khaki uniforms and wide brimmed western hats the outback policeman was a sight to behold, they didn’t always wear uniforms however, in fact they would dress in light civilian clothes for their daily duties in the desert environment that had proved completely hostile to uniforms.

Bill would always wear his large wide brimmed outback Police hat and badge in his day to day work with and without uniform.

Summer would hit hard and whilst Will was able to endure such hardship, poor Margaret was suffering from the oppressive heat that was non-stop day and night and life in a galvanized hut in extreme weather was a challenge. Now pregnant for their third child she had many chores to carry out in primitive conditions and was suffering greatly.

William would cover the roof with wet Hessian bags and dowse the roof with buckets of water in an attempt to keep the house cool with reasonable effect. Remember, electricity was still a long way from the outback in the early 1920’s so there was no refrigeration or any other luxuries to speak of at all.

On one occasion, Will had finally finished a long patrol on horseback (patrols could last up to six weeks) when he arrived home late in the afternoon to find a heavily pregnant Margaret in a panic.

Will! Thank God you are here! The kids are missing out there and I’m scared.

Will asked what happened and immediately sent for Jackie.

After a quick talk, Jackie stated that they should start a number of signal fires, as it was now almost dark.
So off the town went and started the fires and then they went from one to the other hoping that the two small kids would be attracted to one of them. It worked, Jackie and Will came across his young son Laurie and his tiny little girl Ursula standing at one of the fires. Young Laurie had a stick with Ursula’s undies on the end of it drying them next to the fire. As soon as Will and Jackie approached the kids, young Ursula would state to her dad. I did wee’s in my pants daddy, so we are drying them! Both men laughed with relief as they picked up the kids and made their way back to town. Around this time their third child “Kevin” was born at Black Range hospital some 120 kilometres to the north of Youanmi as it was the only hospital within ‘whoop whoop’ of anywhere!

Some time down the track it was time for Will to be granted leave so the couple and their kids would endure the long trip back to Mt Magnet and then by the relative comfort of the train they would head back to Perth. One momentous thing had happened in Youanmi in the past six months, that is, somebody had purchased a modern motor vehicle to run the mail, light cargo and/or paying customers to and from surrounding areas so now they could offer a grand trip to Mt Magnet in hours instead of days with the camel wagon. It was about this time that Will received word that his father had died in England, unfortunately he couldn’t do anything else but write home and morn his father from far away.
POLICE DEPARTMENT.

This form should accompany the Officer's application for leave, and must be sent to the District Police Officer, who will transmit it to the Commissioner.

APPLICATION FOR FREE PASSES TO THE COAST.
(Regulation 355A.)

THE DISTRICT POLICE OFFICER,

I beg to apply for tickets as detailed hereunder from __________ to __________, dating from __________ available for __________ (give names with relationship).

John Harvey, husband.
Margaret Harvey, wife.
Mary Smith, daughter.
Number of tickets required: Adults __________, Children’s __________, cost only __________.

Ages of Children __________, __________, __________.

Length of continuous service on the Goldfields __________.

State whether a free pass has previously been given __________.

If so, date __________.

Length of leave applied for __________ weeks.

Nature of leave __________.

I certify that the information given herein is correct, and that the persons named are members of my family and reside with me. I undertake to travel by the first available train and meet to break my journey.

Signed __________.

No. __________.

Date __________.

The Commissioner of Police.

I beg to recommend that the passes applied for be granted.

The cost to the Department will be __________.

Signed __________.
Margaret was pregnant again so this time she was to be in the comfort of a City hospital in the Perth suburb of Subiaco. The trip went well and soon eight weeks leave was up and no baby. William had to go back to work almost as soon as he had left and that work was a long way from that cosy hospital in Perth. So back to Youanmi he went.
The next communication was asking for him to be relieved as soon as possible as Margaret was not doing well whilst in hospital. As hard as she had tried, the outback had taken its toll on her and William had to get her out of it.
The couple’s fourth child Edwin James Harvey was born sometime around this request. Will was obviously keen to get down to Perth again and see that all was well for this was a time of turmoil and anxiety for him as he tried to juggle a job out in the sticks with a sick wife and four children in the city.
Chapter Nine
Down in the Deep South

Within time all worked out for the best and soon it was midway through the year of 1925. Will took the opportunity and applied for a posting to a South West country town that would be a lot kinder to his family.

The family was on the move again, back to Perth for a couple of weeks and the new posting was approved and soon Will and his family would be in a place in the ‘Deep South’ of the state.

Manjimup was the place, and Manjimup was a rough and tough timber, dairy and tobacco town in the deep southern ‘Karri’ forests that his mate Handlebars had mentioned on that first train trip from Albany to Perth way back in 1911.

At last somewhere civilised where the kids could go to school, and poor old mum could live in a cooler climate. Manjimup was a hub of society in 1925 but it was perceived as a lawless area that was out of control as far as law and order were concerned. The senior decision makers of the Police Force obviously knew who were good Policemen and where they would be most effective.

Manjimup residents, storeowners and shire officers were keen to greet this new officer as word and rumours had by now spread far and wide throughout the district. Many men from William’s Sixteenth Battalion had come from this area and many of them had known him during their service in the ‘Great War,’ and, they were always keen to catch up with old mates. The towns folk in general had also heard of his prior service and many hoped that this man would bring some peace and stability to the area.

As the steam train from Perth pulled into the Manjimup railway station there was an excited crowd of office bearers, families, business folk and friends waving and shouting happily away. Neither William nor Margaret had expected such a crowd and they were warmly welcomed by well wishing townsfolk and officials as they stepped from the train.

Standing taller than most Will was able to look over the top of the people and observe the crowd on the far side of the station so as to check out the area without anyone being aware of his observations (as a police person does). A policeman and soldier will instinctively do such things in new surroundings so as to sum up new situations and thus be prepared for the unusual if it happens. Always aware, a Policeman must have foresight into the unseen!
Within days, Margaret had the small timber police house turned into a lovely little family cottage next to the Police Station and the family settled in.
In the coming weeks not all was well, soon after arrival at Manjimup Will became seriously ill when his throat became seriously inflamed, which in turn rendered him to bed.
This illness turned out to be the results of his years of smoking and of the gas inhalation from his war years.
He was sent to Perth for urgent medical treatment because he had not been able to eat for a week. He would laugh in later life about the cure.
The doctor gave Will an injection of what was then known as ‘Dold’, he reported that the following morning he awoke to breakfast, scoffed it down and then ate his fellow patients meals too, on their approval, naturally!
He never smoked again, that is until the following war that was to come but then he only had a taste and that was it.

The Police Station in Manjimup was on approximately 5 acres of land, which included the house, stables and a “target tree” down the back.
In these times the effects of the Great War were still discussed everyday and awarded heroes were both talked of and admired and many legends were built around these men, such were the days.

As Will did the rounds of the town he would run into all sorts of characters including some ANZAC veterans who knew of his awesome reputation and indeed many who had known him personally. As mentioned some 16 thousand odd men served in the “Old’ Sixteenth” battalion in the First World War so those who had lasted from April 25th 1915 to November 11th 1918 were rare people and those who were still alive were admired by all as ‘the originals’.

The pubs were the first on the list of visits and as the tall uniformed frame of this upright man entered the premises all chat at the bar faded, the drinkers turned silently in his direction and looked him in the eyes.
‘Good evening gentlemen’ he would say softly. A short silence followed, then expressions of greetings. Have a beer came demand after demand!
No thank you boys, (Will was a tea totaller by now) I would just like a brief word with you whilst I’m here!
First, I am a fair man, and all who treat me with respect will receive that respect in return, however, I am not here to look pretty and the job of policing is not always easy, so, I would ask for your help in keeping the peace. Everyone in the pub that night agreed to help him as much as possible and all pledged their support. Thanks for your time fella’s and goodnight, he then continued on his rounds.
Within months the outlook for law and order was finally looking positive as he started to spread his wings and get to know some of the places beyond the town.
Followed by the expectation of support

Unfortunately William was to be the only policeman in Manjimup for the next nine years. He worked constantly for the community putting in sixteen hours a day (often more when on bush patrol), seven days a week to keep on top of the many chores required for efficient policing.
Let’s not forget that he was also responsible for banking, birth and death registration, plus many more jobs that we would not care to get into at this time.

One morning he was called to the barbershop to attend a disturbance. As he arrived at the shop door he saw three youths working the barber over. In he went and dragged one of the offenders off of the helpless barber whilst the other two took the opportunity to scramble out the front door and flee down the street. William cuffed his man and marched him down the main street to the station then secured him behind bars. He then set out to find the other two thugs who had fled the scene, however despite a hard day on the beat he was unsuccessful and he returned to the office at the end of the day where he discovered not one prisoner, but three.

It would appear that the talk to the good patrons in the pub when he first arrived in town had paid dividends! Shortly, after he had arrived back at the station a group of men turned up and excitedly told him how they had chased the culprits down the road, over fences and through the back streets until the boys had them collared. They went on and told him how the blokes in the pub had seen the two culprits and how they had given chase and made a citizen’s arrest. They had then marched the offenders to the lock up, got the key from Margaret and locked them away. Will just stood there shaking his head and laughing as he uttered the words, ‘well I’ll be damned.’

The year of 1926 was a busy time for this ‘old soldier’ and the baddies kept him busy as can be seen by the following report.
PAYROLL ROBBERY 1926

The weekly payroll for the Pemberton Mill workers was taken from the National Bank in Manjimup, on a motorised rail trolley by the Bank Manager, Mr Barber and Constable Bill Harvey as the escort, with a railway employee driving the trolley.

The amount of cash involved was around $6,000 - a considerable amount of money in 1926.

About 5 miles from Pemberton, around a bend and in a small cutting, some bushes had been placed across the line.

On pulling up the trolley, the occupants were confronted by a gunman, standing on top of the bank with a rifle in his hands demanding the payroll box.

Evidently Mr Barber made some sort of a move which made the gunman believe he was reaching for his revolver. The gunman fired and severed one of Mr Barber's fingers. He slumped over and the gunman thought he had killed him. He picked up the payroll box and took off on his horse.

Following the horse tracks later, the payroll box was found under a log, the contents were intact.

No trace was ever found as to the identity of the gunman.

This happening was recorded by an 'Anonymous' author in his written words of his 1914 - 40 memories of events during this period of time.
Later in 1926 Margaret gave birth to another beautiful baby daughter, the couple named the child Madeline and with a little help from their many friends life got back to as normal as it could be.

With so many young children to feed and care for, plus the normal chores of life poor old Margaret didn’t have any time to herself, however like most women of her day she managed to get through those tough times with barely a whimper.

While ‘Bill’, as he was now commonly known to the townsfolk in Manjimup was cleaning up the town he invested in a model ‘T’ Ford as time was at a premium and speed was essential.

The car was great, however when it was low on fuel and it came across long steep hills the motor would splutter and die, so when that first splutter was detected he would prepare to turn the vehicle around and back it up the slope.

You see, this model T Ford had a ‘gravity feed’ fuel tank under the front seat, all would depend upon the amount of fuel remaining in the tank, when low on fuel and on a steep angle the fuel would not flow to the carburettor causing the car to splutter and roll to a stop. However, if the Ford was reversed up the incline then the fuel level in the tank would reverse and fuel would flow to the engine.

Even with these small problems it was faster than the horse out the back, and besides, it was a damn side more comfortable, but the horse out the back could get deep into the forest so both were used for their own specific purpose.

In the 1920’s, the ‘Powers To Be’ had deemed the southwest area around Manjimup as very suitable for settlement and the Western Australian Government had encouraged English migration with the promise of ‘five acres of land for free’. You just had to ‘clear it’ and crop a small parcel of produce within five years and the land was yours’, however that claim was optimistic at best!

It all sounded too good to be true and some lucky families managed to stick it out for generations to come.

Along with the land came a package consisting of a cow, maybe a few chooks and some odds and ends. These small parcels of land where grouped together to make small communities known as ‘Group Settlements’ and many ‘Group Settlements’ were deep in the Karri forests.

These small plots of land sounded like one of life’s great dreams for many people who were doing it tough in England so soon after World War One.

The promise however was a far cry from the reality as each plot of land was covered in large stands of Karri forest with individual trees so huge and thick that the ground below never saw the light of day.
The biggest problem facing the Group Settlers on arrival was the fact that they would have to remove trees of gigantic proportions by hand, so times were going to be tougher than they could ever have imagined.

After a gruelling sea voyage many of the settlers were off loaded at the port of Fremantle and then loaded aboard open rail wagons to be pulled by steam locomotives for a couple of hundred miles into the southern forest. These trips were done in all kinds of weather from hot dry summers, to cold wet winters and it went on for years.

‘Big Bill’ would sometimes wait at the Manjimup railway station for some of the migrant trains to arrive; he would then guide these new settlers to their plots of land and along the way he would explain about life in that region of Australia.

Life was about to get tougher than any new migrant could have imagined because chopping 60-80 metre tall trees down with little more than an axe was going to be tough enough. Having to dig the tree stumps out with little more than a spade, then stacking and burning the waste all within five years would strain many good folk to breaking point.

With these pressures came many hard luck stories like the time Will was called out to another unfortunate accident. Almost all families had started out with an axe to chop trees down and a shovel, spade and pick to dig out extra ordinarily large stumps.

It was during these times in the southwest that explosives became widely used as a means of land clearing, the results were fantastic and many people resorted to the use of dynamite in their day-to-day work. Unfortunately there was no training in the handling of dynamite and detonators in those days and many careless and sickening accidents would result in a police investigation.

A man and his eight-year-old daughter were walking down a bush track, in his right hand was a steel bucket filled with dynamite, detonators, fuses and some personal gear. He lit a cigarette and accidentally dropped the match or smoke into the bucket of high explosives or the dynamite was unstable, whatever the cause an explosion resulted in the death of the little girl and the loss of an arm for the father. Of course a Policeman had to be called to clean up the mess and investigate such accidents so he was always busy caring for dead and injured people and the families around them.
Ted would recall the time when his father brought a wounded man into town from one of the Group Settlements, this man was to gain the nickname of “Woof, Woof Martin” for reasons which will become clear shortly. Martin was a normal kind of a bloke doing what most normal blokes were doing on a daily basis in that part of the world. He had been moving from one unearthed Karri stump to another setting dynamite charges and blowing them into smaller pieces.

On one particular stump the hole was formed for the dynamite so it was time to crimp the fuse to the detonator, insert the detonator into the dynamite, insert the dynamite into the hole then light the fuse and run for cover.

A common practise in those days was to crimp the detonator to the fuse by squashing it between your teeth. When Martin bit down on a detonator however it exploded in his mouth blowing the side of his face off. Will took him straight to the hospital where the staff patched him up and he survived.

Ted would tell us that this man was nicknamed “Woof, Woof Martin” because he could not speak normally, his injuries caused many words to be distorted with a woof overtone but everybody was accepting of his disability and he got by.

Many settlers would simply walk off the land possessing nothing but new hope; they would then disappear into the middle of the great depression and try their luck elsewhere.

People walking away from their settlements and leaving everything behind had many effects on the people still struggling to hang on to their hard earned gains.

One day a large black bull was reported to be scaring children going to and from school.

When Bill got the call about this ‘half wild’ bull he arranged for the butcher to accompany him to the site so they could remove the problem.

Will was armed with the trusty .44 Winchester rifle and the butcher had his knives so the two set out. It wasn’t too long before they came across the large beast in a small clearing to the right of the Ford T so Bill stopped the car and turned the engine off. The black bull stood motionless and just stared at the two men.

What do you reckon Jack? The policeman said to the butcher.

Gee’s, his a big bugger, I reckon we should take him out from here; came a nervous reply.

William slipped a number of cartridges into the rifle, slowly opened the car door and stood near the front fender, he then took aim at the now moving bull and fired one shot hitting it in the forehead.
The bull collapsed to the ground immediately so the butcher got out of the passenger side of the car, opened the rear door and retrieved his knives then moved next to Bill.

What do you reckon Bill? He dead! Jack’s reply came with an upward motion of his head.

Big Bill was, as usual, in that famous upright position with the rifle at the ready, about waist high.

Hang on a minute Jack!

No sooner had he spoken than the bull staggered to its feet, shook its head, looked in their direction and charged, the bullet had hit solid bone and then deflected into the paddock and had only momentarily stunned the beast.

Whoa look out they yelled as they tripped over one another while trying to get behind the car. With seconds to spare and barely behind it the bull hit the other side lifting the little Ford onto the left side wheels where the two men were taking protection.

Bloody bastard! Exclaimed the butcher in bewilderment!

The bull backed off for another charge and it was on the run-in when boom, the animal hit the ground running and tumbled stone dead just feet from the battered, dust covered tourer.

While the butcher was panicking to put distance between himself and the bull Big Bill had taken a few steps to his left and dispatched the raging animal with a single shot to the heart.

Jack had turned in mid stride, stumbled and fell into the bush, a few stunned moments passed without a movement or a word being spoken, then suddenly the butcher started to laugh in a soft nervous manner which grew into a full belly laugh as he collapsed to the side of the road in stitches.

When Bill took his attention from the bull he focussed on the butcher who was trying to compose himself and with broad smile that turned to full laughter he cried out.

Are you all right Jack?

Then in an upper crust English accent he said “Oh dear, that was blickin’ close, say what!”

The two men soon recovered from their startle and all the belly laughter so with the help of a few jokes they got to work carving the beast up into select cuts, they then returned to town and distributed the meat to many needy families.

Late in 1927 Margaret was pregnant again however, this time the baby boy died at birth. Margaret would blame the doctor for the rest of her life for the death of her little boy Joseph. She would remember the smell of alcohol on the doctor’s
breath and then seeing the baby’s left side of its skull caved in as if by undue pressure from forceps. This was devastating to the couple and within days a small personal burial took place in the Manjimup cemetery. Also in 1927 the Harvey’s were advised that William’s brother Laurie who was married to Helen had died of pneumonia. Both were devastated at this news for it was Laurie and Helen (Margaret’s sister) who had introduced William to Margaret and once again distance had stopped the couple from attending yet another family funeral.

Little did anybody in the bush know that the great depression was just around the corner and of course there were not too many people in the bush living real flash at that time either! Then came a huge blow for Manjimup and indeed the world over. October 1929 and Wall Street crashes! World depression was a knockout kick in the guts for most of the workers in the western world and Manjimup was to become one of the hardest hit places. Margaret had also given birth to her last child around this time, another boy was born healthy and well and was named ‘William Patrick’ on Margaret’s insistence.

Edwin (Ted) would later remember fond memories of the peace and happiness in the family home aided by the soft sound of beautiful opera music that his dad would play on the gramophone and he would remember that his dad always encouraged peacefulness in the family home.

Times were getting tough and money was short so the criminal personality began to surface and Bill was starting to get ran off his feet trying to keep law and order in his district, however law was to be maintained for the ten full years that he was there!

Every two weeks a pay wagon would travel to the timber cutting camps out in the forest to pay the workers so the monetary cargo always needed protection. Will would load some suitable weapons for the two day trip because this little black wagon was going out in the back blocks and it could be the target of desperate robbers at anytime, however we’ll get back to that a little later!

For now though, it was 1930! In fact it was Saturday the 30/11/1930 and for a change not much was happening so Will was catching up with some paper work when the phone rang.
On the other end of the phone was the Railway Stationmaster asking in an urgent and anxious manner for Bill to come down to the rail yards as a little girl had been fatally injured during a shunting procedure?

At once Will leapt to his feet and called out to Margaret that a little girl had been run down at the rail station so he may be a while. Margaret called back ‘Ok Will’, be careful, then she thought nothing more of it as he was always in and out.

As Will approached the scene at the rail yard he was drawn to a small crowd of rail workers standing in a semi circle near some freight wagons so he walked hurriedly in their direction. As he neared the scene he could see the body of a small child, at once the blood drained from his face because there before him was his little girl Madeline laying dead on the ground. One can only wonder of the thoughts and emotions that ran through this wonderful but tortured man at that moment? As he slowly bent down he could not take his eyes off the face of his dear little four-year-old baby.

Madeline and her elder sister Ursula had been playing all day with a number of other girls and they had been taking a short cut home through the main rail area of the timber town.
As the elder child called ‘this way Mad’, she ducked under a wagon and Madeline followed.
As Madeline neared the point of no return a steam engine shunted backwards to hook up with the wagons that the girls were now under.
The young one was hit hard by the wagon and she was killed instantly. In a way it was thankful that it had been internal injuries that had killed her, the outside of her body was unmarked.
William picked his little baby’s limp body up in his arms, turned and faced the workers in the eyes and slowly started the long walk home.

A bystander reported that this main street long walk home by this strong man was the saddest and most pitiful sight that he had ever witnessed in his entire life.
As he walked with his little girl many of the towns folk gathered in silence on the nearby footpaths to support him at this most terrible time.
The man probably would have cried silently in front of many people that day as he humbly walked that lonely road. Once he turned the corner into his street he saw Margaret, she was standing outside of the front fence near the gate. Instantly she recognised that this was bad. She ran to Will yelling No, please, No! William what has happened? Madeline my baby, Oh no! William, bring her inside. He shook his head and muttered the words. Its too late mum!

Will and Margaret then walked together and lay Madeline on her bed as if asleep, Margaret was on her knees praying and sobbing uncontrollably, the little girl was no more. What a tragedy, what a sad blow to the family who, like most others at the time were just coping with the life and times of depression.

Sadly it was William’s job to investigate his own daughter’s death! There was a huge gathering of town’s folk at the funeral and over one thousand cards of sympathy were received by the Harvey’s following Madeline’s death. This hugely popular man was asked to run for parliament around this time so he could represent the people. He graciously declined stating to Margaret that the communists in the area wouldn’t vote for him anyway, that was just a light hearted excuse as he was a career cop and he intended to stay a cop right to the end.
Chapter Ten
On the road to Depression

The mid to late nineteen twenty’s were a time of great productivity in the logging and sawing industries that would take men deep into the Karri and Jarrah forests. Living hard was ‘par for the course’ in the southwest corner of Australia and drunkenness and all the problems that it brings was a large part of life in that time. The problems would also include violence, bestiality, suicide, domestic problems, threats, paedophilia, accidents and the like with many of these everyday occurrences involving the over indulgence of grog.

In the mid to late twenties William’s main aim was to bring sly grog dealing to account because the criminal activity had been increasing both in numbers and severity. At the best of times things were always tough in the bush but they were about to get a lot tougher and all sorts of illegal deals were happening so all Policemen were constantly trying to shut down the illegal movements of alcohol which in all probability would have been stolen in the first place.

Although policing has always been very serious work sometimes you have to have a bit of a giggle and let your imagination take over when you read some of the reports from that era. Sly grog running was something that simply had to be stopped and there are some funny stories to be had, one of these stories was to be typed for “the record”, so we will let William explain it to you in the following report.
Const. Harvey reports 21/3/26 that in consequence of complaints received in company with Const. Cooper he left Station at 7 a.m. and proceeded to the Pemberton-Northcliffe Road in the vicinity of Dawson's property arriving at about 10 a.m. At 11 a.m. I proceeded to Northcliffe leaving Const. Cooper on the road with instructions to stop Dawson's car if it came along and search the same for liquor.

Returning from Northcliffe I travelled in a motor wagon owned by Sidney Fraser, and on arriving at Dawson's found that Dawson's car had been stopped by Const. Cooper who was then in conversation with Mrs. Dawson. We searched the car and Mrs. Dawson produced two bottles of whisky from a locker on the switchboard saying she was taking them to her old man who was working at Northcliffe.

We allowed the car to proceed in the direction of New Northcliffe, but not being satisfied with the result of our search called on Fraser to assist us and ordered him to follow Dawson's car. We overtook Dawson's car about 1½ miles along the road, it had stopped near two stationary motor wagons.

We again searched the car and found four more bottles of whisky, two in each of the rear pockets on the car. Mrs. Dawson was informed that the car would be seized and taken to Manjinup Police Station. Robert Dawson was allowed to drive the car back to their gate where the occupants got out and Const. Cooper drove the car to Manjinup.

On the way Const. Cooper complained that a broken spring was sticking in his back, and on arrival at Manjinup a further search of the car was made, and eight bottles were found concealed behind the upholstery of the front seat, and the same number concealed behind the upholstery of the back seat, making a total of 22 bottles of Johnny Walker red label whisky. Mrs. Dawson stated the car was her property being purchased on time payment, she has three children Robert, 19 years and two daughters five and ten years.
Days came and days went and at times groups of young blokes would bet (each other) that they would be the only person other than Mr. Harvey to ride the horse affectionately known as “Stupid” (William’s Police horse).

‘Stupid’ (Police horse No 309) was a big strong male with a particular personality.

The only small problem Will had with Stupid was the fact that he was pretty much spoilt, he was a very well looked after animal and he would not let anybody on his back, anybody that is, except William.

This particular character trait was well bred into him for if Will was to become dislodged from his mount then he didn’t want any other person to use the horse (always one step ahead).

Stupid, (like most Police horses of the time) was being replaced by the horseless carriage so he needed all the exercise he could get. At times he would be used to clear timber to help keep him fit and motivated, he never worked too hard though, his job was always at the higher end of the timber market because nobody could afford an injured or sick Police horse. Will had a duty of care to all under his protectorate and Stupids needs were never neglected.

At times a few young bucks would front up to ‘Mr Harvey’ and explain what they had in mind, Will would tell them to get a group together and they would make a time so the boys could get rid of a bit of energy and Stupid would also get a chance to release a bit of energy himself.

Soon the day for the rides would come round and folks of the town would turn up as spectators, the local doctor would also be in attendance just in case a mishap occurred. The big horse would buck any challenger to the ground so Will would be close at hand just in case Stupid got to carried away.

When he could see that the horse or the boys had had enough William would walk up to Stupid, talk to him calmly, mount him and ride him back to the stables with the young blokes laughing and the gathered crowd clapping and cheering the horse and Will for the days entertainment. By the time Stupid was retired no man other than Will would ever spend more than a few seconds on his back.

On one occasion Bill apprehended a young fellow for a minor matter and talked with him about his grim situation and what the future held for the young bloke?

By the end of that long talk Will had employed the kid as a gardener to trim his hedges at the rate of ‘2 bob’ a week (20 cents) so as to give the lad some form of income and pride. Many young men would be encouraged to go to his office and he would do for them what a councillor would do today.

Many years later when William was a high ranking Police officer a young man knocked at his office door and entered.
Hello Mr Harvey! Do you remember me?
The young Police officer now standing at his desk turned out to be the young fella who Will had put straight as his gardener during the great depression, that young fella was now a proud Policeman and he had just wanted to thank the man who had ‘changed his life’.

Will’s son Ted would remember back to the day in the thirties when a couple of prisoners befriended him.
Ted thought back with a laugh because at the time he was an eight year old and two minor offenders had asked him if he knew where the Ford’s tools were kept.
Ted being a friendly young lad said “yeah sure”, the prisoners then talked him into getting the pliers from the cars toolbox, they soon made clean their escape by cutting through the wire compound later that evening.
Needless to say dad was not too happy with the whole incident and Ted was quick to learn not to do that again.

Ted was a ‘self admitted’ sticky beak when young and at the age of 77 he still laughed at some of the things he got up to when the ‘old man’ was out of town. A firearms amnesty had been introduced in the early thirties (brought about by the shooting and killing of a policeman) so the station was full of guns. Young Ted would get into the Police Station and go through everything that he could find and he became somewhat of an expert on the firearms that had been turned in, especially a particular .44 handgun in a holster.

He would also remember the time when a penny was on offer to him during the depression.
He ran home one day and told his mum that a ‘commie’ (Yugoslav man) had told him to say ‘I am a very good communist’ then he (the commie) would give him a penny! Old Margaret flew into a rage; she grabbed a broom and went with Ted so he could point the ‘commie’ out.
She then attacked the man with the broom yelling that he would never, ever offer her boy money again for saying he is a good communist, people came into the street from all directions to see what all the commotion was about and they all witnessed what would have been quite a sight.
Undoubtedly there would have been fits of laughter at the sight of this middle aged catholic lady giving it to the ‘commie’, especially outside the local pub and, in the main street.
Chapter Eleven
Attempted Armed Robbery

Will would think back in his later years and remember the serious side of his work, like this small event in a day in the life of an Australian Policeman. Came the second Thursday of the month, it was payday for the timber cutters and loggers out in the bush camps so Will, a driver and paymaster set off at seven in the morning to spend all day in the cool Karri forests of the south west region.

This trip was always taken dead seriously because all aboard the wagon knew that they were sitting ducks in an ambush, William was of course armed with a .44 sidearm.

As was mentioned earlier, this was the wild west and many people were desperate to ‘have a crack’ at all costs to get free money to see them through their miserable lives.

This trip to the outback of the town was one that demanded full concentration from all aboard as anything as simple as a tree across a track could lead to an ambush. On this particular day he had information that led them to take a different route to the norm. This different route was taken due to Will’s suspicion that the phone line from Manjimup to Perth had been cut for the purpose of dirty deeds.

Down that way there are bush tracks crossing the forests from one direction to another and even today they can be very quiet, lonely and little travelled.

On that day way back then however the little wagon had come across a small bush camp that was unoccupied and it happened to belong to some men who were at an intersection down the road a little, strangely they just happened to be right where the pay wagon would normally travel.

It appeared they were awaiting the distant sound of a vehicle before returning to their camp and arming themselves for no good. William noticed that the bush was thick so he jumped out of the wagon telling the other two men of his plans.

He moved through the jungle undergrowth with his handgun at the ready whilst the other two backed the wagon up a little and sat in and near the pay wagon, both armed.

Will took a quick look at the campsite and identified recently stolen goods under some rugs. Immediately he covered the items and silently backed into the lush green undercover.

Within moments he could hear the camps occupants running back towards the camp. One thing that had caught his eye when inspecting the camp was two old...
rifles leaning against a tree, he quietly unloaded them and made sure they were in his view and that he was in between them and the closing men. The pay wagon was now parked back up the track and out of view and he could see three men almost at the camp. He waited for the right moment, then with little noise and his .44 revolver at his hip he appeared between the hard breathing men and their weapons. Whoa there fellas! Just slow down and don’t move too much and all will be fine!
As he got everything under control he called out for his mates in the wagon to come forward slowly, he then ordered the bushmen to lay face down with their hands outstretched above their heads.
On inspection of the firearms he found one had a piece of paper stuck in the barrel stating, “This was the rifle that shot Ned Kelly.”

Will had noted that the telephone line from that area to Perth had been cut earlier that morning so he was cautious, however cut lines did happen from time to time in the Karri forests so telephones could be an unreliable form of communication at the best of times!

It turned out that these chaps had been ‘knocking off’ a number of targets in the area and they had planned to knock over the pay wagon however, by taking an alterative route Will and his two offsiders sprung these thugs away from their camp, waiting and listening for the pay truck that was to come the normal way. With the cut telephone line and all of the evidence gathered it was a dead certainty that the pay wagon was their target. William once again received accolades from the authorities and thanks from many groups supporting different communities because the pay wagon was their life support system. Will had foreseen trouble that day and decided that a little known track that was shown to him by some Aboriginal people would be a good alterative route.
re Payment of Wages Pemberton.

THE UNDER SECRETARY.

Mr. Lazenby, the officer who conducted the last road pay in the Pemberton district reports that there were suspicious circumstances which pointed to an attempted hold up which did not eventuate probably because a different route was taken. However, the telephone wire to Perth had been cut and owing to the vigilance of the Police Escort in detecting three criminals, when they returned to camp they were arrested and locked up. Every reasonable precaution is taken by this Department to avoid risk. The Pay Clerk accompanied by another officer draws the money from the Bank at Manjimup and it is made up in the Police Constable's Office. The Police Constable at Manjimup then accompanies the Pay Clerk to Pemberton and returns to Manjimup after the Pay Clerk arrives at the Camp. The cash is locked up in the safe in the same room in which the pay clerk and another officer sleep. Police escort is provided the following day by the Pemberton Policeman who stays with the pay clerk until the pay is completed so that all reasonable precautions are taken but, of course, if determined men want to hold up a pay in lonely bush roads in Pemberton and Manjimup Districts, they could do so whether the Policeman was present or not.

There is one favourable phase and that is the men arrested were not of the expert criminal class who would take on a job of this kind.

I agree with Mr. Lazenby's suggestion that a complimentary reference should be made to the Police Constable's action in promptly arresting the men found around the camp.

ACCOUNTANT, WORKS & LABOUR.
23/3/28 F.Y.R.
Chapter Twelve
Main Street Gunfight

Soon it was turning into the early months of 1932 and all was under control in the area however, there was silent crime. Most folks in the district knew of this man’s reputation to get on top of a situation and come out the winner so they tended to keep away from getting mixed up in trouble because Bill would generally get them.

April 1932 and autumn was now upon the southwest. The depression was starting to bite hard and things were hotting up down south as men, women and children were on the road to their own destiny. This was the time when the following photo was taken of the final full family at that time; soon after this photo was taken life would face another challenge.

The April long weekend of the 23rd and 24th carried over to the following Monday the 25th which in Australia is celebrated as Anzac Day. Anzac Day being the celebration of Australia’s historical military past and in particular that day when Will and his mates stormed ashore at Gallipoli. This day is in honour of the many men and women of Australia who have paid the ultimate price for the love and honour of their country and it is focussed on the landing at Gallipoli on that fateful April day in 1915.

A few weeks prior to this weekend two unknown men had been in the area, one going to the bank of New South Wales and checking out the interior and talking to the manager, whom it was reported, gave the inquirer ‘two shillings’ to send a telegram to Perth! The other would wait for him at the pub and inquire about the local cop. At the bar the ‘would be robbers’ engaged drinkers in general conversation and then bring the chat to the Cop!

What of the cop?
Does he patrol much?
How about on the weekend?
Have another drink?
All in the pub warned these fools not to mess with Bill.
One of the ‘would be’ robbers stared at the floor and muttered, the ‘old boy had better not get in my way, or else’.
The bar patrons and staff mostly had a laugh and went back to their drinks, thinking little more of the incident.

The plan was hatched and the crooks were soon jumping trains and heading back to Perth.
When back in Perth the two linked up with a dangerous young man who was the ‘brains of the outfit’.
The hoods were soon in the port of Fremantle where they would steal a car from the streets on the Friday night before the long weekend, take it down to the Swan River and steal an oxy-acetylene rig from a naval barge that was anchored below the Fremantle railway bridge.

As soon as they had what they wanted they would spend the rest of the night getting out of the city regions to camp in the jarrah forests on the southwest highway where they made the necessary adjustments and confirmed a final plan for the oncoming job that was awaiting them.

The ‘main man’ turned out to be 22 year old, Martin Keen.
Martin was from Queensland and he had just been released from jail (goal) for other criminal activities; unfortunately, he had not been smart enough to learn from his time inside!
The other two were local to the southwest and they had been roaming from town to town picking off odd targets to keep them going.
Meanwhile, many towns like Manjimup seemed to become ghost towns on long weekends and ‘Manji’ was indeed in a very quite state this weekend.
People would use the Anzac day ‘long weekend’ to get away or just to ‘chill out’ at home without the hustle and bustle of the working week.
That is apart from three hoods with intent, in a stolen car, now with the extra features of a large railway tarpaulin and of course the optional extra ‘gas cutting
equipment’. They would hideout in the bush just outside of Manjimup and wait and watch as the night of the attempted robbery drew on.

The clock passed midnight, they were now into Sunday morning and all was ready. The moon was full and the sky was clear so the crooks could now get to work. With headlights off the three slowly made their approach to the town from the east, they drove over the rail line, across the main street and then turned right down the service lane behind the bank.

Soon these men would be far away and they would be rich because they had ‘made a pact’ and they were determined to follow it through, ‘all for one and one for all’.

All had been planned; all but a vigilant nightwatchman that had been observing the town movements and had detected the vehicle pulling up behind the bank. As he (George Starkey) watched with intensity he could see from his hiding spot that this was it! The bank was in the process of being knocked over! George quietly retreated into the shadows and while the thugs were getting the oxy into the bank George was moving to the post office to use the phone as fast and as quiet as he could.

‘Ring ring’. But no answer! For some reason William had not switched the phone from the Police Station to the home? Starkey was now getting a bit of a panic going so with adrenalin pumping he ran as fast as he could for about 500 meters to the police station and the police house.

Meanwhile back at the bank, the robbers had the gas axe (oxy-acetylene cutter) going under the large tarp that was covering them and the flame from sight. As Starkey reached the Harvey’s front porch he was breathing heavily and although he was over 500 meters from the bank he still knocked as softly as he could on the door and called in a loud whisper ‘Bill are you there’?

Will and Margaret awoke to Starkey’s call and Bill went to the front door.

George! What’s wrong?

The bank is getting done over!

Oh blast!

Come on in George!
Will left Starkey in the lounge room and went into his bedroom. He reached for his little .32 calibre revolver in his bedside cabinet. Margaret reached out and firmly held his wrist and said at once, no Will! Take the .44. She then said, Will, be careful!

With instant thought Will did just that and went next door dressed in trousers, a light blue shirt and tennis shoes, he pulled on his long dark blue police overcoat and handed George a small .22 calibre revolver with a box of ammo and told him to ‘take this’ and load it on the way. Before leaving for the bank Starkey quickly told Will of the situation. Ok George, you take cover and guard the back and I’ll be there soon. He loaded the .44 and slipped out of the stations front door and into the shadows cast by the full moon. On his was to the bank he moved through a vacant block and checked out the main street but he had seen nothing suspicious to that point.

The following reports tell the story!

Excerpts from the:
Manjimup and Warren Times May 26th 1932

MANJIMUP BANK SENSATION
Inquest on death of Martin Keen
Verdict of justifiable homicide

On Thursday last, 19th inst., the Coroner, Mr. L. L. Crockett, held an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the death of Martin Keen, who was shot on the occasion of the attempt to rob the Manjimup branch of the bank of New South Wales on the 24th, April last. Detective-Sergeant Cowie conducted the evidence, and Police Inspector O’ Halloran watched the proceedings on behalf of the Commissioner of Police. A considerable number of the public attended at the hearing. The first witness was Dr. M. F. Williams, of Jardee, who stated that between 3 and 4 a.m. on 24th April last he was called by telephone to come to the Bank of New South Wales in Manjimup. On arrival there he saw lying on a lorry a man whose name he afterwards learned was Martin Keen. The man had a wound in his forehead from which blood and brain matter were protruding. A dirty handkerchief, similar to the one produced, hung loosely round the man’s neck. At witness’s direction the man was removed to Warren Hospital by Constable...
Cooper. Witness operated at once. The man was unconscious up until the time he died at 5.45 a.m.
On the 25th April witness held a post mortem examination, and his report thereon was produced in court.

Describing the injuries, witness said he found the bullet embedded in a fracture of the left occipital bone. Death was due to laceration of the brain substance by the bullet.

Detective Albert Victor Penrose, official photographer and finger-print expert, produced photos taken by him of the body of the deceased, and photos of finger prints of the deceased. He also produced a set of finger prints taken from the official police record.

An enlarged photo of the prints of the left little finger on the record, and a photo of the same finger of the body at the morgue showed forty identical points. He could say definitely that the body in the morgue was the body of Martin Keen, known in official police records.

He described Keen as follows: Martin Keen aged 22 last November; born at St George in Queensland; height, 5 feet 11 inches in boots; occupation, motor mechanic; dark brown hair and blue eyes. Witness also produced photographs of the motor car used in connection with the attempted robbery of the bank, also photos of front and rear views of the bank.

Leslie John Fitzgerald, manager of the Manjimup branch of the Bank of New South Wales, stated that at 1 p.m. on Saturday, the 23rd April last, he closed up the bank, leaving the resident officer, Ronald Walter Beck, there. All the money and valuables in the bank had been placed in the safe. That afternoon witness went to Perth. On the morning of Sunday, whilst in Perth, he was informed of an attempt to rob the bank, and immediately returned to Manjimup. He arrived in Manjimup about 1.30 p.m., and found an attempt had been made to open the safe. An oxy-acetylene cutting plant was set up in working order in front of the safe. A hole had been burned in the metal round the lower lock.

The photo produced showed the position of the cutting plant, with the safe covered by a tarpaulin. Another photo produced showed a circular hole on the safe over the lower lock. He identified the revolver produced (No. 33230) as the property of the bank. The revolver was usually kept in possession of the resident officer, Ronald Beck. It was always kept loaded in five chambers, with one vacant chamber under the hammer. It was usually kept with the torch produced, in Becks wardrobe after office hours.
There was a considerable amount of money in the safe at the time of the attempt.

George William Starkie, employed as a watchman for business premises in Manjimup, stated that in the early morning of April 24th his attention was attracted by movements of a motor car which soon afterwards he found drawn up at the rear of the Bank of New South Wales. He went to the back door of the bank and heard sounds indicating that someone was in the bank. He concluded that an attempt was being made to rob the bank and at once reported to Constable Harvey. Witness returned to the rear of the bank and was immediately joined by the constable. Both listened, and then the constable went to the front while witness remained at the rear.

At that time he could hear voices within the bank but could not distinguish what was said. Shortly after the constable left him witness heard a voice which he recognised as Harvey’s, shout something like “Put ‘em up.” Then he heard a shot fired at the front of the bank. Just afterwards the back door opened, and witness called out “Stop,” and fired through the open doorway. The door was closed. A minute later the door opened again. Witness fired a second shot, and no one came out. Immediately afterwards, he fired again in the air to attract attention. Constable Harvey came round to him and asked if he was all right. Witness said “Yes.” Harvey said: “I think I killed my man. Have you got any?” Witness informed the constable that the men were still in the bank. From the time of the shot in the front to the time of witness’s first shot, only a few seconds elapsed. By the time Harvey had come round to him and returned to the front there was ample time for anyone in the bank to get away through the front door. Witness had a view of the rear until Harvey and others came round, and did not see anyone leave. He never saw the man who was shot.

On his way to report to Harvey he tried to ring the police station but could get no reply.

Kenneth George Charles Mac-Arthur, of Jardee, said that on Sunday morning, the 24th April, between 2 and 3 a.m., he was walking through Manjimup on his way home from Palgarup. As he passed Manjimup Police Station he heard the sound of a bell which he thought was an alarm clock, but which might have been a telephone bell. He walked along Giblett-street in the roadway. Near the Post Office he met George Starkie who was hurrying toward the Police station. Starkie said, “Is that you Bill?” Witness said, “No; you’ve mistaken me for someone else.” When opposite the Bank of New South Wales witness heard a buzzing sound, like an electric fan, but he could not locate the sound. As he passed on, a man came round the corner of Ipsen-street, and crossed Giblett-
street, passing so close to witness that he could have touched him. The man did not speak and kept his face turned away from witness. Witness went onto the Jardee road then turned and saw the man standing under the second pine tree from the corner. It was bright moonlight, and he had noticed that the man wore white sand-shoes, a blue overcoat, with collar turned up and his hat pulled over his eyes. He was fairly tall and well built.

William Sproge, of Manjimup, said he resided in Rose-street directly behind the Bank of New South Wales, and slept on the front veranda. He retired at 11 p.m. on Saturday, the 23rd April. Next morning at about 3.30 a.m. he was awakened by the sound of a shot which seemed to come from the direction of the Bank premise. Shortly afterward he heard two more shots at short intervals, and then a forth shot. He heard the night-watchman calling out. Witness put on trousers and shoes and ran to the front of the Bank. As he approached he met Constable Harvey, who ordered witness to put his hands up and asked who he was. Witness replies, “Bill Sproge.” The constable said, “Good,” and informed witness that he had shot one man. The two went together and examined a man who was lying on his back with his right hand outstretched and his left hand in his overcoat pocket. His feet were about 10 or twelve feet from the curb. What appeared to be a white mask covered the lower part of his face. The revolver produced was lying under his right arm. Harvey told witness to pick up the revolver. He did so and broke it open and found it loaded in five chambers, with one vacant chamber past the firing pin. Later, he handed the revolver to Constable Cooper.

On the man’s hands were gloves similar to those produced. A light was procured and they saw he was wounded high on the forehead. The man never spoke and they saw he was unconscious. The front door of the bank was open. Witness and Harvey went into the bank and found no one there. They found an oxy-acetylene plant in front of the safe and the premises were full of fumes. Constable A. C. Cooper, stationed at Midland Junction, stated that on the 24th April he was on leave and staying at the Manjimup Hotel. At 3.30 a.m. he was called at his room and told that an attempt had been made to rob the Bank of New South Wales and that a man had been shot. He went to the bank, and on arrival saw Constable Harvey. Witness also saw a man lying on his back in the road about nine or twelve feet from the curb right in front of the bank premises. Harvey informed witness that he (Harvey) had shot the man when the man had pointed a revolver at him. Witness examined the man on the ground, and found that his right arm was stretched out, and the left hand was in the overcoat pocket. The man had been shot in the forehead. He was still alive but gasping for breath. A white handkerchief covered the lower part of his face. Witness
removed the left hand from the overcoat pocket and found clasped in it a half plug of gelignite with cap and fuse attached ready for firing. From the same pocket he removed a small pencil torch. The revolver produced was then handed to witness William Sproge. The injured man was wearing the gloves produced. Dr. Williams attended and by his direction the man was removed by witness on a motor truck to hospital. Witness remained with the man until 5.45 a.m., when he died without regaining consciousness. The photo produced of Martin Keen was the photo of the deceased.

The next witness was Percy Fulton Preston, and, as a charge was pending against him he was warned that he was not obliged to make any statement that might incriminate him. Preston stated that the photograph produced was that of Martin Keen. Witness last saw Keen on the early morning of the 24th April, when Witness, Keen and Rodda were engaged in an attempt to rob the Bank of New South Wales. Keen went outside and left witness and Rodda in the bank. That was the last that he saw of Keen. They were disturbed and left by the front door. As he left he saw someone lying in the road but did not know who it was. Neither he nor Rodda were armed and as far as he knew neither was Keen armed. Whilst in the bank witness heard no shots fired.

Clarence Edward Rodda, who was also in custody, received the same caution as that given to Preston and gave evidence similar to that given by Preston. When in the bank he heard a shot which disturbed them. They left by the front door and went in different directions. As he left, witness saw and recognised Keen lying on the ground, and saw he was injured.

Constable William Harvey, in charge of Manjimup Police Station, said he was the only constable stationed in Manjimup. At about 3 a.m. on April 24th last he was in bed. He was awakened by the night-watchman, George Starkie, who told him that an attempt was being made to rob the Bank of New South Wales. Witness put on trousers, civilian overcoat and sand-shoes, and told Starkie to go back, and that witness would follow. The distance from the Police Station to the bank was about 500 yards. Witness went into the Police Station and got the service revolver (produced) which was fully loaded. He went down the main street as far as the post office and then up the lane at the rear of the bank. At the rear of the bank he met Starkie, and together they looked at a motor car which bore the number Y L 137. They then went to the rear of the butcher’s shop adjoining the bank. At the back door of the bank, which was closed, they heard a slight metallic sound and words spoken in a low tone inside the bank. Witness told Starkie to remain at the rear door while witness examined the interior of the motor car. He saw suit case and shoes produced in the car. He then went to the front of the bank - a distance of about 150 yards. When he reached the front door he heard a grinding sound in the interior of the bank. He looked round instinctively, and saw a man coming toward
him from the shadow of a pine tree on the other side of the road. It was a bright moonlight night. Witness walked to the edge of the footpath, and, not being able to recognise the man, shouted, “Who are you?” The man did not reply, but continued to walk toward him in a very determined manner. Witness again shouted, “Who are you?” The man made no reply, and when he was more than half-way across the road witness saw that his face was covered with the handkerchief produced. Witness raised his revolver about in line with his waist, and shouted, “Police here; put ‘em up!” The man made no reply, but, still moving forward, drew a revolver from his right hand pocket, and when about twelve feet distant, levelled the revolver at witness, his right arm being straight out in front level with his shoulder. Witness raised his revolver and fired without taking aim. When the flash cleared the man was lying on the ground. Witness was certain that the man had fired at him. Until later, when the revolver was examined. After firing he turned and faced the door of the bank, and almost immediately heard three shots fired at the rear of the bank. He shouted to Starkie, “Are you alright George?” Starkie replied, “Yes.”

Witness could hear sounds of a scuffle, and ran to the rear of the bank to assist Starkie. Starkie explained what had happened and said the men were still inside the bank. Witness returned to the front of the bank and found the front door open. He shouted and Sproge came running up along the footpath. Witness told Sproge to pick up the revolver which lay under the man’s right arm. Sproge picked up the revolver and opened it, and said it had been fired, pointing to the empty chamber, which was at the time one chamber past the firing pin. Witness examined the revolver and found that no shot had been fired. The man was lying flat on his back with his right arm outstretched, and his left hand in the pocket of his overcoat. The handkerchief was still on his face. He was wounded over the right eye. Sproge produced a torch, and it was seen that the gloves were on the man’s hands. Witness pulled the handkerchief down but failed to recognise the man. Going to the front door of the bank witness shouted, “Anyone in here?” There was no reply, and as witness entered the bank Sproge ran in front of him with the torch. They found a switch and turned the lights on. They saw the oxy-acetylene cutting plant (produced) in position for opening the safe as shown in the photos produced.

The place was in general disorder as a result of having been broken into. Witness sent Mr. H. A. Davis for Constable Cooper, who came and was informed as to what had happened. Dr. Williams was called, and by his orders the man was taken to Warren Hospital on a motor truck. Witness did not know the man who was shot, but afterwards learned that he was Martin Keen.
At the time witness fired he was quite certain that the man intended to shoot, and that his (witness’s) life was in danger. He did not want to kill and it was against his will that he fired at all. He had no option but to fire as the man was still advancing.

It was my bounden duty to arrest the man. The mask and revolver, and sounds within the bank, were reasonable grounds for the belief that the man was engaged in a crime punishable with life imprisonment.

Instead of complying with my command he threatened me with a revolver. When in this position a constable has not the option of retreat, as a civilian would have. The position of the hammer of the revolver would suggest that an attempt had been made to fire the revolver, but had been cut short with the trigger halfway.

Police regulations dealing with firearms, and also the Criminal Code, provide that in certain circumstances a constable is justified in firing.

Detective-Sergeant Cowie produced the coat worn by the deceased man, and drew the coroner’s attention to a concealed pocket in the lining of the left sleeve, apparently for the purpose of carrying a revolver.

The Coroner, after reviewing the evidence, said there was no question of doubt that Constable Harvey was fully justified in acting as he did, and, in protection of his own life, fired and killed Martin Keen. He returned a verdict of justifiable homicide.

The verdict was received by subdued applause, which was quickly silenced by Detective-Sergeant Cowie.

**Police Court Proceedings**

**PRESTON AND RODDA PLEAD GUILTY**

At the conclusion of the inquest, Police Court proceedings were opened, with Messrs. C. I. Doust and Jas. Barrie, J’s. P. on bench.

Percy Fulton Preston and Clarence Edward Rodda were charged with having, on April 24th, 1932, in company with one Martin Keen, broken into and entered the dwelling house of Ronald Walter Beck, at the Manjimup branch of the Bank of New South Wales premises, situated in Giblett-street, Manjimup, in the night time, with intent to commit a crime therein.

Detective Albert Victor Penrose, official photographer and finger-print expert of the W.A. Police Department gave evidence as to the identification of Martin Keen, referred to in the inquest. He also produced photographs taken by him of the interior of the bank, showing the oxy-acetylene cutting plant in front of the
safe; front and back views of the Bank of New South Wales; also of a Whippet motor car. Y L. 137.

Leslie John Fitzgerald, manager of the Manjimup branch of the Bank of New South Wales, gave evidence substantially the same as that which he gave at the inquest. He added that about a fortnight or three weeks prior to the attempted robbery, the accused Preston, then a stranger to him, was shown into his office by the teller, and conversation with witness concerning money matters. Witness gave him 2 shillings to send a telegram to a friend. That was the last he saw of him until he saw him in custody. In his visit Preston had every opportunity to note the interior of the bank premises and the safe.

George William Starkie gave evidence similar to that which he gave in the inquest. He also said that when he examined the motor car bearing the plates Y L 137, he looked at the registration disc on the wind screen, and saw that it did not correspond with the number plates. Constable A. C. Cooper also gave evidence supporting that which he had given at the inquest. He added that, prior to going to the hospital with the wounded man, he went into the bank and saw half a tarpaulin covering the safe and an oxy-acetylene cutting plant, which was placed ready for the operation of opening the safe.

Constable William Harvey gave evidence substantially the same as that which he had given in the inquest. He also stated that on examining the interior of the bank he found that the safe was covered with part of a railway tarpaulin, which was kept in position by two chairs one on top of the safe and one chair in front. A box of matches was on the chair in front of the safe, and a torch lay on the floor. On the table in the managers room was a spanner (produced), and on a table in the bedroom in the back of the premises were a tyre lever and a screwdriver. He also saw pieces of molten metal on the floor in front of the safe. On examining the car he found all the articles produced as shown on the list submitted, including a pencil, tapered apparently for the purpose of tamping a charge in the key hole of the safe.

Leonard William Law, an employee of Muir’s Garage, which is near the bank of New South Wales in Giblett-street, gave evidence as to having seen three men come over Ipsen-street crossing and, along the footpath in front of the bank and the garage, between 1 and 2 a.m. on the 24th April last. One man was taller than the others, and all were dressed in dark clothes. The garage was closed, and he saw no one about then. Percy Hill, foreman on Limmer’s tobacco farm on Group 5, said that about three weeks prior to April 26, a man resembling the accused Preston, visited the farm.

Samuel Albert Sawyer, a farmer at Yornup, 14 miles from Manjimup stated that on Sunday, April 24th last, about 3 p.m. a man who he since identified as the
accused Preston, came to his house from the direction of the railway line. The stranger said he was hungry, and that he had come from Bridgetown and was going to Manjimup.

Witness who had not heard of the attempted robbery, told the stranger to go to the police at Manjimup, and that they would fix him up with a night’s doss. (Laughter, in which the accused joined). Continuing the witness said he supplied the man with food, and noticed that, on leaving the man travelled towards Bridgetown.

Andrew Hancock, a railway guard, identified the half tarpaulin found in the bank as that which was missing from Palgarup on April 25th.

Constable Cornelius Moynahan, stationed at Bridgetown gave evidence as to having found the accused Rodda on the morning of April 27th at 3.15 a.m. at Bridgetown railway yards, in an open G.C. truck covered with a tarpaulin. Witness took Rodda to the police station and detained him until Detective-Sergeant Cowie arrived later in the morning. Subsequently Rodda was charged. Detective Sergeant James Duff arrived later in the morning to make enquires into the case. When the accused were apprehended, witness interviewed them separately, and each in turn agreed to make a statement. Witness obtained from each of the accused written and signed statements which he submitted to the bench.

Both statements were read in court. According to Prestons statement, he first met Keen at Harvey, about one month previously; he had known Rodda for about two years. Preston and Rodda were in the Manjimup district some time ago looking for work but could find none. Prior to 22nd April they met Keen, who broached the subject of robbing the Bank of New South Wales in Manjimup. That night, the three went to look for a car, and took the front one from a row of cars in Leake-street Fremantle. They drove down and got an oxy-acetylene cutting plant from a navel dredge in the river between the two bridges. They then travelled to the South West, Keen was driving the car, via Armadale, and camped in the bush near Donnybrook, were Keen changed the numbers on the plates. Going on, they passed Bridgetown at about 10.30 p.m. They went on to Manjimup and stayed in the road at the back of the station. On the way down they had taken half a tarpaulin from the Palgarup siding.

They waited until the garage and the bank closed, and the lights were out, which would have been about 1.15 p.m. on Sunday, the 24th April. They walked down, and after an examination of the bank premises, Keen forced the front door. Afterwards, Keen drove the car to the rear of the bank. Rodda stayed by the car while Keen and Preston carried the plant inside the bank. Preston set up the plant and opened it while Rodda stood by him. Keen went out to keep watch. Preston did not know that Keen had got the revolver. They had heard him rummaging in the back room, but thought he was looking for keys. Preston did
not hear the first shot. He had been working about a quarter of an hour when Rodda told him to get out. They went to the back door and were stopped by shots. They then left the bank by the front door, and separated as they left. Preston saw something lying on the ground in front of the bank, but did not know it was Keen. After a day in the bush he got into a railway truck in Bridgetown, and hid until the train reached Fremantle on Tuesday, the 26th April.

Rodda’s statement agreed in essential details with that of Preston. Further, Rodda stated that as he left the bank he stopped to look at Keen and saw that he was injured, he then ran away, and for some time he was completely lost in the bush. He reached Bridgetown at 2 a.m. on the 27th April. He intended to jump a train, but the police got him. Rodda stated that he was born in Victoria, and came to this state four and a half years ago.

The accused, neither of whom had questioned any witness, said they had no wish to cause any delay or unnecessary expense, and both had decided to enter a plea of guilty. They were committed for sentence at the Supreme Court, Perth on June 7th.

Footnote: Had Ronald Beck (the bank officer) been in bed on the night of the attempted robbery he would almost certainly have been severely injured or killed as Keen had struck the bank officers pillow with such force with the tyre iron that it would have easily fractured a human skull. The banks revolver was either in a wardrobe or under Ronald’s pillow?

Other reports of that night mention that many townsfolk awoken by the shots of the gunfight turned up in the vicinity dressed in their pyjamas and armed with all kinds of firearms, everything from pistols through to shotguns and the sound of gunshots would echo through the morning air long after the event. Many people were jumpy and maybe just a few cats paid the price for it that night?

During the last meeting we had with him old Will relived that early morning in vivid detail, his mind flashed back to an era long gone, his gaze was fixed on the piano keyboard, it was as if you could see his eyes acting like small screens reflecting back pictures of a disturbing time in any Policeman’s career.

“I went to the front of the bank and all was quite. I looked around the immediate area and slowly moved to the front door of the bank. As I was
bending over listening to the noise and chat coming from inside the bank building I turned slightly and in the bright moonlight I saw a man approaching me in a hurried way from the shadows of the second pine tree on the other side of the road.

I called out loud “Who are you”? I called again telling this figure that it was the Police here so ‘Get Em Up’.

The pace of the figure quickened, he was now in the bright moonlight and I saw that he had a mask on his face, I lined up his eyes in my mind, then suddenly he pulled the revolver from his overcoat pocket, aimed it straight at me and pulled the trigger.

The next thing I remember was a flash from my gun that was at my hip then all went quite for a few seconds, he was lying on the road, then all the dogs started howling and the whole thing was like a bad dream.

That silly young fella was dead serious and without a doubt he intended to kill me that night!”

One thing Will had never forgotten was “point and shoot” and it saved his life again.

Keen had closed rapidly and the gunfight had taken place at a distance of just twelve feet (approximately four meters)!

William’s life was once again dogged with death and tragedy.

What the remaining records don’t tell us is that Margaret was out on her veranda listening to the sounds of that still and quite Manjimup night.

As the sound of the .44 handgun bullet echoed through the still cool air of the night Margaret clung to a veranda post, frozen with fear.

Then, as the robbers inside the bank ran to the back door, bang again and again. Margaret knew firearms and she recognised the sound of the .22 calibre revolver however, she did not know that the night watchman had taken a .22 with him.

Where these the sounds of something bad? After all, the .22 sounds had come after the recognisable boom of Will’s .44 and then, apart from the howling dogs, all went quite.

She had a good idea that the .44 calibre sound was that of Will’s as she had heard him practicing ‘out the back’ all of their married life.

What was happening she thought? Was he ok?
Oh god! She was going crazy inside and she knew that it would be a long night. Finally, Will eventually returned home and wrapped his arms around her, she suddenly burst into tears; reality had to sink in that he was safe. She hugged him tight and kissed his ear and whispered “thankyou lord, thankyou so much”

Will was shaken by this experience, as the days to follow were to be tough with many interviews reliving the scene, over and over again. The sad bit of the whole incident appears to be that when it came to the crunch, the pact that the crooks had made was ignored. They had flown into a panic and fled the scene with no regard for their mate or their ‘brave pact’ made just weeks before. These crooks were the exact opposite to the ANZAC spirit that is highly regarded in Australia. Big Bill refused any mention of bravery awards, by now he had probably had enough of such things?

Their son Ted and daughter Ursula would later recall the daylight that followed the shooting. A group of kids approached Ted and his sister and said, ‘your dad shot a bank robber last night and his brains and stuff are all over the road down near the bank!’ This was the first the kids had heard of the news as they had all slept through the night. When they woke in the morning nothing was said, dad was at work, not unusual, mum had fed the prisoners and had breakfast ready for the family, as per usual, she then farewelled them as she sent them on their way.

We must remember that women didn’t have dishwashers, microwaves or washing machines in those days! Instead there was the copper to boil the clothes, two or more wood fires to attend, family and prisoners to cook for, kids to bath and the Police lock up and office to clean amongst her many other chores, week in week out. So while this story is primarily about William we must also give our thoughts to the toughness and improvisation of the women of the day.
Chapter Thirteen
Lucky escape

Ted recalled a time just a few weeks before the bank job. Will had taken the then eight year old boy down the back of the Police Station to have some pistol practice with Will’s private .32 calibre revolver.
‘Ted recalled that day vividly.’
The old man fired all the ammo in the chambers of the pistol and reloaded it with cartridges from a new box and said ‘that will do for now young Ted’, come on, I’ll race you back to the house.
Pointing a finger in the air, squinting one eye and with a smile on his face Ted described the moment the ‘old bugger’ had put a number of holes right in the centre of the can, didn’t miss a shot!

A number of weeks had past after that fateful night of the gunfight and once again Will and Ted were down the back at the target tree and ready to blast that tin can.

Ted would remember the “Old Man” pulling the trigger of the .32 revolver and hearing nothing but the firing pin strike home with a very audible ‘click’.
That first round was a dud. Will stopped a second to think about the night at the bank, then click again, and again, it turned out that most of that new case of ammunition was faulty. If Margaret had not insisted on her husband taking the stations .44 that night then maybe there would have been a very different outcome!
He would spend his own money and time ensuring Keen’s grave was not forgotten and he looked after it when he visited his own two kids in that lonely cemetery.

As time drew on Will would put a headstone up for his two children who were buried in the Manjimup cemetery and he would remove the wooden cross from their grave and relocate it to Martin’s state plot (Paupers grave) near his own two children. This cross along with the plaque remains to this day!
‘Big Bill’ Harvey stated that the last thing he wanted was ‘to have to kill someone’. Although killing or being killed is a constant thought in a Policeman or Policewomen’s life, nobody can imagine that it will ‘happen to him or her’.

If Will had taken the smaller firearm (.32 revolver), it is almost certain that Keen would have shot him that night. Thankfully the banks policy was to leave the firearm in a safe state (with the first chamber under the hammer left empty) so it would not fire accidentally. That firearm had the trigger pulled once and had the next chamber almost ready to fire again when the .44 slug fired from the hip ripped into Keens forehead.

The bank would request permission from the Police Commissioner to allow William to be rewarded for his efforts. It appears that the night watchman was paid 10 pounds so it is likely that the money was past on to George Starkie (night watchman) who was by now a small legend in the Manjimup district.

Will would always deny himself for the sake of others, however it would appear that if you crossed him you would pay a price and there would never be any more major crime in the district for the rest of his time in the southwest.

This proud man had killed enough men for what he believed in during the war and he knew that he never wanted to be put in that position again. Now in his forties the last thing he or his family needed was a gunfight.

Records show that Will had had enough. Although the town’s people gave him their full support he wanted to move on in life. Time after time he requested a transfer and time after time he was refused. Comments on one-application reports!

This man is too valuable in Manjimup. ‘Request denied’. Will had been and still was doing the work of two officers.

At the age of forty-nine he was still wrestling them to the ground.
Police Department,
Criminal Investigation Branch, Perth,
10th May, 1835.

Re Arrest of Frederick Moger Playford,

Reference 336/35.

Report: CHIEF INSPECTOR PURDUE.

I respectfully report that on the 21st of April last Alexander Joseph Lackie's Buick motor car No. 7794 was stolen from Murray Street, Perth.

The first information we received about this car was from Constable Wyatt of Margaret River, who while investigating the breaking, entering and stealing from the store of Margaret Clarke of Karridale, ascertained that the offender in that case was Frederick Moger Playford, and that he was travelling in the stolen motor car mentioned above.

This information was circulated around the District and on the 27th ultimo Constable Harvey of Manjimup sighted this car, and gave chase in a private car eventually overtaking same and after a struggle arrested Playford who is recognised as a desperate Criminal.

As a result of the work done by Constables Wyatt and Harvey, Playford was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment on two charges in the Police Court, and yesterday when he appeared in the Supreme Court he was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment on another charge of stealing and receiving and a further 6 months concurrent on a charge of unlawfully assuming control of the motor car.

In all about £90.00, worth of property was recovered, also the motor car which is valued at £160.00.

Sgd. J.J. Johnston,
DETECTIVE 1495.

THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE.

Submitted, Frederick Moger Playford, the offender in question, was discharged from Fremantle Prison on the 9th of April after having served over 5 years. He is an ex-convict from England, and when he was arrested in 1930, he was charged with many offences throughout the country, and was also a suspected safe-blower. He is a daring dangerous, and impudent thief, and his early arrest on this occasion reflects great credit on the attention given to the movements of criminals by Constable Wyatt of Margaret River, whereby he
was early able to supply information to this Branch, that enabled us to get into immediate touch with Police in surrounding District, and later due to the vigilance of Constable Harvey of Manjimup who effected his arrest on this occasion resulted in ending a career of crime that would have left devastation in its wake.

I am pleased to submit these Constables for your favourable commendation a ding that they have previously proved an acquisition to the Service by their devotion to Duty.

C.I.B. PERTH.
10.5.35.

CHIEF INSPECTOR.

SERGEANT DONALDSON,
ACTING D.O. NARROGIN.

In the absence of the Commissioner of Police, I am forwarding this file for the information of Constable Harvey, of Manjimup, fully assured that the Commissioner of Police would do likewise.

C.I.
10.5.35.

for COMMISSIONER OF POLICE.

CONST. HARVEY

For your information. Please note.

D.O. Narrogin.
13. 5. 35.

Sgt. I/C.
D.O.

Sergeant Donaldson.

Manjimup.
5/7/35.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

Noted by Const. Harvey.

D.O. Narrogin.
Frederick Playford was a very desperate criminal of the times and he was to serve many years in prison after this episode. During his prison term it is believed that he would learn the art of hairdressing and he would bump into Will much later in life and thank him for putting him straight.
Chapter Fourteen
Back to Perth

The years had passed slowly since the gunfight and then finally a little later in 1935 there it was. ‘Request Granted.’
Constable William Harvey, MC was to be Sergeant in charge of the Police Academy and in charge of all Police Recruit Training.
The news broke like wildfire in the south of the state that the man who alone had kept the peace for the normal citizens of the community in depressed times was now moving on.
This was a new position for Will and it was a most highly regarded posting and Will was not to disappoint, for now however the family was still in Manjimup and they had a few things to sort out before their departure.
Big Bill and his family would attend many functions held in their honour in the coming weeks and at one such function virtually the whole town and surrounding districts turned out to bid the couple farewell. Things like this were big occasions in country towns at the time as it wasn’t everyday that a town like Manjimup would farewell such a warrior and a true gentleman.

It is said that on that night in the Manjimup town hall, William and Margaret were presented with five hundred pounds. During the height of the great depression in 1935 five hundred pounds was a huge
amount of money. The good people from the town mayor to the migrant group settlers joined as one to celebrate the mighty man that they had been gifted with for the past ten years.

People would remember what a chore it was for the old catholic priest to get out to the ‘group settlers’ with a ‘horse and sulky’ and how William started a fund raising collection and soon put the priest in a brand new car so as to help him get around to his congregation with a little more haste and comfort.

In those times a Policeman was required to work twenty four hours a day, seven days a week so this was not a job for the ordinary person. This was a job only for the ‘best of the best’ and these sorts of people never seemed to tire of such huge workloads and their efforts were greatly appreciated.

That night there was speech after speech from all the local dignities as the hundreds of people celebrated ‘Big Bill’s’ time in that part of the world. William and Margaret had touched many hearts in the district and now the good people would repay them in kind.

So that was it!
That night was the end of an era for the Harvey family and for the fair folk of the district of Warren.

Manjimup finally got their two officers; the force had now decided that the large district was too much for one man to handle alone.
Chapter Fifteen
Settling in!

Now back in Perth William had steady hours and he could blend in without being recognised for the first time in many years. It felt good and the couple purchased their first and only home. The place they chose would be a fascinating place, as it was right opposite the ‘Perth Zoo’. In fact it was to be 13 Angelo St, South Perth so one would figure that the zoo’s animals would be much better entertainment than the crooks that the family had had to deal with for the past twenty odd years.

There was also a ‘catholic church’ within eyeshot of their house and that was to become Margaret’s second home of peace as she would become extremely involved with the congregation. This humble woman was to find her place of peace in that shrine to her beloved Jesus Christ and she would pray there often for her departed loved ones. It has been said that her lot in life had sent her a little potty in her later years. It would appear that life had taken its toll on her as surviving children mentioned that they didn’t get on with their mother, however she was always a very kind Grandmother to me and maybe she had a touch of a degenerative disease? Who knows?

It is said that in her later life Margaret would stand near her front gate and ask people passing by if they were going to the church up the road. If they said no she would then scrub the pathway to clear it of their sins!

As Sgt in charge of training, William was spoken of as a strict disciplinarian with a kindly nature and invaluable in that position.

1936 came along and ‘William Harvey, MC’ was to turn fifty at the end of that year and for once in his life he would not be in the bush but in the comfort of their own home with his many friends to celebrate and to reflect on his life thus far.

This by now ‘old guy’ still had plenty to give and the coming years were to change his direction from the Police Force to another roll, however for now he was
settling in and he was soon to become the General President of the Western Australian Police Union. When his name was nominated for this position all other candidates stood down. William was to be unopposed; such was the respect and high esteem his colleagues held in him. One thing that would always be noted of Will was of his compassion for others. His surviving children were now growing up and receiving a good education.

St. Columba's School,
South Perth.
3rd Aug., 1938.

To whom it may concern.

Master Ted Harvey was enrolled in the 5th IV Class at this school in February last. While in attendance at St. Columba's, he showed himself reliable, willing, and thorough in his work. Moreover, he belongs to a highly respected family. We feel confident that he will prove worthy of any trust that may be reposed in him.

Sister Maureen, D.A., Diped.
(Principal).
William’s beloved wife no longer had to cook for police prisoners or endure the outback so she had more time for almost anything. She had treasured music all of her life so now that Will was making better money the couple invested in an upright piano for her to enjoy some precious time to herself. Some days she would sit there on the red velvet covered stool and play away and at times she would make up her own lyrics. Apparently she really did get very good at it and there was a tale of the wonderful feelings of coming home from work, smelling the evening dinner and hearing the enchanting songs that Margaret would be working on.

As a Policeman and the General President of the Police Union he would push for many new changes from small to large. Things like making sure the uniforms were more carefully manufactured so all officers would be issued with clothing that would suit and fit their individual needs thus ensuring that the force looked smart, a very wise move, as any frontline force needs to present well disciplined troops and part of that discipline is immaculate dress. He would also be the first Police Union President to organise for the very first time in West Australian Police history a superannuation scheme for all Police personal. There was not a time in his working life when he was not doing something for others.

Simply Incredible!
Mr. William Harvey, General President (1937)

The general president-elect, Mr. Wm. Harvey, who succeeded Mr. S. Campbell on December 22, 1916, is attached to the Central Police Station, Perth, as sergeant 3rd-class, and is the ninth president of the Union.

The new general president was elected to the Council on November 4, 1935, from three other candidates, with an absolute majority, in order to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of Mr. Wm. Colmee, former general treasurer, who left the Force on September 30, 1935.

Mr. Harvey came to Perth in July of that year as a plainclothes constable on transfer from Manjimup, where he had been stationed for ten years, and was promoted to N.C.O. rank in February, 1916.

Prior to his election to the Council he was appointed vice-president of the Metropolitan Branch, also as a member of the Widows and Orphans’ Fund Board, and attended conference in 1936 as a councillor.

When Mr. Campbell resigned three elections were necessary, owing to the extraordinary position which arose when the first two ballots resulted in a draw, and Mr. Harvey was elected easily in the third ballot held after polling well in the two previous votings.

Our new general president joined the Force on April 8, 1920, and served at Central Police Station, Perth, as a reserve constable for twelve months. He saw service at Victoria Park for a similar period, being both mounted and foot duty at that suburb. He was appointed officer-in-charge of the Youanmi Police Station in 1922, remaining there until 1925, when the station was closed.

Going from Youanmi to Manjimup he served ten years at the latter centre.

Upon being transferred from Manjimup to Perth as plainclothes constable in July, 1935, Mr. Harvey recorded a public farewell and many expressions of regret were tendered when it was learned that he was leaving Manjimup, where he had earned the esteem and confidence of the public generally during his long stay in that town.

After seven months in Perth his promotion as 3rd-class sergeant came, and he is now attached to the Central Station as one of the relief N.C.O’s.

Prior to entering the Police Force Sergeant Harvey, who was born in London, England, was apprenticed to the printing trade as a bookbinder and machine-worker, being employed by the Essex Times Office. He worked at his trade in London and Hertford.

Sergeant Wm. Harvey, General President

Mr. Harvey’s father was a member of the London Metropolitan Police.

While resident in England, the general president took an interest in military affairs and was a sergeant in the Volunteer Battalion of the Essex Regiment.

He left England and arrived in Western Australia in 1911, and was engaged in many occupations after his arrival here, such as clearing, well-digging, etc., and was also employed on a survey party in the Wengan Hills District, working through to Millawa before the construction of the railway from Millawa to Wengan Hills.

At the outbreak of War he was engaged on scout rolling contracts, and enlisted as a private in the original 16th Battalion, A.I.F., Signallers. He took part in the landing at Gallipoli, going ashore from the destroyer “Ripple,” and was promoted sergeant-in-charge of signallers two days after the landing, and took part in the fighting in many places, which are now historical in the Anzac Landing, such as Pope’s Hill, Quinn’s Post and the attack on Sari Bulur on August 7 and 8, 1919.

After being invalided back to Egypt in October, 1916, and later performing the duties of signaller instructor, Imperial School of Instruction, at Zeitoun, he subsequently went to France, and in September, 1916, joined his battalion and was in action at Ypres and on the Somme, receiving his commission as a lieutenant in 1917.

He took part in the actions of Missines, Polygon Wood and Zonnebeke. During 1918 he was also in military operations in Ypres, Helverens, Villers Bretonneux, and the attack on Vaux Wood on July 4, 1918, and participated in the Battle of Hamel on August 8, 1918, when the Germans received their memorable defeat, which practically decided the War, and ultimately led to the Armistice on November 11, 1918.

Sergeant Harvey was mentioned in dispatches for bravery on the day of the big attack upon the German forces for an incident which took place near Moucourt, on the Somme, on August 8, 1918, and was subsequently decorated with the Military Cross by His late Majesty King George V at Buckingham Palace, London, after returning from the Front.

He finally returned to Western Australia in March of 1920.

Mr. Harvey’s election as general president has been received with expressions of pleasure and congratulations have been forwarded by many of the branches throughout the Union, and members feel generally that he will prove a capable successor to the ex-general president, who has just relinquished office.

Sergeant Harvey, with his wide knowledge of police affairs which has been accumulated during the time he has been a member of the Force, and his experiences abroad, will prove of considerable service to the W.A. Police Union and to him generally in his office as general president.

CORONATION
LONDON, 12th MAY
3
7
It is recommended that intending visitors to England for the Coronation Celebrations should
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56-58 WILLIAM STREET
PERTH
He also championed the movement of the Police Union offices from Police Station premises to a central private location in the Padbury buildings opposite the Perth GPO. This was the start of the new union movement to fully protect the rights of these very special people in the community.
He was at this time in life also president of the ‘junior police athletics and swimming assoc’ and the looking after of ‘Police Widows and Orphans’, plus much more.
Will was a strong swimmer and was very athletic so with any possible time to spare he would do his bit for people in need, especially the ‘youth of the time’.

It was becoming obvious to most at this time that things were not going well in Europe, Germany had rearmed and the Japanese to Australia’s north were also playing up.
It was getting very close now to the time when William would become a very powerful figure in the west and he would play yet another part in it’s history.
The Harvey family were also doing well in life and in many ways being a sibling of Big Bill Harvey was definitely a big plus in life.
WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BRANCH
POLICE DEPT., PERTH.
1st August, 1939.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This is to certify that I have known Edwin Harvey for approximately six years, and I can honestly say that he is thoroughly reliable, intelligent, and conscientious. He has had the advantage of a splendid home life, and the example of parents of the highest integrity, which are reflected in his conduct and disposition.

I feel sure that he will give entire satisfaction in any position which he may occupy.

[Signature]

INSPECTOR OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.
Chapter Sixteen
A new job

1940 and war was on in Europe and it was certain that the ‘Jap’s’ were going to head south after the raw materials that their country did not have, Australia was one of those targets.

Fremantle was to become the western exit for many men and women going to war in the ‘middle east’ and a return port for those lucky enough to get back home. However, controlling many thousands of military personal from different parts of the globe was to be a tall order so the Army ‘heads of staff’ started their hunt for the one man who could do the job.

They had searched hard for the perfect person who could liase with many different people, from the Premier of the state to the Police Commissioner, from the highest ranks of the Military Forces to the man in the street. The person they were after had to be the perfect diplomat, problem solver, intelligence gatherer and advisor, amongst many other things.

On 27 July 1917 AIF Order 771 was issued and reads ‘No further appointments to the Anzac Provost Corps except of men who have served in a fighting unit in operations against the enemy will be made’. This was an important decision by the Corps and the Army, which only increased the standards and professionalism of the new Corps by ensuring that all military police would be of the highest military and moral character.

When questions were asked, the reply always seemed to be. Oh! That would be Bill Harvey!
So the messages went back and forth and one can only imagine the thoughts of some of William’s policemen superiors, however they all knew Bill and they all knew his judgement so there were no great problems there. All of a sudden an Sgt of Police would be the main man in control of Military law and order and at
times his say was final as he had the power to call curfews (and did) anywhere in Western Australia. Basically he outranked all other authorities both civil and military when it came to the nation's security, however he was a diplomat in all matters and policing in WA during the war years generally went well.

D. Hunter, Esq.,
Commissioner of Police,
Police Department,
PERTH.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter dated 12 Feb.40, in which you have granted permission for Sergeant W. Harvey M.O. to accept the position of D.A.P.M. in this Command —

I know that you realize how essential it is that there should be full liaison between the Civil authorities and the Department of the Army, especially at the present time, as well as at those periods when convoys of troops pass through.

I feel sure that Sergeant Harvey is an eminently suitable selection to ensure that that liaison is maintained. His service in the Police Department will be very helpful to me in his new appointment and to you in securing information and cordial co-operation between the services in the course of their duties.

I wish to thank you therefore, for your assistance in obtaining approval for Sergeant Harvey to accept the appointment of D.A.P.M.

Yours faithfully,

J.M.A. DURRANT Major-General.
G.O.C. WESTERN COMMAND.
So now William was back in the army at the rank of Captain. Although Will had finished with the army in 1920 he did however retain his officers rank in the CMF (Citizens Military Force).

When he fronted up for military duty he was Lt. William Harvey, MC. The following day he was taken onboard and promoted Capt. William Harvey, MC and within two years he was Major William Harvey, MC. He was to be based in the Swan Barracks in Francis St Perth, (now known as the area of Northbridge) he also moved around the state in the course of his duties.

Big Bill had taken on the responsibility to form, train and lead a ‘Military Police Force’ from scratch and to gather information on policing matters and act on it.

In the year of 1940 things at home (like the world over) were not as happy as they could be, the Harvey’s eldest sons Lawrie and Kevin had joined the army and they were in imminent danger as they prepared to fight the Japanese.

Lawrie was newly married to Enid, they had a child (Michael) together and Lawrie had signed up to the army but only after taking into account his wife and mother’s wishes for him to stay at home. Lawrie was just twenty years of age so now Margaret had to go through the same pain as the ‘first world war’ all over again.

Lawrie was a Sergeant in the 2/4th Machine Gun Battalion and was in Darwin when his group were commanded to ‘make a move’.

The ships would make a brief stopover in Port Moresby for some more machineguns and other stocks, they then steamed down the east coast of Australia, across the ‘Great Australian Bight’ and back to Perth for a stopover and a chance for the many West Australians to see their loved ones before setting sail for Singapore.

As the troopships with the 2/4th Machine Gun Battalion aboard the Aquitania arrived off the coast of Fremantle the order went out, there would be ‘no leave’.

As one can imagine things got a bit out of hand and many were to disobey orders and take matters into their own hands.
Many would slip over the side and get to shore and Laurie was one of them. He sheepishly knocked on his mum and dad’s front door and was welcomed inside by his mum with great joy.

Poor old dad almost had a fit when he arrived home from work and saw Lawrie sitting there with a huge smile on his face and saying “Hi dad!” Will was stuck between a rock and a hard place because he was out all day with his men looking for the absconders from the ships and the naval officer that he had been working with lived just three doors down the road from the Harvey’s. So what could he do now? By law he was harbouring an “A.W.L” soldier. Luckily at this time William was the law and Lawrie was advised to go back the next day!

“Big Bill” Harvey with Margaret, Ursula and Ted during WW2

What could Bill say; for once upon a time he too had gone “A.W.L.” Even so, they would have all cherished the moment for little did they know that this was to be the last they would ever see of their dear Lawrie.

It was during this visit that Lawrie told his dad that he thought one of the bank robbers (Rodda) was in his battalion. If so then Rodda had changed his first name as the initials are different. This could be likely for an ex con! By now he had done his time and he would pay the supreme cost and never return to home shores.

After visiting his mum and dad Lawrie went to his home and spent a short night with the love of his life, his young wife. As it would happen she conceived that night and at dawn he was whispering his last goodbyes, little did they know that they were never to see or touch each other again. Lawrie would never see his son who was conceived in that short night of passion. When he returned to his ship he was ‘busted’ from the rank of Sergeant to Corporal. Others did not return at all, their numbers being replaced by other men from around Kalgoorlie way.
Those that did not return to the ship were lucky as this convoy was about to sail straight into the Japanese hands that were about to seize Singapore. Lawrie was to do almost three years as a P.O.W in the infamous “Changi” prison and then on the ‘Burma Railway’.
For many months the people of Perth and Australia were left wondering if their men folk were dead or alive.

Time went on with little word as to the fate of the men on Singapore, then ‘out of the blue’ came word that ‘HMAS Sydney’ had been sunk off the mid Western Australian coast about 500 miles north west of Perth. The Sydney had been caught up in a ‘fire fight’ with the very well armed and very serious Nazi fighting ship the ‘Kormoran’, disguised as a freighter.

THE AUSTRALIAN CRUISER ‘SYDNEY’ WHICH DISAPPEARED WITHOUT A TRACE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN IN NOVEMBER, 1941, WAS MORTALLY WOUNDED IN THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF IT’S BATTLE WITH THE MUCH WEAKER GERMAN COMMERCE RAIDER ‘KORMORAN’ ACCORDING TO THE DIARY KEPT BY THE FORMER SUPPLY OFFICER OF THE ‘KORMORAN’
Forward: According to this diary, the Sydney was tricked by the ‘Kormoran’s’ Captain into coming into range of the auxiliary cruiser’s light guns. The diary says that the Kormoran’s first salvo hit the ‘Sydney’s’ bridge - a vital spot - while the ‘Sydney’s’ opening shots were too long (Note: Sydney was equipped with long range guns which may account for elevation difficulties)

We continued to steer in an easterly direction with the intention of patrolling the west coast during the coming new moon period, and keeping under observation the trade routes between Australia and the Sunda Straits.

Now comes the memorable Wednesday, November 19th 1941. We have had another quite day under blue skies and bright sunshine. Most of the Officers are taking afternoon coffee in the mess, and supper is being prepared in the mess deck. It is 15.30 hours (3.30pm)

The ‘Kormoran’ is on a course 25 degrees and about 650 miles west by south of Carnarvon. Shortly before 1600 hours, the cry rings through the ship ‘Steamer in sight’. Almost immediately the alarm signals shrill.
The lookout in the foremast reports that the ship might be a sailing vessel, for at this great distance, recognition of the superstructure is impossible. Our commander decides to turn westwards in order to come into the sun. The vessel now bears 2 degrees to port. Soon comes the next report from the look out that the stranger’s superstructure is unusually stout. This can only mean one thing, and we immediately begin to withdraw at full speed, but a few moments later, the engine room reports that No 4 motor is out of action. We can now move only at 14 knots.

All suppositions and doubts are now at an end- the steamer comes ever nearer, and we recognise it as a cruiser.

It is1605 hours! The cruiser turns towards us, and begins signalling by lamp. We do not answer, but hold our course west-south-west. Our nemesis comes nearer; now we can distinguish her as the Australian Cruiser of the Sydney Class. Escape is no longer possible, perhaps we can deceive her, but this is merely a hope without very much foundation. At1635 hours No 4 motor is again reported to be in working order, but it is too late now.

The Cruiser meanwhile without slackening her pursuit asks the name of our ship. She is still a long way off, but not so far that we can overlook her signals. We are the Straat Malakka and hoist the Netherlands flag at our stern. All sailors disappear below decks and the ‘Kormoran’ appears as though she is deserted, but below decks and hidden behind the ships gear the men, from Commander to lowest rating, sweat and hold their breath with suspense. The distance between the ships is now about 8,000 metres (five miles).

The enemy naturally does not seem quite satisfied with our reply to our signal, and he moved closer, the distance lessening minute by minute. At1700 hours the cruiser is about 1200 metres (3/4 mile) distant, an unbelievable short range.

We can distinguish individual figures on her decks; her bridge is crowded with officers. She now travels at the same speed and travels parallel with us. She wants to know more about us and wants to know our destination and cargo. We answer that signal by flag signal.

The tension mounts to breaking point—what will she do now? She appears as though she is satisfied with our identity, for we can see she has picked up her seaplane and swung inboard.

The mussels of her four 6inch guns are still directed menacingly towards us, however!

The seconds turned to minutes, something must happen! Just at the last minute when it appeared as though she is about to turn away, she makes one last request. This, at 1725 hours, is the signal ‘hoist your secret call.”
This is too much! We do not know the secret code signs of the ‘Straat Malakka’. So fate takes a hand.
Now there remains only one decision for our commander-to attack and by surprise and speed, hope for success. His orders came with lightning swiftness: Hoist the battle flag! ‘Load’ Prepare for action!

At 1730 hours the first salvo roars from our 4 starboard 15 centimetre guns, and simultaneously, the lighter weapons open fire. The starboard PAK (anti-tank guns, 37 millimetres of which the Kormoran carries four) is directed at the bridge of the cruiser. The first salvos find its mark, and are followed by another and still another. Our opponent opens with a full salvo from their turrets, but the shots are too long, and so far we have suffered no hits. Suddenly the Cruiser’s turrets fall silent. Apparently the men are waiting for orders from the gunnery officer, but he as a result of our accurate fire, is probably dead. Precious and decisive moments pass to our opponents cost.
After our fifth salvo, nearly all of which were hits, the Cruiser’s C turrets began firing independently. Finally, the cruiser scores a hit on our funnel, but, beyond a few killed and wounded the damage is negligible. A life boat, that was close to the funnel, was shot away, and black smoke begins to pour through the walls of the funnel.

The Cruiser’s third salvo passes through our rigging and explodes in the water on the port beam. All our guns are firing in rapid succession. The enemy’s C and D turrets reply, the two forward turrets having been knocked out. At this stage we sustain a hit- the poop deck and Officer’s quarters are hit and begin to burn. Our engines are also hit. The Cruiser is now afire in several places.

We attempt to quell the rapidly spreading fire on our own ship but, from the beginning, it is a hopeless task as our fire fighting equipment is destroyed, or at least so badly damaged that it will not deliver water. Our torpedo tubes are also displaced both tubes having failed to fire on at least two attempts. Yonder, there is a tremendous explosion. The Cruiser completely disappears in a black fog, and as it slowly clears, we can see that she is down by the bows. Over our decks the cry goes up, Hurrah, she sinks’ but this jubilant outcry is premature for, although she is deeper in the water and apparently totally destroyed forward, her C turret continues firing. Slowly she drifts astern and her firing becomes spasmodic.
Suddenly, a discernable shudder is felt on the 'Kormoran'. From all ventilators leading to the engine room pour black fumes. Obviously one of our oil burners has been hit.

It is 1735 hours. Our opponent is astern and our guns can only be brought partly to bear.

We have to try to turn the ship to bring her into a firing position but with our motors mortally wounded, we find this difficult.

Finally the Cruiser drifts away on our port quarter, and at a range of 4000 metres (two and 1/2 miles) we can again direct fire at her port beam.

However, the enemy does not reply any further. Her guns all point away from us. Apparently she is out of control, and can no longer turn. Only one possibility remains for her—torpedoes.

She makes immediate use of these and fires a torpedo salvo towards us. Manoeuvring and evasive tactics are out of the question now but, fortunately all the torpedoes passed under our stern. It is now 1745 hours and we are still under way, but very slowly. The cruiser is afire from stem to stern and, in fact, little more than a wreck.

After 1800 hours we fire three torpedoes from our underwater tubes. These are intended to finish the cruiser, but our torpedoes too, miss their mark.

The cruiser drifts very slowly towards the south-east, and the distance between us increases. At 1825 hours the last salvo leaves our guns. In the distance we can see only a drifting column of smoke—a wreck.

However, now that we have time to consider, we have suffered badly ourselves. Our top deck blazes furiously, and it is impossible to think of extinguishing the flames. We drift helplessly before the wind, and with the approach of darkness the swell increases.

The battle is fought, it lasted a good hour and now we become conscious of that fact that our auxiliary cruiser’s voyage has come to an end.

A glorious end for, surely, a battle between a cruiser and an auxiliary cruiser with this outcome must be unique in the annals of navel warfare.

The Kormoran in this battle fired 500 rounds of 15-centimetre shells and three torpedoes at her opponent and, as we later learned sank this far superior warship without a single man of her complement being saved.

Two boats forward appear undamaged and capable of being made seaworthy quickly. They are the boats from the supply ship Kulmerland and the Nikalaos L.D., which we sank in March.

Our longboats are filled with our wounded and lowered into the water. The men take only the barest essentials and only those things which are readily available.

Most of the wounded are accommodated in these boats and given orders to pull away from the ship and wait in the vicinity till morning when we shall assemble.
As the Kormoran carries 400 mines, much ammunition, and many torpedoes, we all have the feeling that we are sitting on top of a volcano. At any moment the fire might reach the explosives. Almost all the officers, most of the petty officers and 113 men still remained on board. No other boats are available with the exception of the two heavy lifeboats which are forward down in No.1 hatch. This is not very hopeful, for the electric power that operates the winches has ceased to function.

By the aid of block and tackle each boat is raised a few centimetres at a time, and, after hours of back-breaking and tiresome work, is lifted on to the deck. The tow heavy boats are lowered luckily without damage into the water on our port side. They are shipping a little water in the heavy swell, but this can be bailed out.

The men on deck now all have something, either from the galley of the living quarters provisions, blankets and coats being the next important. The main pantry is located deep down in the dark bowels of the ship. As we gather torches we can hear the flames crackling and roaring behind the bulkheads. Finally the time comes to get into the boats. Those of us remaining are divided into boat loads, officers and men alike. Each boat, designed to carry 40, holds 57.

It is difficult to find room in the overcrowded boat, but slowly the high steel sides of the Kormoran slide away from us. About 2400 hours we see light signals from the Kormoran and we know that the last boat is ready to cast off. We are now some 3000 metres from the ship. At 0035 hours on November 20 there is a mighty explosion. A huge column of fire leaps high into the sky and forms perhaps 500 metres up, a gigantic mushroom of smoke, vividly lit by the flames below. Then the fireworks give way to utter silence.

The Kormoran has ceased to exist. We bail our boat, alone on an unruly sea. That night, with its wondrous canopy of guiding stars is above us...

For some the sea journey to a hostile land had begun.

A police report on the 30th of November 1941 was submitted by Regimental No.1300 Sergeant 3/c S. Anderson of the Western Australian Police Force relative to:

German Sea-men landing 80 miles North of Carnarvon

Sgt Anderson reported that about 10.30 am on the 25th November 1941 a Mr Sharp who was the manager of Dalgety & Co in Carnarvon, informed him that a Flight Lieutenant Cook of the RAAF and at present patrolling from Carnarvon, had located two life-boats on the shore about 80 miles North of...
Carnarvon, and that there appeared to be 80 seamen in the two boats, and that it was thought that they may be sailors from HMAS Sydney.

Mr. Sharp stated that he had arranged with Mr. Patrick Young of Gascoyne Trading Company, to send three Motor/Wagons to bring these sailors to Carnarvon, provisions had also been obtained, and were being sent on the trucks, Dr. Piccles was also notified, and he, and Flight Lieu Cook, Arthur Snook, of the Gascoyne Traders, and himself, left in a runabout (Small car) and went on ahead of the motor trucks.

The Carnarvon Council was also notified, and arrangements were made to have all the sea-men billeted out amongst the residents of the town, Boolathuna, and Brick House Stations, sent in rugs and mattresses from their shearing sheds for the use of the sailors.

Just before leaving Carnarvon, the Customs Officer received information that there may be a few German Sailors amongst the men on the beach, he then obtained two service revolvers from the Police Station, and took with them. After they had travelled about 20 miles in the direction of the Sailors, on the Quobba Station Road, they met Mr. Keith Baston, of Quobba Station, and he stated that he had received a telephone message from the Carnarvon Aerodrome requesting him to inform Flight Lieu Cook, to return to Carnarvon at once, Mr. Cook then returned with Keith Baston to Carnarvon, Dr. Piccles, Arthur Snook, and Sgt Anderson continued on.

After travelling about 80 miles they saw a number of men, which appeared to be sailors at a tin hut, about one mile from the shore, there was also one man about 100 yards from the side of the road, watering a few sheep in a yard, thinking that he was a station hand, Dr. Piccles and the Sgt went over to him and Sgt Anderson asked him if he had seen any sailors about, and this man then informed him that he was a German, and said that there were others over at the shed and three of the other men could speak English, we then went over to the other men and ascertained that there were 46 men altogether, some of the provisions that they had with us were then distributed amongst the German Sailors, they were practically out of food, they had already killed one sheep and had others yarded up in case they were needed.

Up until the time that the first German was met, it was not known that the sailors were Germans.

A note was left with one of the Germans who could speak English, to tell the Motor trucks to come further on.

Anderson and Piccles continued on further north, leaving these men as they were, the two Aussies then struck the beach about 13 miles north of where the
first Sailors were found, after travelling over very rough country, three RAAF planes were flying above and directed us to the other life boat. On arrival there it was ascertained that there were 57 German Sailors from this life-boat, these men had sufficient food to carry them on for a while, but their water would run out the following day.

In the first batch of German sailors located apart from a few sunburns and sore feet they were quite alright, but in the second lot the conditions of some were a little worse, these were attended to by Dr. Piccles, there was also a Doctor amongst the Germans but it was not known at the time, at no time did the Sgt Anderson question any of these men, for any particulars, as he considered it a job for the Military.

About an hour after their arrival at the second life-boat, one of the motor trucks arrived, the German sailors were then taken up the high cliffs to the motor truck, some of the sick men were carried, word then had to be sent back for another motor truck, which later arrived, and all the Germans were loaded onto these two trucks and then left for where we had the first German sailors, on arrival there the 46 German Sailors were waiting by the side of the road.

By the time all the Germans were loaded on the motor trucks it would be about 9pm, the three motor trucks then continued on towards Carnarvon and we followed on behind in our Runabout, apart from the Germans on each motor truck there was a motor driver and his assistant, and in the runabout there was the Doctor, Arthur Snook and the Sgt, we arrived at Carnarvon at about 4am on the 26th November, and all the Germans were accommodated in the Carnarvon Goal.

There are no provisions in the Carnarvon gaol to provide for a large number of men as this and the Sgt had no person to consult, and the men had to be fed, so he took it upon himself, and ordered from different local stores, plates, mugs, spoons and food sufficient for these men until such times as they could be transferred elsewhere.

A Military Guard arrived from Perth on the morning of the 27th November and took over from me the 103 German Prisoners, during the time the Germans were in the Carnarvon goal, the Sgt had the assistance of the Carnarvon Home-Guard, to patrol around the Goal.

The Germans were escorted to the MV Centaur on the 28th November and I have been informed that there were a number of other German sailors, picked up at sea by different vessels, but these were never landed at Carnarvon.

At no time during the time the Germans were first met and when coming into Carnarvon on the motor trucks did these men give any trouble what-so-ever, and I was the only Guard with the 103 men coming in with the motor trucks.
The account for stores etc, have not yet come to hand, all these have been booked to the Military Department, and will be forwarded on at a later date. The Life-boats were left on the beach and equipment was left, the local Custom’s Officer has been instructed to have all this brought to Carnarvon, and Constable Sullivan will assist him.

Signed Sergeant 3/c 1300
S Anderson

Sgt Anderson was a personal friend of Williams and he was also a World War I veteran, he had been awarded the Military Medal and had joined the Police Force at the same time as ‘Big Bill’.

With no survivors left from Sydney the remainder of the ‘Kormoran’ crew were sent down the coast in ships to Perth and it was Major Harvey’s task as Deputy Provost Marshal to collect the Germans on arrival at Fremantle and interview them via an interpreter and intern them for the duration of the war. He moved the German prisoners into Fremantle prison and took full control of that convict built ‘fort style’ building and made sure there was no escape for them.

It was said that some of these men were Nazi’s through and through. Within time they were moved down south near the township of Harvey then onto country prison work farms on the east coast.
Chapter Seventeen
Fremantle: The hub of conflict within Western Australia

Whist the Kimberley’s up north were known as “Purgatory” to the West Australian Police, Fremantle was known as “Hell”, this description was even tougher during World War Two. The biggest problems in Western Australia occurred during troop movements and in particular troop movements in the port city of Fremantle.

On one occasion a number of American soldiers snuck out of a passing battalion and found their way into the National Hotel for a beer or two. Unfortunately the National had a number of Maori drinkers at the bar at the time and within minutes the meeting became a full on battle for life. The Maori diggers were no angels and many a times they would be the cause of disturbances so it seemed ‘all was fair in love and war!’ The fighting spilled out of the pub’s doors and windows and onto the streets with many groups of men from many nations taking part in an all in brawl. Some American troops were known to carry weapons such as knuckle-dusters, knives and other weapons, many went looking for trouble, and by all accounts they found it! The fight had started hard and things got serious very fast as a number of Americans were set upon, the results of this stupidity ended with two Maori’s knifed and very dead on the bar floor and many other men injured. It seems that one American soldier was arrested and another soldier seems to have escaped Fremantle; Will and the American army tracked the other soldier to the Solomon Islands and had him dealt with.

As he surveyed the scene confronting him it became very obvious that he was not at all happy and he stated to his Officers and NCO’s that ‘we must never let this happen again!’ He knew that this stupid act had been fuelled by the alcohol demon and a good dose of anti-social behaviour so he would stop it now, once and for all! He closed all the pubs in the areas of military movements or gatherings and whilst this kept the peace for the general public he had made himself extremely unpopular with those who had vested interests and money at stake, causing them to protest quite vigorously. It would appear that the army, navy and state police did not have the resources to control the many thousands of battle hardened men who would descend on the small port town of Fremantle at any one time. As far as it is known there was never a repeat of that sad incident and history moved on.
The policemen of Fremantle did it tough in the forties and they would award an imaginary medal to those officers who had been involved in, and survived the fighting in some of Fremantle’s main streets. The “High Street Star” became the highest award in the minds of the policemen who manned the local station and many times a number of bruised, battered and bloodied figures with their uniforms ripped to shreds would appear back at the station. These men were tough, so with a cup of tea, the odd band-aid and the ‘High Street Star’ unofficially awarded it was back to the front for most, however some officers would have been injured in these scuffles and many would require time off to heal the wounds of full on ‘man to man’ battle.

Time moved on and the couple’s son Edwin (Ted) had a nasty incident when on his way home from a swim in the Swan River. Ted was hit by a drunk driver who had left the scene of the accident and who had left Ted for dead in the gutter and with a seriously smashed left hip. That incident left him disabled for many years because he contracted a form of blood poisoning that would eat away at his hipbone in the form of puss (Osteomyelitis), sometimes referred to as “Golden Staff.” Penicillin had just been invented and the armed forces were taking all the stocks that could be manufactured leaving precious little for civilian use. Ted would never be offered that miracle cure and he was extremely lucky to survive, however this crippling condition would have him suffer for many years in his later life.

As mentioned earlier Lawrie was a prisoner of war and along with the other prisoners of the Japanese he was being treated and abused worse than any human or animal should ever be treated. Laurie had inherited a strong will to live and he had put up with all the death, bashings, poor food and diseases that the POW jungle camps could offer, then one day he, along with others were hand picked as slaves to be sent to Japan to work in the mines. They would be out of the steamy jungle and in a cooler climate in Japan but then what?

Back home things were going along quite well, the threat of a Japanese invasion was almost certainly over and the population started to feel that this stinking war was almost at an end, until! Early one morning Margaret awoke from a nightmare screaming to her husband, ‘Will his gone, his gone Will’. Will gathered his thoughts and inquired into Margaret’s state of shock. She explained that she had had a dream that Lawrie was dead.
With tears streaming down her face she told Will that she saw water and Laurie was in it calling his last goodbyes to his mum and his dad. She said that it was as real as if she had been there with him. She was crying her heart out.

This was 1944 and Will was about to resume his place in the Police Force when a telegram boy came to the front door.

Margaret answered the knock and opened the door and she instantly knew, ‘it was Lawrie.’

The telegram read: *Corporal Lawrence Harvey, lost at sea, presumed dead.*

Of course Margaret was heartbroken as news filtered through about the facts of the day that Lawrie had died. The news was even worse than they could have imagined.

It is said that Lawrie, along with some 1400 other POW’s were aboard a Japanese transport ship in the ‘South China Sea’ and heading for Japan when a number of prowling American submarines spotted it from the subs periscopes. It was the ‘Rakuyo Maru’ and it was a goner. The date was the 12th of September 1944.

**The submarine attack was reported as follows. Author unknown**

*In the South China Sea on September 12, 1944...In what Fleet Admiral Chester W Nimitz, USN described as “one of the most sensational stories of the war, “four U.S. submarines on war patrol rescued 159 British an Australian prisoners of war, already the victims of three years of harsh Japanese captivity, from certain death in the Pacific, and brought the survivors to Saipan in the teeth of a fierce typhoon.*

*The Allied soldiers were more dead than alive when located, some in a coma, all suffering from the ravages of tropical diseases, undernourished and scorched by the unmitigated rays of the sun. Under the aimed pistol of the Japanese they had been committed to the mercy of the sea when the S.S Rakuyo Maru, bearing them and 1300 other prisoners taken after the fall of Singapore was sent to the bottom by torpedoes from the USS SEALION.*

*Seven of the rescued men, picked from the water, patches of oil, tangles of debris and rafts, improvised from wreckage, could not be kept alive despite the heroic efforts of the pharmacist’s mates on the submarines. Their bodies were committed to the sea. The sufferings the men underwent during captivity, revealed when their stories were pieced together, led last November to an official protest by the British Government to the Japanese.*

*The dramatic rescue extended over a period of five days after the Raker Maru was sank.*
It was enacted against a background of undersea warfare, deep in enemy waters, which saw the four submarines, the USS SEALION, USS QUEENFISH, USS PAMPANITO, with a fifth submarine, the USS GROWLER, attack two convoys and sank at least 10 sizable enemy ships, including transports, tankers, freighters, destroyers and a 22,500-ton aircraft carrier of the Osaka Class. The QUEENFISH, SEALION, and BARB have received Presidential Unit Citations for extraordinary accomplishment, including the rescue of the British and Australians.

The Rakuyo Maru was in the first convoy that was hit as it was bound from the Straits Settlement to the Japanese mainland. She was hit just before dawn in the attack on the convoy which began shortly after midnight.

The first strike was a down-the-throat attack on an enemy destroyer, a thrilling incident of war that the Commander of Submarines in the Seventh Fleet, Rear Admiral Ralph Waldo Christie, praised as “one of the most daring attacks on record.” The squadron commander said the attack, made on the surface, “is believed to be unique in submarine warfare.

It was pressed home by the USS GROWLER, under command of Lieutenant Commander Thomas B Oakley, Jr. The GROWLER was reported over-due from patrol and presumed lost on February 1945, and Commander Oakley is listed as missing in action.

The moon was just rising when the GROWLER spotted the convoy, three columns of ships with escorts ahead, on the bow and on the quarter. The GROWLER manoeuvred into position to fire on a good sized ship in the centre of the column when here lookouts observed a large destroyer swing from the starboard side of the convoy and bear down on the submarine with the apparent intention of ramming.

The GROWLER, running on the surface, headed directly for the enemy destroyer on a collision course. It was win or die. If the GROWLER’S torpedoes missed it was planning to submerge, but time and distance was short. Less than half a mile of open water was between the enemy and the challenger when the men on the GROWLER heard a hit timed for their first torpedo.

“The destroyer,” recorded Commander Oakley, “exploded violently but beautifully amidships. She took a 50-degree list and turned hard right. The flash of the explosion was seen in the conning tower. There was a great sigh of relief from the GROWLER."
The exuberant skipper yelled below to his men, “You’re the best fire control party ever seen!”

Now shells from the enemy escorts fell around the GROWLER as she fired on two freighters. She continued to move in and passed the destroyer, which was burning fiercely and listing 70 degrees. A horde of Japs, recorded Commander Oakley, “clambered up the deck, the bridge and the foremost of the destroyer as she approached Davey Jones’ locker.”
Flames lighted up the GROWLER’S conning tower as the destroyer went down, leaving a small fire burning on the surface.
The GROWLER continued to move in for the attack on the convoy despite the gunfire from other enemy escort vessels. In a few minutes torpedoes from the GROWLER hit two freighters. On one there was an explosion. On the other columns of smoke could be observed between the bridge and the stack.

Enemy patrol craft spotted the GROWLER and gave chase. As she manoeuvred, her men could see the flash of explosions from attacks by other submarines. The GROWLER evaded the patrol craft, hearing a rumble of blasts that were taken for exploding depth charges. Her men could see fires burning on a tanker and a cargo ship, the Rakuyo Maru.

The GROWLER fired on another enemy destroyer and heard the hits register. Other enemy craft moved in to depth charge the GROWLER and for several minutes her men could hear a series of explosions. Later they reported their target, the destroyer, was breaking up and sinking. The GROWLER then withdrew from the area.

Meanwhile the USS SEALION, under command of Commander Eli T. Reich, had joined the attack on the convoy. For some time she underwent and evaded fire from the deck guns and machine guns of the convoy’s escorts and, shortly before dawn, closed a large tanker and fired upon her, the tanker bust into flames.

The blast on the tanker lighted the Rakuyo Maru. In a matter of seconds torpedoes were streaking from the SEALION to the transport. There was an explosion as the SEALION submerged to avoid countermeasures. After dawn, Commander Reich looked through his periscope and could see a large vessel well down in the water. From a distance only her spars were showing.
The SEALION withdrew from the area with the target zone obscured by smoke and fire. She continued on patrol, unaware that there were Allied prisoners on the transport.

On the night following the attack the USS PAMPANITO, under command of Commander Paul E Summers, came upon a group of ships remaining from the enemy convoy. The night was dark. There was no moon. The PAMPANITO defied the enemy escorts and closed for an attack.

Ten minutes after her torpedoes struck home, the PAMPANITO observed a large transport and a large freighter disappear beneath the sea. More torpedoes and the lookouts on the PAMPANITO saw the deckhouse of another freighter go sky high and smoke pour from the doomed ship. Damage inflicted on a fourth freighter could not be observed because of the haze and smoke.

The enemy escorts closed on the PAMANITO and at least one depth charge shook the submarine from stem to stern. Random gunfire came from the convoy.

Two days later both the PAMANITO and the SEALION observed a large freighter still afame. Flames were bubbling from the surface of the water. The freighter was so far consumed by flames that the commander of neither submarine considered it a worthy target. It appeared just a matter of time and the freighter would join the other three ships at the bottom of the Pacific.

Later in the afternoon of the third day after the attack on the Rakuyo Maru, the PAMPANITO sighted considerable debris floating wreckage and what appeared to be men on a raft. Believing that the men were Japanese, the PAMPANITO manoeuvred toward them while some of her sailors stood on deck with small arms, prepared in the event the supposed enemy attempted any surprise actions.

The curly hair of one of the men on the raft was the first indication to the PAMPANITO’S men that the survivors were not Japanese. At about the same time the men on the raft decided that the men on the submarine were not Japanese because they were tall men.

Commander Summers recorded that the men on the raft were covered with oil and filth and “we could not make then out. Black curly hair didn’t look like Japs. The men were shouting but we couldn’t understand what they were saying. Then we made out the words, ‘Pick us up, please!’ There were about 15 men on the raft.
The survivors were taken aboard, some being transferred with great difficulty. They were taken to the after torpedo room and each was given a piece of cloth moistened with water to suck on.

“All were exhausted,” said Commander Summers, “after four days on the raft and three years of imprisonment. Many had lashed themselves to their makeshift rafts, which were slick with grease. Some had nothing but life belts. All showed signs of pellagra, beriberi, immersion, salt water sores, ringworm and malaria. All were very thin and showed the results of under nourishment.

Some were in very bad shape, but with the excitement of rescue they came alongside with cheers for the Yanks and many a curse for the Japs. It was quite a struggle to keep them on the raft while we took them off one by one. They could not manage to secure a line to the raft, so we sent men over the side to do the job.

“The survivors came tumbling aboard and then collapsed with strength almost gone. A pitiful sight none of us will ever forget. All hands turned to with a will and the men were cared for as rapidly as possible.”

Next the PAMANITO found a second raft with nine men. Nine minutes later six more survivors were found and brought aboard. Another nine minutes passed and six more were saved. About a half hour later 11 more were picked up. At that point what was thought to be an enemy plane was sighted and the PAMPANITO’S commanding officer was amazed to see the “dead come to life and scurry below.” Six more were found, then five more. As the light was fading a single survivor was rescued. It was complete dark as the PAMANITO took the last group of ten men aboard. “We felt we had everyone in sight and knew we had all we could care for, if not more.” In all, the PAMANITO had taken 73 men aboard. (The complement of a U.S. submarine is about 90.) She had meanwhile sent word to the SEALION, request help.

Though now on an errand of mercy, the PAMANITO had to keep at the peak of fighting efficiency because she was deep in enemy waters. Lieutenant Ted N. Swain took supervision of the survivors. He tried segregation until he had some idea of their health, because in cramped quarters an epidemic might become uncontrollable.

Pharmacist Maurice L. Demers worked without let-up. Commander Summers said that “undoubtedly his unstinted effort saved many of the survivors’ lives.”
After the survivors were given emergency treatment, the long progress of cleaning them of oil and grease was begun.

Despite all possible attentions one of the British soldiers died the next day, possibly from internal injuries. He had been unconscious continually since his rescue. He was buried at sea with honours. Two days later, with the storm beginning to set in, the remaining survivors were reported much improved and some were able to move around the PAMPANITO.

Several hundred miles from Saipan the PAMPANITO was met by the USS CASE, under command of Lieutenant Commander Robert S. Willey. The sea was now so rough none of the survivors could be transferred to the CASE but the destroyer sent a medical officer to the submarine, Lieutenant Commander Paul V. Waldo, and Chief Pharmacist Lynn I. Wilcox.

Two more days passed and the PAMPANITO arrived at Saipan. She moored alongside a tender, the USS FULTON, under command of Captain Arthur A. Clarkson, Doctors came aboard. Fresh fruit and ice cream were given to the survivors and their transfer to the military hospital began. Then the FULTON’S men undertook the refitting of the PAMPANITO, furnishing decontamination, new dungarees, skivvies, new blankets and new mattress covers.

When the SEALION received the quest of the PAMPANITO to aid in the rescue she proceeded to the area at flank speed. She arrived near the scene of the sinking shortly before dusk on the third day after she had torpedoed the Rakuyo Maru. Bodies were floating amid the debris. There were heave oil slicks. Then the SEALION sighted men on rafts and began taking them aboard. In all she rescued 54, but four later died on the way to Saipan. Two of them were not identified, for they were continuously in a coma.

One of the survivors told this story to Commander Reich:

We were sleeping topside on the Rakuyo Maru. At about 2 o’clock in the morning a two funneled destroyer was hit by a torpedo and blew up. (This was the attack made by the GROWLER.) There was a lot of gunfire and flares, and then everything went quite. At about 5am.or 6am. A red flare went up on the port side of a tanker right ahead of us. Then a torpedo struck and the tanker burst into flame, literally blew up, and threw flaming oil high in the air.

Then the ship on the port bow (presumably a transport) swerved in and almost collided. She looked disabled, for she just seemed to drift toward the burning
tanker and caught fire aft. In a moment there was a puff of smoke around the bridge and she was in flames forward.

“Then there was a thud forward on our ship followed by another thud aft, and the Rakuyo Maru began to settle in the water. The Japs took to their boats at once and about five minutes later we went into the water, too, and climbed aboard some rafts. The tanker was burning fiercely and we tried to keep away from fire on water. A half-hour later the tanker sank.

“The Rakuyo Maru took a list to starboard but looked as if she would remain afloat for a while. Some survivors started back, but before they could get to her she began to keel over and settle. So we changed our minds about getting provisions and water. She sank about 6pm.

“Shortly afterwards a destroyer picked up Japs in long boats. We were held off with revolvers. Later another destroyer came up escorting passenger-freighters. They rescued the remaining Japs and all three ships steamed off. I believe they were loaded with raw rubber.

The Pharmacist’s Mate on the SEALION, Roy J. Williams, Jr was praised, along with other members of the crew of the SEALION, for their untiring, unselfish efforts to nurse the survivors back to health during the trip to Saipan. The SEALION also took aboard medical men from the CASE, Lieutenant Commander George N. Schiff, and William A. Cumpston, Pharmacist’s Mate First class, who helped the survivors until they were taken to the general Hospital.

The two other submarines, the BARB and the QUEENFISH, had also received a request to aid the rescue. They had to travel so great a distance that despite flank speed they were unable to reach the scene until five days after the Rakuyo Maru went down.

En route to the scene they encountered another enemy convoy. Their first mission was the rescue, but the commanding officers judged that they would not be able to effect any rescue except in daylight, and when they spotted the convoy they calculated that they would have a leeway of a couple of hours to work on the convoy. There was no moon so they moved in for the attack.

The BARB, under command of Commander Eugene B. Fluckey, hit a large tanker and the ship exploded. Commander Fluckey reported that there was a ball of fire 500 feet in diameter shooting up into the night sky. Then, just before
midnight, a 22,500 ton aircraft carrier was spotted. “Ye Gods, a flat top!” exclaimed the submariners. Torpedoes went “flying.”

The BARB submerged to avoid being rammed. While submerged her men could hear depth charges, heavy underwater explosions, whistling, cracklings the sounds of a ship breaking up. It was the end of the enemy flat top. Then the BARB resumed its mission of mercy.

“As an after thought,” said Commanding Officer, “having seen the piteous plight of the 14 survivors we rescued, I can say that I would forego the pleasure of an attack on a Jap Task Force to rescue only one of them. There is little room for sentiment in submarine warfare, but the measure of saving one Allied life against sinking a Jap ship is one which leaves no question, once experienced.”

The BARB searched the farthest possible area considering the tide and wind. She passed frequently through wreckage and passed floating bodies. Then they came upon men on rafts. The men were covered with grease and oil, a disgusting blessing that saved them from being hideously burned by the sun. All of the men were 25 to 30 pounds underweight and were suffering from malaria, dysentery, pellagra, sores and ulcers.

“At first the dubious, then amazed, and finally hysterically thankful looks on their faces, from the time they first sight us approach them, is on we shall never forget,” said Commander Fluckey. “Several were too weak to take the lines thrown to them. These were secured by the valiant efforts of Lieutenant Commander Robert E. Mc Nitt, Lieutenant James F. Lanier, and Traville S Houston, Motor Machinist’s Mate, Second Class who dived in after them.

“Too much credit cannot be given to the crew for their superb performance and willing efforts in the production line we had formed from the deck party who picked them up stripped them, and passed them below, where they were received by the cleaners who removed to oil and grease, then the ‘doctors’ and ‘Nurses’ for treatment, thence to the feeders, and finally to the sleepers who carried them off and tucked them into their bunks.

He praised William E. Donnelly, Chief Pharmacist’s Mate. “Through his untiring efforts, working day and night, these men were brought over the hump without the loss of a single live.”

“The appreciation of the survivors,” said Commander Fluckey,” was unbounded. Even those who couldn’t talk expressed themselves tearfully through their glazed, oil soaked eyes.
One survivor remarked, “Matey, we’re in safe hands at last!”
Another said, “Three years without a drink of brandy; please give me another.”
Still another said cheerfully, “Be sure to wake me up for chow.”

On the next day the BARB continued to search for survivors.
But the typhoon was moving in. The wind was up to 35 knots and the seas were very heavy. Commander Fluckey believed it was impossible for any other survivors to last the night. Finally the wind picked up to 60 knots, the BARB pulled away. En route to Saipan the crew of the BARB passed the hat around and raised $300 as a stake for the survivors.
The QUEENFISH, under command of Commander Charles E. Loughlin, sent torpedoes into a large transport on her way to the rescue scene. There was a terrific explosion and its flash lighted up the horizon. The submarine proceeded to the rescue scene and arrived shortly after the BARB. By late afternoon she had picked up 18 men.

Commander Loughlin’s report said: “By the time the sea and wind began to pick up, making the rescue work extremely hazardous. Only in a few cases were the weakened and emaciated survivors able to assist in their recovery and the officers and men on deck did yeomen service in lifting them bodily from the water. In one instance Lieutenant (junior grade) Edwin A. Desmond, Jr., plunged into the water to tow back to the ship a raft on which sat a survivor who was too weak to reach for the heavy line that had fallen at his feet.”

Commander Louchlin also highly praised the rescue work of Lieutenant John E. Bennett, Robert J Reed, Coxswain, Laurence F. Nadeau Jr., Torpedo man’s mate, Third Class, Otto B Hendricks, Chief Quartermaster, Thurmond E Milliren, Seaman First Class.

The QUEENFISH continued to search for survivors despite the heavy sea, but only empty rafts and lifeless bodies were sighted. The wind rose and water started coming in the conning tower.
“The rough weather,” said Commander Loughlin, “effectively sealed the fate of any possible remaining survivors and materially added to the discomfort of those on board. Not one word of complaint was heard and it was with the upmost feeling of respect for their courage and fortitude we later transferred our passengers.

Every consideration was given the survivors. They were placed in the forward torpedo room. Lieutenant (junior grade) John H. Epps and Harold Dixon, Chief
Pharmacists Mate, were in charge of the group giving individual attention to the survivors.

Commander Loughlin said “Very little could be done for two who were recovered with great difficulty, and who remained in a coma until they died, but the remaining 16 reacted almost immediately to water, food, hot baths, and medical treatment administered by Dixon. It is interesting to note that not one word of recrimination was uttered concerning the sinking, but only of gratitude that they had been rescued.”

Seven days later the survivors were transferred to the hospital from the QUEENFISH, terminating the rescue. After hospitalization, the Australians were taken to their homeland direct and the British were taken to Pearl harbour and thence across the United States to their homeland.

The sinking of the Rakuyo Maru by an unknown Navy author is from the “Commissioning Program of the USS FRANKLIN D ROOSEVELT at the New York navy Yard on October 27, 1945.

Lawrie was tied up in that little misfortune in that far away sea and all that was to be let known to the family was that he was one of those that ‘didn’t make it’. So much for a woman’s intuition, old Margaret had dreamed her dream at the time it is believed Lawrie died.

William was in a position to extract as many facts as possible about the fate of the West Aussies and Laurie’s fate would have been known in as much detail as the survivors could tell.

Of approximately 1400 prisoners aboard the Rakuyo Maru only some 259 survived, it is said some 1159 perished?

Rumours had filtered back to Australia that the subs had prowled the waters with machine guns firing at the survivors of the Japanese ships in the belief that they were all Japs in the water.

It was mentioned that an American sailor on board one of the submarines yelled to a machine gunner to stop firing for a bit as he could see a head in the water with curly blonde hair. Hey that’s not a Jap he called out! That fella has blonde hair!

Only a survivor from that cruel sea could confirm or deny the truth to that rumour however!
Chapter Eighteen
Back to being a cop

In 1944 it was time for William to leave the army, his job was now done with
Perth and Fremantle starting to return to normal.
Will took up his old rank as a Sgt. and was appointed to train “special
constables” however he was highly
recommended to become an officer
and by 1948 he was 1303 Inspector
William Harvey, MC and he was to be
in charge of Fremantle police station
for the last years of his police service.
He was often seen walking the beat
with his junior police constables
showing that he was still a policeman
of substance who genuinely cared for
his men.

We must remember that in those days
of the Police Force you were mostly
ranked by your years of service and
not necessarily by your abilities.
Had William been of a younger age when he joined the Police Force (remember
he was 34 when he joined) he may have been destined to be the states ‘Top
Cop’ (Police Commissioner), but then this story would have another ending all
together!

Margaret and Will had had Lawrie’s name etched upon the headstone in
Manjimup so that the three kids were together forever although no sign of
Lawrie was ever recovered.

By now the pair had grandchildren starting to pop up all over the place.
There were Laurie’s children, Kevin had a couple of kids, as did Ursula and Ted
was to have two sons, one (Raymond) died at the young age of seventeen and he
is buried with Will and Margaret. Ted and wife Rhonda had another son named
‘Laurence James’ with respect to Ted’s brother ‘Lawrie John’.

Back to 1944-49, William had to do some shuffling with his pension plans as it
had gotten a little hectic with his military and police careers at times conflicting.
He also purchased quite a few acres of land in the then rural area of Rivervale
and this land would be of significant interest to me early in my own life story.
Dancing with their friends of the time was a particular pleasure for the couple, the ladies would be impeccably presented and the men were finely dressed and proud of the lifestyle that they had helped create for Western Australia, their families and of course last of all, for themselves. Quite rightly so because a life trip from childhood in England, through India, through two world wars and the heartbreak of the great depression for example would make this lifestyle something to be savoured.

In the terms of the day, a person like Will who had been awarded the Military Cross and was an extremely likable and well respected Policeman was in great demand, so life would be hectic to say the least.

Together the couple would dress up in ‘well to do clothing’ and attend many official functions that would include formal Balls, Opera and Symphony Orchestra performances, all sorts of meetings, dance’s, public speaking and the like. William was by now a universally admired and respected citizen of the fair ‘City of Perth’ and his presence was pretty much demanded well into his retirement!

Surviving female members of Will’s closest family would recall meeting him under the Fremantle or Perth town hall clock with his hands behind his back and standing at ease just watching the modern world go by. After the greetings he would palm a few pounds into a daughter in-laws hands, just to help out.

Will and Margaret had decided that the last day of the decade would be the time for retirement so on the 31st of December 1949 he officially hung up his hat (the last of many) for the very last time and that was it. He had retired from the Police Force thus bringing his service in uniform to his adopted country to an end, however he would continue to serve his community as an active civilian to the end of his days.

The date of 31st of December 1949 was to be known as the end of an era in the Police Force, for not only did William retire on that date but many other officers and legends of their time were with him.
Chapter Nineteen
Retirement

In retirement old Will and Margaret would put a lot of time into their growing family, at last they could focus their time on their grandchildren, a new generation of kids known as the baby boomers.

William also stayed on as the police youth Athletics president between working for St Vincent De Paul while Margaret found comfort in the ‘Catholic Church’. It has been mentioned that she went over the top with her religion, however that was her thing!

Will had not been retired long when he was approached by the horse racing industry and between them they worked out a deal. Whenever there was a race meeting held in Perth old Bill Harvey would load a semi automatic .45 calibre Colt handgun (supplied for the task) and holster it, he would then join his armed hold up team and go into action to protect the very large sums of cash that was being moved from site to site.

As the years faded from one to another, festive times would put speed into his and Margaret’s lives. Weeks before the traditional Christmas breaks for many years the legend and his wife would be on the run from one function to another. Later the children would remember seeing the couple for just a quick hello as Will and Marg would start at the front door and work through to the back door of a function then onto the next one for weeks at a time.
Life went on and soon the pair had been retired for a decade or so when one day there was a knock at the front door. William answered it to find an old man in his seventies facing him. Hello said Will in a soft and kindly voice. Can I help you? The old man replied, do you remember me? Will looked closely for a second and replied ‘I don’t think so.” You are William Harvey aren’t you and you landed at Gallipoli and sort shelter at the bottom of a cliff when some silly bastard came along, pushed in beside you and got ‘himself’ shot! William looked closer and mumbled aloud, No? Only one other person would know about that. The old man went on to tell William that he was the man who was shot through the chest. Old Bill was absolutely astounded that this man was still alive and quickly invited him inside for a cuppa. After all the old digger had been through and after being shot in the chest the only thing that had bugged this old fella was the fact that when they were evacuating him from Gallipoli they removed his boots and put them at the base of his stretcher. These boots were very special to this digger as he had had them specially made by a renowned Melbourne boot maker, he went on to tell Will that in the middle of the night on that ship ‘some bastard pinched the buggers’! That was his biggest complaint in life about Gallipoli. He must have saved up for those boots and it would appear that somebody thought he was a goner so they pinched ‘em’. It was now the sixties and the world was changing fast, man had been into space and it was now the jet age so things were moving faster than ever. Margaret would spend time playing the piano and the couple would spend as much time as possible in the garden, just the two of them with their thoughts and the old guy was still climbing ladders to change light bulbs for his local church when well into his seventies. Their house was special in that warm kind of way and the couple were extremely comfortable with their lot in later life, now at last they were finally together almost every day which had been something they had never, ever known in their incredible lives. Margaret became very proud of her English heritage when she heard a group of young men named “The Beatles” for the very first time. Actually she was witnessing a phenomenon starting to get as huge as her beloved Jesus.

Then at the beginning of the 1964 West Australian winter, Margaret had a stroke.
She had been taken to hospital and started to recover and was last seen by members of her family a week later sitting up in bed quite cheery and listening to “The Beatles” whilst holding her rosary beads and telling what beautiful songs the boys were singing and that they were going to go places ‘those boys’.

A short time after that dear old Margaret passed on to her prepared heaven.

Shortly after Margaret’s death old Will was driving his small Austin A40 car home from a community event when he lost control and the motorcar collided with a tree. Luckily Will was not travelling at great speed and he only sustained a cut on his forehead.

Looking back on the events of those times it is now obvious that his heart was giving out and he had ‘blacked out’ momentarily, causing the car to crash. This incident was a warning to the family that all was not well with the old bloke so they monitored him with lots of contact to make sure he was well looked after.

Will knew his time was nearing an end so he started to prepare his family and they all knew that it was only a matter of time.

The old fella had lost the will to live and it became very obvious that he wished to let life go, life without his mate was no longer worth living so against doctors orders and in true William Harvey fashion he decided to mow the lawn with a hand mower, ultimately bringing on a fatal heart attack.

So this is where this whole story started for me.

Remember that evening just before William’s death when my father (Ted) said that we were going over to see old Grandad? Well I had just reached my teenage years at that time and I was starting to become well aware of the big bad world with events like the Cuban missile crisis, JFK assassination and of course the ‘Beatles’ occupying my immediate sense of being. I will always treasure that last night with ‘Old Bill Harvey’ and I will always carry those memories near to my heart, forever!

That night only father and son heard this story and more from “Big Bills” big heart!

The steel sea trunk that had started its life all those years ago was unlocked and almost all of his life was bared free!

Or so a dumb kid saw it!
Photos, diaries, letters from friendships forged the world over, German naval hatbands, fully operational luger automatic hand gun with bullets (WW1 souvenir), his German expandable camera that he had carried all through the war from April 25th 1915 to the end of it all on November 11th 1918 and of course countless bayonets and other memorabilia.

In reality that night was but a mere brush over of his life and as the years went on I studied him and his times through the many remaining official documents and the wonderful memories of the survivors of his time.

Before that night old Grandad didn’t know much! He was ‘just old Grandad’, a nice white haired old man who was kind to me.

After that night I became fascinated that this man had got through all that was thrown at him, and yet he was still able to show time for me.

He knew that he did not have long left, so did Ted.

As for me!

Well I had no idea that that was one of the last times I would see him alive for within weeks of our last get together he was found by his daughter Ursula.

Will was laying outside of the back door of his home with his heart tablets in his right hand, his face towards Margaret ‘up there’. Old Bill and Margaret had been active to the end. They loved playing the game of tennis and keeping fit and occupied in old age so they really enjoyed peace with each other. In fact William had had a leaking heart valve for some time that may have been caused by the scabies he had battled with on Gallipoli and maybe even the “little bit of gas” that he had suffered!

Who knows!

Hopefully his legend can now live on alongside all of the world’s heroes and pioneers that had that special thing about them.

In the new millennium he rests with his beloved wife and their grandchild Raymond (born 1953 died 1970).

Raymond’s life was one of utter misery with him and the family having to cope with Muscular Dystrophy and then polio on top of that. Knowing that Raymond would not live a long life Will and Margaret made arrangements for him to be with them forever. Margaret believed that he was a saint because of his inner strength!
It was after Will’s death that his brother Bernard was to fill in some parts of Will’s amazing life that Will had not covered in too much detail. Things like the desertion from India and his brief time locked up by the British on Gallipoli were to be the most revealing things that Will had only mentioned to very few people, the exception being his closest family. Sometimes you must forget the past and get on with the present and as far as his life had gone India was just a small part of his incredible times. William’s life was indeed one of hardship, pain, sorrow and emotion, yet he was able to satisfy his position as a ‘True Legend’ by being able to face such personal hurt and then at the end of it all, he was still able to laugh. This ‘spirit’ is in most of us, but few can match the spirit or life of “WILLIAM HARVEY MC”

I remember my father suggesting to old Will that “he should write a book about his life” the old bloke simply and honestly replied; “ha, why would anybody be interested in my life!” My father asked; why did you do it dad? The old soldier’s answer was as humble as anything he had spoken of that night in ‘64. “We did it because it was the way of our times and we all knew that Australia was worth our sacrifice.” “We had our dreams too you know!”

Without doubt William Harvey, MC

You sir!

“Paid Your Dues”
A quote from an editor of the West Australian Newspaper written for men like William would, I think you will agree, be an appropriate epitaph for the many Soldier & Police heroes and gentlemen of their day!

“There are men, not, unfortunately, met in large numbers, but appreciated all the more because they are few, who may, perhaps, best be described as social bulwarks – the retaining walls of society. ... because they have qualities which command universal homage both from good and bad; because they are upright and just, high-minded and generous, kindly and courteous, truthful and scrupulous, self-contained and self-respecting; because they set a good example and their presence has a restraining and elevating influence; in short in the truest and best sense of the word, they are gentlemen. Such a man, essentially, was the Late Policeman, whose loss as a private citizen and a public official Western Australia has so suddenly been called upon to mourn...

The death of this upright and efficient public officer is an event deeply to be deplored....
He passes away regretted by the Government, to which he gave trusty support and faithful service, by the community whose interests and welfare he earnestly sought to promote, and by private friends to whom he was endeared by the sterling qualities of his heart and by the honest loyalty of his nature. In these days of timeserving, of chicanery, of insincerity, of pushing selfishness, it is rarely that such an epitaph can with absolute truthfulness be written as might deservedly be engraved on the tombstone of the late policeman.”

Lest We Forget

Footnote: As we researched William and Margaret’s lives we were quite astounded as to how many people have had parts of the legend of “William Harvey, MC” passed down to them over the years. Everyone seemed to say the same thing. Basically it appears that he was a very fine caring Gentleman, a Gentleman held together by a dogged respect for the upmost of honour.
Did he live up to that highest of expectations?
Well you tell me?
Respect indeed, and respect to them all!

Maybe one day Will and Margaret’s story should become a film? An English/Australian co-production film made about their life and their times, a film with Aussies and Brits acting side by side, after all that was the way it was. The sets are still there, preserved in another time! We just need to look at
Manjimup and it’s districts, or Sandstone in the Mid West to see that another time still exists, if you know where to look then you will understand what I am saying.

Filming in the southwest from the coast to the hidden waterfalls in the Karri forests in particular would be visually stunning in high definition, surely it would have world appeal.
If handled correctly it would become an ‘Australian/British Classic!’

I would like to thank the following people and organizations for their generous support and help in the documentation of this story.

Harvey family

**William Harvey (The Legend)**
Margaret Harvey (Williams ‘sole mate’)
Edwin Harvey (Ted) (his ‘memories of the old man’)
Ursula Sheridan (her memories of her mother & father)
And dear Josie Harvey (her memories of a wonderful father in-law)

All the behind the scene’s Harvey’s

Julie Harvey (Great grand daughter)
Russell Harvey (Great grandson)
John Harvey (Grandson)
Rhonda Hemsley (Daughter in law)

And how about my wife! Well my wife is Lorraine and those of you who know us personally know that we are joined at the hip and known as L&L.

My wife is your typical “legend wife” and a great lady in her own right, so to her I say thankyou, thankyou, thankyou!

I/We must not forget the many wonderful people who have helped us along the way, if you are one of those kind folk, a very special “thankyou” to you.

**Western Australian Police Personal**
Peter Conole: Research and Legislation Service Trust and Official Western Australian Police Historian

Michael Hollier: Personnel Service Manager
Jean Hobson: Police Library (W.A Police Historical Society)
Western Australian Police Union Personal
Michael Dean: General President (1995-2009)
Ken See: General Manager
Mick Rae
Paul Brabazon

Western Australian Police Historical Society
All members

Western Australian Police Commissioner (1999-2004)
Barry Mathews

Western Australian Military Museum
Captain Wayne Gardiner & Volunteers

Macquarie University Harvey Broadbent (Senior research fellow in modern history, author, documentary maker and radio feature maker)

Ian Gill
Historian and Author

Australian Broadcasting Commission
Lateline

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Fred Larimore
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Rob Ruggenberg
Historian & Author (Holland)

May I also take this opportunity to wish you the reader all the very best in your own life. Remember, this story is about you! With luck, be it good, or be it bad. It could have been YOU!
Please take care

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