

**"E" Company, Childers  
2nd Queensland (or Wide Bay and Burnett) Regiment,  
Queensland Defence Force.**

From just after Separation from New South Wales in 1859, the infant colony of Queensland maintained its own military force to defend its major towns. Initially the men who formed this force were volunteers, giving their time and money to carry out what they believed was a necessary task. The early Queensland volunteers provided uniforms and equipment at their own cost, while the government provided arms and ammunition, and when possible, a qualified drill instructor for training purposes. The British Army maintained a company-size presence in Queensland until 1870, but upon its withdrawal from Australian defence measures rested solely on the colonial volunteers and perceived ability of the Royal Navy to be able to act swiftly if an invasion of the Australian mainland threatened.

Towards the end of the 1870s, the independent Australian colonies collectively acquired British expertise on the best way to defend themselves. Re-armament and fortification of major ports and towns was part of the answer, while the re-organisation of the volunteer forces to generally conform with the British Army system set in train the ultimate development towards a unified Australian army. In Queensland in 1885, a new Defence Act created major changes for the military. Instead of a purely volunteer force, Queensland established a small permanent artillery and instructional force, a large militia of partially paid soldiers, and continued to operate a volunteer branch. The permanent force were full time soldiers stationed at Brisbane, Townsville and Thursday Island, centres where there were large fortifications. They also provided instructions and training for the militia and volunteers. The militia were much like Australia's modern army reserve. They were paid for their attendance at drill and training camp, but the government largely provided arms, ammunition, uniforms and equipment. The volunteers were required to attend less drill and parades and provided their own uniforms and personal equipment. This system continued in operation until 1901 when the newly formed Commonwealth of Australia took over nominal control of the colonial armed forces.

Between 1899 and 1902, Australian troops were involved in the South African war against the Boer. Queensland raised six contingents of mounted infantry and contributed men to a number of Commonwealth contingents. These men all volunteered for overseas service, as the Government was not legally able to raise a force to do that. In the early contingents preference was given to men who had military training, and many members of the Queensland Defence Force volunteered for active service. The apparent popularity of the war saw the Defence Force militia expand fairly rapidly during those years. The infantry, for example, increased from three to six regiments. Some existing regiments, such as the 2nd Queensland (Wide Bay and Burnett) Regiment increased its number of companies. One such new company was officially established in Childers on 22 November 1899.

E Company Childers was granted an establishment of one Captain, two Lieutenants, one Colour-sergeant, three Sergeants, three Corporals, one Bugler/Drummer, one Pioneer, and forty-eight privates. It was also allowed ten supernumeraries, giving a total of seventy of all ranks. Captain H.W. Lee was appointed to command the new Company in 1900, as recruiting got under way. In March Acting-Lieutenant G.R. Noakes was attached to the Company pending completion of

recruit drills. At the end of that month Lt.-Colonel J.F. Flewell-Smith, Officer Commanding the 1st Queensland (Moreton) Regiment, inspected the recruits at Childers. Satisfied they had undertaken the necessary drills, the men were taken on the strength of the company.

No. 1	Pte	W C Horton
No. 2	Pte	J Hayles
No. 3	Pte	C Coles
No. 4	Pte	D McLean
No. 5	Pte	R Lacy
No. 7	Pte	H Bade
No. 8	Pte	R Gardiner
No. 9	Pte	J Bourke
No. 10	Pte	D Meadmore
No. 11	Pte	T David
No. 13	Pte	J O'Brien
No. 14	Pte	J Moller
No. 15	Pte	H Lacey
No. 16	Pte	N Smith
No. 18	Pte	J Mathieson
No. 19	Pte	O Vollmerhusser
No. 20	Pte	W T Buss
No. 21	Pte	W Wood
No. 23	Pte	J T Kingston
No. 25	Pte	G Morrison
No. 28	Pte	W J Sing
No. 29	Pte	F E Eales
No. 30	Pte	J H Pizzey
No. 31	Pte	L Bolton
No. 33	Pte	A Revie
No. 35	Pte	J Pasch
No. 38	Pte	E W P Rayner
No. 39	Pte	A Holt
No. 40	Pte	J A Revie
No. 41	Pte	G Kulnel
No. 42	Pte	H Eggleton
No. 45	Pte	J A Heidke
No. 46	Pte	B F Walke
No. 47	Pte	J Taylor
No. 48	Pte	C P Frederiksen
No. 49	Pte	G H Rowe
No. 51	Pte	R W Barnes
No. 52	Pte	H E Perske
No. 54	Pte	G N Llewellyn
No. 56	Pte	A Perske
No. 57	Pte	T G Stewart
No. 58	Pte	E Sharman

No. 60 Pte E Finke  
No. 62 Pte W H Collins  
No. 64 Pte G A C Woodman  
No. 66 Pte J T Allen  
No. 67 Pte J Rodgers  
No. 68 Pte P E Kasse  
No. 69 Pte J Price  
No. 70 Pte ST Maslen  
No. 71 Pte F Sing  
No. 72 Pte WT Maslen  
No. 73 Pte W B Tuesley  
No 74 Pte W Troy  
No 75 Pte R D Dinnie  
No 76 Pte A Boisen  
No 77 Pte A L Reimer  
No 78 Pte L Larsen  
No 79 Pte F A Reimer  
No 80 Pte A F Reimer  
No 81 Pte A E Rayner  
No 82 Pte W R Frost  
No 83 Pte W E Woodman  
No 84 Pte H R Gardner  
No 85 Pte H P Jensen  
No 86 Pte C Thomas  
No 89 Pte A P Anderson  
No 91 Pte C T Meredith  
No 92 Pte G M Meredith  
No 93 Pte R Cullen  
No 94 Pte G H Rayner  
No 95 Pte O W Wechsel  
No 97 Pte W C Terkelsen  
No 98 Pte J Andrews  
No 99 Pte F F Cocking  
No 100 Pte B F Lourigan  
No 102 Pte G Smith  
No 103 Pte R C Anderson  
No 104 Pte J Kingston  
No 105 Pte A E Reimers  
No 108 Pte F L Perske

## **The boys from Boonah.**

### **I Company, 2nd Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Queensland (or Moreton) Regiment**

From the time of Separation from New South Wales in 1859, the infant colony of Queensland had to maintain its own military force to defend its major towns. Initially the men who formed this force were volunteers, giving their time and money to carry out what they believed was a necessary task. The early Queensland volunteers provided uniforms and equipment at their own cost, while the government provided arms and ammunition, and when possible, a qualified drill instructor for training purposes.

The British Army maintained a company-size presence in Queensland from 1861 until 1870, but upon its withdrawal from Australia defence measures rested solely on the colonial volunteers and perceived ability of the Royal Navy to be able to act swiftly if an invasion of the Australian mainland threatened. Towards the end of the 1870s, the independent Australian colonies collectively acquired British expertise on the best way to defend themselves. Re-armament and fortification of major ports and towns was part of the answer, while the re-organisation of the volunteer forces to generally conform with the British Army system set in train the ultimate development towards a unified Australian army.

In Queensland in 1885, a new Defence Act created major changes for the military. Instead of a purely volunteer force, Queensland established a small permanent artillery and instructional force, a large militia of partially paid soldiers, and still continued to operate a volunteer branch. The Permanent Force were full time soldiers stationed at Brisbane, Townsville and Thursday Island, centres where there were large fortifications. They also provided instruction and training for the militia and volunteers. The militia were much like Australia's modern army reserve. They were paid for their attendance at drill and training camp, but the government largely provided arms, ammunition, uniforms and equipment. The volunteers were required to attend less drill and parades, and provided their own uniforms and personal equipment. This system continued in operation until 1901 when the newly formed Commonwealth of Australia took over nominal control of the colonial armed forces.

During the late 1890s some of the existing infantry regiments, such as the 1st Queensland (Moreton) Regiment increased and reorganised its companies. One of the new companies established in this re-organisation was in Boonah in 1898. I Company of the 1st Regiment had originally been established in Nerang in August 1890. In November 1898 a decision was made to form I Company, 2nd Battalion at Boonah instead of Nerang, and from the 29th of that month the existing members of the Nerang Company were transferred to the Southport Company.

Recruiting in the Boonah district must have begun immediately. Acting-Lieutenant J Haygarth was posted to the Boonah and took command of the company from Christmas Eve 1898. On completion of his recruit drill at the end of April 1899 he was officially posted to the Company. From 28 January 1899, Acting-Lieutenant John Henry Fox was attached to the company pending the completion of recruit drill, while Acting-Lieutenant WH Ewing was attached for the same purpose in late April 1899. Ewing completed recruit drill and was posted to the company in July 1899. Fox also remained with the company. Finally, by General Order 144 of April 1899, the first thirty-eight trained men were taken onto the strength of the Company after completing the required number of drills, and passing an inspection by Captain H G (Harry) Chauvel, the Adjutant of the 1st Regiment.

On 12 May 1899, Captain Harry Chauvel inspected more recruits for the company, and seven men were taken on the strength. On Friday May 19 1899, I Company furnished a Guard of Honour on the occasion of the opening of the Exhibition of the Fassifern and Dugandan Agricultural and Pastoral Society by the Governor. Later in May 1899, I Company journeyed to Lytton Fort for the annual training encampment with Defence Force companies from as far north as Bundaberg. Two more men passed from recruits to be taken on strength after being inspected by Captain Chauvel at the Lytton camp. At the Muster held in June 1899, I Company 2nd Battalion of the 1st Queensland (Moreton) Regiment mustered forty men on parade. Six men were absent with leave and five without, giving the company a total strength of fifty-one men. The strength of the 1st Regiment at that time was 486, and the entire Queensland Defence Force numbered 2356. The authorised establishment of I Company as at July 1899 was one Captain, two Lieutenants, one Colour-Sergeant, three Sergeants, three Corporals, one bugler/drummer, and forty-five privates. Ten supernumeraries were allowed giving the company a paper strength of sixty-six men of all ranks. In November 1899 an increase of four privates was allowed the company. No 55 Acting Colour-Sergeant W Farley, No 20 Acting Sergeant F W Hemmy, No 5 Acting Sergeant J McBean and No 19 Acting Sergeant C Kuskey were all appointed Sergeants during December. At the December muster of 1899, I Company paraded only thirty-four men, with nineteen being absent without leave.

In mid-February 1900, three new were added to the company after being inspected at Ipswich by Lt-Colonel J F Flewell-Smith, Officer Commanding the 1st Regiment. On April 7, Lt-Colonel Flewell-Smith passed fourteen men into the company after another inspection at Ipswich. The annual training encampment at Lytton in 1900 was held in May. I Company left Boonah by train at 5:30 pm on the 18th, arriving at Wynnum Station at 10pm. From Wynnum, the men marched to the Fort.

In June 1900 Lt-Colonel Flewell-Smith made another inspection of Boonah men at Ipswich, passing four into the ranks of the company. When the company mustered early in that month thirty-five men were on parade out of a total sixty-three. Ten were absent with leave and eighteen without. The Government Gazette of 1 December 1900 provided a new detailed establishment for the Defence Force. From that date the colony's infantry expanded from three Regiments to six. In the re-organisation, the Boonah company was re-designated as G Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th Queensland (or Darling Downs) Regiment. The headquarters of the Regiment was in Toowoomba where Toowoomba and Warwick companies made up the 1st Battalion, while companies from Ipswich, Boonah and Lowood made up the 2nd Battalion. The rapid increase in the Defence Force numbers is generally thought to have been a reaction to the war in South Africa in which Queensland was participating. The December Muster of the Company had seen thirty-seven men on parade out of sixty. Fourteen were absent with leave while nine were absent without leave.

Second-class Instructor, Colour-Sergeant C Mayes of the Permanent Force, was stationed in Boonah from February 1901 to provide instruction for members of the company. Three men inspected in Ipswich by Captain J C O'Brien, Adjutant of the 4th Regiment, and were taken on strength of the company in April. For the 1901 military training encampment, G Company Boonah boarded the train at 2:20pm on the 14th May. They stopped overnight in Ipswich, boarding a train at 6am on the 15th and arriving at Pinkenba at 7:55 am. They were then

transported by river steamer to Lytton.

On the occasion of the Royal Visit to Queensland by HRH the Duke of Cornwall and York, in May 1901, the Boonah company formed part of the guard of honour lining the streets of Brisbane. The company were stationed with the remainder of the 4th Regiment, and most of the other Corps of the Queensland defence Force. At the June Muster, G Company paraded only twenty-eight men. Three men were absent with leave and twenty were not. The strength of the company had reduced to just fifty-one men. The services of Colour-Sergeant and probationary 2nd Class Instructor C Wanstall, who had apparently replaced Colour-Sergeant Mayes, were no longer required from 1 September 1901. He was replaced by Colour-Sergeant Instructor H G Harris. Harris had recently returned from South Africa where he had served with the 4th Queensland Contingent.

On 28 October 1901, No 20 Sergeant F W Hemmy was examined at Lytton and passed for the rank of Colour-Sergeant. Lieutenant J H Fox was granted leave of absence from the company from 1 December 1901 to 31 May 1902. At the December Muster of 1901, thirty-six men paraded. Four were absent with leave and thirteen absent without leave.

The Commonwealth had taken control of all the Australian colonial defence forces in March 1901, but orders continued to be issued from the Permanent Staff in Brisbane for another year. Official records of the Queensland Defence Force, particularly the General Orders from which most of the material in this article is taken, were quite detailed. The same cannot be said for the records of the new Commonwealth Forces, and gradually mention of individuals and even companies disappeared. The only record for Boonah in 1902 shows one recruit taken on strength after inspection is Ipswich in April 1902.

Although the Boonah company saw no active service in defence of the nation, it is worth a moment or two to consider that these men were quite prepared to serve their country if they were needed. There are no memorials to honour them, and nor would they want them. They were ordinary men from a small country town - farmers, labourers, working men - doing what similar men across the country were doing. For a time they became civilian soldiers because they believed it the right thing to do. Between 1899 and 1902, Australian troops were involved in the South African war against the Boer. Queensland raised six contingents of mounted infantry and contributed men to a number of Commonwealth contingents. These men all volunteered for overseas service, as the Government was not legally able to raise a force to do that. In the early contingents preference was given to men who had military training, and many members of the Queensland Defence Force volunteered for active service. Some of them are known to have gone on and served in the South African war. These included Lieutenant JF Fox who served in the 2nd Queensland Contingent; FW Hemmy who was a Squadron Quarter-Master Sergeant with the 7th Australian Commonwealth Horse; and P Christie who served with the 6th (Queensland Imperial Bushman Contingent). No doubt one or two again donned the khaki a decade later as Australia mustered troops for the Great War.

The following list of members of the Infantry Company at Boonah has been extracted from the General Orders of the Queensland Defence Force, 1899-1902. It shows only the number, rank and name at the time a recruit was taken on the strength of the Company.

No. 2 Pte W Zingelman  
No. 4 Pte A Labudde  
No. 5 Pte J McBean  
No. 6 Pte J Holdorf  
No. 7 Pte F C Tomlinson  
No. 13 Pte J T Hooper  
No. 16 Pte V S Geiger  
No. 18 Pte C Pokarier  
No. 19 Pte C Kuskey  
No. 20 Pte F W Hemmy  
No. 21 Pte F H Vincent  
No. 23 Pte J H Geiger  
No. 25 Bglr A Weick  
No. 26 Pte E Bermingham  
No. 27 Pte F Wimmer  
No. 30 Pte C Hume  
No. 31 Pte R F Schmidt  
No. 33 Pte E Zuch  
No. 34 Pte J Neibling  
No. 35 Pte J Venz  
No. 36 Pte A Libke  
No. 37 Pte F Gadsby  
No. 38 Pte G Zielke  
No. 39 Pte O F Zingelman  
No. 40 Pte H Venz  
No. 41 Pte O Sokoll  
No. 42 Pte W Schablon  
No. 43 Pte J Gillett  
No. 45 Pte W J Tomlinson  
No. 47 Pte E E Wright  
No. 48 Pte C F Mieland  
No. 49 Pte G A Moss  
No. 50 Pte W Dooley  
No. 51 Pte M Goostry  
No. 52 Pte W Stumer  
No. 53 Pte W Hooper  
No. 54 Pte R Griffiths  
No. 55 Pte W Farley  
No. 56 Pte J R Kennett  
No. 57 Pte B McBean  
No. 58 Pte A Surawski  
No. 59 Pte C E Elliott  
No. 60 Pte F Surawski  
No. 61 Pte H Thomas

No. 62 Pte G F Schneider  
No. 63 Pte C F Durre  
No. 64 Pte J Bartz  
No. 66 Pte D Wren  
No. 67 Pte W A Zerner  
No. 69 Pte D M Keary  
No. 70 Pte J D Martin  
No. 72 Pte A Pearson  
No. 73 Pte J W Ramsay  
No. 74 Pte F Young  
No. 75 Pte W Hern  
No. 76 Pte H Spann  
No. 77 Pte H Pearson  
No. 78 Pte C Hobbs  
No. 80 Pte P Christie  
No. 82 Pte F A Stokes  
No. 83 Pte W F Schimming  
No. 84 Pte R S Pennell  
No. 85 Pte A W Muller  
No. 86 Pte J Richter  
No. 87 Pte A H Freiberg  
No. 88 Pte C McLean  
No. 89 Pte G H Whitney  
No. 90 Bglr F J Martin  
No. 91 Pte W Alcorn  
No. 92 Bglr R Banditt  
No. 97 Pte G A Hooper  
No. 102 Pte T Freiberg