

Gunner of Renown



Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company

Lieutenant Colonel Henry Dundas Keith MACARTNEY, CMG, DSO

(1880-1932)

Henry Macartney enlisted in the Queensland Defence Force Artillery (Militia) on 9 March 1900 and was made a Provisional Lieutenant. His rank was confirmed on 28 July as member of A Battery, the Queensland Regiment of the RAA. On 30 June 1901, he was accepted into the RAA Permanent Forces.

Macartney next served with 'A' Battery in Sydney and was ADC to Major General George French. In 1906, he transferred to Victoria as a Company Officer in the Garrison Artillery. From 1908 to 1910, he was on exchange duty with the British Army as a captain. From September 1908 to May 1909, he served with 126th Battery, Royal Field Artillery. He was then attached to the 19th Hussars until his tour concluded on 31 January 1911. On return to Australia he was attached to the newly formed Royal Military College, Duntroon, in February 1911 and was promoted major on 1 December 1914 serving as a Company Officer and Instructor of Drill. In January 1916, he joined the AIF and was attached to No. 1 Squadron, AFC, as Artillery Corps Observer sailing for Europe in March.

In June 1916, he assumed command of the 15th Battery, 5th Field Artillery Brigade (FAB), 2nd Division, AIF, serving on the Somme and at Ypres before being promoted in October to command the 7th FAB, 3rd Division. Macartney was noted for 'his ability to rapidly and accurately size up any situation, shrewd common sense, his boundless energy and adherence to the highest standard of conduct'. His brigade, as part of 3rd Division B Group [a 'group' was a temporary formation comprising two or more artillery brigades], had extended periods of service without relief in the line from May to September 1917, so desperate was the need for continuous artillery support for the infantry. He recorded his concern for his troops' welfare in a message to Division HQ, cited by historian Horner as being typical of the workload of artillery batteries.

Macartney was later appointed GSO2 HQRAA Australian Corps and was involved in artillery planning for the AIF's important battles of the '100 days' from Hamel in July until October. He was given command of the 3rd (Army) FAB in October 1918 and was temporarily CRA 3rd Division in 1919.

Postwar, Macartney returned to the RMC as Director of Drill for four months and donated a cup, still in use, for the cross-country running competition. He then returned to Queensland for a year and a half to command 3rd Battery, RAFA, before joining the staff of the 2nd Military District in NSW followed by command of the 18th FAB. Further postings followed until 1923 when he was placed on the Reserve of Officers.

Macartney became a grazier in New England thereafter and died of injuries sustained in a vehicle accident in 1932.

Sources: D. H. Johnson; *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 1939. *Reveille* (Syd) Dec., 1932; *The Queenslander*, 27 Oct., 1932; R. M. C. Toplis, RAAHC records; *SMH* 25 Oct.,

1932; *The Age*, 9 Nov., 1932. AWM Records; *Yandoo*, Media of 7th AFA Brigade; D. Horner, *The Gunners*, pp.163-4 (cited as AWM 26, Item 251/13),168; RMC Archives.

For more information follow this link: [http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/macartney-henry-
dundas-7291](http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/macartney-henry-
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