

# *Gunner of Renown*



Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company

## **Lieutenant General Sir Frank Horton BERRYMAN, CB, CBE, KCVO, DSO**

**(1894-1981)**

Frank entered the Royal Military College, Duntroon, in March 1913 and graduated in June 1915 and was appointed a lieutenant in the AIF on 1 July. After brief artillery training, he was posted to 12th Battery, 4th Field Artillery Brigade (FAB), 2nd Division. He arrived in France in March 1916. In July, he was made adjutant of the 4th FAB and promoted to captain. In January 1917, he worked on the operations staff of the 7th Brigade headquarters. Promoted to major in September 1917, he was given command of the 18th Battery, 6th (Army) FAB and, thereafter, the 14th Battery, 5th FAB from May to September 1918 for which he was awarded the DSO and was twice mentioned in dispatches. Wounded in action in September, he returned to 7th Brigade headquarters as assistant brigade major, then as brigade major.

Back in Australia in August 1919, he continued his service with the PMF as a lieutenant with the honorary rank of major. A two year course in Britain in 1921-23 brought appointment as inspecting ordnance officer, followed by promotion to captain and brevet major. He attended Staff College, Camberley, England in 1927-28. After two years in the Australian High Commission in London he became army representative in London until 1931.

Berryman returned to Australia in 1932. He was promoted to brevet lieutenant colonel in May 1937 (substantive in July 1938) while working in the operations branch at Army Headquarters, Melbourne. In December 1938, he was posted to headquarters 3rd Division, as general staff officer, 1st grade (GSO1).

Seven months into World War II, on 4 April 1940, Berryman was appointed GSO1 6th Division with the rank of colonel. He established his reputation as a staff officer at Bardia and Tobruk, Libya, in January 1941, but was then transferred to be CRA 7th Division. For his staff work with the 6th Division Berryman was appointed CBE.

In the Syrian campaign in June-July 1941, Berryman was CRA 7th Division and for two weeks commanded Berryforce, a mixed brigade fighting in the Merdjayoun sector until relieved by a British brigade. He planned and launched five attacks, using his guns well forward and aggressively. By the end of the campaign he had been hospitalised with exhaustion. In August, Berryman became Brigadier General Staff I Australian Corps. When Japan entered the war, the Corps was ordered to the Far East. Lieutenant General John Lavarack, Berryman and others flew to Java, Netherlands East Indies, in January 1942, but disaster in Malaya and the swift advance of the Japanese put an end to Allied plans.

In April 1942, Berryman emerged as Major General, General Staff (MGGS), First Army. In September, he was promoted to substantive major general under Lavarack and made Deputy

Chief of the General Staff at Land Headquarters, Melbourne. At various times he was also in New Guinea as MGGS, New Guinea Force. He worked closely with Blamey, especially in the planning of the operations that cleared the Japanese from the Ramu Valley and the Huon Peninsula in 1943-44. Given command of II Corps (I Corps from April 1944) in November 1943, he was promoted to lieutenant general on 21 January 1944. As a staff officer, and then as a commander, Berryman was commended for 'his skilful planning and able supervision and vigorous leadership.' He was appointed CB (1945).

In July 1944, became Chief of Staff Land Headquarters in Brisbane planning the proposed concentration of British forces in Australia and then Liaison Officer with MacArthur's General Headquarters in Hollandia, Netherlands East Indies, Leyte, in the Philippines, and Manila. He continued in this role until the war ended.

In March 1946, Berryman was given his final appointment, that of GOC Eastern Command, and commander 2nd Military District. He was transferred to the Prime Minister's Department in February 1951 to be director general of the Commonwealth Jubilee and of the royal visit planned for 1952. As the visit was postponed, he returned to Eastern Command in March, resuming duties as director-general in December 1953. After Queen Elizabeth II's tour early in 1954, he was appointed KCVO and was placed on the Retired List on 12 April.

Survived by his wife and their daughter and son Sir Frank died on 28 May 1981 at Rose Bay, Sydney, and was cremated with full military honours. His portrait (1958) by Joshua Smith is held by the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

Source: A J Hill, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol.17, 1981-1990. pp. 93-95. MUP.

For more information follow this link: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/berryman-sir-frank-horton-12204>