

## AUSTRALIAN GUNNER OBITUARY RESOURCE

### Major Colin Henri Stirling, MC, ED

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Colin Henri Stirling was an accountant in an engineering firm when he answered the call to arms and enlisted into the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Field Regiment – his promptness is reflected in the regimental number of VX1058. He quickly reached Sergeant rank before being earmarked for officer training. The 2/2<sup>nd</sup> departed for the Middle East during his course so Lt Stirling graduated into the 2/4<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment.

He served in North Africa, Palestine, and Syria as a Troop Leader, GPO and Forward Observation Officer; in the Brisbane Line as Battery Captain; and became an FOO again at the start of the Battle for Shaggy Ridge, New Guinea. He moved tirelessly with the lead sections of 2/12<sup>th</sup> Battalion walking directly into the line of fire on the Prothero features and was constantly in contact with the enemy for about ten days. So effective was this fire support that Colin received the immediate award of a Military Cross, his signaller the Military Medal and another signaller in the party was mentioned in despatches. (A replica copy of Major Styling's war medals on display in the 4th Field Regiment's Historical Collection in Townsville.)

Captain Stirling transferred to the 2/2<sup>nd</sup> Field Regiment, returned to New Guinea but contracted malaria and dengue fever and was repatriated back to Australia, finishing the war on the staff at Land Headquarters.

Post war he became a battery commander in 2<sup>nd</sup> Medium Regiment CMF whilst developing a blind manufacturing business. The latter forced his retirement soon after promotion to Major and receiving the Efficiency Medal. He later ran sheep and was oyster farming when ill health forced retirement to the Gold Coast where he became a passionate yachtsman till his health deteriorated.

This unassuming yet very astute businessman spent his last ten years as a widower with very restricted mobility and a craving for visitors with whom he loved to yarn. He is survived by two sons.