



In Memory of
Lance Corporal
SAMUEL CRICHTON McGOWAN
1336, 5th Australian Light Horse
who died age 24
on 7 August 1916

Son of Elizabeth Jane and Samuel Benson McGowan,
Warwick, Queensland.

Remembered with honour
KANTARA WAR MEMORIAL CEMETERY, SUEZ CANAL, EGYPT



LANCE CORPORAL
SAMUEL CRICHTON MCGOWAN

5TH AUSTRALIAN LIGHT HORSE
SERVICE NUMBER: 1336



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P03452.005

Samuel Crichton McGowan was born at Gembrook in Victoria and was a farmer near Warwick when war was declared. He was a single man, 23 years of age and worked on the family farm. He was the son of Elizabeth Jane and Samuel Benson McGowan; his mother was listed as NOK; she indicated to the army in 1920 that his father was deceased. Samuel junior was educated at the Toowoomba Grammar School. After leaving school he worked for a time as a bank officer before returning to the land, working as a station hand with both sheep and cattle. He was of the Church of England religion, 5'9" tall and weighed 156 pounds, with dark brown hair, a fresh complexion and grey eyes.

Samuel had eighteen months military experience as a stretcher bearer with the militia when he enlisted in the AIF at Brisbane on 9 September 1915. After beginning his training at Enoggera he was posted to the 5th Light Horse, the second regiment of light horse to be raised in Queensland. When Samuel sailed from Brisbane bound for Egypt the 5th LHR was fighting at Gallipoli as dismounted infantry. The journey aboard the A69 *Warilda* began on 5 October 1915, too late for the reinforcements to serve on the peninsula. Soon after he arrived in Egypt Samuel developed mumps and spent a few weeks in hospital at Heliopolis. He rejoined his unit in the New Year and soon afterwards, on 21 February, at Serapeum, was made a lance-corporal.

In 1916 the Australian light horse regiments prepared to continue the fight against the Turks in Sinai and Palestine. The infantry battalions they had fought beside at Gallipoli sailed to France and the Western Front. In the summer of 1916 the 5th LHR crossed the Suez Canal and began its campaign in western Sinai. The first major battle with the Turkish army occurred at Romani, an isolated village a few kilometres south of the Mediterranean Sea in the Sinai desert. A combined force of British infantry and ANZAC mounted troops fought a sharp battle turning back a Turkish advance that threatened the Suez Canal. The 5th Regiment was not committed to the main battle but fought a series of engagements with Turkish units while patrolling the area around Romani. In one of these fights, on 5 August, Samuel was wounded by small arms fire. His medical file, on evacuation, read "wounded, dangerously, GSW, abdomen". He was taken to the 2nd LH ambulance where he arrived on 6 August.

Captain Chatham of the 5th, who was a close friend of the McGowan family, wrote soon afterwards about Samuel's last days. His information was passed on to the army in September by Mr J. Rowland, of Warwick, Samuel's brother-in-law; the letter reads, '*My first cable . . . stated that my brother-in-law had died at noon on the 7th August . . . Lance Corporal McGowan was hit about 4 o'clock on the 5th of August and at first it was thought he was not seriously wounded. He was taken to Etmaler Hospital at Romani, where the doctors found that he was hit by two bullets, one piercing his bladder and the other his kidneys. (Later) Capt. Chatham received a telegram from (the doctor) to the effect that McGowan had died.*' Mr Rowland continued, quoting other soldiers with first-hand reports of Samuel's death; the army in Australia had still not received official notification from Cairo of these events.

Samuel McGowan was buried at Et Maler by chaplain Rev. F. O'Halloran. After the war his remains were moved to the Kantara War Memorial Cemetery, at El Kantara (grave B.2), a consolidated war cemetery with over 1600 graves from various parts of Sinai. Samuel was Elizabeth's only son and was 24 years old when he died. Two cousins of Samuel from Victoria, brothers William and James Lecky, both artillerymen, were killed late in the war.

Toowoomba Grammar School Archive Records state that he started at the school on 16th July 1907 and left on 25th June 1909. The School Magazine of November 1916 states, '*Samuel McGowan, of Warwick, was at School in 1908. He was in the Light Horse under Colonel Grant and in the battle of Romani received wounds from which he died two days later -August 9th.*'

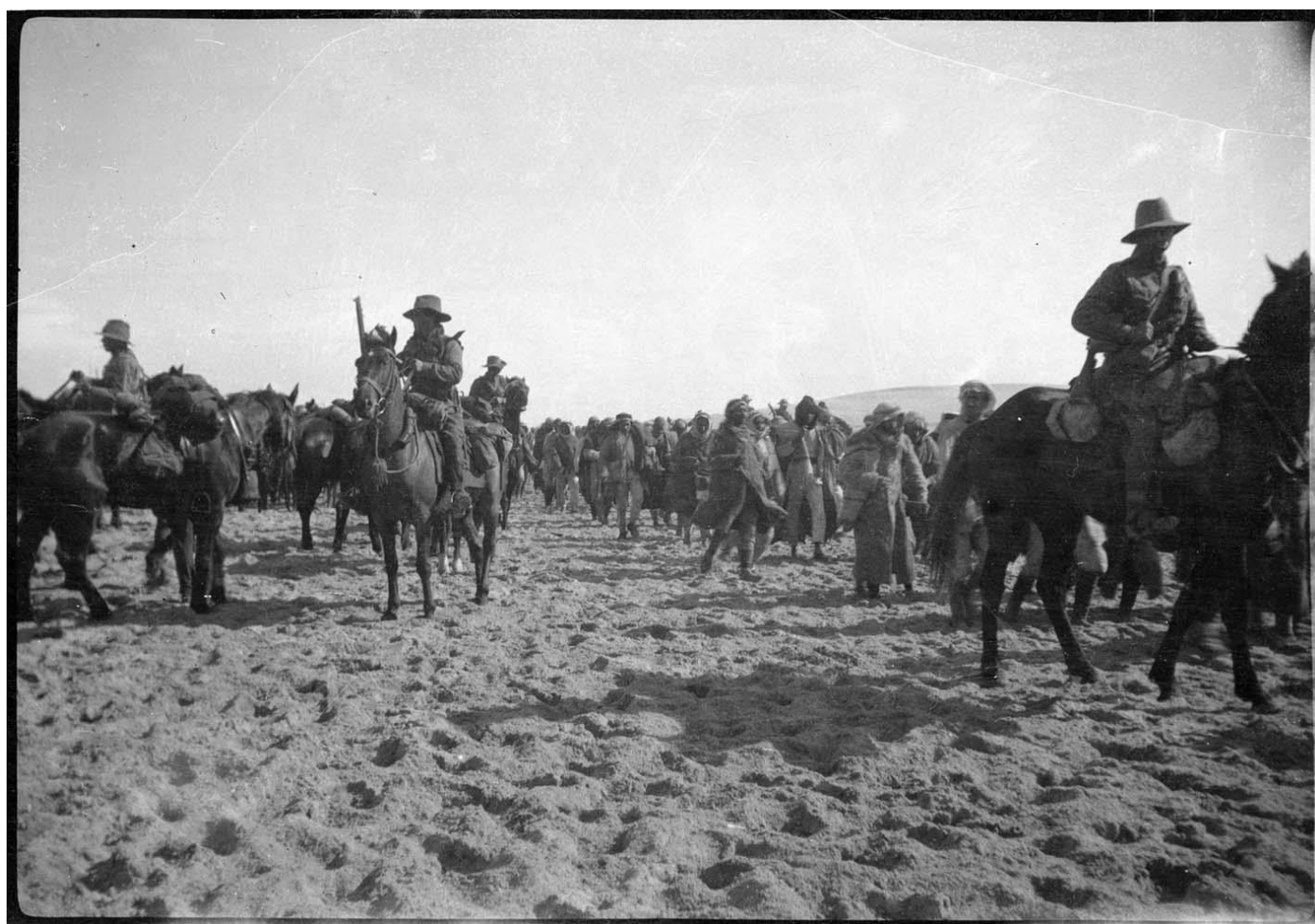
External Links:

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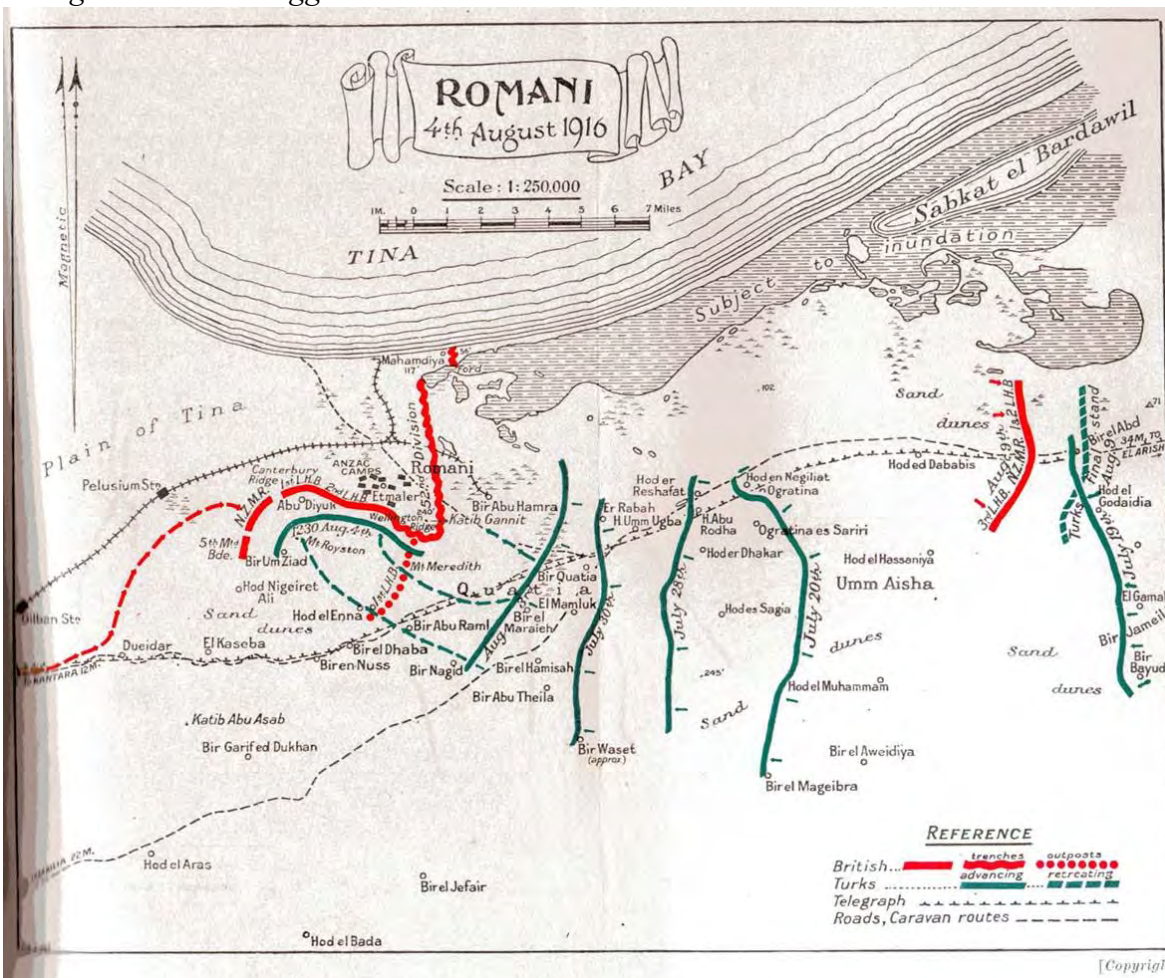
[AWM4 AIF unit war diaries 1914-18 war 10/10/20 5th LHR Aug 1916](#)



5th Light Horse near Romani courtesy of National Anzac Centre



5th Light Horse at Enoggera 1915



Additional Map of Romani 4th August 1916