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19 Dec 75

Dear Ron,

This is the
draft paper on
General Beavis
which may be of
interest to you as
you probably knew
him longer than I
did.

Please put it in
the dust bin when
you have finished
with it. I do not
want it back.

With kindest
regards to yourself
and Ellie ~~for~~
and best wishes for
Christmas and 1976.

Warren Perry

13M

Sun 5 Oct 1975
Sat 1 Nov 1975

THE LATE MAJOR-GENERAL L.E. BEAVIS

An Appreciation

By Major Warren Perry, R.L.*

In analysing persons of a certain class Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer once said: "They think rarely of what is right in the abstract: they do usually what is best at the moment. They never play the greatest part among their contemporaries: they almost always play a great one: and (they) ... generally retain considerable importance, even during the most changeful circumstances, and most commonly preserve in retirement ... much of the consideration they acquired in power." This analysis fits admirably the character and achievements of the late Major General Leslie Ellis Beavis, a distinguished wartime Master-General of the Ordnance, ^{*} ~~and retired general officer of the Australian Staff Corps~~ who died at Heidelberg in Victoria on Saturday 27 September 1975, aged 80 years.

Les Beavis, the name by which he was known among his friends, was born at Bathurst, 145 miles west of Sydney, on the 25 January 1895. It was six years before Federation; it was a time when the military forces of the Colony of New South Wales had fallen into a state of neglect and inefficiency; and, in 1893, Major General E.T.H. Hutton, as he then was, had been brought out from England to command, re-organize and re-vitalize them. Beavis began his military career in Bathurst as a school cadet. There, on one occasion, after having won a prize for rifle shooting, he was presented to the visiting District Commandant, Brigadier-General J.M. Gordon. On another occasion he was selected to join the New

* Major General Leslie Ellis Beavis, CB(1952), CBE(1942), DSO(1918), psc(1930), psc(1921), mid. An Artillery officer of the Australian Staff Corps. Born 25 Jan., 1895. MGO from 6 Apr., 1942 to 1 Dec., 1946. Died 27 Sep., 1975.

South Wales Contingent of Cadets which went to England to take part in the ceremonies connected with the Coronation of King George V.

Under the command of Major C.W.Wynne the Contingent marched from Victoria Barracks at Paddington through the City of Sydney to the place of embarkation. From there the Contingent sailed, on Friday afternoon 21 April 1911, in the Themistocles for London via South Africa. When ^{it} the Contingent reached Durban on the 21 May 1911, the Government of the Union of South Africa arranged for the cadets to visit battlefields of the South African War of 1899-1902, including Colenso and Ladysmith. This was a stimulating experience for Cadet Beavis. The Contingent reached London on the 15 June 1911; it was met on arrival at Fenchurch Station by the Australian Minister for Defence, Senator G.F. Pearce; and it was encamped in the grounds of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham.

King George V was crowned in Westminster Abbey a week later, on Thursday 22 June 1911. On that day Cadet Beavis's Contingent was on street-lining duty opposite the entrance to Buckingham Palace and, on the following day, it was on similar duty at Westminster Bridge. On Wednesday 28 June 1911 a team from the New South Wales Contingent of Cadets distinguished itself at Bisley where it won a cup in a competition open to all cadets of the Empire. On a third occasion, on Friday 30 June 1911, this Contingent provided a guard of honour for King George V when ^{he} visited a children's fete at the Crystal Palace.

Another one of the highlights of Cadet Beavis's visit to England on this occasion was a lecture to the cadets from New South Wales by Lieutenant-General The Earl of Dundonald about his experiences in the South African War of 1899-1902.


Beavis's Contingent sailed from London on Saturday 2 September in the Demosthenes for home and again via South Africa. The cadets landed in Sydney, after an absence of six months, on Saturday morning 14 October 1911. From the ship they marched through the City of Sydney to Victoria Barracks at Paddington where they were welcomed home by the ~~NAME~~ District Commandant, Brigadier-General Gordon. For this bloodless campaign Cadet Beavis and his fellow cadets of the Contingent were in November 1911 invested with King George V Coronation Medals at Government House in Sydney by the Governor-General, Lord Denman.

Two years later, at the age of 18 years, Beavis became a ~~cadet~~ cadet of a more professional kind. On ^{Monday 10} ~~Sunday 9~~ March 1913 he entered ^{as a Staff Cadet} the Royal Military College at Duntroon, then commanded by Brigadier-General W.T. Bridges, ~~as a Staff Cadet~~. Other members of this "Third Class", who afterwards attained distinction in various capacities included the future Lieutenant-General Sir Frank Berryman, Lieutenant-General Sir William Bridgeford, Major General G.A. Vasey, Major General E.J. Milford, the two Chapman brothers - Major General John A. Chapman and Colonel James A. Chapman - Brigadier J.H. Crombie, Brigadier R.M. "Wingy" Thompson, and Brigadier I.G. Fullarton.

Beavis's course at the College was outstanding. He was one of the five cadets of his class in 1913, 1914 and again in 1915 who was classified as "most distinguished academically"; and he attained the rank of sergeant. The course of the "Third Class", because of the war, was shortened. The first three places on graduation on the 28 June 1915 were won by L.E. Beavis, A.T. Hatton (k.i.a.) and F.V. Brown of N.Z. (k.i.a.). Beavis was also one of the twelve Australian cadets allotted to the Artillery. At the time of his graduation, and since June 1914 when he succeeded General Bridges, the College was commanded by General Parnell.

Beavis was commissioned in the Permanent Military Forces on the 29 June 1915 with the rank of lieutenant. Then, on the 1 July 1915, he was seconded to the A.I.F. and posted to the A.F.A. On the 18 November 1915 he sailed from Sydney in the Persic for Egypt. He would have arrived in Egypt about the time the A.I.F. was returning there from the Gallipoli campaign in which one of his brothers had been killed as an infantry captain.

Beavis was the Adjutant of the 5th Field Artillery Brigade for a short time from March 1916 to May 1916. During that time Lieutenant-Colonel (later Major General) H.W. "Bertie" Lloyd - a versatile personality renowned for his dash and efficiency and love for "spit and polish" - assumed command. By September 1917 Beavis had attained the rank of major in the A.I.F. and that was, according to regulations then in operation, the "ceiling" for "Duntroon" graduates. When the "Cease fire" sounded on the



Western Front in November 1918 he was serving regimentally as O.C., the 53rd Field Battery of the 14th Brigade, A.F.A. and he had been decorated with the D.S.O.

In 1919 Major Beavis did not return to Australia as many of his brother officers did. Instead he entered the Ordnance College, then located at Woolwich, in February 1919 for the 20th Ordnance Course of twelve months duration. During that time, on the 12 August 1919, at All Souls Church at Hampstead in North London, he and Miss Ethel Blumer of Hunter's Hill in Sydney, were married. His course finished in February 1920. It was followed by another course in Woolwich at the Artillery College at Red Barracks where he attended the 37th Advanced Class in Ordnance. This course was also of twelve months duration and it terminated in March 1921 *when he was granted the symbol "P.A.C." after his name.*

Major Beavis's next posting was also in London. It was to the Australian High Commission as a Staff Officer and he held this appointment from March 1921 to January 1922. Mr Andrew Fisher relinquished the High Commissionership officially in April 1921. In November 1921 he was succeeded by Sir Joseph Cook.

Then Major Beavis returned to Australia for the first time since the termination of hostilities in November 1918. There, after a twelve months tour of regimental duty with the R.A.G.A. in the 2nd Military District he took up duty on the Base Commandant's staff in that district as an I.O.O. - a post which he held officially from March 1923 to November 1928. During this time he served under three Base Commandants with widely different personalities - Major General C.H.Brand, Major General Sir Julius

Bruche and Major General T.H.Dodds.

~~Then~~ Again Major Beavis returned to England for further higher training. He attended the Staff College at Camberley during the years 1929 to 1930 when its Commandant was Major-General Sir C.W.Gwynn who had been Duntroon's original Director of Military Art and who was still in that post when Beavis joined the College in 1913. After completing his course at the Staff College, ^{which terminated on the 21 Dec 1930} and gaining the symbols "psc with dagger" after his name, Major Beavis remained in England but this time as an Exchange Officer with a posting to the Imperial General Staff at the War Office where the CIGS, from 1926 to 1933, was Field Marshal Lord Milne. ^{from Jan 31 to Dec 32} There Beavis gained valuable experience as a GSO(2) in the Directorate of Military Operations and Intelligence.

Then Major Beavis returned to duty once more at the Australian High Commission in London where Mr S.M. (later Viscount) Bruce had in September 1932 begun his 23-year tour of duty as High Commissioner. There, from January 1933 to June 1933, Major Beavis was the Australian High Commission's Junior Military Representative; and from June 1933 to January 1936, he was its Military Liaison Officer. It was during this latter posting that he was granted, in July 1935, the brevet rank of lieutenant-colonel. His successor in this post was Lieutenant-Colonel (later Lieutenant-General) E.K.Smart.

Lieutenant-Colonel Beavis's next posting took him back to

Australia. There, from April 1936 to April 1937, he was Chairman of the ^{Defence Resources} Supply Board in the Department of Defence. The Permanent Head of the Department ^{of Defence} at that time was Mr Malcolm Lindsay Shepherd. But this posting soon turned out to be an unhappy one. He clashed over policy matters with the Controller-General of Munitions Supply, Mr A.E. Leighton, who was also the Chairman of the Principal Supply Officers' Committee. Leighton was indeed a very powerful official. An outline of the main facts in this clash will be found in Professor D.P. Mellor's The Role of Science and Industry - a volume of the official history of Australia in the War of 1939-45. Beavis was recalled from this post in April 1937 to field duty in the Australian Army. From ~~1937 to~~ April 1937 to September 1937 he was Brigade-Major of the 2nd Infantry Brigade in Melbourne. This brigade was commanded at the time by Colonel (later Major General) F.P. Derham and it formed part of the 4th Australian Division which, from July 1937, was commanded by Brigadier (later Lieutenant-General) J.L. Whitham. But this was only a short term posting for Beavis.

In October 1937 Beavis went to the Adjutant-General's Branch at Army Headquarters in Melbourne where, at that time, the Adjutant-General was Major General Sir C.H. Jess. His posting there was that of a D.A.A.G. and he held this post until August 1938. This was the only "A" staff appointment that Beavis ever held.

In March 1938 Colonel V.A.H. Sturdee became the Australian

General Staff's first Director of Staff Duties. Later in that year, in September 1938 and in succession to Major H.F.H. Durant, Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Beavis was posted to that Directorate as a GSO(I). ^{The War of 1939-45 began on the 3 September 1939} Then, in November 1939 and with the rank of colonel, Beavis succeeded Sturdee as Director of Staff Duties. But he only remained in this post for the next five months.

On the 4 April 1940 Beavis was seconded to the A.I.F. with the rank of colonel and appointed ADOS, Headquarters, 1 Aust Corps which was then commanded by Lieutenant-General Blamey of whom Beavis said: "I had the greatest admiration and respect for him as a commander. He had his shortcomings. Aspects of his personality caused some of the personal clashes in which he became involved; and he manifested a degree of ruthlessness when he felt sure he was right. These qualities, combined with an incisive manner and an apparent brusqueness which was sometimes intentional were facets of ~~an~~ a Churchillian strength of character. This character, reinforced by judgments of clarity and wisdom, enabled him to stand firm in a crisis irrespective of whatever praise or odium he received." (Stand-To).

Seven months after serving in the A.I.F. Beavis became, in November 1940, DDOS of the A.I.F. in the Middle East. Then, in February 1941, he became DOS, and concurrently DQMG, of the A.I.F. in the Middle East. He was obviously succeeding in ^{previous} the ^{postings} he had been given. Writing of this period Brigadier G.H.S. Moran, sometime Director of Mechanical Engineering at Army Headquarters, ~~he~~ said:

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My brief meetings with General Beavis during the Middle East period were often fiery but he always won the respect of officers. He fought continuously for more and better equipment for the A.I.F. I recall, clearly, well after the war while on a visit to the United Kingdom, a one time senior officer of the R.A.O.C., saying to me: "How is your fiery brigadier who fought everyone to get the A.I.F. equipped?" His job, particularly on the Stores side, was almost insoluble. Major General Sir Bertram Rowcroft, the wartime D.M.E., at the War Office, told me at the War Office that the job of the R.E.M.E., was difficult enough but that of the R.A.O.C., whose task was to get stores always in the quantities required and when required and place them where required and yet remain within the limits of the nation's Budget, was quite impossible.

With Japan's invasion of Malaya in December 1941, Australia was placed in dire military straits and the A.I.F. ^{was obliged to} returned from the Middle East to take part in the War in the Pacific. In the major re-organization which took place in Australia, in circumstances of great urgency, to cope with this changed strategical situation, Beavis was given in April 1942, in succession to Major-General E.J. Milford, the difficult and expanding job of Master General of the Ordnance.

Although the Master-General of the Ordnance is an ancient ^{title} office and it was once held by the Duke of Wellington, the title was not used in Australia until recent times and in the re-organisation ^{at present} now in progress the title has been abolished, ~~as it was for some decades in the British Army after the Crimean War.~~ The first general officer in the Australian Army to bear the ~~title~~ sole title of Master General of the Ordnance was Major General T.R. Williams ^{"Toc"} who was appointed on the 13 October 1939. His predecessor in the post, Major General O.F. Phillips,

bore the dual title of Quartermaster-General and Master-General of the Ordnance. ^{The second occupant of the post was Major General E. J. Milford.} General Beavis was the third occupant of the post to bear the sole title of Master-General of the Ordnance.

What then was the nature of the duties of the Master-General of the Ordnance in Australia during the period that General Beavis occupied the post? First of all it should be said that general officers in peace and in war discharge their duties in accordance with the demands of the niche into which ~~there~~ they ^{by the requirements of the} ~~principles~~ are placed ~~in accordance with the~~ principles of the division of labour. Second, this niche occupied by the Master-General of the Ordnance neither demanded nor gave scope to the "Charge of the Light Brigade" type of general officer who often recommended himself as one who loathed "desk work".

Now as Master-General of the Ordnance, General Beavis was in fact the managing director of an enterprise more vast than any enterprise that existed in the private sector of the nation's economy. As such he spent a lot of time at his desk for, like his subordinates and those he served in the field and elsewhere, he had to learn and to grow with the job, he had to think and to plan, he had to direct and to control the execution of plans, he had to promote experimental and developmental schemes and he had to supervise. These were not duties ~~that~~ which demanded a white horse and a loud voice. They were duties which demanded both physical and intellectual fitness and the sustained application of much trained mental labour. It was a time too when he was obliged to devote much of his ability to the urgent

task of inducing subordinates and those he served to use their own. How well he did this task can be judged to-day by measuring his performance in the post of Master-General of the Ordnance.

Although this is not the place to set out his duties in that post in the manner of a duty statement it can nevertheless be said that they included responsibility for the efficient performance of the tasks of his Branch as a whole. These tasks were divided up and allotted to the Branch's Central Office and its four divisions - its Equipment Division, its Design Division, its Inspection Division and its Maintenance Division. Within each of these divisions there was an enormous range of duties all of which demanded on the part of General Beavis's principal subordinate officers high standards of technical knowledge and skill in Administration - a difficult art is Administration which, contrary to beliefs widely held in his time and even in unexpected places, may only be acquired by study, by training and by long experience. Again Brigadier Moran said:

I believe that General Beavis's hardest time was as M.G.O. in ~~Australia~~ Australia when the fear of invasion had passed - or most thought it had - and rather petty issues of an obstructive and time-wasting character had cropped up. This is why service in the Field Force rather than at LHQ was so much more attractive during the war. Nevertheless, in this as in other critical situations he took charge, he gave clear-cut orders, he produced timely results and made good decisions.

General Beavis was ^{from April 1942} Australia's Master-General of the Ordnance, in war and in peace, for more than 4½ years, ~~from April 1942~~. He still occupied the post when the war in the Pacific ended in

August 1945 and he finally relinquished ^{it} 16 months later in December 1946.

But before stepping down from the high office of Master-General of the Ordnance a few important changes had occurred in earlier months which should be noted here to show how General Beavis fitted into the changed organizational picture. First, General (later Field Marshal) Sir Thomas Blamey relinquished command of the Australian Army in November 1945. He was succeeded as Acting C-in-C for a period of three months by General Sturdee. Then, on the 1 March 1946, the Military Board which had been in abeyance since the 27 March 1942 came into operation again. General Sturdee joined this Board for the second time as Chief of the Australian General Staff and First Military ^{member} Melbourne. General Beavis joined it for the first time as Master-General of the Ordnance and Fourth Military Member. Colonel A.N. Kemsley also joined the Board as its Business Member.

But at this stage the Australian Army was winding down and in April 1946 Colonel Kemsley relinquished his appointment on the Military Board. He marked the occasion of his leaving by writing a letter dated 18 April 1946 to General Beavis. ~~The letter exemplifies again that sincerity is readily recognisable and that it cannot be counterfeited. Colonel Kemsley's letter to General Beavis is written straight from the heart~~ and it began by saying:

I cannot leave the Army to resume my civil interests without expressing words of goodwill to you. All through my three years as Business Adviser you have not only shown a grand spirit of goodwill to me on your own account but you have encouraged a similar attitude right through the vast

organization you have controlled. My appreciation of that spirit of co-operation has been expressed at various times in various ways and I repeat my thanks now.

Your task as M.G.O. has been a colossal one which extremely few people could possibly have carried out at all, and fewer still could have held the confidence of all authorities as effectively as you have done. I am in a position to know the reactions of other senior executives within and without the Army. You have just cause for pride in the universal respect in which you are held for your really amazing achievements. And I may say I accept second place from no one at all in these praiseworthy tributes.

Colonel Kemsley went on to say to General Beavis in this letter that:

Many times you were justified in various stages of annoyance at the interference or meddlesomeness of the various reviewing authorities, of whom I have been one of the most troublesome. No one has realised more than I how even the most careful reviewing authority can clog the machinery. But you have always tempered your views by a full appreciation of the fact that others also had their allotted duties to perform. I choose to believe that you went further insofar as my actions were concerned by recognising that at least they were dictated by honest motives.

So having paid this tribute to General Beavis, Colonel Kemsley made his exit from the Military Board. General Beavis remained on for another eight months before he made his own exit ^{too} for the last time.

The Australian Army by this time was facing and coping with its post-war problems and so henceforth General Beavis's official life was to follow different and often unfamiliar paths. But he was to be engaged in work which fully utilized the valuable and varied and high level experience he had gained ^{under desperate conditions} as Master-General of the Ordnance. Colonel John P. Buckley, a former regular officer of the R.A.A.E.M.E. who served in the Middle East, in the South ^{in North West Europe} West Pacific Area, on the Australian Army Staff in London and on the wartime headquarters staff of the M.G.O. Branch in Melbourne and who ^{in a civil capacity} later became First Assistant Secretary in the Department of Defence had long and close associations with General Beavis during and after the war. He said that: "In December 1946, at the conclusion of his meritorious Army service, General xxxxx

Beavis was seconded to the Department of Defence, then in Melbourne, where his outstanding ability was recognised by the late Sir Frederick Shedden and the then Chiefs of Staff."

In the Department of Defence in those times much of its important work was done through the medium of committees and this was the kind of work that General Beavis was to be engaged in for the next five years. The two main kinds of committees on which he was to serve in the Department of Defence ~~were~~ from December 1946 onwards were: first, permanent committees under Departmental chairman; and second, permanent committees on which the Department of Defence was represented but ^{for} which ^{it did not} necessarily provide a chairman. ~~might not be conducted by chairman from outside the Department of Defence~~

Sparks correct
In addition there were a variety of ad hoc committees and inter-departmental committees on which General Beavis was to serve. He also represented the Department of Defence ^{top level} on committees administered by the Department of Supply and Development. *On any committee on which he served he was always a dynamic force.*

Colonel ~~John P. Buckley~~, a former regular officer on the wartime staff of the M.G.O. Branch and who was later ^{again} First Assistant Secretary of the Department of Defence, said of General Beavis's post-war work that: "His responsibilities included the formulation and implementation of Defence policy in regard to Defence research and development, Defence production planning; and Defence supply." Colonel Buckley went on to say in his letter dated 23 October 1975 that: "The early planning involved lengthy

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negotiations with major Allies in both the Scientific and Production fields, after our own organization had been created and was working. General Beavis was a firm and skilful negotiator and was highly regarded by International authorities."

What then were some of these committees with which General Beavis was connected? In December 1946 he became Chairman of the New Weapons and Equipment Development Committee in the Department of Defence of ~~Supply and Shipping~~ and he held this post until December 1948. During that period the Permanent Head of the Department of ~~Supply and Shipping~~ Defence was Sir Frederick Shedden. Concurrently General Beavis was also in the Department of Defence, from December 1946 to February 1947, Chairman of the Australian Committee on Guided Projectiles. Also, from February 1947 to February 1950, General Beavis was the Representative of the Department of Defence on the Long Range Weapons Board of Administration. This Board was administered by the Department of ~~Supply and Shipping~~ *Supply and Development* and its Chairman was *Mr. N. H. S. Broderick* who was Controller General of Munitions *Supply*. Another Committee of the Department of Defence was the Principal Administrative Officers Committee (Maintenance and Materials) and General Beavis became its Chairman in May 1947. *and he retained this position until his retirement from the Army in 1952* Then, from December 1948 to October 1950, he was the Representative of the Department of Defence on the Defence Research and Development Policy Committee in the Department of Defence under the part-time chairmanship of Professor Sir Leslie Martin. In December 1948 General Beavis became Deputy Chairman of the Joint War Production Committee of

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the Department of Defence under the part-time chairmanship of Sir John Storey; and in December 1948 General Beavis became Chairman of the Joint War Production Planning Staff of the Department of Defence.

For his outstanding ~~work~~ post-war work in the Department of Defence, General Beavis was created a Companion of the Order of the Bath and ~~this~~ ^{this} honour was announced in the ~~King's~~ King's New Year's Honours List in 1952. On the same day the Minister for External Affairs, Lord Casey, announced his appointment as Australian High Commissioner in Pakistan.

So after these two joyous announcements ^{major} General Beavis's long and successful career in the Australian Army was about to come to a close. On the 26 January 1952, at the age of 57 years, ~~Major General Beavis~~ ^{he} was placed on the Retired List. In looking back over General Beavis's post-war Defence work, Colonel Buckley ~~wrote~~ wrote recently that:

The organization he set up on the Defence Production Planning and on Defence Research have stood the test of time and some 25 years later the J.W.P.C., now known as the Defence (Industrial) Committee, with Sir Ian McLennan as Chairman and Sir Charles McGrath as Deputy Chairman, fulfils the same functions as envisaged by General Beavis.

There are many existing monuments to the vision and tenacity of General Beavis, both within the Army and in the production and scientific fields. The large Army Depots and Workshops scattered throughout Australia, the Woomera Range and some of the Government factories were his brainchild. There are many others in which his influence and guidance were a major factor in obtaining approval for their construction.

General Beavis had that very rare quality, a man of vision - great vision - who had the drive, tenacity and ability to make his dreams become a reality. I will remember him as a kindly man, a modest man and a great Australian.

In the years that lay ahead, ^{when he came} ~~after coming~~ home to Melbourne in 1954, after having completed his diplomatic duties in Pakistan, General Beavis chose not to be idle in retirement. He took an active interest in the local affairs of Ringwood where he resided and where he became ^a well known and a much respected citizen. A former GOC of the 3rd Australian Division, Major General K.D. Green, has recently said:

General Beavis became associated with our CMF Engineer unit, the 10th Independent Field Squadron (Armoured), later 10th Field Squadron, by virtue of his residence in Ringwood and because of his deep interest in Army matters. He was always welcome at special activities and was an honoured guest at the annual Army Ball, which was quite an event at Ringwood in the 1950s.

We could always count on General Beavis for some wise advice, and his concern for the welfare of the CMF Engineers persisted for many years until failing health caused him to gradually sever his contact with us. He will be sadly missed as a kindly man and a good friend.

General Beavis took an active interest in R.S.L. affairs too and for many years he was a familiar figure at the annual Anzac Day March in the City of Melbourne until failing health compelled him to drop out. In 1965, at the invitation of the Auckland Returned Servicemen's Association, he led the Anzac Day March in Auckland, ~~on Anzac Day~~.

In retirement he also did much reading and some writing. Here his intellectual interests were ~~mainly~~ centred mainly in books published on World Wars I and II. His writing usually took the form of book reviews. But there was nothing ephemeral about these reviews. They were writings of substance and based on much study and filled with fruits from his own wide experience of men,

material and warfare. A subject he often discussed was the status of Administration in military training. In his review of Gavin Long's The Final Campaigns he set out ^{which he had often discussed} his views ^{clearly}

orally when he said:

The material requirements for our five divisions in France and the cavalry divisions in Palestine in 1914-18 were almost entirely looked after by the British Army for which we paid the British Government. We had no Base or Lines of Communication set-up behind the fighting divisions, except for personnel depots in the United Kingdom and Egypt.

Perhaps, if there had been a history of the administration by Australian and British authorities of the first A.I.F., at the outset of the War of 1939-45 we would not have been without the organization to provide the material requirements of a force in the field based on Australia. Such a history might have helped the military authorities between the wars to avoid their failure to obtain in peacetime an organization which could have expanded when war came. As it was, the organization to look after the arms, ammunition and equipment of the field force based on Australia had to be created at the same time as it was required to function, and it was largely a case of "the blind leading the blind" until with some experience and training an efficient organization came into being. (Stand-to, Jan-Feb., 1964, p.22.)

When his wife died in March 1974 after a long illness, General Beavis's own health was already a cause for anxiety ^{among} ~~by his family~~ and his friends. He bore too the ever increasing pain of a wartime injury in a forward area in Syria with great courage and fortitude.

The battle against declining health ended on Saturday 27 September 1975 when General Beavis died in the Repatriation General Hospital at Heidelberg in his ~~81st~~ 81st year.

The Commander of the 3rd Military District arranged a military funeral and it took place in Melbourne on Thursday morning 2 October 1975. First, a service was conducted at St Paul's Church

in Ringwood by the Vicar of that Church, the Rev. William R. Potter. A part of the service was the delivery of an impressive address on the personality and achievements of the late General Beavis by Lieutenant-General The Hon. Sir Edmund Herring. In the course of his ^{General Herring} address, he said:

By 1939, he had reached the important position of Director of Staff Duties.

Then came the Second World War. It was here he proved his great capacity as a Soldier and an Administrator. From 1940 to 1942 he was Director of Ordnance Services at Headquarters, A.I.F., in the Middle East. The importance of these Services are not ordinarily understood: they comprise not only the provision and maintenance of guns, ammunition, and such like things, but also the provision and maintenance of all manner of military stores and materials from vehicles to uniforms. For his outstanding services in this field he was created a ^{Companion} Companion of the Order of the British Empire.

In another part of the address General Herring drew attention to the circumstances in which General Beavis became the M.G.O. by saying:

When Japan came into the war he returned to Australia and was promoted to the rank of major general and appointed Master-General of the Ordnance, a post he held from 1942 to 1946. This is a wide-ranging and immense task at any time, but, faced as we were then with war against Japan and with so many cupboards in Australia bare, the task was one that would have daunted most men. General Beavis had the skill, the knowledge, and the training required and also the ability to pick the right men and to get them all to work together, and a truly wonderful job was done.

From the Church in Ringwood the funeral cortege moved to the crematorium at Springvale. The pall bearers were:

Major General T.F. Cape
Major General R.R. Gordon
Major General C.E. Long
Major General S.M. McDonald
Major General Sir Robert Risson
Brigadier John Purcell

The chief mourners were: Dr and Mrs E.L.G. Beavis (son and daughter-in-law) and Captain and Mrs H.S. Barber (son-in-law and

daughter). Other mourners included:

Mr C.R.Eggleston,
Formerly P.A. to General Beavis when M.G.O.

Mr Eric Harding,
Formerly Assistant Secretary, Department of the Army

Mr E.L.D.White,
Formerly Executive Officer of the Defence Research and
Development Committee, Department of Defence.

Major General A.H.Hellstrom,
Formerly Controller of Army Supplies and Development

Major General S.F.Legge,
Formerly Master-General of the Ordnance, Australia.

Air Vice Marshal E.C.Wackett

Air Vice Marshal F.M.Bladin

Brigadier J.H.Crombie,
Formerly the Military Secretary

Brigadier T.L.Gilchrist,
Of the U.S.I. of Victoria

Brigadier H.S.Kingham,
Formerly Director of Ordnance Services

Brigadier G.N.Moore,
Formerly Director of Financial Administration at LHQ

Brigadier G.H.S.Moran,
Formerly Director of Mechanical Engineering at A.H.Q.

Brigadier J.A.Munro,
Director General of Supply

Brigadier H.S.Nurse,
Formerly Inspector-General of Munitions at A.H.Q.

Brigadier D.A.Whitehead,
Formerly commanded 2nd Armoured Brigade

Colonel J.P.Buckley,
Formerly First Assistant Secretary of the
Department of Defence

Colonel A.N.Kemsley,
Formerly Business Member of the Military Board

Lieutenant-Colonel A.J.C.Wells,
Representing the Commander of the 3rd Military District

Major E.L. "Ginger" Burke, M.C.,
Late Australian Staff Corps

Major E.W.O.Perry,
Representing the Royal Historical Society of Victoria

Captain R.J.Swarbrick,
Conducting Officer of the Funeral Party, 3 MD.

IWM

When the service was brought to a close in the Chapel at the crematorium by the Rev. Mr Potter the time had come for the mourners to leave forever the remains of Leslie Ellis Beavis, a retired major general of the Australian Staff Corps, (a Companion of the Order of the Bath, a Commander of the Order of the British Empire, a Companion of the Distinguished Service Order,) a graduate of the Royal Military College of Australia, a graduate of the Artillery College at Woolwich, a graduate of the Staff College at Camberley, sometime Master-General of the Ordnance in Australia and formerly Her Majesty's Australian High Commissioner in Pakistan.

Leslie Ellis Beavis will be remembered by his friends for many reasons. He will be remembered for his ^{co-operativeness in team work} ~~character~~ attractive personality; he will be remembered not only for the quality but also for the style of his performance as a Soldier in peace and in war; he will be remembered especially for his work during the War of 1939-45 as Director of Ordnance Services in the Middle East and later as Master-General of the Ordnance in Australia; he will be ~~remembered~~ remembered for his short career as a diplomat; and he will be remembered for his public work as a private citizen. Nature endowed him with a natural and friendly manner, a great capacity for sustained and productive work, a temperament for the ready acceptance of responsibility and for the making of timely decisions, and an ability, based on knowledge matured by experience, to relate ends to means or plans to available resources in manpower and material. In short he did the best he could with the means available and he did not waste time as men sometimes do in "crying for the moon".

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The work of Leslie Ellis Beavis is now finished and he has gone from among us. He was a modest man who did not advertise himself. Indeed he disliked publicity and he took as much pains to avoid it as some persons take to attract it. Nevertheless, his personality, the manner of his performance and the nature of his achievements did attract attention and so to those officers of succeeding generations with careers to make and reputations to preserve he will serve as an example of the best type of Australian officer.

EAGLEMONT,
Tues 4 November 1975