

GREAT PARADE OF TROOPS
12th March 1940
4000 MEMBERS OF CAVALRY DIVISION
HALF HOLIDAY FOR SCHOOLS
LIEUT.-GENERAL J.D.LAVARACK TAKES
SALUTE

Through a city decked with flags and bunting about 4000 members of the 2nd Cavalry Division, which is encamped near Torquay, paraded yesterday to the accompaniment of applause and the waving of flags by people from Geelong and surrounding districts. It was a stirring military spectacle in which the Division, comprising the mounted and mechanised sections made a brave showing. The march was the greatest event of its kind ever held in Geelong, and the occasion was made one of celebration. School children were given a half holiday, most shops were closed to enable employees to witness the parade, and business people adorned buildings with flags and other decorations. The troops moved through avenues of spectators, most of whom captured something of the thrill of a big military parade. At Geelong City Hall the salute was taken by Lieutenant-General J.D.Lavarack, general officer commanding the Southern Command.

The troops who have been in camp near Torquay for the past two months, were proceeding en route to carry out tactical

exercises to be known as the "Battle of the You Yangs".

Mounted troops proceeded from the camp to Barwon Bridge via Barwon Heads road while mechanised troops took the westward route via Zeally road and Freshwater Creek road. The march from Barwon Bridge moved on with Military precision at two p.m., but long before that time a large crowd of spectators was assembled in the vicinity to witness the arrival of the two columns.

From Barwon Bridge along the entire length of Moorabool street spectators were gathered. Hundreds of motor cars occupied positions on the Moorabool street frontage of Kardinia Park. In the city the scene was a Gala one. Flags flew from most of the buildings, many of which displayed national emblems and streamers. Adults and children armed with miniature flags lined the route in Moorabool street and Malop street, and pressed forward when the head of the column made it's appearance over Moorabool street hill.

From the tower of bright and Hitchcock's St. Augustines orphanage band played martial music. As each section passed by, the crowd showed its appreciation by cheers and hand clapping. Spectators occupied vantage points at windows and on roofs and verandas of city buildings along the route. The head of the column lead by Major General Rankin and his staff officers, approached the saluting base at 2:25pm. Among those on the official stand were lieutenant General Lavarack, Colonel Piano

(chief of staff of the General Officer commanding the Southern Command), General Sir Neville Smyth and Lady Smyth, and the Mayor of Geelong (Cr. R. C. Thear), Mrs J.G. Rankin, Captain Hargrave, A.D.C. to Major General Rankin, And Lieutenant T. C. Manifold, A.D.C. to Lieutenant General Lavarack; the Mayoress of Geelong (Mrs R.C. Thear), The Mayor and Mayoress of Geelong West (Cr.N.H. Drew and Mrs Drew), and the Mayor and Mayoress of Newtown and Chilwell (Cr.F.W. Stinton and Mrs. Stinton).

Major General Rankin, after giving the salute, occupied a position at the saluting base. At the front of City Hall provision was made for the accommodation of 300 official guests, including about 100 wives of officers taking part in the parade.

MILITARY TUNES

Near the saluting base the 3rd Cavalry Brigade Band, under the direction of Lieutenant Grimwood, played stirring military tunes. As the head of the mounted column swung into Gheringhap Street, headed by a motor cycle patrol and four police troopers mounted on greys, the band played the livening "Colonel Bogey" march. When the head of the column arrived opposite the saluting base, the salute command was given. Sabres gleamed in the sunlight, and the sun-tanned troops, mounted on splendid horses, evoked enthusiastic applause from the large crowd assembled in Gheringhap Street.

The first impression gained was admiration of the splendid physique of the mounted men.

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Seated erect in their saddles, and holding their sabres at the salute. they looked fit and a splendid example of Australia's military strength. Emu plumes tossed in the air as the cavalymen passed by. The troopers in their khaki drill shirts open at the neck, and with sleeves rolled up, looked the picture of health and strength. All were sun-tanned and showed evidence of the benefit of weeks of open-air training.

The troops were splendidly mounted.

In the van of the mounted column rode Brigadier Christison and members of the Third Calvary Brigade Head-quarters, followed by the 4th Light-horse Regiment of 460 officers and men recruited from the Warrnambool district, and under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Bastin. Then followed the 8th Lighthorse Regiment from Benalla district, in command of Major Morrison, and comprising more than 500 troopers.

The 13\19th Light Horse Regiment from Gippsland, in command of Lieutenant-Colonel Hopkins and numbering 475 men followed and was given its share of applause as it cantered by. Major Hall was in command of the 20th Light Horse Regiment, recruited from Seymour and districts extending to Jerilderie. Lieutenant-Colonel Penrington led the detachment of the Australian Army Medical Corps, which included two horse-drawn field ambulances and other mobile equipment. Following this detachment was one of the Australian Army Veterinary Corps under the command of Captain Pader.

MECHANISED COLUMN

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The mechanised column, a comparatively new adjunct to cavalry, and introduced in keeping with modern army development, followed the mounted column and was headed by the 22nd Field Brigade, comprising two batteries from Melbourne and one from Albury. It was under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Stillman. Of special interest to spectators were the field howitzers, 18pounder field guns and the anti-aircraft Lewis guns.

Field kitchen equipment, an essential adjunct to the army, passed by, and received its share of applause. The mechanised column comprised many and varied vehicles requisitioned for military purposes, and these with their trade names and places of origin indicated the wide field from which the troops had been drawn.

The 1st Armored Regiment from Horsham and Murton, in command of Lieutenant-Colonel Ainsworth, included personnel of 250 men accommodated in 50 motor vehicles. The Second Field Squadron, drawn from the metropolitan area, was in command of Major Taylor, and was followed by 210 members of the signallers, in charge of Major Downey. Detachments of the Australian Army Service Corps, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Frencham, the Australian Army Medical Corps, under command of Major Summons, and a detachment of the Veterinary Corps followed in that order.

GEELONG WEST STRONG POST

The mechanised units which traversed Pakington Street, attracted the interest of hundreds of Geelong West citizens, including

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many school children, who assembled in the vicinity of the Geelong West Town Hall. Here a special platform had been erected for the accommodation of the Mayor and Mayoress of Geelong West (Cr. and Mrs. N.H. Drew), members of the council and staff and their wives, and representative ratepayers.

A description of the march was broadcast by 3GL ("Geelong Advertiser station")

. A recording of the commentary was made and a re-broadcast will be given early next week for the benefit of the troops at the Torquay camp. The recording was undertaken at the request of Brigadier Christison, of the 3rd Cavalry Brigade Headquarters.