

Hugh Angus Cochrane – Ebony McHugh

The 9th Light Horse Regiment was part of the 3rd Battalion, which served in Gallipoli and the Middle East in WW1. (9th Light Horse Regiment, 2020)

Gallipoli being hard to reach for the regiment, as horses weren't able to proceed into the area, meant they were based in Egypt. After heavy casualties on the front line, during late May 1915, the 9th Light Horse Regiment was deployed. They landed in Gallipoli without their horses. As part of the Australian and New Zealand division, they were a reserve group for the Brigade's unfavourable attack on the Nek, happening on the 7th of August. (9th Light Horse Regiment, 2020)

After the attack, the 9th Light Horse Regiment was used as a defensive line for their time during Gallipoli. They were exhausted and struggled at finding ways to keep hold of the land they'd conquered. (9th Light Horse Regiment, 2020) During November "no mans land" had become narrower, increasing the amount of casualties. Rifts of the harsh winter weather meant that soldiers became less mobile and many fell ill. (9th Light Horse Regiment, 2020) Hugh Angus Cochrane a young, determined man, fought for months in the trenches, but was hospitalised in December 1915. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020)

The 9th Light Horse Regiment persevered in the important role of keeping defensive lines strong throughout the campaign. The plan was to launch an attack at ANZAC Cove that would surprise the Central Powers and take control, as the focus of the enemy was reported to be on the Dardanelles. (The Australian War Memorial, 2020) (Gallipoli campaign, 2020) Once called on from reserves to the battlefield, they held a strong line to prevent losing area their fellow soldiers had gained. (9th Light Horse Regiment, 2020) The attack ultimately ended with defeat, as the enemy was prepared, but the ANZAC's gained honourable respect from their Allies and even the Turkish troops.

Returning back to Egypt in late December 1915, the regiment became part of the ANZAC Mounted Division. (9th Light Horse Regiment, 2020) With the combination of cavalry and mounted



Figure 1: The 9th Light horse Regiment. 1914
Source: Virtual War Memorial, 9th Light Horse Regiment.



Figure 2: 9th Light Horse Regiment Colours. 1914. Source: Virtual War Memorial, 9th Light Horse Regiment.

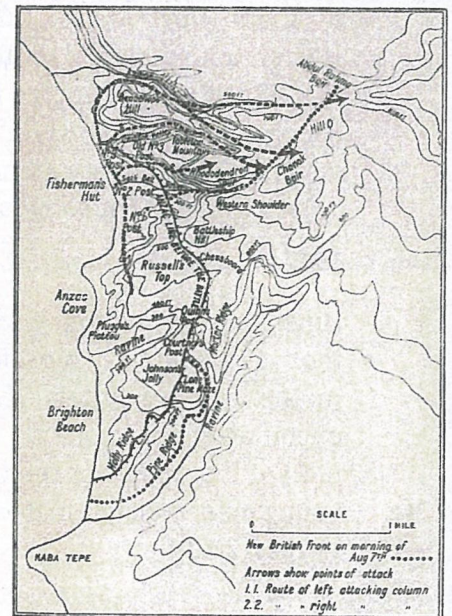


Figure 3: Map of Gallipoli where the 9th Light Horse Regiment was deployed. 1915.
https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Battle_of_the_Nek

infantry, the regiment continued to assist the advance throughout 1916, in the Sinai Desert, which led to numerous battles throughout Palestine including Beersheba. (Australian Light Horse Studies Centre, 2020) The Turkish position soon collapsed in November 1917 leaving the focus to defeat the Turks in the Jordan Valley. (The Australian War Memorial, 2020)

The 9th Light Horse Regiment made a significant impact to the defeat of the Turkish troops in the Middle East. (9th Light Horse Regiment, 2020) This allowed the ANZAC Division to control Egypt and create large training and military bases. (Easton et al., n.d.)

Hugh Angus Cochrane was born in 1890 in the town of Serviceton, Victoria. (Hugh Angus COCHRANE, 2020) He was the oldest son of Hugh Angus Snr and Harriet Cochrane, both whom born in Australia. (Heather McHugh, 2020) He grew up with his younger brothers George, William and Hector as well as his five sisters. (Hugh Angus COCHRANE, 2020) He attended Nairne School but his father died when Hugh was seventeen leaving him, being the eldest son, to take over his physical farm work. (Heather McHugh, 2020)

Living in the town of Langhorne Creek, South Australia for a large proportion of his life, Hugh was a farmer. He was a Methodist, who never married. (Hugh Angus COCHRANE, 2020)

Harriet, his mother, was appointed Next of Kin for both him and his brothers. (Hugh Angus COCHRANE, 2020) Hugh enlisted with his brother Hector, both assigned to the 9th Light Horse Regiment. (Hector McEacharn COCHRANE, 2020) George later enlisted, unfortunately being killed during battle in 1916. (George Victor COCHRANE, 2020) In 1918 William enlisted, meaning all four brothers served in WW1. (William Henry Albert COCHRANE, 2020) Hugh was fortunate to have Hector known as "Mac" with him for some of his service during the war. (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 14-4-1917)

Hugh's service number was 110 meaning he enlisted very early. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020) His motives would have most likely been to honour our country and out of loyalty towards our mother country, Britain. The promise of six shillings a day would have been a great encouragement for young, hard working Hugh, as a farmer's wage wasn't secure. (Easton et al., n.d.) At that time war seemed an exhilarating adventure rather than a brutal experience for young men, making Hugh one of the first members of the Australia Defence Force. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020)



Figure 4: Hugh Angus Cochrane in his service uniform. 1915. 9th Light Horse Regiment. Source: Family Records

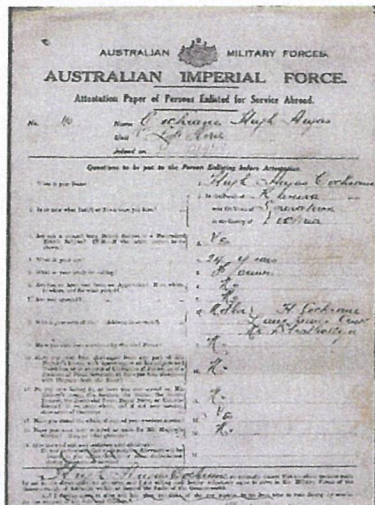


Figure 5: Enlistment Records 1914.

Source:

<https://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/records/231816/1>

Hugh Angus Cochrane enlisted on the 12th of September 1914. He was a Private (Discovering Anzacs, 2020) who was known for doing the job he was given. (Heather McHugh, 2020) Part of the 3rd Light Horse Brigade, the 9th Light Horse Regiment was formed early during the war. (9th Light Horse Regiment, 2020) Hugh was one of the first to join in his battalion, which the majority of were farmers. He trained in Melbourne until February 1915. Two thirds of the regiment was from South Australia and the remainder from Victoria. (9th Light Horse Regiment, 2020) Embarking on a ship as part of 3rd Light Horse Brigade, the unit arrived in Egypt on the 14th of March 1915. (9th Light Horse Regiment, 2020)

Hugh trained diligently in Egypt for months before being sent to Gallipoli. Here he suffered enteric fever. Hugh was forced to



Figure 6: Image of the 9th Light Horse Regiment Egypt. Photo taken by Hector (Mac) Cochrane with his Vest Pocket Autographic Kodak camera. Date unknown.

Source: <https://indaily.com.au/news/2015/04/24/old-camera-key-to-my-familys-anzac-history/>

attend "Fisherman's Hut," arriving on the 19th of September 1915. In hospital he received basic treatment and later during November he travelled to England where he was admitted to Beaufort War Hospital in Bristol to recover until February. On the 27th of April 1915, Hugh rejoined his regiment in Egypt. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020)

Six months later he was sent for rest at camp Port Said in Egypt. For a week he was rested

but without sleeping in a bed. (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 11-9-1917) He returned to duty on the 19th of November 1916. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020)

Hugh was sent to train as Lance Corporal on the 5th of December 1916 (Discovering Anzacs, 2020) and later told to go to Zeitoun for Hotchkiss gun instruction (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 24-2-1917) in February 1917. After a week of intense training he finished this course, now more knowledgeable, and returned on the 8th of March. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020) However prior to being formally appointed to Lance Corporal, on the 21st of March, he was made temporary Corporal that led to him undergoing additional training. (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 21-3-1917)

On the 19th of April 1917, Hugh was officially made Corporal at a time when his entire regiment was under heavy fighting. (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 19-4-1917) Possibly due to the death of a higher rank, the day after he was made temporary Sergeant. Hugh was sent to rest from the 6th to the 16th of September again at Port Said. His diary stated, *No temporary ranks to be*

confirmed for a month (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 6-10-1917) but he was made Sergeant on the 21st of October 1917, being his highest rank received. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020)

Hugh later received shrapnel wound in the arm, whilst they *had the turks on the run* (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 8-11-1917) He was forced to go to the Brigade ambulance for treatment. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020) He mentioned that he was *having a very rough time*. (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 9-11-1917) Four days later he returned to duty.

During December Hugh left his regiment to go to Calvary school in Cairo. (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 13-12-1917) Here the training consisted of *mounted manoeuvres in the mornings and lectures in the afternoons* (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 18-12-1917). While undergoing the course he visited local sites, *went to the pyramids* (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 30-12-1917) and *had evening dinner at the Obelisk* (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane, 1-1-1918). In January 1918, Hugh returned to duty. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020)

From April 1918 to June 1919 when he was approved for non-military employment. He departed on the "HT TAGNS" for the U.K on the 13th of July and was granted leave on the 9th of August until October 1919. In this time he attended an agricultural course, with pay, in Aberdeen and Jersey, Scotland. In this time he claimed, "*a very satisfactory course*", in which these skills and knowledge would have taken home to his family farm. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020)

On the 1st of November 1919 he returned to the 9th Light Horse, still keeping his rank as a Sergeant before returning to Australia on the "Aeneas". He disembarked on the 6th of January 1920. Sergeant Hugh Angus Cochrane was discharged from the Australian Imperial Force on the 7th of March 1920 meaning he was free to return to his family and community. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020)

We can only assume why Hugh was promoted multiple times. He was well mannered and respected amongst the Battalion. He also would have demonstrated extraordinary leadership skills. Records show that there were no incidents where he was reported for misconduct. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020) In addition his personal diary from 1917 has entries of him writing about others misbehaving, for example *Some whiskey in the camp. McColine and several others make fools of themselves*, (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane 9-7-1917) making it relevant that he was well behaved.

Hugh received three medals: The Victory Medal, 1914/1915 Star and the British War Medal. (Discovering Anzacs, 2020) (See Figure 7.)



Figure 7: War medals that Hugh received. (L-R) Victory Medal (front and back), 1914/1915 Star and British War Medal (front and back)

<https://www.defence.gov.au/Medals/Imperial/WWI/default.asp>

Hugh was part of the fifty percent of his regiment that survived. (9th Light Horse Regiment, 2020) On his return he continued to farm at Langhorne Creek and spent a generous amount of time with his family. Hugh was never married nor had kids of his own so he became a role model to his nieces and nephews and other children in the community. Football and cricket were popular sports for Hugh after he returned from war. The Cochrane's were known for their local sporting success. (Heather McHugh, 2020)



Figure 8: The Cochrane Family. Hugh Angas Cochrane farthest left. 1936. Source: Family Records

War stories from Hugh were told to his nieces and nephews, with them receiving his diaries and treasures from WW1. These stories that were passed down for generations became a valuable part of his family history. His recounts of his service remain clear for my Grandmother, (Heather McHugh, 2020) who Hugh was her Great, Great Uncle. This information helps my generation understand and empathise for the soldiers of WW1 and honour and respect the remarkable sacrifices he and his brothers made.

Hugh Angas Cochrane later died in 1969, aged 79. His ashes lay in the Langhorne Creek cemetery with his mother, father, brother and sister. (Find A Grave, 2020)

Total Word Count: 1499

The Anzac Spirit began in WWI, credited to the Australian and New Zealand troops, the spirit underpinned every action undertaken during war. This spirit consisted of courage, mateship, perseverance, resourcefulness, pragmatism and endurance. Our allies and enemies respected this spirit, as the Anzac troops were well known for it. When Hugh, fought in Gallipoli and the Middle East, he demonstrated all of these qualities, but by being the young dependable man he was, courage, mateship and perseverance appear to be his standout traits.

During the six years that Hugh was a part of the AIF, he was always a good mate. This quality allowed him to find the good in the horrific situation that he was in. While he was in the Middle East, Hugh *had to put George Smith to bed* as he had drunk *a bit of sherry* (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane 2-6-1917) that night. Not only did he demonstrate mateship in camp but on the battlefields. In Hugh's diary he speaks of Mac, his brother: *Mac went away sick today.* (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane 26-7-1917) These entries give us something that means more than mateship, a brother to brother relationship. Hugh and Mac spent a generous amount of time together during the war, developing a closer bond that stayed present for the rest of their lives. Stories that I have been told about Hugh, gives me the impression that many people relied on him. The mateship shown by him represents the Anzac Spirit and may be one of the many reasons he was promoted multiple times.

Fighting during battle but also surviving the horrendous conditions of the war would have required significant perseverance. Hugh *dug trenches nearly all night and stood to arms at 0200.* (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane 21-4-1917) These long, grueling nights would have brought major hunger, with little rations, and the men would have been exhausted. By having *travelled all night* (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane 7-5-1917) Hugh used his perseverance to stay strong, and always do what was required.

Lastly, I believe the most relevant attribute of the Anzac Spirit that Hugh showed was courage. He was courageous just by signing up on what seemed like an adventure, this courage is what made a good soldier. He left his family behind, leaving Australia with his brother by his side. At war, Hugh *buried dead and cleaned up the battlefield* (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane 10-1-1917), to bury dead bodies of which many were his own mates, would have taken a tremendous amount of courage. To have been in the position of *Close firing and to get 15 out of a possible 25* (Diary of Hugh Angus Cochrane 22-1-1917) kills would have taken skill, skill that is shown through courage and his attitude to doing the job that he was tasked with.

Hugh Angus Cochrane was a very reserved, courageous, determined and dependable soldier, farmer, mate and brother who showed various qualities of the Anzac Spirit. His personal diary is an insight to WW1 and himself as a person. We shall remember with honor, the courageous actions made by every soldier and nurse throughout the war and every war, forever.

Total Word Count: 492

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Figure 1: <https://vwma.org.au/explore/units/68>

Figure 2: <https://vwma.org.au/explore/units/68>

Figure 3: [https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Battle of the Nek](https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Battle_of_the_Nek)

Figure 5: <https://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/browse/records/231816/1>

Figure 6: <https://indaily.com.au/news/2015/04/24/old-camera-key-to-my-familys-anzac-history/>

Figure 7: <https://www.defence.gov.au/Medals/Imperial/WWI/default.asp>