

PART 1

THE MILITIA

1925 - 1942

Chapter 1

1st Company, Australian Army Ordnance Corps (AAOC) 1925 - 1927

In 1925, a small Citizens' Force Ordnance Unit was raised in Brisbane to train army personnel in ammunition requirements, including storage and handling. Designated the 1st Company, Australian Army Ordnance Corps (AAOC), it was part of the First Military District Base Unit which came under command of the Base Commandant and District Commandant MAJGEN C.H. Foote, CB, CMG.

The first officer appointed as Officer Commanding (OC) was LT T.D. Watson, an original ANZAC who had served with Ordnance in France in WW1.

The unit began with an initial strength of 1 Officer and 16 Other Ranks, making its home at Victoria Barracks in the northern end of the lower building off Countess St., where the Orderly Room was shared with the Garrison Artillery and Fortress Engineers. Parades were held on alternate Tuesday nights and were divided into obligatory and alternative parades. Members were required to undertake one 10 day camp and two weekend bivouacs each year, the first six months' training consisting of ammunition duties, with the last six months of the year devoted to stores.

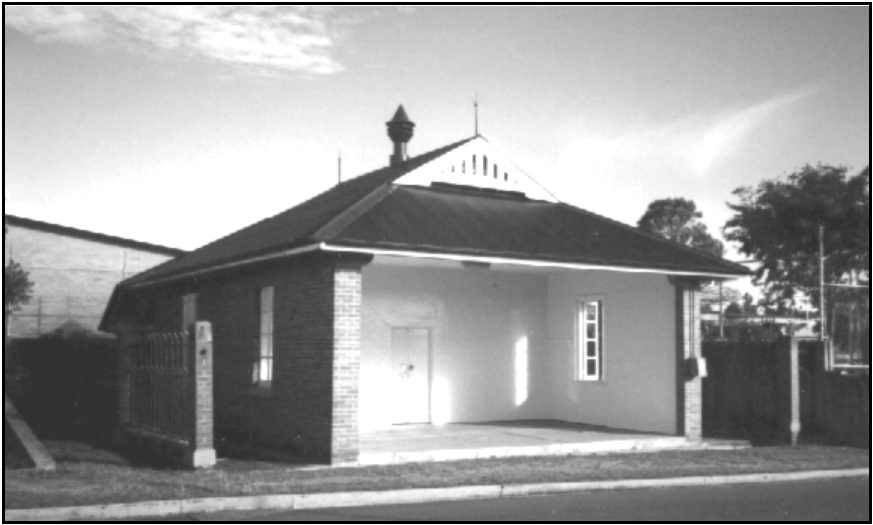
Since Ordnance at this stage was an offshoot of the Artillery, the Ordnance Department provided members with valuable experience and practical training in ammunition, and they were given access to the laboratories, magazines and fortress stores. The unit uniform included the wearing of bandoliers and leggings, riding breeches, jacket and slouch hat with a hatband of blue with a broad central red stripe. Officers wore Sam Browne belts.



1st Company's Orderly Room from 1926 to 1939.

The .303 Lee Enfield rifle was standard issue and members had the option of leaving the weapon in the armoury or taking it home. Quite a few members were also members of rifle clubs and were thus able to utilise their service rifles there. Rifle shooting competitions were very popular at the time and the members of the Company won many trophies shooting at the Enoggera Range. As the unit could not raise sufficient numerical strength to form a club (30 members) it competed under the name of the *1st District Base Unit Rifle Club*. Later the club combined with the Australian Army Service Corps (AASC) with the same success and broke every record for range shooting with issue rifle using open sights. At one stage three members of the Duncan family (members of Ammunition Company) took part in competition. J.B. Duncan (later to become OC) came second in two Kings Shoot marksman competitions.

Mr W. Crossen, a civilian in the Ordnance Department, was the Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) at Victoria Barracks. As a Conductor in Ordnance WO1 W. Crossen took precedence over all Warrant Officers of the Militia. He was described as very knowledgeable in Ordnance and a strict disciplinarian who was a member of the Australian Instructional Corps. He saw service in both WW1 and WW2.



Armoury, Enoggera Range.

The Chief Ordnance Officer (COO) of the Ordnance Department at this time was Mr L.H. Storey. The store holders, Mr L.I. Martin (stores) and Mr G.W. McKay (ammunition), provided invaluable assistance. Master Gunner W. Smyth of the AIC was the cadre instructor and combined that role with that of instructor to the 22nd Heavy Battery, Garrison Artillery.

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