

## Why are there three 7th Battalions?

For a brief look at each of the three battalions, using information from the Australian War Memorial's website, read on.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion or 1/7<sup>th</sup> Battalion (WW1)

The 7th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 5th, 6th and 8th Battalions, it was recruited from Victoria and, together with these battalions, formed the 2nd Brigade.

The battalion was raised by Lieutenant Colonel H. E. "Pompey" Elliott within a fortnight of the declaration of war in August 1914 and embarked just two months later.

The 7<sup>th</sup> served at Gallipoli, Egypt and the Western Front. More information can be found in these battalion histories:

- Arthur Dean & E.W. Gutteridge, *Seventh Battalion, AIF: resume of activities of the Seventh Battalion in the Great War - 1914-1918* (Collingwood: Abb-Typesetting Pty Ltd, 1986).
- Austin, Ronald James, *Our Dear Old Battalion: the Story of the 7th Battalion AIF, 1914-1919* (Slouch Hat Publications, 2004)

### 2/7th Battalion (WW2)

The 2/7th Battalion opened its headquarters at the Royal Melbourne Showgrounds on 25 October 1939 as part of the 17th Brigade of the 6th Australian Division. It relocated to the newly-established camp at Puckapunyal on 3 November to carry out basic training and departed Melbourne for service overseas on 15 April 1940.

The 2/7<sup>th</sup> served in the Middle East, Greece, Crete and New Guinea (Wau, Aitape). More information can be found in the battalion history:

- W.P. Bolger & J. G. Littlewood, *The firey phoenix: the story of the 2/7 Australian Infantry Battalion 1939-1946*, (Parkdale: 2/7 Battalion Association, no date)

### 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion (North West Murray Borderers) (WW2)

After the First World War the defence of the Australian mainland lay with the part time soldiers of the Citizens Military Force (CMF), otherwise known as the Militia. The Militia was organized to maintain the structure of the First AIF and kept the same numerical designations. These Militia units were also distributed in the same areas that had raised the original AIF units. Consequently, Militia units were also known by the name of their shire. Thus, Victoria's 7th Infantry Battalion was the "North-West Murray Borderers". The battalion was headquartered in Mildura, with companies established in Merbein, Wentworth, and Red Cliffs. However, during the 1930s little was spent on defence and the Militia had few volunteers. In 1929, the 7th was merged with the 38th Infantry Battalion, forming the 7th/38th Infantry Battalion. In 1936 the two were unlinked and this 7th Battalion became effective on 9 November.