

# ANZAC HERITAGE

- ▶ Edmund Bowler
- ▶ Brigadier James Hargest
- ▶ Letter Home

## Key Ideas

Looking at the overseas contribution of some local individuals on the front lines of World War 1.

### Did you know Gore's own Edmund Bowler was the first New Zealander in NZEF (NZ Expeditionary Force) uniform to step on to ANZAC Cove?

FACT:

He left his legal practice to volunteer but what he witnessed as an officer, Lieutenant Colonel, caused him to become an advocate for the soldiers of Gallipoli. His honesty, however, went unheard and he lost many powerful connections. He was medically discharged and returned home. Bowler immediately set about ensuring support was in place for returning soldiers as he knew the horrors they had endured. He was the founding president of the Gore RSA.



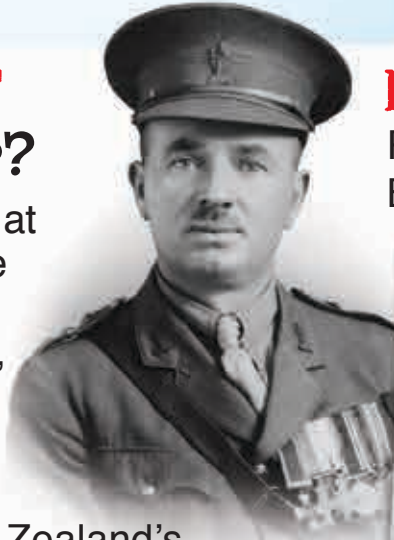
## BRIGADIER JAMES HARGEST Medals - what were they for?

The flags at Southland's Rugby Park flew at half-mast on the Saturday they heard the news that Jimmy Hargest wouldn't be coming home from war. A natural leader, his personal example of courage and ability inspired admiration and respect in and out of military life.

James Hargest is a local legend of New Zealand's military heritage. He is one of New Zealand's most decorated and highly ranked soldiers. He served in WW1, rising through the ranks, and was killed near the end of WW2 in France.

Born in Mandeville and educated there and in Gore, he loved to work on the family farm. He would eventually become a farmer and Member of Parliament. Southland chose to recognise his contribution at both war and home by naming James Hargest College after him.

Here is a selection of the medals he earned in WW1.



## LETTER HOME

Private Henry McQuillan's letter home following the Battle of Chunuk Bair, Gallipoli.

We have had a busy time lately, during which the New Zealand troops played a very important part in a fairly successful advance. We suffered considerable loss, but our casualties in proportion to the action, were not large. I haven't slept under a roof or canvas now for nearly five months; we just dig a bit of a hole in the ground to protect us from shrapnel and bullets and sleep there. It is strange how callous one becomes at this game. One sees death here almost every day, and wounded and sick are quite common. As to bullets and shrapnel, we absolutely take no notice of them. For three months the food was very poor, but lately the authorities appear to have been trying to build us up a bit, and we get one-sixth of a tin of milk per man, an egg or two, and on favoured occasions, a bit of bread in addition to the ordinary bully beef, etc. ... The flies are very bad here and it takes one all his time to get a piece of food to his mouth without a fly or two, they are so thick.

Mataura Ensign, 1 November 1915.

## Design your own medal

Medals are awarded to people who were part of a special event or who succeeded in a difficult challenge. Create a medal that remembers our WW1 ANZAC heritage.



Medals by Tukurau Primary School students



### Companion of the Distinguished Service Order - DSO

Instituted in 1886, the DSO recognises acts of gallantry by military officers. Hargest was first awarded the DSO in 1918. His citation reads:

*For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty during an advance. He commanded his battalion with marked ability. His tactical dispositions were excellent, and he secured and forwarded valuable information. Constantly in the front trenches he inspired all ranks with the keenest offensive spirit, and the uninterrupted success of the battalion operations were largely due to his fine personal leadership.*

Two bars were added to the medal following his capture by the Germans in WW2 followed by his escape and safe return to Britain.



### The Military Cross

Awarded to junior officers and senior non-commissioned officers of the Army for courage and devotion to duty on active service, Hargest earned this, his first honour, in 1916.



### The Victory Medal

Distinguished by its unique 'double rainbow' ribbon the Victory Medal was issued to all those who had already qualified for the 1914 or 1914-15 Stars. Approximately six million military personnel from the British Empire received the medal.



### The 1914-15 Star

This medal was awarded for military service between August 1914 and December 1915, provided they had not qualified for the 1915 Star and included service in Gallipoli after a proposed Gallipoli/ANZAC Star was abandoned.



### The British War Medal

Awarded in 1919 the medal recognises the successful conclusion of the 1914-18 War.



### French Chevalier Légion d'Honneur

The French Order of Chivalry, instituted on 19 May 1802 is one of the most prestigious French awards, their country's highest civilian honour. Hargest's efforts were recognised in 1919.

For more information on medals check out <http://medals.nzdf.mil.nz/category/h/index.html>



# ANZAC HERITAGE

▶ Ronald Burns Bannerman  
▶ Nurses of the District

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## RONALD BURNS BANNERMAN

Ronald Bannerman became NZ's #1 flying ace. After his law studies at the University of Otago, he signed up for New Zealand's Flying School in 1916 then the Royal Flying Corps in England in 1917 where he undertook further training. He flew a Sopwith Dolphin in every combat mission.

Bannerman's record in the air:

- 396 flight hours
- 190 combat sorties
- 16 enemy aircraft destroyed
- 22 enemy aircraft forced out of action

His efforts and skills were recognised with the Distinguished Flying Cross and bar (one of only 70 awarded) as well as a CBE. In 1919 he returned to civilian life and joined Edmund Bowler at his law practice here in Gore. He served the RNZAF in WW2, achieving the rank of Air Commodore as well as the Aide de Camp for the Governor General (1943-45). After WW2 he again returned to his legal career, this time until his retirement.

RB Bannerman and his plane



RB Bannerman in his flying kit

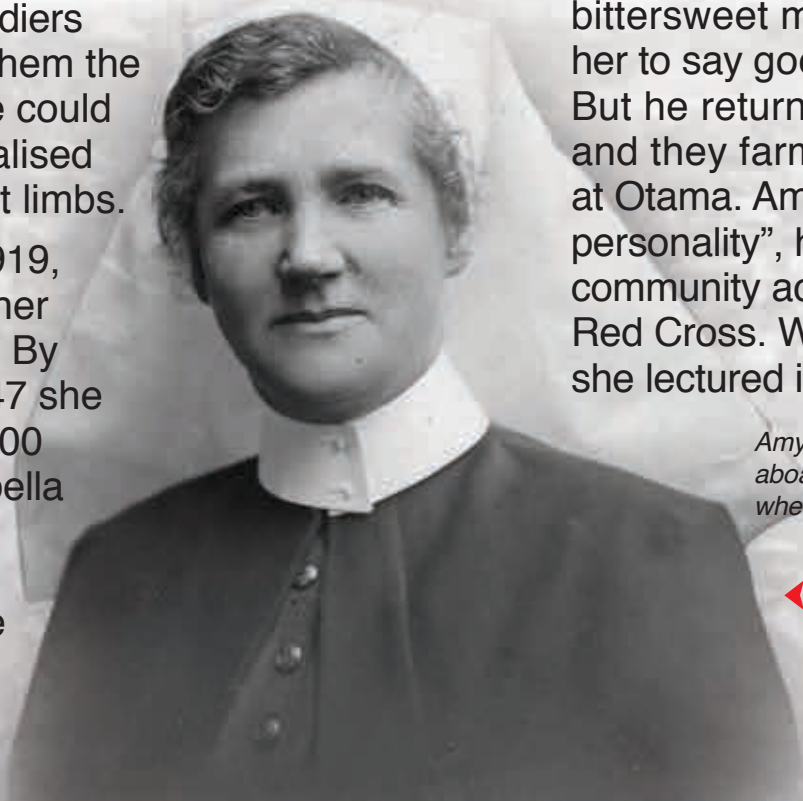
## NURSES OF THE DISTRICT

### Sister Isabella Young Scott

Sister Scott's efforts for the welfare of soldiers and veterans was recognised when she was the first New Zealand woman to be awarded the RSA's Gold Star.

War was not on her mind when she established a private hospital at Matura called 'Nithdale' but in 1915 she volunteered for war service. She served on hospital ships including the first to leave New Zealand, the *Maheno*, as well as London hospital, Walton-on-Thames. There were 25,000 New Zealand admissions at this hospital alone. So, on the other side of the world she was a friendly and familiar face for injured soldiers from the district and read them the *Matura Ensign* when she could get a copy. Isabella specialised in caring for those that lost limbs.

Returning to Matura in 1919, she changed the focus of her hospital to maternity care. By the time she retired in 1947 she had helped more than 1,500 babies into the world. Isabella was also a community leader, involved in many organisations including the Matura sub-branch of the Gore RSA.



◀ Sister Isabella Young Scott

### Amy Smith

One of the first graduates of Gore's nursing school in 1912, Amy became Matron of the Gore Hospital when the previous matron volunteered for war service. She was awarded the Associate of the Royal Red Cross (ARRC) for her service.

When Amy returned to New Zealand she married her sweetheart, Robert White, before he too set off for war. It must have been a bittersweet moment for her to say goodbye. But he returned home and they farmed together at Otama. Amy was "an active personality", heavily involved in community activities including the Red Cross. When WW2 came, she lectured in home nursing.

Amy's dress coat that she wore aboard the hospital ship *Marama* where she served for one year.

