Trooper Frank Andrews (1880 - 1900) of Wollongong

A Boer War Casualty


Introduction

On 26 August 1900, Trooper Frank Andrews of "A" Company, New South Wales Imperial Bushmen, was fatally wounded by a sniper's bullet at Ottoshoop, near Mafeking, in South Africa. This young Wollongong volunteer was the first of the Bushmen to fall in battle, and, as such, his death was sorely felt by comrades-in-arms overseas and family back home in Australia. Locally, Frank's death marked what was perhaps the initial instance of an Illawarra son losing his life in an enemy action on foreign soil. His death, and the manner in which it was received in Wollongong, was a foretaste of things to come. The Great War of 1914-18 was just around the corner, and numerous Boer War veterans returned home horribly injured and maimed as the new century unfolded. The court-martialling and execution of the Australian soldier Breaker Morant also soured the minds of the Australian public in regards to this foreign campaign in defence of the Empire.

The Boer War took place between 1899-1902, and almost a century later - in 1991 - the death of Frank Andrews was brought to the attention of the Illawarra Historical Society when a letter was received from the then 92 year old Mrs. Olive Everard of Liverpool, New South Wales. Mrs. Everard offered to supply some reminiscences of Wollongong from the days of her youth (circa 1900-1920). Of special interest was the revelation that she was the niece of Trooper Frank Andrews - an individual fondly remembered by local historians as a result of the memorial erected in his honour during 1902. This Boer War monument was initially located in a prominent position on the corner of Crown and Kembla Streets, Wollongong, adjacent to the Town Hall. This location reflected the intensity of feeling associated with the loss of an Illawarra son, and also facilitated ease of access to the water fountain which formed an important element of the structure. The sandstone and marble monument was later moved to Wollongong's Rest Park, off Burelli Street, and subsequently to the nearby Macabe Park, where it now sits alongside memorials to various twentieth century wars.

Memories of Wollongong and "Uncle Frank"

Mrs. Everard was only one year old at the time of her uncle's death in 1900. However, as a child, she was told many loving stories of Frank by his parents and brothers and sisters. She heard how he held and cared for her, and sang her to sleep in those final few months before departing his native shore to fight the Boer
in Africa. Olive came to feel a special affection for her late uncle, even to the point of telling the many young school friends she had in Wollongong that they would have to answer directly to her if they 'messed around' with his memorial. She was very protective of the fountain, treating it as Frank's personal tombstone (he had been buried in South Africa) and calling on others to respect her family's feelings on this matter.

Following her initial letter to the Illawarra Historical Society, Mrs. Everard visited Wollongong on 27 September 1991 and spoke at length about 'Uncle Frank' and the fond memories she had of Wollongong in the years prior to her marriage in 1923. Throughout this period she frequently visited her grandparents at Wollongong, especially during the summer holidays, as Olive's immediate family was variously resident at Lithgow and Sydney. The longest single visitation was a 6 month period during 1909 when she was a pupil of Wollongong Public School, in Smith Street. Mrs. Everard's reminiscences are incorporated within the following account, alongside details of the military career of her uncle 'Trooper' Frank Andrews and the few other personal details we have of him.

The Andrews Family of Wollongong
Frank and Emma Andrews (parents of 'Trooper' Frank Andrews and the grandparents of Olive Everard) arrived in Wollongong from England around 1875 with their three children Harry, Netta, and Fanny. The elder Frank Andrews was a mining engineer bought out to work the Mount Pleasant coal mine, west of Balgownie. He later became part-owner of Wongawilli Colliery near Dapto, and for a period lived apart from the family in a small cottage close to the mine, where Olive and her grandmother would visit him with food and other supplies. Frank was a cousin to the Mr. Figtree who operated the Mount Pleasant coke works. The Andrews family variously lived in two houses near the corner of Bourke and Keira Streets, Wollongong, where a further 4 children were born - Clara (b.1878), Frank (b.1880), Emma (b.1882), and George (b.1884). Many of the Andrews children went on to lead eventful lives outside of Wollongong. Fanny married a soldier and moved to America in 1902, where she witnessed first-hand the great San Francisco earthquake of 1906. Having survived that catastrophe, she was supported by parcels of food and clothing dispatched by Illawarra residents as soon as they were made aware of the true scale of that city's destruction. Fanny's husband had earlier worked at Wollongong's Flagstaff Hill garrison before the couple's departure for America. They returned to Australia once - in September 1923 - shortly after Olive's marriage to Mr. Everard. Another daughter Clara eventually became Clara Walters and lived in Wollongong for the remainder of her life. Harry, the oldest son, was chief engineer on the Mattai during
during World War I, and later took German internees back to Europe after the war, before migrating to New Zealand to live.

Emma, the youngest daughter of Frank and Emma Andrews, married Colin Johnston, an iron foundry moulder. The couple would eventually have 9 children - 7 girls and 2 boys. One of these was our correspondent Olive, born in Sydney on 11 July 1899. For the first four years of her life she resided in Wollongong with her grandparents, before moving on to Lithgow in March 1904. It was during those first 6 months of life, and the last 6 months of 1899, that Frank Andrews held and cared for his little niece. After the move to Lithgow, Olive returned to Wollongong regularly for Christmas holidays, extended weekends, and occasional schooling, staying on for six months in 1909 in order to attend Wollongong Public School under headmistress Miss Long. As a child, Olive remembered playing with the Figtree children at Bourke Street, and held fond memories of trips to the beach at North Wollongong with her Granny Andrews. The Johnston family lived at Lithgow until 1916, at which point they moved to Sydney where Colin Johnston had secured employment as manager of a steelworks. Despite these movements, the Johnstons maintained close links with Illawarra and Olive's grandparents Frank and Emma Andrews. Olive's mother Emma, having been born in Wollongong, always considered the town her home. She did not like Lithgow and had no qualms about regularly bringing her large family down to stay with their grandparents in the house at Bourke Street. The family was also increasingly concerned for the elder Mrs. Andrews, whose health deteriorated after the tragic death of her son Frank in 1900.

Olive fondly remembers those holidays at Wollongong in the first two decades of the twentieth century, especially the long days spent at North Wollongong beach with her family and friends. She loved the beach, and swimming in the ocean was a favoured pastime. As a child she would spend her holidays variously gathering shells to make necklaces; helping her Aunt Clara with sewing; heading off to one of the local picture theatres; or collecting coal from alongside the Mount Pleasant rail line which passed through North Wollongong and along the beach towards the loading facilities at Belmore Basin. With her special bag Olive and her brothers and sisters would walk alongside the tracks and pick up enough lumps of stray coal to stock their grandparents' fire for a couple of days. Often the train drivers would throw the children a lump or two when they saw them collecting by the line.

During these holidays the Johnston children were never allowed on the beach alone, but were always accompanied by an elder member of the family such as
'granny' or an uncle or aunt. The old saying "early to bed, early to rise" was regimentally applied during these Illawarra visits, with the children generally not allowed out at nights, apart from engaging in Saturday evening shopping. Some early mornings were spent gathering mushrooms in nearby fields, of which there were many. Olive passed most of her days at Wollongong sitting down by the beach talking with friends and watching the surf carnivals. She especially liked body surfing, in preference to using the nearby rock pools at North Beach. During later adolescence she would travel down to Wollongong on weekends with a girlfriend, such was her fondness for the area and its beaches.

A highlight of any week there was shopping on a Saturday night, or meeting at O'Brien's pub (located on the corner of Crown and Keira Street) which was a well-known landmark at the time. Olive spoke with some amusement, and dread, of 'Old King Billy', a Aborigine from Port Kembla who would every now and then come into town with his family and friends and "put the wind up the local residents". 'Old King Billy', whose English name was William Charles Wentworth, worked on the various New South Wales estates of his more famous namesake, including the large holdings in the Port Kembla and Shellharbour area. Olive well remembered on one occasion as a child being quickly dragged off the street by her uncle and whisked into O'Brien's pub where she was hidden after the call had gone up that King Billy and his people were coming to town and Billy "was in a very bad way". According to her account, all the shopkeepers in Crown Street were "scared stiff of him" and they would close up shop and bolt the doors awaiting his passage. King Billy was a big man - at least in the eyes of the children of Wollongong. Whether he deserved his fearful reputation, or was being used as something of a 'bogeyman' by local parents to frighten their children, is unclear. Perhaps Olive's uncle simply used it as a ploy to drop into O'Brien's pub for a beer!

Mrs. Everard recounted how New Years Eve in Wollongong was a special time of the year. Her aunt Clara was a member of the local Salvation Army and during this festive season the Salvation Army band would play in front of her uncle's monument near the Town Hall, and also further up Crown Street by the Mount Kembla Disaster monument, before heading on out to her grandparent's house in Bourke Street where granny Emma Andrews and Clara would put on a special meal for the band members. The children would also accompany the band through the streets of Wollongong singing carols and rattling their tambourines during this festive season.

Unfortunately grandma Emma Andrews was much aggrieved by the death of her
beloved son Frank in 1900 and according to Mrs. Everard never really recovered from the shock, passing away at the end of 1910 following a long illness. She was buried in Wollongong cemetery on 2 November of that year. Olive's grandfather Frank lived on in Wollongong for another twenty five years, comforted with regular visits from his children and grandchildren. He died in November 1935 and was buried alongside his wife on the 25th of that month.

Olive's late uncle Frank was spoken of regularly by the family and her grandparents during her visits to Wollongong, and from these stories and conversations she came to cherish his memory. Her protection of the monumental water fountain erected in his honour in Crown Street during her youth, and sense of attachment to it even to this day, is understandable, especially as Frank's body was never returned to Australia. It was therefore with some concern that the Andrews descendants discovered that the fountain had been removed from its prominent Crown Street location early in 1954 to make way for a temporary stand to be used by Queen Elizabeth during her visit to Wollongong in that year. The Illawarra Historical Society intervened and was instrumental in having it re-erected in full working order within the Wollongong Rest Park, off Globe Lane, when it was well used by local residents. When the Wollongong Mall was constructed during the second half of the 1980s, the fountain moved once again, this time to a prominent position in Macabe Park alongside World War I and later war monuments. Here it remains, sans water cup and original spent shell ornament. Whilst we may look on it as simply a quirky memento to a long forgotten war, to the descendants of Frank and Emma Andrews it will always be more personal than that - a tombstone for the cherished son who never came home.

**Trooper Frank Andrews**

Frank Andrews was born in Wollongong on 1 April 1880. He was baptised at St Michael's Church of England, Market Square, Wollongong, on 5 August, along with his sister Clara. According to Mrs. Everard, young Frank was well liked by the local residents and a competent horseman, honing his equestrian skills in the open paddocks then present around North Wollongong, and at the nearby racecourse operated by Theodore Bode, the proprietor of the North Wollongong Hotel since 1878. At one stage Frank worked for William McKenzie, the Mayor of Wollongong, though we know little of his life prior to joining the Bushmen contingent at the end of 1899. A.P. Fleming, in his booklet on the history of the Wollongong Rest Park (Illawarra Historical Society, 1971), gave a brief account of Frank's death in South Africa, along with details of the subsequent public campaign which resulted in the erection of a memorial water fountain and plaque
in his honour. The following is a summary of that account, supplement by additional information gathered from Mrs. Everard's reminiscences, reports in the local newspapers, and general histories of Australia's involvement in the Boer War.

Off to South Africa

War between the Boers of South Africa and the British was officially declared on 11 October 1899. It lasted until a 'Treaty of Peace' was signed at Pretoria on 31 May 1902. Almost immediately upon the outbreak of hostilities, the Australian colonies offered support to the British occupying forces. This was initially in the form of regular army units such as the New South Wales Lancers and New South Wales Mounted Rifles. They were among the first to be dispatched to South Africa as news of the conflict spread. In December 1899 the New South Wales Citizens' Bushmen contingent was raised, following on a call from the British War Office for mounted troops and hardy bushmen who would be able to fight the Boer on their own terms. Colonial 'bushmen' were seen to have some advantages and additional skills over traditionally trained British army regiments, though the latter were adept at all forms of killing. This soon became evident as more barbaric aspects of warfare were practiced upon the Boer and their families by the British, including the formation of 'concentration camps' and wanton destruction of Boer property.

The initial New South Wales Citizen's Bushmen's regiment embarked for South Africa at the end of February 1900 amid much fanfare, following on a brief period of training in a camp set up on the site of the present-day Randwick racecourse. This and subsequent Bushmen contingents were basically a citizens army composed of hardy young colonial bushmen who could 'ride, shoot, and find their way about'. This would enable them to meet the Boer head-on and engage in a new form of guerilla-style warfare which the British were finding it difficult to deal with.

Over 16,000 Australians went on to fight in the Boer War between 1899 and 1902. The most famous of these was Breaker Morant, eulogised in book and on film. Unfortunately the events surrounding this rather ugly war were to become largely forgotten in the annals of Australian history, passing into relative insignificance in the light of more glorious events at Gallipoli in 1915, and the ensuing conflict. However, as the nineteenth century drew to a close, enthusiasm for defense of the British Empire and foreign adventure was on the rise in the colony of New South Wales, and in country towns such as Wollongong. Sometime during December 1899, at the tender age of 19, young Frank Andrews
traveled to Sydney to enlist in the Bushmen contingent. He missed out on the first intake, but was accepted into the Imperial Bushman. The Australian authorities were initially overwhelmed with offers of enlistment for these voluntary forces - there were no less than 10 volunteers for every soldier eventually selected. This enthusiasm was not to be dampened, however, for a further call for volunteers came from the British government on 3 March 1900. It resulted in the formation of a second Bushmen's Regiment, to be known as the Imperial Bushmen.

In order to be one of the successful candidates for South Africa, Frank Andrews first had to pass a series of strenuous tests to assess his physical fitness, horse-riding abilities, and skills with a rifle. This was followed by a little over one month's training as a mounted horseman at Randwick and Rookwood. Apparently Frank passed these tests with flying colours and, according to Mrs. Everard, he supplied his own horse and saddle for the expedition to come. Judging from later accounts and letters published in local newspapers, Frank Andrews was accompanied to South Africa by a number of Illawarra volunteers (Appendix 1), such being the enthusiasm in the colony for this seemingly grand adventure. In many ways the Boer War was a foretaste of what was to occur fourteen years later, when the district likewise freely supplied young men to the battlefields of Europe, and took part in requiting campaigns such as the 'Waratah March' from Nowra to Sydney.

**Imperial Bushmen**

The first contingent of New South Wales Imperial Bushmen, with Trooper Frank Andrews as one of its members, consisted of 40 officers, 722 men, 800 horses and 6 carts. The regimental rolls, published in the *Sydney Mail* of 28 April 1900, listed 'Pte F.L. Andrews' serial number 477, as a member of "E" Squadron under Captain H.H. Browne. This contingent left Sydney for Cape Town amid much fanfare on 23 April 1900 aboard the transport ship Armenian, and was not to return until 17 July 1901, after a 15 month absence. During Trooper Andrew's period of service in South Africa the Imperial Bushmen served as part of the 2nd Brigade Rhodesian Field Force under Lt. General Sir Frederick Carrington and alongside the New South Wales Citizens' Bushmen. Frank Andrews was a member of "A" Company, under the command of Captain Granville de Laure Ryrie.

Upon arrival in Cape Town at the end of May, Frank's ship was immediately ordered to sail north to the port of Beira in East Africa, from whence he traveled overland 382 miles by light rail to Marandellas. The trip was a slow one through tropical jungles and took more than four days. It was followed by a further 280
mile trek on foot to Bulawayo in central Rhodesia, where the complete complement of Imperial Bushmen assembled on 4 July. Corporal Wallace Ryrie, a fellow member of Frank's "A" Company, described the Rhodesian experience in the following terms:

"Some of us have put in a fairly rough time. Most of our horses died [from disease] and I was one of the party that had to do a forced march on foot from Marandellas to Bulawayo - three hundred miles, carrying about 35 pounds, including rifle, ammo, blanket, overcoat and tucker. I have hardly had a square meal since leaving Sydney."

From Bulawayo the Bushmen traveled by train south to relieve the besieged town of Mafeking in the Transvaal, setting up a staging camp north east of that town, at Zeerust, late in July. After such a lengthy and tiring period of travel, the Australian soldiers were itching for battle. As Field (1979) points out:

'....for the twelve months that the two contingents were in South Africa, the Bushmen threw themselves into the skirmishing of the guerilla phase of the war with a dash and gusto which was so alien to the usual British methods that the Boers sat up and noted the advent of a new type of enemy.'

The Imperial Bushmen initially saw action attempting to relieve the Eland's River garrison east of Zeerust on 4 & 5 August 1900. Thereafter, they were involved in the retreat to Marico River on 6 August; the occupation of Ottoshoop, a small town north-east of Mafeking on 14 August; and in skirmishes at Buffel's Hoek (16-19 August), Jacobsdal (22 August), and Malmani (27 August).

Eland's River Garrison Retreat

The Eland's River garrison, with a small Australian contingent and Rhodesian volunteers, had been attacked by Boers on the morning of Saturday, 4 August 1900. General Carrington's relieving force of 1000 men - including the Imperial Bushmen - arrived from nearby Zeerust the following day. It was subsequently ambushed, and Carrington ordered a retreat towards Mafeking. The British and Australian forces were pursued by snipers all the way to the Marico River, and according to one account, Frank's "A" Squadron 'was under a hail of bullets for a long time'.

This episode was an inglorious start to the Imperial Bushmen's South African campaign, and many felt they should have pushed on to the Eland's River
garrison during the initial attack or at least held some ground, instead of undertaking a full retreat. The Eland's River garrison now had to wait in siege until 16 August before it was relieved by Lord Kitchener's column of 10,000 men. As Field further points out:

'...there was nothing shameful about the British general's withdrawal of his untried column from an ambush executed by a force of Boers superior in number and commanded by the most competent Transvaal soldier. What was shameful was that Carrington kept on running, and without good reason.'

According to Chaplain Green, there were widespread feelings of shame among Carrington's force as they scurried back to Zeerust pursued by what turned out to be only a small Boer contingent of less than 100 men. Carrington's action was eventually viewed as a dishonorable retreat and he was shortly thereafter replaced, '...leaving the Australians of his command in the hands of more capable leaders' (Green, 1903).

Ottoshoop

From Zeerust, Carrington's force headed west towards Mafeking via the small town of Ottoshoop, which was occupied on 14 August. Between 16-19 August the Imperial Bushmen were involved in the battle of Buffels Hoek, located a few miles outside of Ottoshoop (Wallace, 282-4). This was followed by a period of consolidation of their position, recuperation from the weeks of fighting and travel, and routine patrol of the surrounding district. It was during one such patrol that Trooper Frank Andrews was killed by a Boer sniper. While the precise details of Frank's time in South Africa are unclear, the circumstances of his death at Ottoshoop on 26 August 1900 are outlined in a number of letters written to the family after the event and published in local newspapers. From these accounts it appears that Trooper Andrews, riding the horse of Trooper A A Graham from Woonona, was shot on 26 August whilst taking a message to "A" Company's Captain Ryrie that he was to retire. Frank apparently died immediately from the wounds he received, though the Wollongong monument and the official war historian P.L. Murray (1911, 91) give his official date of death as 27 August 1900. Whatever the truth, Trooper Frank Andrews - the first Imperial Bushman to be killed in action - was buried on 27 August with full military honours.

Official notice of his death was published in the Illawarra Mercury of 8 September 1900. This suggests that military authorities had informed the family relatively quickly of the loss of their son. The local newspapers later made reference to the circumstances of Frank's death, including in their reports copies
of letters to the Andrews family from other Illawarra soldiers fighting in the Transvaal. The most telling was from Frank's commander, Captain Ryrie. It was received by the family on 19 October and published in the South Coast Times the following day:

**The Captain's Tribute**

Mrs. Andrews, of Wollongong, received the following letter yesterday from Captain Ryrie, A Squadron, Imperial Bushmen: - Otto's Hoop, South Africa, Sept. 3rd, 1900

'Dear Mrs. Andrews

It grieves me very much to have to write to you to tell you of the death of your son; no doubt you have already learned of the sad occurrence. It took place the other day while we were out patrolling. The poor fellow was shot in the back when we were retiring from a position. I know that nothing I can say can lighten the burden of your sorrow, but it will be some solace to you to know that I as his captain can truthfully say that there was not a better man in my command; that he was respected by all his comrades and died like a true soldier.

I had him buried here in the cemetery by Mr. Reynolds, our Church of England Chaplain, and he was taken there on a gun carriage attended by a large crowd of his regiment. I am sincerely sorry and only wish I could do something to lighten your grief. I will see the disposal of his personal effects, and his pay which amounts to some £15 will be forwarded to you in due course.

Again expressing my regret and hoping that God will give you strength to bear bravely the bereavement of losing such a good son as I know he must have been.'

Following the regiment's return to Australia in July 1901, Frank's personal stirrups and a few other mementos were presented to the family by Captain Ryrie, who himself had been slightly wounded at Wonderfontein on 11 September. According to Mrs. Everard, Captain (later Major-General) Ryrie afterwards became a good friend of the family. Frank's stirrups were subsequently silver-
plated and mounted by the fireplace in the house at Bourke Street. Just prior to receiving Captain Ryrie's letter, Mrs. Andrews had also received another from the Bushmen's chaplain, the Reverend J. Reynolds (South Coast Times, 13 October 1900):

'My Dear Mrs. Andrews

As Church of England Chaplain to the Imperial Bushmen, under Col. Mackay, it is only right that I should let you know that your son, F. Andrews, who was shot by the Boers, was decently and properly buried. Let me assure you of my sincere sympathy in your sad affliction. May God himself grant you comfort in your loss.

It will console you to know that your son did not suffer pain and agony, as he died immediately. Our colonel, officers, and troops, attended the funeral. The grave is in Ottoshoop cemetery; and the burial party, troopers from your son's squadron, have cut out the name on a stone, and placed it at the head of the grave.'

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Two further letters published in the South Coast Times during October and November make mention of the circumstances surrounding Frank's death. The first appeared in the paper on 20 October 1900, as follows:

Mrs. Andrews, of Bourke-street, is in receipt of the following letter from Trooper Ross Willmot (now in South Africa) and having reference to the death of Trooper F. Andrews: -

'The news I have for you is not very welcome, though I suppose you have heard it already; it is the news of poor Frank's death. I am very sorry to say that Frank was shot by the Boers, on the 26th instant, while taking a message to the captain of A Squadron to retire.

Well, Mrs. Andrews, you have the sympathy of myself and the whole of A Squadron. He was loved by all who knew him. He went out in the morning in good spirits and in good health, and it gave me a great surprise when the sad news came in that poor Frank Andrews had been shot.
But you know that God can see further than we can, and we are taught to say in our prayers "Thy will be done," and I trust that God will comfort you in your sad bereavement, is the prayer of Frank's true friend and comrade, who feels his loss very much. But God only knows who will be next, "We know not the hour when the son of Man cometh," it may be me or it may be some other of my comrades, but I trust that whoever it is that we may be prepared to meet our God and Maker.

I must tell you that I have a ring and a few little things of Frank's that I will keep for you until I return to Sydney, if I am spared to return, and I pray that the war will soon be over. I must now conclude with my deepest sympathy.'

The other letter appeared in the South Coast Times of 24 November 1900 as follows:

**From the Front**
The following letter has just been received by Mr. E.A. Graham, Woonona, from his brother Trooper A.A. Graham, Imperial Bushmen, now in South Africa:

'Since my last writing to you we have reached Ottoshoop, and have had a days' fighting with the Boers; there were about a dozen of our chaps captured. The first Imperial Bushman to be killed on the field was young Andrews, from Wollongong. He was riding my horse that afternoon, while I was signalling. Young Charlie Bode got a bullet in his wrist. I have had a few narrow squeaks; for instance, four of us went out on patrol. We were to go about two miles and the corporal in charge went about 4 or 5 miles; the consequence was we were surrounded by the Boers, who started firing at us from all sides. We made desperate tracks for home. The corporal was shot through the ankle and shoulder, and his mate had his horse shot from under him. The other fellow and myself arrived home safe and sound. I call this a bit of luck; the bullets were whizzing all around us making the dust fly. I can tell you sincerely it puts the fear of God in you. A great number of our chaps are badly wounded, generally through patrol duty...'
The New South Wales Imperial Bushmen’s lack of military training and knowledge of Boer guerilla strategy - whereby they would continually strike unannounced and swiftly retreat, or use sniper tactics as opposed to open, massed confrontation on the battlefield - was telling on the young and inexperienced Australians, with many horses killed and soldiers wounded in those first campaigns of August 1900. However they quickly acclimatised and went on to play an important part in the eventual defeat of the Boers. Young men from the Illawarra region continued to enlist, and as late as April 1902 it was noted that seven members of the Bulli "F" Company had volunteered to join the Commonwealth Horse Contingent then in camp at Berry, prior to leaving for South Africa where the Pretoria Treaty was to be signed the following month.

Frank Andrews was only 20 at the time of his death, and one of 251 Australians killed in action during the course of the Boer War. Another 267 succumbed to disease whilst in South Africa. Of the Imperial Bushmen contingent, 1 officer and 20 soldiers were killed or died in South Africa. Frank was the first Imperial Bushman to be killed in action. The fact that he had been shot in the back would have made it all the more difficult for his family to bear. As Mrs. Everard recounted, his mother was shattered by the news and never fully recovered from the shock.

The Frank Andrews Memorial

Less than two months after Frank Andrew's death in South Africa, members of the Illawarra community raised the idea of erecting a public memorial in his honour, and one which could also serve as a remembrance of those who had left Australia to fight the Boers. This initiative resulted in the getting up of a public committee during the early part of 1901. By November it had raised £40, including £10 promised by the New South Wales Government. The committee's activities culminated in the erection of the Trooper Andrews memorial water fountain. It was unveiled amid much ceremony on 2 June 1902, in a prominent position on the corner of Crown and Kembla Streets, Wollongong, adjacent to the Wollongong Town Hall.

The unveiling ceremony was performed by the Reverend J.A. Reynolds, the same gentleman who had originally buried Frank in Ottoshoop cemetery. It was attended by Frank's immediate family, local community members and dignitaries, plus fellow Boer War veterans from the district and the Imperial Bushmen's contingent, including Lt. Jack O'Brien and Troopers Meredith and Smith. The monument was of carved local sandstone, with a marble water fountain at its centre, and 3 spent shell casings on top. A white marble tablet bore the following inscription:
Erected by the Citizens
To Commemorate the Death of
Trooper Frank Andrews
Who was Killed in Action at
Ottoshoop S. Africa
27th August 1900,
Aged 20 years
A Volunteer with
The 1st Imperial Bushmen

The whole structure was designed and built by monumental mason Frederick William Rose of Wollongong. The Frank Andrews monument is significant in both its grandeur and rarity as a Boer War monument - pre-dating as it does the many edifices erected after the ANZAC attack at Gallipoli in 1915. It also stands as an expression of unity of purpose by the Wollongong community at a time when the Commonwealth of Australia was newly born. Another local Boer War monument was erected in Shellharbour to commemorate the death of Samuel Charles Atchison at Rensburg on 22 February 1900, again got up by public subscription and serving to forever remind local residents of the price paid by these sons of Illawarra in defense of the Empire.

The Trooper Andrews memorial water fountain (sans water and shell casings) today stands in MacCabe Park, Wollongong, opposite the Wollongong RSL (Returned Services Leagues) Club, and alongside monuments to World Wars I & II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Its former location at the corner of Crown and Kembla Streets, Wollongong, is graced with a new fountain bearing a richly detailed Aboriginal motif.

Whilst the Boer War claimed only a few local lives, the increasing numbers of those who fell in later wars could no longer be accommodated on a single monument, giving rise to their proliferation throughout the district. Wollongong in 1900 was still a small country town, and as such a monument to a single event - such as a mining disaster, or the death of a soldier of foreign soil - was most appropriate. The Trooper Andrews memorial serves both to individually honour the man, and also remind us of those with whom he fought. Lest we forget.
Acknowledgements

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