



Australian Light Horse

The Australian Light Horse Regiment were a mounted troop with characteristics of both cavalry and mounted infantry, who served in the Second Boer War and World War I. During the inter-war years, a number of regiments were raised as part of Australia's part-time military force. These units were gradually mechanised either before or during World War II, although only a small number undertook operational service during the war. A number of Australian light horse units are still in existence today, including the 2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment (Queensland Mounted Infantry), now an armoured reconnaissance unit equipped primarily with the ASLAV armoured fighting vehicle.

Origins

The Australian Light Horse was established as the outcome of a doctrinal debate which took place in military circles in Australia in the late 19th century concerning the future of mounted troops.

World War I

Light horse were like mounted infantry in that they usually fought dismounted, using their horses as transport to the battlefield and as a means of swift disengagement when retreating or retiring. A famous exception to this rule though was the charge of the 4th and 12th Light Horse Regiments at Beersheba on 31 October 1917

Each regiment initially had a troop of two Maxim guns but during the Gallipoli Campaign, where the light horse served dismounted, this was increased to four guns..[[]

Gallipoli and the Sinai and Palestine campaign

At the start of World War I, Australia committed to provide an all volunteer expeditionary force of 20,000 personnel known as the Australian Imperial Force, which would consist of an infantry division and a light horse brigade.

The light horse regiment's first involvement in the fighting during the war came during the Gallipoli Campaign, where the troops of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Light Horse Brigades were sent to Gallipoli without their horses to provide reinforcements for the infantry.

Western Front

The 13th Light Horse Regiment and one squadron of the 4th Light Horse Regiment served on the Western Front.