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BROTHERS IN ARMS



Charles and Hubert Gould

Harold E. Hayward

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The Conference of Churches of Christ in NSW will consider for publication short papers on historical and theological topics relevant to the development of Churches of Christ. The publication of as paper does constitute an official endorsement of the views expressed therein

Whenever the word Gallipoli is mentioned most Australians think of the landings at Anzac Cove where soldiers of the Australian New Zealand Army Corps came ashore in the Dardanelles on 25 April 1915. The name Krithia means nothing but it was here where Australian soldiers won their first battle honours. Krithia is a village in the south of the peninsula about six kilometres from Cape Helles. It was at Cape Helles where the main British and French Forces landed in the campaign against the Turks.

As at ANZAC COVE the Anglo/French landings met with mixed success and bogged down within a few days to trench warfare. Early in May 1915, Victorians of the 2nd Brigade and a New Zealand Brigade were withdrawn from ANZAC Cove and sent in to assist the advance against the entrenched Turks. The New Zealand Brigade was sent in first but made little progress up the steep ridges. Then late on the afternoon of 8 May as the soldiers of the Australian brigade were digging in and preparing a meal, they were ordered to attack over grassy scrub land. They had little time to form up. Official war historian Charles Bean (below, left) describes the scene as follows:

Everyone was cramming his mess tin into his pack, harnessing up and falling in.....within a quarter of an hour the first two battalions were moving out.....One has often read with wonder the feats of famous infantry which has gone into action as if it were drilling on a parade ground advancing carelessly under a hail of bullets as if it were an affair of everyday. But I have never read anything finer in history than the way in which this disciplined, seasoned, trained Australian infantry went out. They

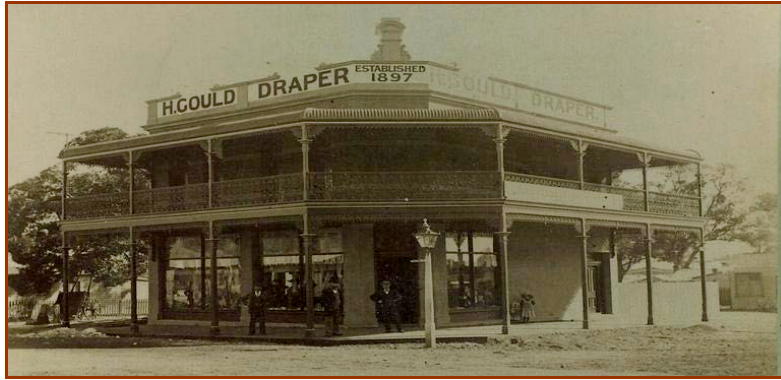
reckoned those bullets were no more than a summer shower. I have a distinct picture in my memory of one youngster walking steadily into that storm with his entrenching spade held in his left hand a little in front of his face.....whilst he looked out from under the shelter of it exactly as man looks around his umbrella when walking in the rain down a city street.¹



The Australians advanced about 900 metres. But this glorious (and ultimately futile) charge came at a dreadful cost. The advance halted in front of the Turkish trenches about two kilometres from Krithia and a stalemate developed. Over 1000 soldiers were killed or wounded—about one third of the Brigade's strength. The two ANZAC brigades were returned to Anzac Cove where, reinforced, they supported the beachhead. Among the wounded at Cape Helles was Sergeant-Major Charles Henry Gould. Writing to his aunt in Bendigo in October 1915 he said "Since it has been mentioned in the papers, I suppose I can tell you that it was my brigade that made the now famous charge at Cape Helles. That was where Cpl. Howard and Sergeants Watson, Tiller and myself were wounded".²

Early Years

Charles Gould was born in Bendigo in 1884, the elder son of Henry and Frances. Henry arrived in Victoria as an unassisted immigrant in 1871. It seems he may have moved to Western Australia try his luck on the gold fields of Kalgoorlie but then returned to Victoria where he set up a drapery business in Bendigo. Henry was interested in temperance issues and he and Frances were possibly members of Bendigo Church of Christ.³ The aunt with whom Charles corresponded during the war, a Mrs. S.C. Hunter, was a member of that church.



Gould's Drapery Store in Subiaco

In 1887 Henry sold the drapery business and the family returned to Western Australia where he opened another drapery business in Subiaco, then an outer suburb of Perth. It is known that in 1903 (and probably earlier) Henry was an officer at the Subiaco Church of Christ and according to accounts in the *Westralian* it seems that other members of the family were also active in the church around that time.⁴ Growing up in the west, Charles undertook an apprenticeship as a sign writer. His name is not mentioned in the *Westralian* accounts and it is possible that he had returned to Victoria where he had his fruitful encounter with Andrew McKenzie Meldrum.

In 1906, with Meldrum (minister of Swanston Street, Melbourne, Church of Christ) he undertook an epic voyage of discovery to the South Pacific. Their small ketch, "La Ventura," was wrecked off Borneo and the intrepid travellers continued by other means to the Orient. Gould left Meldrum at that stage and may have gone to the United States (see following). Meldrum travelled on to Scotland. The story of their dangerous journey is told elsewhere.⁵ Charles used his artistic skills to make water colour paintings of scenes during the journey. Some of these water colour paintings survive.



The Gould family. Back: Hubert, May, Charles. Front: Gwen, Francis, Henry, Eileen
(family photo – used with permission)

Henry's business prospered and in 1907 together with wife Frances, daughters Victoria May ("May") and Esther Gwendoline ("Gwen") and their younger son Hubert, they travelled to the United States. Their elder son Charles might have

joined them there after his adventures in the Pacific. Their daughters May and Gwen married and remained in America. Hubert married an Australian girl, Beatrice Grace ("Gracie") Watts, in Cincinnati, in 1908. They initially made their home in Seattle but later returned to Sydney and lived in Manly. Henry and Frances returned to Melbourne around 1912 and became associated with the Carnegie church. On his enlistment papers, Charles gave his address as Caulfield and listed his mother Frances as next of kin.

War Service

Charles enlisted on 16 December 1914 and was appointed to the 6th Battalion. The 6th Battalion was raised in Victoria and became part of the Second Brigade. Being a mature experienced man with upright bearing and previous service in the cadets, Charles was ideal NCO material. He was appointed to the rank of sergeant, later being promoted to sergeant-major.



Anzac Cove 1915

After minimal training, the 6th Battalion was shipped out to Egypt in February 1915 and thence to Gallipoli. The battalion landed at Anzac Cove on April 25 and took casualties. As indicated, as part of the Second Brigade, it was then sent to Cape Helles early in May. The battalion returned to Anzac Cove and fought in some notable engagements including the action at Lone Pine. But, having been wounded at Cape Helles, Charles was not with them.



Captain Charles Gould, c 1917

Charles made light of his wounds, dismissing it as a piece of “metal in his leg”. But they were sufficiently bad for him to be sent to England to recuperate. In 1916, he rejoined his battalion in France where he soon distinguished himself. Later that year, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant and awarded the Military Medal. He subsequently served in Belgium.⁶

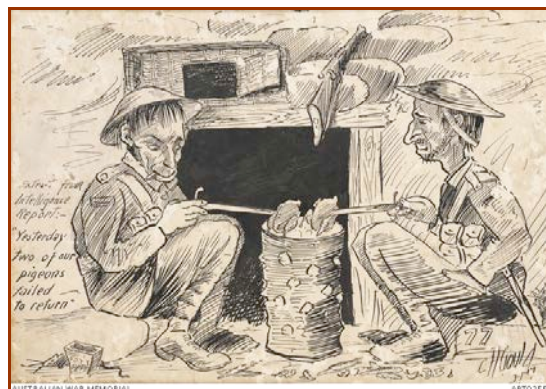
During his service Charles regularly sent home letters to his aunt, Mrs. Hunter, in Bendigo. Some of them were published in local papers. The following letter describes in great detail the conditions he saw in France in 1917:

A beautiful summer's day to-day, and it is about time we had a good one.....The villages and towns are all destroyed, churches, cross roads and buildings blown up, smaller buildings pulled down, and farm implements all destroyed....There are no inhabitants here now, soldiers only, and line after line of barbed wire which was intended by the enemy to hold us back. The push has commenced on another portion of the front, and Fritz has lost heavily. One of our Australian divisions made a fine advanced but was not supported and lost heavily. We are living and eating in a stable that was partly destroyed. We got busy with some repairs, and it is quite comfortable now. To look at the village it seems as if every place is quite destroyed, but we have over 2000 men under cover now.⁷



Soldiers of the 6th Battalion occupying recently deserted German trench in Picardy, August 1918.

Having been mentioned in despatches, Charles was promoted to Captain in May 1918. He was mentioned in despatches again in July 1919. While in France and Belgium he produced cartoons and sketches of life around him. Most of these paintings were made after the Armistice on 11 November 1918 but may have been based on earlier sketches. The following provides an example of “Aussie humour.”



“Two of our pigeons failed to return”

Charles Gould (front, centre) with platoon members, c 1918 probably at Ypres. (Courtesy of the Australian War Memorial)



Back in Australia

Charles returned to Australia in November 1919 and applied for an allotment under the soldier resettlement scheme. He was allocated an irrigated block at Red Cliffs (in north western Victoria) and probably moved there with his father Henry and mother Frances early in 1922. The work of turning the mallee scrub into arable farmlands was a difficult one but Charles' experience on the high seas and in the army had well equipped him for a pioneering role. The area became a centre for the growing of grapes and citrus fruits.

Among the new settlers moving in were Churches of Christ members. This led in 1923 to the formation of Red Cliffs Church of Christ. Henry and Charles Gould were elected to its first board of officers. Henry was appointed chairman of the Board in 1924 but was unwell and stood down. He was replaced by Charles. Charles continued as chairman in 1925 and as an officer until 1928.⁸

Charles married May Wilson in 1926. They had no children. Charles wrote many letters to nephews some of which he illustrated with cartoons. These letters illustrate contemporary home and farm life. Extracts follow:

12 August 1923. More rain today and it was the day for the opening of the new church at Red Cliffs. The showers were very obliging as they remained in the sky while we drove to the church.....Quite a lot of people came and the service was fine.

6 April 1924. We are having grand weather now and grandpa, grandma and I all had a real nice time driving to church. Grandpa drove Teddy [the horse] all the way home. Teddy enjoyed it because he was able to stop and eat thistles by the road).

20 July 1924. Since grandpa and grandma have had a car to visit they have been leading the gay life. Last week they went out three nights in succession....Thursday to Mildura and the pumps and today out twice.⁹

Father Henry died in 1928 and Frances in 1944.

Community Service

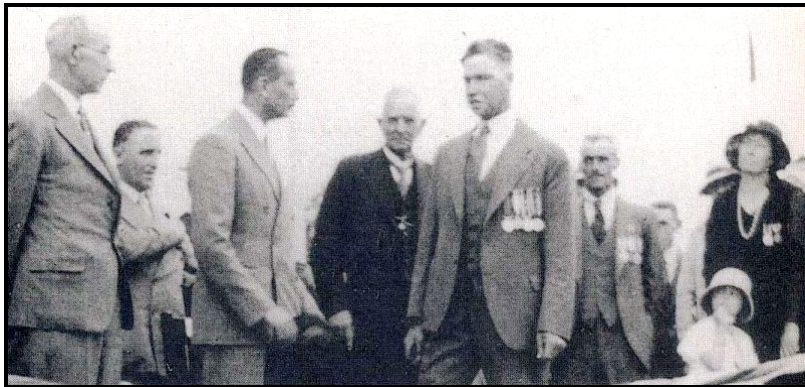
During the 1930s Charles became more involved in local and community affairs and was correspondingly less involved with the church. During the Second World War he joined the Voluntary Defence Corps with his former rank of Captain, being discharged in October 1945. He maintained an involvement in military matters by

participation in Legacy and the Returned Serviceman's League. He was a foundation member of the Red Cliffs Returned Serviceman's League, serving as its President on three occasions.



Charles Gould to his nephew on the opening of the Red Cliffs Swimming Pool

From 1952 to 1964 he served on the Mildura Shire Council, including a term as Shire President (1955–1956). He was the founder of the Red Cliffs Senior Citizens' Club and its president (1964–1968). He was also a founder of the Red Cliffs Bowling and Golf Clubs and was awarded a life membership of the Red Cliffs Swimming Club for his "untiring efforts in establishing a pool" in the town.¹⁰ He was an active member of the Mildura Art Gallery and represented fruit growers on the Australian Dried Fruit Association and the Victorian Central Citrus Association.



Charles Gould meets the Duke of Gloucester, 1936. Gould was at the time Chairman of No.24 District (Irrigation) Board (photo from Ken Wright, *A Land Fit for Heroes*)

Community Recognition

In recognition of his community service he was made an MBE (Member of the British Empire) in 1968. The award was announced in the New Year's honours but the investiture was delayed. Now in his 85th year, Gould became seriously ill and the investiture was made at his bedside in Red Cliffs hospital on October 1. He died ten days later.

There was a massive turnout for his funeral. The *Sunraysia Daily* reported a crowd of over 200 mourners at the service at Red Cliffs Church of Christ. The little chapel was overwhelmed. Pallbearers included representatives of the Mildura Shire Council, Red Cliffs Returned Serviceman's League and the Mildura Legacy Club. Members of the Red Cliffs Senior Citizens' Club formed a guard of honour outside the chapel.¹¹

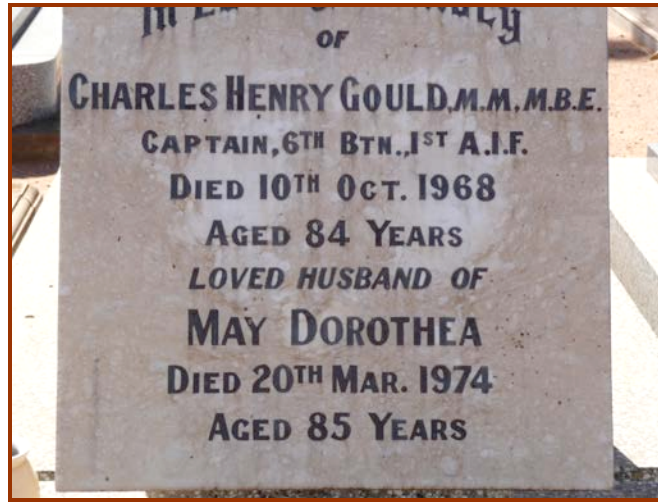


Photo courtesy of Liz Milne, Red Cliffs

Hubert Gould

Hubert [name incorrectly recorded as “Herbert” on the Nominal Roll] enlisted in August/September 1914 and was sent as reinforcement to the 4th Battalion in February 1915. His address on enlistment was shown as Manly and his occupation was shown as “engineer.”¹² This background in engineering may have influenced his appointment as a commissioned officer (second lieutenant). Later he was transferred to an engineering corps.

The 4th Battalion, which was raised in N.S.W, participated in the Anzac landing on 25 April. Hubert served at Gallipoli until the evacuation. Like his brother Charles, Hubert corresponded with his aunt in Bendigo. One such letter describes the desperate nature of the fighting:

I got the post of honour in one of our two advanced posts and held it for 36 hours, with the Turks about 40 yards away on both sides and in the front. We were cut off in daylight from our troops, but had a very strong position. There were eleven of us fighting and working without sleep, and with very little food, for two nights.¹³

Around this time he was slightly wounded but dismissed his wounds as “a few chunks of metal in my left arm muscle and one in the muscles of the back”.

In France

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the 4th Battalion returned to Egypt and was sent to France in March 1916. From then until 1918 it was deployed in heavy fighting in the Somme Valley and around Ypres in Belgium. At the time of the relocation of the battalion to France, Hubert was appointed with the rank of major to the 2nd Field Company. This was part of the 1st Division Engineers, a headquarters group to which the 4th Battalion and other battalions were attached through their relevant brigades. Such specialised groups emerged as warfare became more sophisticated.

The transfer to a specialised corps may have relieved Hubert from the tedium of defensive trench warfare, but the work was no less dangerous. Not long after his deployment to France (June 1916), Hubert sent the following letter to his aunt in Bendigo:

We spent Easter Sunday in France about 1000 yards from the firing line. We have a lovely billet that has escaped the general destruction that most of the farm houses have had. Only one shell has landed on this billet, and that was last September, when the poor old lady of the farm was killed. The way people keep going about their places so near the firing line is amazing. Conditions of warfare in France are different to Gallipoli. Stray missiles come to earth in France.....Most of the fire is directed on an opponents' gun positions.....The French people are working in the fields despite the stray shells.....Gallipoli was a real campaign, but here in France it is a picnic.¹⁴

Beware of Stray Missiles

But this was the relative calm before the storm and things were probably a little different in the front-line trenches. In 1918 the big German and Allied counter "make-or-break" offensives began.

On May 6 1918, Hubert and four other officers were standing outside their trench at Borre (Nord Pas de Calais, not far from Dunkirk and the Belgian border) eating breakfast. The casualness of the situation suggests that the five officers had no sense of imminent danger. Suddenly a shell burst among them. Three were killed on the spot. Hubert and another officer were badly injured and taken to the casualty clearing station. Hubert died on 8 May and was buried in the Ebbingham Military Cemetery. He was only 31 years of age.



(family photo – used with permission)

A response to an outstanding query about Hubert's death indicates that Charles was with his brother before he died. The slightly irritated matron of the Huddersfield War Hospital wrote to a lady enquirer on 15 August as follows:

Dear Madam,

With reference to your enquiry for particulars of the death and burial of Major Hubert Valentine Gould, 2nd Field Coy Australian Engineers 1st Division, which I see is inserted again in this months Enquiry List, and my letter to you, I should be grateful, if you would kindly inform me whether you have heard from his brother from France ? I forwarded your enquiry to him about a fortnight ago, and cannot understand having had no reply, unless he has written direct

to you. He was with his brother from the time he was wounded on 6th of May until his death on the 8th, and could give you all particulars, and would I am sure do so.¹⁵

The matron then added a note by hand *“unless he has not had time to write recently or has himself been wounded.”*

It is likely that “lack of time” was the answer. In July/August 1918, Charles’ 6th Battalion was involved in heavy fighting around Hamel, Amiens and Villers-Bretonneux.

Meanwhile back home

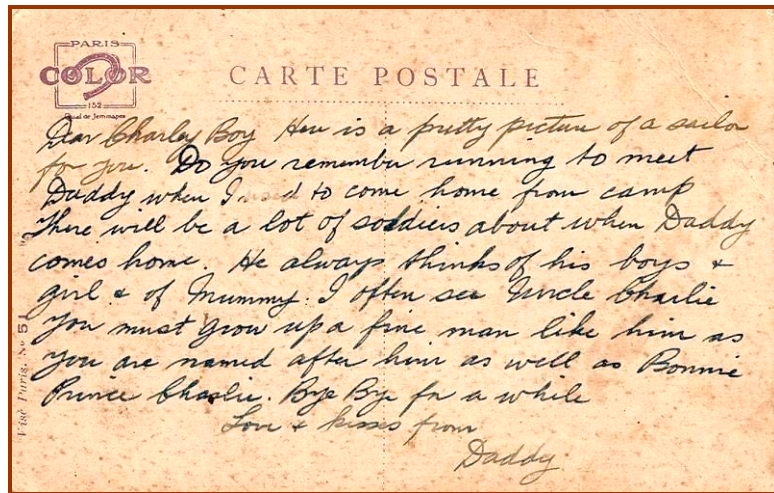
Word of Hubert’s death reached Australia fairly quickly, however. Two death notices for Hubert appeared in the *Bendigonian* on 30 May—one from his parents and other from the aunt to whom he and Charles regularly wrote, Mrs. S.C. Hunter. The eulogistic verses on each notice indicate a Christian connection.

A news item in the same newspaper on the same day reads as follows [quoted in full because of its poignancy and its summary qualities]:

Bro. and Sister Gould of the church at Carnegie have been notified (says “The Australian Christian” the official organ of the Church of Christ) that their younger son, Major H.V. Gould has died in his fourth years of service abroad. Enlisting in 1914 in Sydney (where he leaves a widow and three children) he rapidly gained promotion and has been on continuous service. His only brother Captain C.H. Gould MM is still on service. Major Gould was a native of Bendigo, passed through the Sunday school of the Bendigo Church of Christ and was a member of that church to the time of his departure from Bendigo. His name appears on the church’s honour roll in the Temperance Hall, View Street. His brother Captain Gould has just been awarded the DSO and the news of this distinction was received by the family on the morning of the day on which the cable notifying Major Gould’s death later came to hand.¹⁶



Sadly, Hubert’s children born in 1909 (William), 1911 (Nora) and 1913 (Charles) would have had almost no recollection of their father. Hubert’s wife Grace died in 1968. One can only imagine the difficulties she had in raising infants in that situation and guiding them through the troubled times of the Depression. William and Charles (possibly named after his illustrious uncle) went on to serve in the Second World War.



Reverse of postcard from Hubert Gould to his son Charles Edward (sent from France)

Concluding Observations

When Australians remember the First World War they inevitably think of Anzac Cove. They are generally unaware of the role of Australian soldiers at Cape Helles. Around 8000 soldiers died in the Gallipoli campaigns. Many of the survivors of that campaign went to France in 1916. In the fighting at Fromelles later that year, around 2000 died in one night. Over the course of the war the 6th Battalion (to which Charles was attached) lost 1066 killed and 2017 wounded. That level of casualties was about three times the nominal strength of the battalion.

All told, in France and Belgium 46,000 young men were killed.¹⁷ And of those who survived, many had not seen their loved ones for three or four years.

This is not the place to speculate on the fascination that Anzac Cove holds for many Australian—a fascination which possibly owes more to its evacuation and the need to make sense out of a defeat. It is the place to recognise the contribution to the nation of two fine young men. Blest by survival and longevity, Charles went on to become notable community builder in the Sunraysia area of Victoria.

H.E.Hayward

Acknowledgements

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References

- ¹ C.E. Bean, "Australians at Cape Helles," in the *Morning Bulletin* 5 August 1915, 5.
- ² *Bendigonian* 14 October 1915, 31.
- ³ A "Sister Gould of Western Australia" is mentioned in the *Jubilee Pictorial History* (1903) as an early surviving member of the Bendigo church.

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- ⁴ Henry Gould appears in a photo of the Subiaco church officers in Maston, A.B. (ed), *Jubilee Pictorial History of Churches of Christ in Australia*, Austral Publishing, 1903, 89. A report in the *Western Australian* of the Annual Conference of the Churches of Christ in Western Australia on 2 April 1904, indicates that H. Gould was appointed to the state Home Missionary Committee and a Miss E. Gould was appointed to the Foreign Missionary Committee. The latter was probably Henry's daughter Esther. A report of the Churches of Christ Scripture Examination in September 1905 records a mark of 96% for Miss M. Gould of Subiaco (Distinction) and a mark of 74% for Mr H. Gould of Subiaco in the Teachers' and Officers' division. These would be Mary and Hubert respectively.
- ⁵ H.E. Hayward and D.C. Nutt, *Enmore Incorporated* (Sydney: Freshhope, 2014), chapter 15.
- ⁶ *Australian Christian* 5 October 1916, 605.
- ⁷ *Bendigonian* 12 July 1917.
- ⁸ H.E. Hayward, "Charles Gould Hero and Community Builder," *Australian Churches of Christ Historical Society Digest* March 2013.
- ⁹ From letters and cartoons held by the Red Cliffs Historical Society.
- ¹⁰ "Mr. C. Gould to get MBE," in *Sunraysia Daily* 14 October 1968.
- ¹¹ "200 attend funeral of Mr. C.H. Gould," in *Sunraysia Daily* 14 October 1968.
- ¹² He was an employee of the Sydney Harbour Trust.
- ¹³ *Bendigo Advertiser* 7 October 1915, 8.
- ¹⁴ *Bendigonian* 29 June 1916, 2.
- ¹⁵ It is not known who the enquirer was.
- ¹⁶ *Bendigonian* 30 May 1918, 21.
- ¹⁷ Les Carlyon, "The Worst of the Great War came after Gallipoli," in the *Weekend Australian* May 31-June 1 2014.