

Extract from *"The Fighting 10th"*, Adelaide, Webb & Son, 1936 by C.B.L. Lock; kindly supplied courtesy of the 10<sup>th</sup> Bn AIF Association Committee, April 2015.

## **LOUITIT, Noel Medway DSO & Bar; MID (three times)**

Born 8 March 1894 at St Peters, South Australia.

Son of Thomas Inkster Loutit, who for a number of years was Secretary of Geo P Harris, Scarfe & Co.

He was educated at the Norwood Public School and in 1919 commenced an engineering course at the South Australian School of Mines and Industries.

He started as a cadet in the fitting department of that institution, but in 1911 discontinued the course.

At the outbreak of the Great War he was still a student of engineering, and was residing with his parents at Salop Street, Kensington.

He was a compulsory trainee, and received his first commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the 78th (Adelaide Rifles) Infantry on 16 October 1913, and held this commission at the time of joining the AIF. He was the last Officer to be taken on the strength of the original 10th Battalion prior to embarkation.

He was appointed 2nd Lieutenant in the 10th Battalion at Morphettville on 19 September 1914, and was posted to original G Company in lieu of Lieutenant K E Green, who through the illness of Captain H W H Seager was Acting-Commanding Officer of original C Company.

He accompanied the Battalion to Egypt on *HMAT A11 Ascanius*, and at Mena, Egypt, in January 1915 when his company merged with original D Company he was appointed Platoon Commander in same and promoted to the rank of Lieutenant on 1 February 1915. He landed with his company from the destroyer *Scourge* at the historic landing on 25 April 1915.

During the actual landing he succoured No. 722 Bugler F T Broughton, who was mortally wounded, and whom he lifted out of the boat.

Later that day he distinguished himself by penetrating a great distance inland, which for many years was considered to be a record established that day by any member of the AIF. He led his party of thirty-two men. He and Private Fordham then left the party at a knoll and went forward to another (Scrubby Knoll), about a quarter of a mile away, to see what was there.

In 1934, from fresh evidence supplied, Dr C E W Bean considered that Private A S Blackburn and Private Phil Robin probably exceeded the distance travelled inland by Loutit and Fordham. On the additional evidence submitted he said:

*"With Private Fordham I passed Third Ridge and saw the waters of the Narrows. I saw no one in front of me nor on either side but Turks. I wish I had seen some of our men. I would have been glad of their help. I don't know how far it was inland in direct distance. When we got back to the Battalion four days later there were only about eleven men."*

He subsequently was invalided sick from the Peninsula, and after being admitted to hospital joined the Battalion again in the line at Anzac about 31 October 1915. He accompanied the 10th when withdrawn to Lemnos on 21 November 1915 and proceeded to Egypt with the Battalion, and at Gebel Habieta, on 1 March 1916 was transferred to the 50th Battalion as Adjutant, having been promoted to the temporary rank of Captain whilst on the Peninsula. On 20 February 1916 he was promoted to the rank of full Captain, and for his valuable services rendered in connection with the landing at Anzac was mentioned in Army Corps Routine Orders. He proceeded with the 50th Battalion to France, and on 28 October 1916 attained his majority.

For his gallantry at Noreuil on 2-4 April 1917 he was awarded the ***Distinguished Service Order*** (DSO), which was promulgated in the London Gazette, amongst the King's Birthday Honours on 4 June 1917, the official citation being:

*"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in laying out the jumping-off tape under heavy shell and rifle fire. Later he took forward a machine gun and platoon and opened a surprise burst of fire into the enemy, thus relieving the pressure at a critical time. He did not leave the front until the whole front was secure."*

Probably within the whole British army during the Great War no DSO and Bar were won by the same officer within such a remarkably short time.

He was ***Mentioned In Despatches*** (MID) on three occasions, vide London Gazette on 1 June 1917, 25 December 1917 and 11 July 1919.

On 22 October 1917 he was seconded for duty with the 13th Training Battalion, and on the 29 October 1917 was appointed to Command the 13th Training Battalion.

After several months in England he subsequently returned to France and on 22 March 1918 was first appointed to the Command of the 45th Battalion, and did not relinquish same until subsequently wounded and forced to evacuate.

On 2 September 1918 he was promoted to the rank of temporary Lieutenant-Colonel and appointed to temporarily Command the 45th.

On 1 December 1919 he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and permanently appointed to Commanding Officer (C.O.) of the 45th Battalion.

He subsequently proceeded to England, where he embarked on the Raranga, arriving back in Adelaide on 25 November 1919.

His services in the AIF terminating on 7 January 1920.

During his absence from Australia he was appointed a Lieutenant in the 78th (Adelaide) Rifles Infantry on 1 July 1915, and with the same rank was transferred to 2nd/10th Infantry on 1 October 1918. He was promoted to the rank of Captain in 2nd/10th Infantry on 1 August 1920 and placed on Reserve of Officers with rank of Major on 1 October 1920. He was transferred to the 27th Battalion on 19 May 1927 and Commanded that unit from 15 June 1927 to 14 June 1930, when he assumed the provisional rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. With rank of Major he was placed on the Unattached List on 13 June 1930.

On 13 November 1920 he married Stella, daughter of W J Ponder, there being one son and one daughter from the union.

During the South Australian waterfront dispute in October 1928, he was appointed Commanding Officer of the Essential Services Maintenance Corps by the South Australian Government.

For several years he officiated as Manager of Yellow Cabs Ltd; but on 31 July 1935 resigned that position, and next day commenced duties with the Shell Co. of Australia Ltd as General Administrative Officer, transport of Australia. It was anticipated that in that capacity he would be subsequently transferred to Melbourne.

In 1935 he was residing at Rossington Avenue, Fullarton Estate.