

Gunner of Renown



Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company

Lieutenant General Sir John Dudley LAVARACK, KCMG, KCVO, KBE, CMG, DSO

(1885-1957)

John Lavarack was commissioned in the Permanent Military Forces on 7 August 1905 and was appointed lieutenant, Royal Australian Artillery. His junior regimental postings took him to Sydney, Brisbane, Townsville, Thursday Island and Queenscliff, Victoria.

He attended the Staff College, Camberley, from early 1913 until the outbreak of World War I. After working at the War Office, London, he was promoted brigade major, 22nd (British) Divisional Artillery in February 1915. The division was sent to France in September; in November it was redeployed to Salonica (Thessaloniki), Greece. By May 1916, Major Lavarack was Staff Officer, Royal Artillery, at XVI Corps headquarters.

Lavarack had been appointed to the AIF in February 1915 but despite repeated requests he was not permitted to leave Macedonia until July 1916 when he joined the 2nd Division for the operations at Pozieres, France. He commanded two field batteries and was Brigade Major, 5th Divisional Artillery during the subsequent fighting on the Somme and the advance to the Hindenburg line. One of the few Australian officers with staff college training, he was transferred in May 1917 to the headquarters of the 1st Division where he worked under Colonel Thomas Blamey.

Lavarack went on to occupy numerous senior appointments between the wars and during WWII including as Chief of the General Staff, GOC 7th Division and GOC 1 Australian Corps in the Middle East, and Head of the Australian Mission in Washington. After the war he became Governor of Queensland 1946-57, the first Australian to hold the post. He died in 1957.

Barracks at Townsville are named after him. His portraits by George Bell (1919) and Ivor Hele (1941) are held by the AWM, Canberra.

Source: D. M. Horner, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, M.U.P., Vol.14, p.61-63.

For more information follow this link: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/lavarack-sir-john-dudley-10790>