

Colonel Jack Argent OBE OAM ED

*Eulogy delivered by Burt Bryant Immediate Past President,  
2/3rd Anti Tank Regiment AIF Association*

On behalf of the 2/3rd Anti Tank Regiment Association and our daughter Regiment the 23rd Field Regiment I am honoured to speak to you concerning our late Commanding Officer. Jack Argent's Army service began in 1923 when at the age of 18 he became a compulsory cadet. On completing his training he volunteered to serve with the 21st Artillery Brigade at Parramatta, and by the outbreak of World War Two he had attained the rank of Major.

Meanwhile the 2/3rd Anti-Tank Regiment AIF were formed in July 1940 at Warwick Farm and Major Argent was appointed the Officer Commanding 12th Battery. Shortly after, the Regiment embarked for the Middle East where it became part of the newly formed 9th Division. In due course he became a Lieutenant Colonel and the Commanding Officer of our Regiment from September 1943 to May 1946. In fact he was our leader throughout the Western Desert, during the battle of Alamein and then New Guinea and Borneo.

He was recognised as a fine and distinguished Officer, close to his men, understanding, enthusiastic and energetic. He seemed to possess those qualities that bonded men together as a team, and brought out the very best in them. He was twice mentioned in dispatches and was awarded the Order of the British Empire for his contribution to the fight against tyranny and oppression.

In 1948 he was called upon to raise our peacetime Regiment, the 3rd Anti-Tank Regiment, so named to perpetuate the war time unit. He served as its Commanding Officer until 1951, when he retired with the rank of Colonel. This Regiment is now known as 23 Field Regiment (or the Two Three Field Regiment as some like to call it) and quite a number of its members are here today to participate in the service and pay their heartfelt respects to this wonderful man.

Meanwhile with the assistance of an editing committee the Colonel under the pseudonym of 'Silver John' wrote 'Target Tank' (The history of the 2/3rd Australian Anti-Tank Regiment, 9th Division AIF). This publication has long since become a textbook of some authority.

Let me add, that post war the Colonel was a Life Member and Patron of our Association, was appointed to the 9th Division Council as a delegate, and served as a Vice President and then Chairman. In more recent years he has had the very special honour of leading the 9th Division in the Anzac Day Parade through the City of Sydney. It is indicative of the true measure of the man that right up to Anzac Day last year (2003) at the age of 98 he was there, up in front, proudly standing to attention in a Land Rover still leading his men.

And so having known our Colonel for something like 64 years, we who served with him want to say to his family and loved ones we are thinking of you too at this time. You may be sure we will always remember with great pride and deep affection our Commanding Officer and comrade, Colonel Jack Argent OBE OAM ED.

RAAHC