

JOHN HENRY LISTER

1875 - 1935



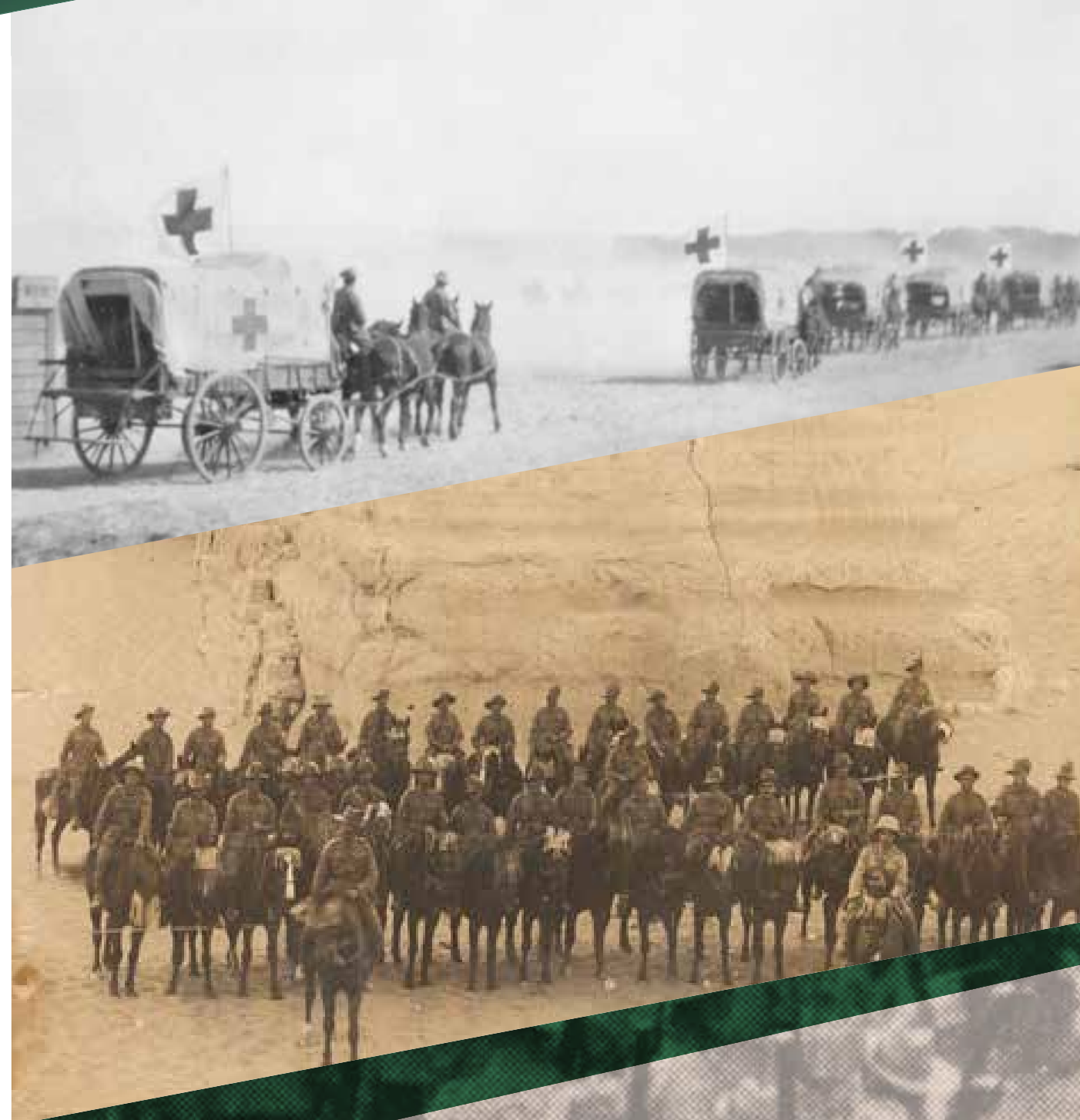
MP (Corio, VIC) • NAT, 1917–1929

Born in 1875 in Lincolnshire, England, John Lister migrated to Australia with his parents in 1889. He worked as a farmer in the Wutul district of Queensland before enlisting in the Australian Imperial Force at Enoggera in November 1914 at the age of 39. Lister served as a driver in the 2nd Light Horse Brigade Field Ambulance at Gallipoli, Egypt and the Sinai. Lister became ill with pneumonia and pleurisy and was invalided back to Australia in August 1916 where he was discharged as medically unfit.

Once home, he went recruiting in Victoria before being asked to stand for the seat of Corio as a Nationalist candidate at the 1917 elections. (Lister had been a member of the ALP, but left the party in 1916 over the issue of conscription.) Lister defeated sitting member Alfred Ozanne whose chances of re-election were undermined by an anonymous campaign claiming that he was a deserter. In contrast, Lister's campaign drew strongly on his background as a primary producer and his experience as a returned serviceman. He declared (once elected) that the 'present Parliament was confronted with the greatest problems any Parliament of the world was confronted with and the eyes of all the soldiers were upon it'.

Lister remained in politics until his defeat in 1929. In 1931, he unsuccessfully ran for the seat of Corio as an independent United Australia candidate.

Upon his departure from politics, Lister moved to Toowoomba, where he died in 1935. Speaking in the condolence motion in the House of Representatives, Prime Minister Joseph Lyons noted 'the zeal with which he applied himself to his duties as the representative of the electors of Corio'; and John Curtin remarked that his colleagues 'had many occasions to observe his high conception of what was due by him to this Parliament as one of its members'.



Parliamentary Library 2015

Sources:

- The Parliamentary Handbook, Parliament of Australia
- First World War Embarkation Rolls
- ALP database
- RSL Virtual War Memorial, www.rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au
- Attestation Paper, John Henry Lister NAA: B2355
- 'Obituary' The Courier-Mail (Brisbane, Qld: 1933-1954) 7 Oct 1935: 13. Web. 31 Mar 2015 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article35925377>
- 'Win-The War Candidate' The Argus (Melbourne, Vic: 1848-1957) 17 Apr 1917: 6. Web. 31 Mar 2015 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article1611173>
- 'West Geelong Returned Soldiers Welcomed' Geelong Advertiser (Vic: 1859-1924) 7 Aug 1917: 4. Web. 31 Mar 2015 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article119722889>
- The Late Mr J.H. Lister, House of Representatives, Debates, 9 October 1935
- Nathan Church, Hannah Gobbett, Martin Lumb and Rob Lurie, Commonwealth Members of Parliament who have served in war: Colonial wars and the First World War, Parliamentary Library Research Paper, September 2014



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA
DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES

- W.A.S Dunlop, 1914. Australian Imperial Force's 2nd Infantry Brigade marching through Bourke Street, Melbourne, Friday, 25th September 1914, National Library of Australia, nla.pic-vn4982243
- Other images used under license from Shutterstock.com, Public Domain images from the Australian War Memorial