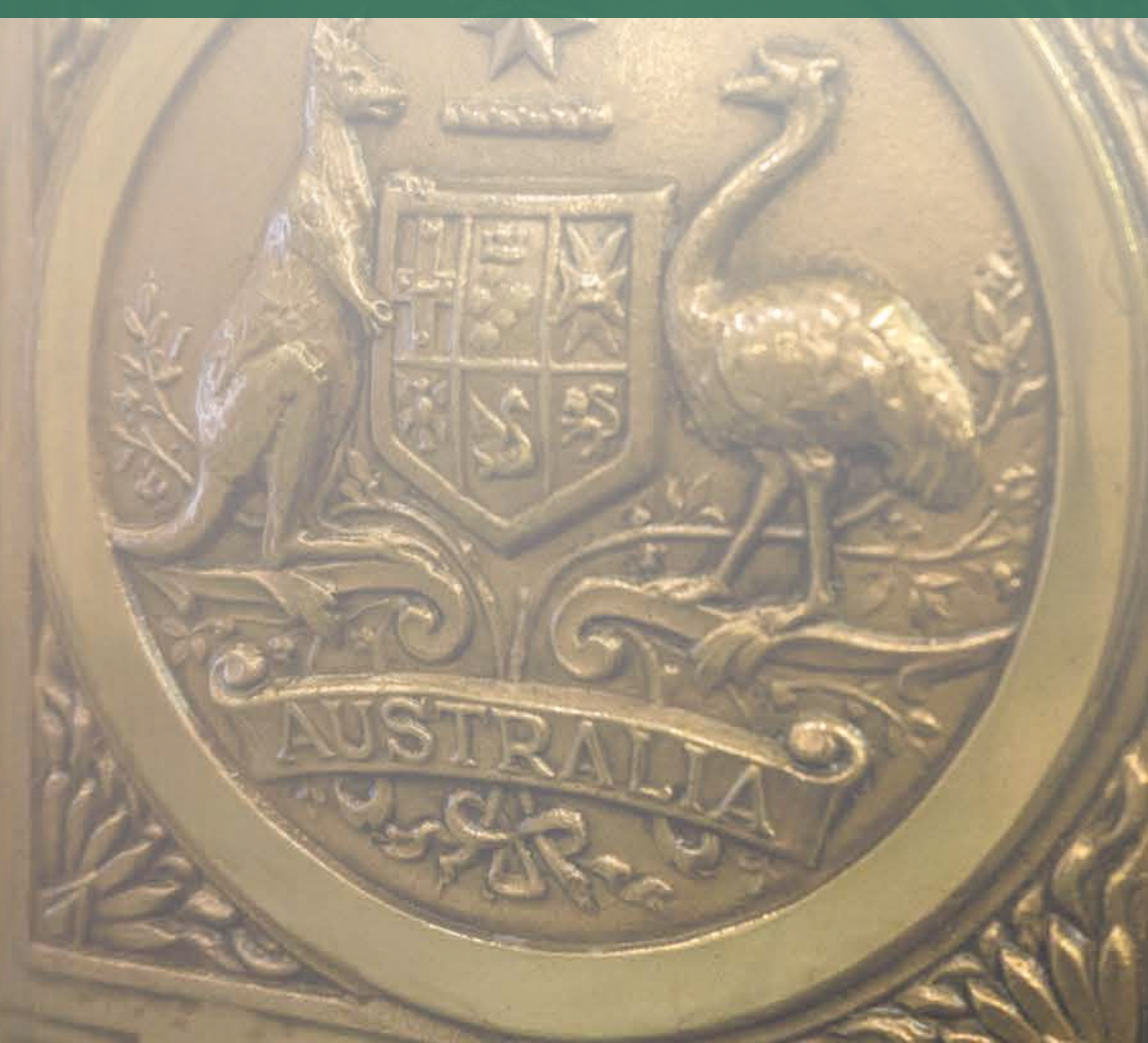


# SIR GRANVILLE DE LAUNE RYRIE

1865 - 1937



MP (North Sydney/Warringah, NSW) • LIB/NAT, 1911–1927

Born in 1865 in the New South Wales town of Michelago, Sir Granville Ryrie was a grazier and amateur boxing champion before joining the 1st Australian Horse in 1898. Ryrie served in the Boer War with the 6th (NSW) Imperial Bushmen and was severely wounded at Wonderfontein in 1900. On his return to Australia, Ryrie returned to his occupation as grazier while continuing to serve in the 1st Australian Horse (in 1903 renamed the 3rd Light Horse Regiment). In 1904 he became commanding officer and was promoted to lieutenant colonel.

In 1906, Ryrie won the seat of Queanbeyan in the NSW Legislative Assembly, resigning in 1910 to contest (unsuccessfully) the federal seat of Werriwa. However, in 1911 he was elected to the House of Representatives as the member for North Sydney.

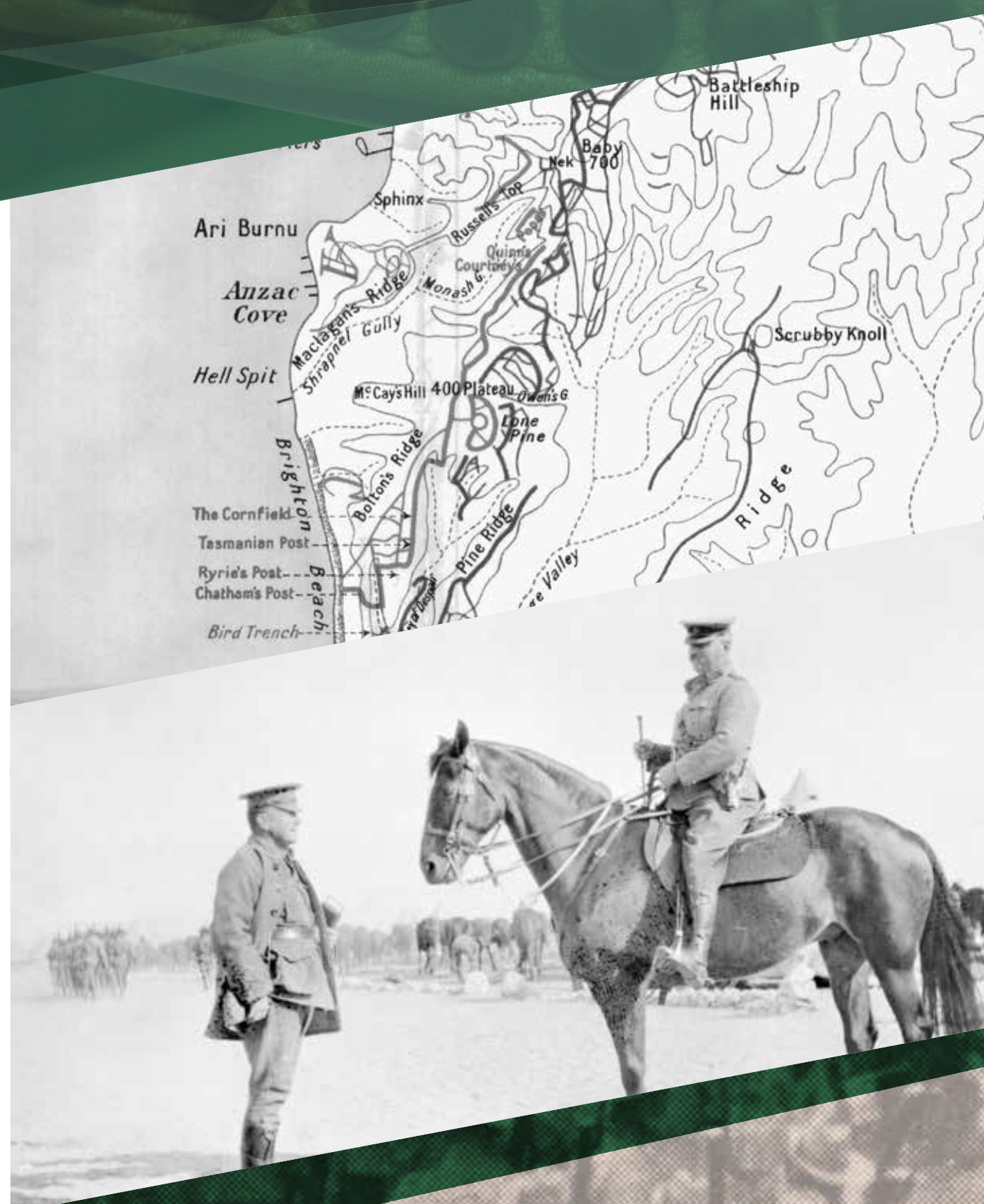
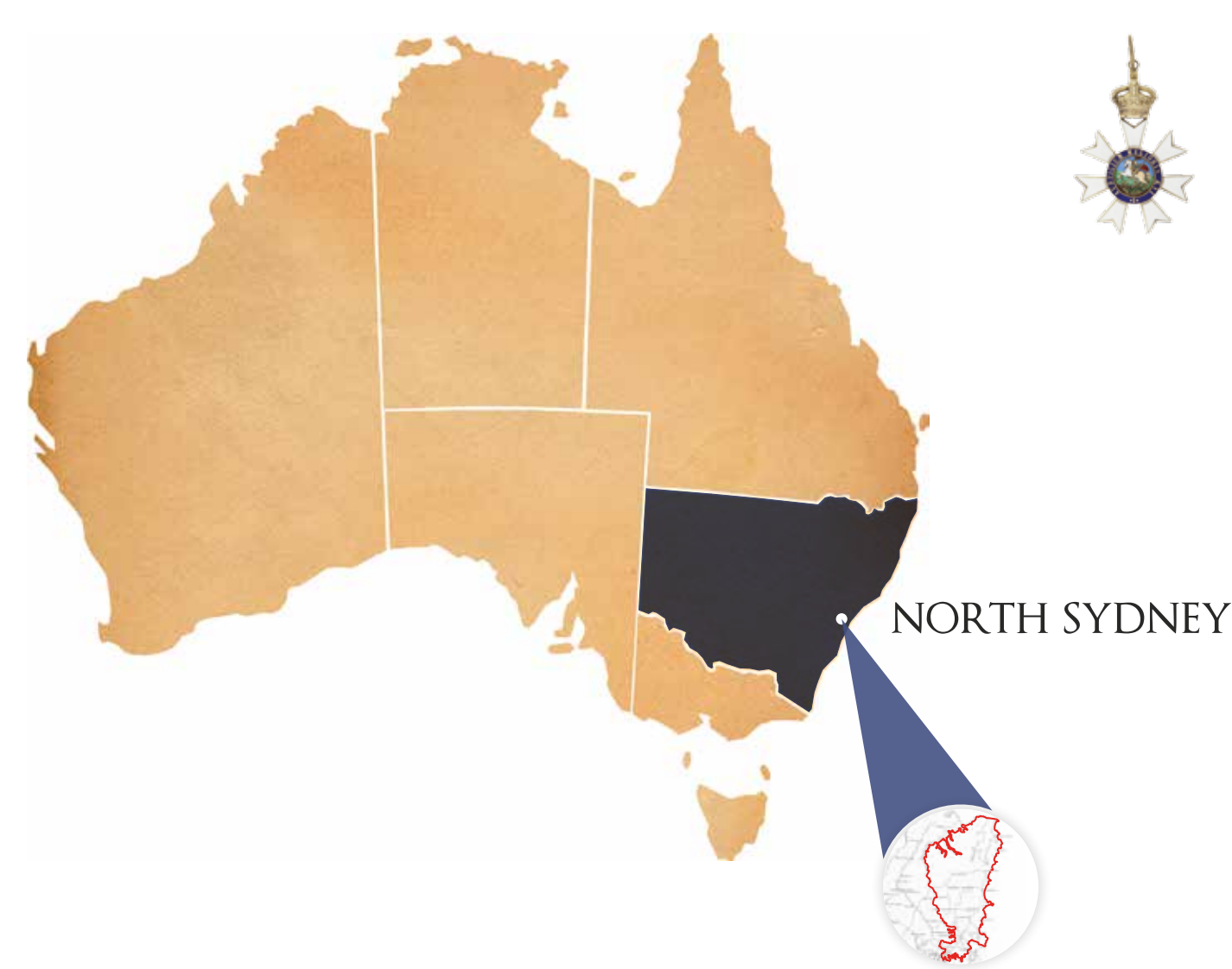
On the day that war was declared, Ryrie wrote to his wife explaining that, 'after thinking for 11 hours', he felt he had to volunteer. Acknowledging he was 'worried to death', and willing to 'do almost anything' not to leave his family, Ryrie explained that:

*I couldn't look men in the face again, especially some of my political opponents whom I have accused of disloyalty, if I didn't offer to go. I simply cannot hold back...if the Empire is at war—I do not care what the cause of the quarrel may be or who created it—we, as an integral part of the British Empire, are at war and must take our own part in it.*

In September 1914, at age 50, Ryrie was appointed brigadier general in command of the 2nd Light Horse Brigade, landing in Gallipoli in May 1915. He suffered a shrapnel wound to the neck on 30 September and was again wounded on 9 November, having resumed his command after the earlier injury only two days prior. In 1916, he moved to the Sinai but was on leave attending the Empire Parliamentary Conference while his troops fought the battle of Romani. On his return, he led the brigade in a successful series of battles, including Gaza and Beersheeba, leading to the capture of Palestine. He was mentioned in despatches five times and appointed Knight Commander of St Michael and St George (KCMG) in October 1919.

Upon the departure of Major General Chauvel, Ryrie was promoted and succeeded him as commander of the Australian Imperial Force in Egypt in 1919. The author of the official history of the Sinai and Palestine campaigns would later remark that he 'was, in camp and in action, the trusted father of his men'.

Ryrie remained a member of parliament throughout the war and returned to Parliament in 1919, serving as Assistant Minister for Defence 1920–21 in the last Hughes Government. In June 1920 he returned to military duties and in 1921 became commander of the 1st Cavalry Division, though on leave until July 1924. He retired in 1927 to take up the post of High Commissioner in London, representing Australia at the League of Nations. He returned to Australia in 1932 and retired from public life.



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- 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
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