

FOUKES-TAYLOR MC

Charles Douglas
Service No: 1323



Courtesy Winston James Foulkes-Taylor

Family History

Charles Foulkes Taylor came from a wealthy family which became very influential in the Australian colonies. His grandfather, John Taylor, owned shipping companies which, from 1852, ran packet ships between England and Australia.

Charles' father, John, was born in England in 1859. At the age of seventeen, he started on a trip around the world but only made it as far as Queensland, Australia. Taking up work on cattle stations, John eventually became manager of a large pastoral property on the Diamantina.

Sometime later, he settled in Western Australia and, in 1887, married Laura Albinia Phillips in Toodyay. Two of his uncles, Peter and Ernest, also came to Western Australia (where they remained). Charles' grandfather, John Senior, also visited the colony.

Following their marriage, John and Laura moved to "Dardanup Park," near Bunbury, before purchasing "Cobham," a farm in the York district, where the family lived for twenty-nine years. The couple had five children: John Foulkes Cunliffe and Ernest Samuel (both born in Dardanup), Douglas Charles (born in England), Susette Albinia and Marjorie Sophia (both born in York Western Australia).

Basic Information

Name: Charles Douglas Foulkes - Taylor

Service Number: 1323

Date of Enlistment: 5/8/1915

Age at Enlistment: 25 years 8 months

Civil Occupation: Farmer

Medals, Honours, Awards: Military Cross, 1914-1915-Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal

Height: 5 foot 9 inches (175.2 cm)

Weight: 160 lbs. (72.6 kg)

Chest Measurement: 34½ - 37

Complexion: Fresh

Eye Colour: Blue

Hair Colour: Brown

Father: John Foulkes - Taylor

Mother: Laura Albinia Phillips

Married: Helen Rosemary Dorothy Blake Taylor

Children: David Phillips, Elizabeth Anne, Michael, Anthony Charles and Winston



Courtesy
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Life Story

Charles was born on the 14th March 1891 in London, England, whilst his family was holidaying at the home of his grandparents. Charles went to school in York then, later, to Hale School in Perth.

After leaving school, Charles worked as a farmer. In 1914, he and his brother, John, registered as the proprietors of parcels of land in the District of Swan.

By 1916, Charles was living at "Cobham," near "Woodside" in the York area, with his parents.

Prior to World War One, Charles served in the 25th Light Horse in Northam for eleven months, where he achieved the rank of Lance Corporal of 'A' Squadron.

Charles enlisted on the 4th August 1915 and was appointed to the 10th Reinforcements of the 10th Light Horse Regiment in October 1915. He embarked from Fremantle for Egypt later that month.



Courtesy Winston James Foulkes- Taylor

On the 8th November 1917, Charles' regiment became part of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (E.E.F). A month later, he joined Cadet School in Zeitoun, Egypt, and qualified for a commission, being appointed 2nd Lieutenant in March 1918.

In April, Charles was temporarily transferred to the 8th Light Horse Regiment, which was short of officers.

According to his service record, Charles experienced several bouts of illness during his overseas service including mumps, diarrhoea, diphtheria, tonsillitis, septic sores and pyrexia. He was also known to suffer from recurring bouts of malaria for several years after his discharge.

Despite these difficulties, Charles went on to prove himself an able commander and, as a result of the May 1918 raid on Es Salt, in Jordan, was awarded the Military Cross. The following details of the raid were recorded by Neville Browning & Ian Gill in *Gallipoli to Tripoli: history of the 10th Light Horse Regiment AIF 1914-1919*:

"As soon as Brigadier General Wilson observed the fall of the enemy position, he ordered the 8th Light Horse forward at 6.15pm. The 8th, led by 'A' Squadron, with one of its troops commanded by Second Lieutenant Charles Foulkes-Taylor, was fired on from Turkish positions on the next ridge, but the regiment ignored the fusillade and proceeded towards Es Salt at the gallop. Further on, approximately fifty Turks deployed behind stone sangars blocked the route into town, but the position was quickly outflanked by a troop and the enemy retreated into disarray. The 8th Light Horse extended its ranks for the advance into town, which continued via the overland approach to Es Salt through several gullies that ran between the hills. Second Lieutenant Charles Foulkes-Taylor's troop of Victorians was the first to enter the town.

Foulkes-Taylor wrote:

Off we went, each man with ten rounds in his magazine and quite a lot of us with revolvers. Half a mile past the redoubts we had to turn to the right and circle around the town, but when I saw the country (it was impossible for horses) I decided to go straight through the town...Just as I got to the town a German officer, leading 300 Turkish cavalry started to emerge from the main street. We yelled like fury and dashed straight at them (we were twenty-five strong), firing as fast as we could. I shot a couple and my men were grand, several drawing their bayonets and dealing out stoush in great style.

Foulkes-Taylor rode straight at the German officer, who was attempting to organise the enemy cavalry and ordered him to surrender at gun point. The German complied and Foulkes-Taylor relieved him of his pistol (his own was empty), whilst his men charged into the cavalry, stabbing and shooting at point-blank range. Amidst the melee, several of the Turkish cavalry threw down their weapons and surrendered, but most fled in panic through the streets of Es Salt. Foulkes-Taylor fired his newly acquired Mauser at the Turks, struck one on the head with the barrel and shouted at his men to follow him after the enemy cavalry.

The Light Horse troop charged headlong through the streets, firing at parties of Turks that either threw down their arms or fled upon their approach. The majority of the enemy cavalry escaped but Foulkes-Taylor galloped towards a column of Turkish transport vehicles on the road to Amman.



Prisoners and their guards
Courtesy Winston James Foulkes-Taylor

Foulkes-Taylor wrote:

I could see no sign of the rest of the regiment coming, and was a bit worried, but pushed on to the place we had to hold; we were then right through the town and amongst a few retreating wagons and motor lorries. We stirred them up properly, capturing a motor car, six motor lorries and about eight transports, shooting the drivers as we galloped by, and we ran two transports over the edge of a very steep bank with about twenty yards drop. A mile and a half along the road we came in sight of about six more lorries, a gun and a lot of infantry and transports. I only had five men with me then and they (Jacko) got two machine guns into action, so we galloped back and took up a good possie about a mile from the town.

In a matter of a few minutes, Foulkes-Taylor's troop had frustrated any attempt at a defense within the town precincts, captured 180 Turks, six Germans, three machine guns, seven motor vehicles and numerous horses, mules and bullocks...Second Lieutenant Charles Foulkes-Taylor was subsequently awarded the Military Cross."



Courtesy Winston James Foulkes-Taylor

The award of the Military Cross was promulgated in Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No. 23, dated the 12th February 1919. The citation read:

Second Lieutenant Charles Douglas Foulkes – Taylor

"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in an attack. He led his troops for a distance of 2 miles, capturing a number of prisoners, motor and mule driven transport. He personally shot five of the enemy who tried to resist. It was owing to his dash and good leadership that 2 roads were so quickly seized and held."

Foulkes-Taylor was wounded and slightly concussed by a bomb splinter on the 3rd May 1918 but was able to remain in the field.

A week later, he was detached to Brigade Headquarters to take over the duties of Scout Officer with the 10th Light Horse Regiment which was given the honour of leading the Australian Mounted Division and accepting the formal surrender of the city of Damascus on the 1st October 1918. Foulkes-Taylor was the first into Damascus.



Scouts on Patrol
Courtesy Winston James Foulkes-Taylor

"At 5am on 1st October 1918 the 10th Light Horse led the march towards the village of Dumar...The troop of scouts, led by [now] Lieutenant Charles Foulkes-Taylor, reconnoitered in front of the column...

...Brigadier General Lachlan Wilson wrote: *Some delay was caused by the road being*

*blocked by enemy transport and animals, the result of our machine gun fire the night before...*The column halted whilst Lieutenant Charles Foulkes-Taylor picked his way through the carnage on the road and reported the road to be blocked by bodies and disabled vehicles for a distance of

approximately one mile...The scouts, followed by 'C' Squadron of the 10th Light Horse, picked their way through the carnage towards Damascus...The column clattered past the disorganised resistance and continued into the heart of the city...a Greek by the name of Tadros was heard cheering in English and on being approached offered



Courtesy Winston James Foulkes-Taylor

his services as a guide. Lieutenant Charles Foulkes-Taylor wrote: *I grabbed him and discovered he knew all the roads, etc. so I sent my groom, Skuthorpe (son of the well-known rough rider), to look after his wife and family and put 'bravo the English', whose name was Tadros, on Skuthorpe's horse to act as guide and direct us to the Homs road, which he did in grand style until we had a little opposition in an olive grove a mile or so northeast of the town. He then evaporated, last seen heading southwest...*

...Harista el Basal was attained at 9.30am, where the scouts came under fire from German machine gunners...A few scouts and horses were shot before the troop could wheel about and gallop to cover. Amongst the horses struck down was Lieutenant Charles Foulkes-Taylor's mount, which collapsed on the road in front of the enemy's position.

Foulkes-Taylor was slightly wounded and pinned beneath his horse, but desperately managed to extricate himself whilst a party of Turks charged towards him. Trooper Robert Loudon, who was firing on the Turks, realised that Foulkes-Taylor was missing and galloped back to the stricken officer and rendered assistance, which undoubtedly saved his life. Basil Craig, who was with Loudon, moved the dead horse to free Foulkes-Taylor, while Loudon defended them both. Charles could not stand easily but was pulled up behind Basil's horse and taken to safety. Loudon was later awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (Browning and Gill).

Charles Foulkes-Taylor returned to Australia in April 1919, and his appointment was terminated on the 1st September 1919. He returned to Western Australia and, by 1920, had formed the Mt Malcolm Pastoral Company and purchased "Glenorn" station near Leonora with his brother Ernest, E.L. Lefroy and L. Manning.

In 1927, Charles and his friend and business partner, Tom Lefroy, went to England to seek treatment for their medical conditions. He met and became engaged to his cousin, Helen Rosemary Dorothy Blake Taylor (known as Rosemary). Charles and Rosemary were married in the Holy Trinity Church in London on the 1st August 1928.

They returned to Western Australia where, in January 1929, Charles brought into "Yuin" station, in the mid-west region, which remains in the family today. Although the couple purchased a home in Peppermint Grove around 1936, they continued to split their time between the home in Perth and "Yuin." Charles also retained interests in other stations, including "Glenorn."

In 1939, Charles was appointed to the Remounts Purchase Board in Perth to obtain about eighty horses for army transport and riding purposes and, in October 1940, Lieutenant Foulkes-Taylor was seconded for Staff Duties to the Western Military District, Cavalry Light Horse Regiment.

During World War Two, Charles also served as an Aide-de-Camp to four General Officer Commanding (G.O.C.s) Western Command, including Major General R.E. Jackson. In 1942, he was appointed Captain but, in 1944, a severe illness saw him placed on the reserve list, before his appointment was terminated and he was placed on the retired list.

After the War, Charles continued to spend time at "Yuin" Station at various times of the year and, in 1950, he was re-elected to the committee of the Pastoralists' Association of Western Australia.

By the time of his death, on the 23rd July 1952, at the age of sixty-one years, Charles was a wealthy man. He left an Estate worth over 65000 pounds.

Acknowledgments

The following people and organisations helped with the research to compile this booklet.

Heather Harvey
James Winston Foulkes Taylor

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