



Proudly worn by soldiers of the 1st and 2nd Australian Imperial Forces in both World Wars, the 'Rising Sun' badge has become an integral part of Digger tradition.

The distinctive shape, worn on the upturned brim of a slouch hat, is readily identified with the spirit of ANZAC.

Yet despite the badge's historic significance, well researched theories as to its origin are more numerous than its seven points.

In 1902 a badge was urgently sought for the Australian contingents raised after Federation for service in South Africa during the Boer War.

Probably the most widely-accepted version of the origin of this badge is that which attributes the selection of its design to a British officer, Major General Sir Edward Hutton, KCB, KCMG, the newly appointed Commander-in-chief of the Australian Forces.

He had earlier received as a gift from Brigadier General Joseph Gordon, a military acquaintance of long standing, a "Trophy of Arms" comprising mounted cut and thrust swords and triangular Martini Henri bayonets arranged in a semicircle around a brass crown. To Major General Hutton the shield was symbolic of the co-ordination of the Naval and Military Forces of the Commonwealth.

A refurbished replica of the shield is on display in the main foyer of Army Headquarters in Canberra. (Figure 1).

The original design, created and produced in haste for issue to the contingent departing to South Africa, was modified in 1904. This badge (Figure 2), was worn through both World Wars.

Since its inception the Basic form of the 1904 version has remained unchanged although modifications have been made to the wording on the scroll and to the style of crown.

In 1949, when Corps and Regimental Badges were reintroduced into service, the wording on the scroll of the "Rising Sun" Badge was changed to read "Australian Military Forces". (Figure 3).

Twenty years later, the badge was again modified to incorporate the Federation Star and Torse Wreath from the original 1902 version of the badge and the scroll wording changed to "Australia" (Figure 4).

In the 75th anniversary year of the ANZAC landings at Gallipoli there arose a desire to return to the traditional accoutrements worn by Australian soldiers during the World Wars and which clearly identify the Australian Army. (Figure 5). The recent change coincides with the 90th anniversary of the Army which was commemorated on 1st March 1991.

