



CEW Bean Prize Citation – 2018

Jordan C. Beavis

**‘Studying with Very Great Interest: Information Linkages between
the Australian and British Armies in the Interwar Period (1919-
1939)’**

Honours, University of Newcastle

Jordan Beavis’ well-constructed thesis addresses the ways in which the Australian Army drew on the British Army in the context of imperial defence during the interwar period. The thesis shines a light on an as-yet-undiscovered aspect of the Australian Army, and therefore provides new insights into the Army’s history and the broader topic of information exchange between and within militaries. Beavis’ thesis stands out above the other entries for its sophisticated analysis, depth of research and engagement with an important subject matter.

Beavis examines three modes of information exchange within the British Empire: official, individual and informal. These three themes, dealt with in successive chapters, build on each other, making the argument well-balanced and clear. As a result, the final chapter, which examines informal networks such as military clubs and military literature, is particularly strong, and represents an original contribution to discussion of the interwar Australian Army.

The analysis in this thesis supports Beavis’ conclusion that the Australian Army was not as isolated from military developments elsewhere in the Empire as is popularly supposed. The thesis is one of a lamentably few scholarly works that addresses the Australian Army in the interwar period. Most importantly, it demonstrates the efforts made in keeping channels of information sharing and learning active after 1919.

Beavis has a good command of the secondary literature and makes excellent use of the archival material. This thesis is an exceptional piece of historical research, and fulfils the requirements of the undergraduate category of the CEW Bean Prize for Military History.