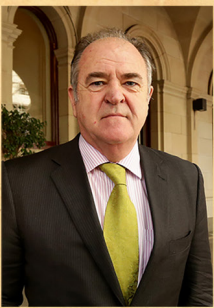


In 1902, three Australian volunteers who served with the British Army during the Anglo Boer War were tried and sentenced for executing Boer combatants. Lieutenants Harry 'Breaker' Morant and Peter Handcock were executed and George Witton sentenced to life imprisonment.

The manner in which these men were treated remains controversial, shrouded in protest that they were scapegoated for the war crimes of their British superiors.

The book is dedicated to the memory of Major James Francis Thomas who was relegated to history without an understanding of who he was and the part he played in the dynamic development of the town of Tenterfield in New South Wales, Australia, as a property owner, solicitor, newspaper proprietor, historian, poet, proponent for Australian nationalism, volunteer soldier. This book also tells how he came to serve in the Boer War, yet was destined to die alone from malnutrition, destitute having suffered from the stress of what he experienced in representing Morant, Handcock and Witton as their trial lawyer.

This book acknowledges the sacrifice Thomas made in acting for his clients, a task that took a terrible toll on his mental and physical health and his life in Tenterfield.



**James Unkles** is a military and civilian lawyer who began researching the 'Breaker' case in 2009 and had serious misgivings about the legality of the trials of Morant, Handcock and Witton.

James has conducted significant research into the Morant case. His work has included petitioning the British and Australian Governments. In 2018, he succeeded in securing a motion in the Australian House of Representatives that provided an apology to the descendants of these men and an expression of sincere regret that they were not tried according to the law of 1902 and suffered a fatal injustice.

In *Ready, Aim, Fire!* James Unkles seeks justice for Thomas and to highlight his place in Australian history.

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READY, AIM, FIRE



Major James Francis Thomas

JAMES UNKLES

"It is an awesome responsibility for a defence lawyer to try to save the life of a client...  
This fascinating book... (is) a worthy contribution to literature on miscarriage of justice."

— Geoffrey Ronald Robertson AO, QC



READY, AIM, FIRE



Major James Francis  
**Thomas**

THE FOURTH VICTIM IN THE EXECUTION OF  
LIEUTENANT HARRY 'BREAKER' MORANT

JAMES UNKLES