

# Not Such a Great Great War



by John D Maclean

# NOT SUCH A GREAT GREAT WAR

**A Part History of some of the Soldiers who served  
with the 12<sup>th</sup>, 51<sup>st</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalions  
of the Australian Imperial Force 1914 – 1919**

By

**John D Maclean**

For the Grandchildren of John Every Maclean

Paul, Christopher, Mathew, Rachel and Naomi

and

Scott, Robert and Alexander



# **Grateful Thanks For All Your Help**

**Dianne Coward**

**Alexander Maclean**

**Val McDonald**

**John McMahon**

**Brianna Maclean**

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My father, Private John Every Maclean,  
11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 12th Battalion AIF  
Perth Western Australia October 1915

## INTRODUCTION

### One Small Photograph

Since primary school I have known my father fought in the First World War as an infantryman with the Australian Army. I knew he enlisted at Perth, Western Australia where he lived with his parents and his brother. My grandfather was a mining engineer and the family had emigrated from New Zealand chasing work in the gold mining boom. I knew my father went to Egypt and France as a soldier. Like many returned soldiers, he very rarely talked about his war experiences. He did not march in the Anzac Day parades and as far as I know he was not a member of any returned soldiers' organization. Out on the back veranda was a battered tin trunk containing old uniforms, some still muddy; all long since gone.

My father died from heart disease in 1960 when I was 14 years old. Years later I began researching our family history. I obtained a copy of my father's war service record. From that record I was able to trace the broad course of my father's war, how he had been wounded more than once and how he came back to Australia in one bit. I guess, as with all of the wounded survivors, a wound a little to the left or right or up or down would have been fatal.

His army service record did not give me a picture of the fighting and conditions at the front. Nor did it tell the story of what his unit was doing, how his mates were going, who was killed or wounded and so on. But as an input to family history his individual war record was invaluable.

One war memento my father left was a tatty photograph album containing a few pictures, many very faded, of his time in Egypt around early 1916. Unfortunately the camera did not make it to France where in fact I believe it was a military offence to have a camera. I had looked at these photos many times, particularly the ones of him:

- On top of the Great Pyramid, with a mate;
- With a sight-seeing group in front of the Sphinx; and
- With a group of 6 soldiers finishing a meal at Aerodrome Camp.

These pictures are reproduced later in this book.

In Egypt my father was part of a training unit known as the 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion. From this unit, he was posted to the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion and then to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion (both in Egypt) before shipping to France. Towards the end of the war he was posted to the 51<sup>st</sup> Battalion.

In 2008 I took the 'meal' photograph out of the album and discovered that my father had written the names of the six soldiers on the back (see p6).

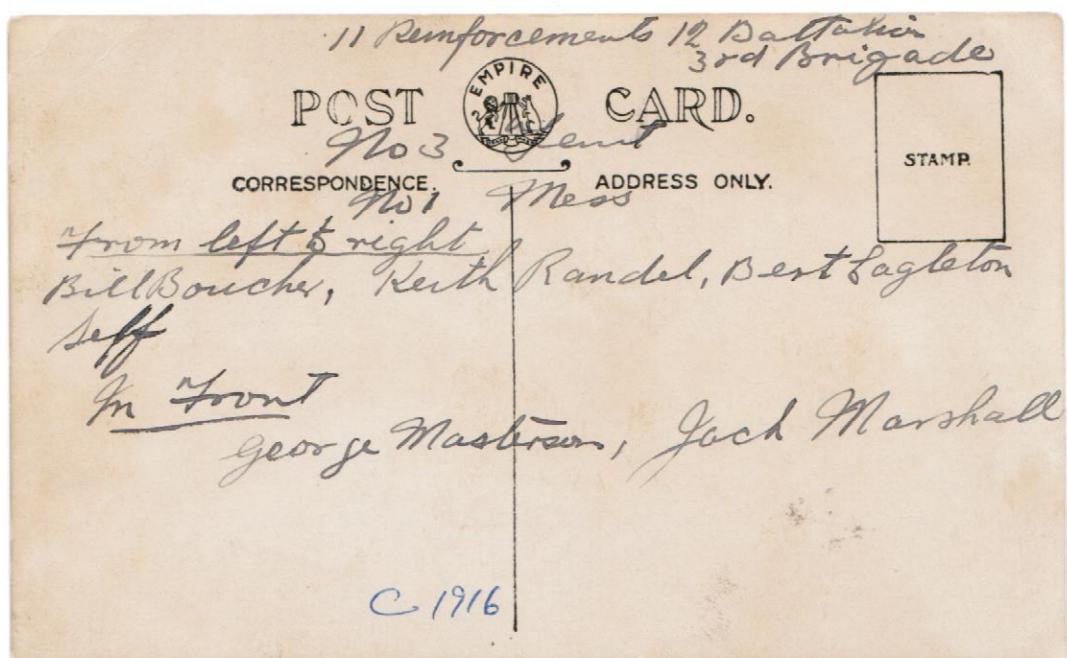
I looked up each soldier's Service Record on the National Archives of Australia web site and found that two of them were killed in France within a few months of the photograph being taken.

Later I found there was an Australian Nominal Roll/embarkation Record which set out, by Battalion and Unit, the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Imperial Force (AIF) soldiers. From that I was able to identify all the soldiers in my father's original unit, the 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements comprised over 300 soldiers from South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia.

Most importantly, from my point of view, the Western Australian enlisted and trained soldiers of this unit numbered only 70 men, all of whom completed their basic training together at Blackboy Hill Army Camp in Perth towards the end of October 1915.

And my project was born, to trace something of the lives and fate of these 70 men before, during and after the war.



# NOT SUCH A GREAT ‘GREAT WAR’

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A tranquil Somme River, Peronne, France, 2010

## Chapter 1

### The War Starts

#### How to get into a War as an Individual

In August 1915, almost a year to the day after the outbreak of hostilities, my father, on his second attempt, enlisted in the Australian Army. He had been rejected earlier because of bad teeth. He undertook his basic training at (by today's standards of political correctness the inappropriately named) Blackboy Hill Army Camp, Helena Vale, Perth, Western Australia. (There is an article on the Camp from the WA RSL's "*Listening Post*" at the end of this chapter.) On completion of his basic training he was appointed as a private soldier to the unit known as the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements (Infantry Corps) Australian Imperial Force. This occurred on October 29, 1915. Then there was just time for a bit of leave and a photograph, as two days later his unit sailed from Fremantle for Egypt.

This history records something of the fortunes of my father, and of the other 69 soldiers from 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements who commenced training in Western Australia that August. That's my father in the photograph at the front of this book, wearing his "12 AIF AUSTRALIA" shoulder and Rising Sun collar badges.

#### How to get into a War as a Country

In early August 1914, Australia followed England into its war with Germany. Australia recruited rapidly. By the end of October 1914 some 30,000 partly-trained troops, 7,800 or so horses and the usual armaments, ammunition, food supplies and support troops crowded onto thirty-eight transport ships, and with four escorting naval vessels started a 6 week patriotic adventure to England, via the Suez Canal, to join the war.

Although the original idea was for the convoy to sail to England where the troops would complete their corps training, it was decided that it was logically more feasible to set up camp in less crowded, drier and warmer Egypt. The first of the senior officers turned up in Cairo on November 30, 1914.

No doubt there were many teething troubles, but by stages the men and nurses were landed at sunny, sandy Egypt and were tented, fed and trained. **The ‘Originals’**

In the words of C E W Bean, who was Australia’s official war historian (1):

*The first Australian Division was trained in one way and another for some six weeks in Australia, six weeks on the voyage and from two-and-a-half months to nearly four months in Egypt.*

This First Australian Division comprised 3 Infantry Brigades of 4 battalions each (1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> Battalions - each nominally some 1,023 men strong) together with artillery batteries, engineers, medical services, supply and caterers etc, plus the usual legion of Headquarter staff. In September 1914 the 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade (Battalions 13 to 16) was also offered to Great Britain as part of the Australian Imperial Force. These 16 infantry battalions, with their support units, fought first at Gallipoli and then in France and the soldiers in them were often referred to as the ‘originals’.

In 1915, after observing the carnage suffered in the early British attacks in France, machine gun units were raised, and there was an upgrading of artillery capability. A second Australian Division was formed in July 1915 from troops training in Egypt and it also served at Gallipoli and then France.

Other Divisions followed. Later the flow of volunteers dried up and there was a struggle simply to replace losses. In the early years however there were plenty of volunteers, many being posted after training as ‘reinforcements’. Early reinforcement units were initially tied to one of the 16 original Battalions.

Battalions 1 to 4 were raised in New South Wales, 5 to 8 in Victoria, 9<sup>th</sup> in Queensland, 10<sup>th</sup> in South Australia, 11<sup>th</sup> in Western Australia and the 12<sup>th</sup> in Tasmania (50%), South Australia (25%) and Western Australia (25%).

I’m not primarily interested in most of the infantry battalions or in the course of the War. This modest history is only concerned a little about the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion, and primarily about its March 1916 offshoot, the 52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion. It assumes the reader has a reasonable understanding of the events of WW1 and Australia’s contribution to the infantry fighting in Turkey and France.

But in brief, the war in 1914 Europe rapidly reached a stalemate of trenches (the Western Front) which neither side could break through. So they bombarded one another with more and more destructive artillery and used more and more barbed wire to prevent ground attacks, which in any case were invariably wiped-out quickly by machine guns or by frantic counter-attack.

With time, poisonous gas, air raids, tanks, mines and flame-throwers added extra amusement, but through to the War's end in November 1918, neither side's infantry could overrun the opposing side.

As well as the Western Front, Germany had an Eastern Front with Russia, which later collapsed when the Russians packed up and went home to their Bolshevik revolution.

Early in 1915 the British War Council fell in line with Churchill's probably poorly conceived plan to relieve pressure on the two European fronts by attacking Germany's ally, Turkey. And thus the Gallipoli legend was born. At first the British and French tried to get through the Dardanelle Straits by bombing the protecting forts from warships. Failed! Then the planners thought it would be a good idea to attack by land along the Turkish coast.

Australia and New Zealand were among those now caught up in land attack and on that ever-famous 25<sup>th</sup> April 1915 morn, went ashore at the wrong place and achieved very little except misery and death, until they were evacuated in December the same year. Bean (2) again:

*The Australian force had lost in all 26,094 men in Gallipoli, and the New Zealanders 7,571; of the Australians 7,594 were killed, of the New Zealanders 2,431.*

and in a following footnote:

*The total British loss was 119,696, and that of the French 27,004. That of the Turks is given ..... as about 218,000 some 66,000 of these being killed.*

With all the hype over the Australian involvement in Gallipoli, it is easy to forget the greater losses suffered by Britain, France and of course Turkey.

## Reinforcements

And somewhere in Gallipoli was Australia's 12<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, supplemented by troops from successive 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion Reinforcement Units that flowed regularly from Australia to fill the holes in the ranks left by the dead, wounded and sick.

A reinforcement unit typically comprised several hundred troops who had voluntarily enlisted in Australia and completed basic training prior to overseas embarkation. According to Adam-Smith (3) the physical requirements for enlisting were: a height requirement of 5 feet 6 inches or more (approximately 168 centimetres or above), a 34-inch (86 cm) chest expansion and aged between 19 and 38 years of age. Of course they also had to pass a medical examination. In the early years there were far more men enlisting than were required, but with the losses in Gallipoli and France and the Australian Government's promises to provide extra divisions, the entry requirements were relaxed, as we shall see when we look at my father's 11<sup>th</sup> reinforcement intake of August 1915.

According to Australian War Memorial records (see Appendix 1) the 12<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion lost 1,135 men killed and suffered 2,422 wounded during the war. These casualties would comprise both original 1914 soldiers and later reinforcement soldiers, the total number of whom was said to have been at least 8,500 (4). I have not been able to find casualty figures for the original 12th Battalion soldiers only.

And, as I have said, amongst the group known as the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, was my father. The 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements was comprised mainly of men who enlisted in early August 1915 and who sailed from Australia in late October /early November 1915. The Reinforcement troop numbers broadly reflected the original State-based composition of the 12<sup>th</sup> i.e. 50% Tasmania, 25% South Australia and 25% Western Australia. The 316 troops comprising the 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements included 'our' 70 soldiers who originally enlisted at Blackboy Hill Army Camp, Perth, Western Australia.

And it is these 70 men that this story is about, all of whom missed the trenches and inhuman fighting in Gallipoli and most, as a consolation prize, went to the trenches and inhuman fighting of France.

## Digression: A Bit about Boats

We might just digress here for a bit of trivia. The ship in which our lot of the 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements sailed from Australia on 1 November 1915 was the former “SS *Benalla*”. The *Benalla* was built for the Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company (P&O) in 1913 and had a gross tonnage of 11,128 tons. She originally operated between England and Australia, via the Cape of Good Hope, as a commercial passenger ship for immigrants (see p14).

In September 1914 the *Benalla* was hired for the war effort as a troop ship for the Australian Expeditionary Force (as the AIF was first called) and lightly armed. She returned to passenger duties after the war and in 1927 carried the first consignment of steel from England for construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. In 1930 she was sold to a Japanese company for scrap demolition.

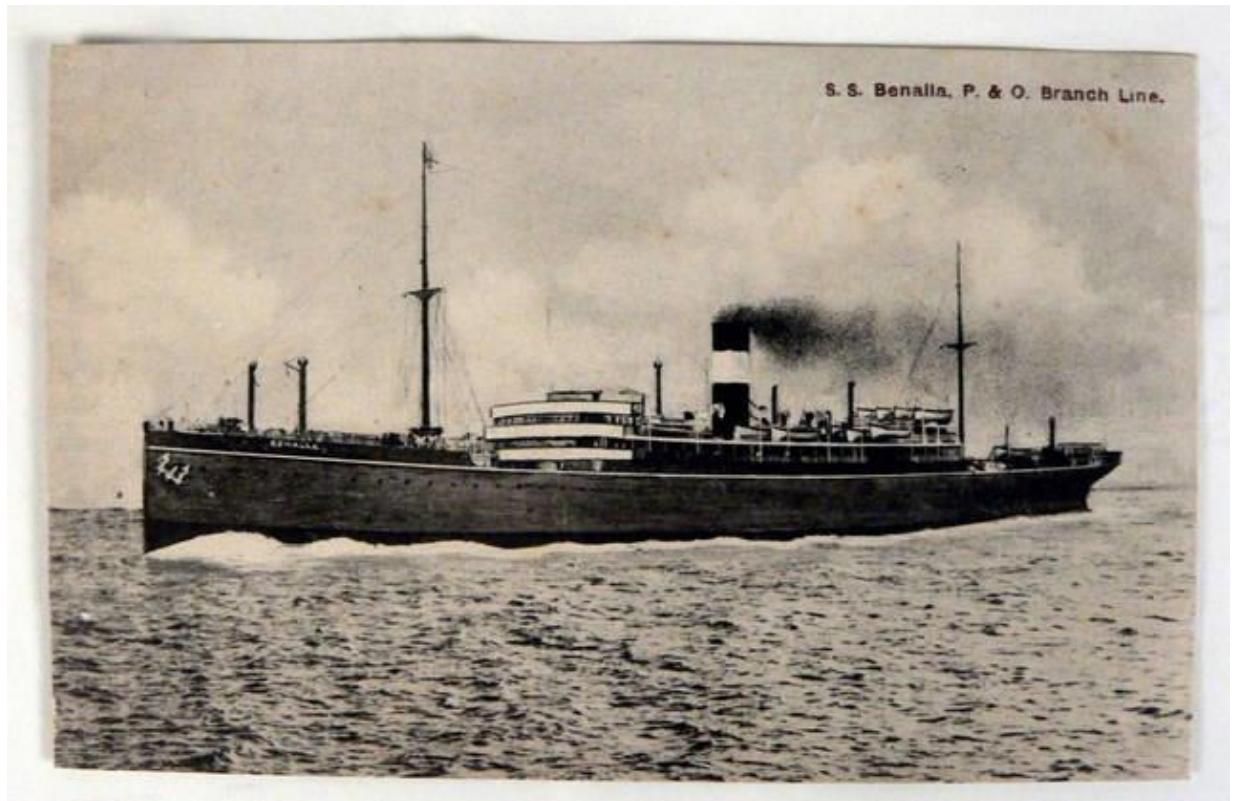
The *Benalla* (now known as Australian troop ship A24) had her first outing as a troop carrier in October 1914 when she took on board the Victorian raised 8<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion and headed across the Great Australian Bight to join the first Australian and New Zealand convoy at Albany, Western Australia for the convoy’s 1 November 1914 sailing.

General Bridges and the staff of the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Division sailed in another former passenger ship, the Orient Line liner *Orvieto* (now armed merchant cruiser A3 *Orvieto*), which became the Division’s headquarters for the 6 week sailing of the convoy. The Australian War Memorial has a large model of the ship and I have a postcard of the ship (see over). The *Orvieto* was built in 1909 and in 1931 sold for scrap (see p 16).

As it turns out, my mother’s family emigrated from England to Australia aboard the *Orvieto* in July 1910 (see copy of ticket below).

## Endnotes

1. Bean, C E W, *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-18*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Angus & Robertson, Australia 1936, Vol 1, p135 – (all further references to Bean are a reference to the volume and page in this edition of the Official History).
2. *Official History* Vol 2, p 909
3. Adam-Smith, Patsy *The ANZACS*, Sphere Books, Melbourne, 1981, p26
4. Newton, L M, *The Story of the Twelfth* J Walsh & Sons Pty Ltd, Hobart, 1925, p 201.



**The Benalla**

## Blackboy Hill—The Memories Linger On

The following article, which appeared in "The Diggers' Book" in the late 1920's, has renewed significance because of the recent unveiling of the Blackboy Hill Campsite Memorial and will certainly stir memories of bygone days for those who trained at the birthplace of the A.I.F. in Western Australia.

Blackboy Hill! Its once well-worn slopes now covered with pasture; its bell tents and marquees "re-turned to store"; but here and there a wooden hut still stands as a reminder of days—and men—that are gone.

The birth of the old camp! When the first thousand marched in! No kindly quartermaster to greet them with a beaming smile; to issue tunics, breeches, and the equipment which was to be carried and cursed later on.

It was a case of getting under cover that first day and, marvellous to relate, the evening saw order wright out of chaos, and eight long rows of bell tents where the morning had seen only the virgin bush.

Comrade Stew was introduced that day. It turned out a long acquaintance which never developed into friendship. Indeed, the stew may have its virtues, familiarity with the field. He lies peace fully in an Anzac gully.

The bosom of Mother Earth that night was hard and cold. The oil-sheet and two army blankets, which comprised "bivouac," were different substitutes for the real bed at home, to die they ameliorate to any extent that chill midnight-to-morning air, which was always a feature of Blackboy Hill.

The whereabouts of that first thousand now! It would be interesting to know. The majority sleep on Gallipoli, in Belgium, or France, or have paid the last penalty back here in the Golden West. A few only were lucky. All carry some souvenir!

### GREAT MEN

Some splendid men "fell in" at Blackboy Hill: Percy Black, the Southern Cross miner who was a rock to lean on at Anzac, and died—a major and mourned by the A.I.F.—at Beecroft; Waller, the man, the Kangaroo boy who saw Gallipoli and France from start to finish and was killed leading his company through the wire of the Hindenberg line; it his unit's last stunt; Harry Murray, the South-West sleeper-cutter, who finished up a lieutenant-colonel and the most decorated infantry soldier in the British Army; McIntosh, the timber worker, who survived Gallipoli!

and France and flew back to Aussie with Parer "by bus"—an epic flight in a plane only held together by wire and string and the sheer courage and resource of its pilots; Sammy Taylor, the rough diamond among the "sab-majors," who after two years turned out of the A.I.F. to die in a night-raid in France, in '17; Meysey-Hammond, the North-West pearly, who lost an arm, wangled his way back to his unit and was killed later at the head of his company; Captain Peter Labor—the smallest man, surely, in the A.I.F.—a grandson of Peter Eureka Stockade.

Killed during the first day at Anzac, waving his grandfather's sword, he was one of the very few men who died sword in hand in the Great War.

"Pink Top" the Perth fruit seller—entertaining and enterprising at his fruit stand in Wellington-street, just so was he in camp and in the field. He lies peace fully in an Anzac gully.

### DOUBLE HONOURS

Pope, the insurance agent who won both crosses when he and his platoon were ordered at Lagnicourt, to hold their outpost to the last man—a ring of 80 Germans surrounded the silent garrison testifying to their grim adherence to orders when the post was recaptured by Australian troops next day.

Simpson, "the man with the donkey"—surely no greater story was ever told than the simple record of this man's deeds on early Anzac; for him the cross of sacrifice!

The list is not complete. It never will be. Those who revisit Blackboy Hill will have their own special memories.

The Hill will always have an attraction for those who once bore the heat and burden of those hectic days.

That picturesque spot, so quiet now, was the rallying point of Australia's finest manhood.

Thousands learnt for the first time the meaning of the word "comrade." There were made friendships which endured until death. There men found that the manly qualities of the navy were on as high a plane as those of more favoured workers in civil life.

Blackboy Hill was the great destroyer of prejudice—the melting pot in which each entrant soon found his own level.

Considering the part it played in moulding the history of this State during its most critical period it would indeed be fitting if the close of the Centenary

Year saw Blackboy Hill dedicated for all time to the people of Western Australia as their Park of Memories.

### Maintaining The Memorial

Now that a lasting memorial has been erected on the old Blackboy Hill campsite there is an urgent need for donations to develop and maintain the surroundings. A special committee is to be formed to ensure that the area receives the care and development it deserves.

It is hoped that this memorable spot will become a notable tourist attraction. Plans are in hand for the establishment of a picnic ground to attract visitors as well as local residents. All that is required is the money to pay for these improvements.

How do you feel about lending a helping hand?



Serving out the stew at Blackboy Hill Camp  
(as pictured by "The Western Mail"—September 18, 1914)

### Men Of The Old 11th

Of further interest on the subject of Blackboy is a letter (printed below) received by the Bunbury sub-branch recently from Mr. H. V. (Jack) Howe, now residing in Galston-road, Dural, N.S.W. Old trainees may recall some of the men referred to.

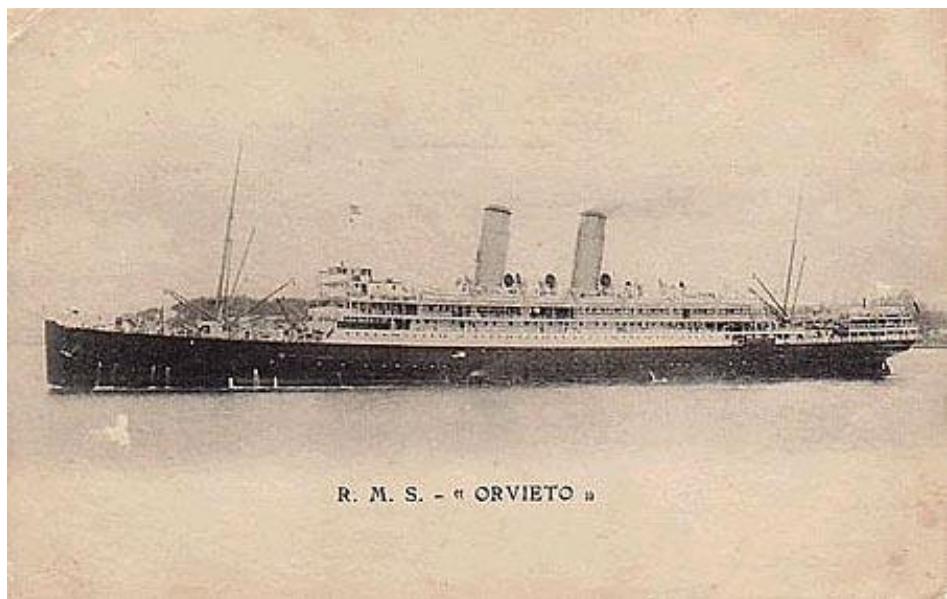
Many thanks indeed for by accident, as I was in one of your letter of January 10 of the companies all the time while he was a sergeant cook. He would however, I think, remember Coghlan and Westcott—"B" company cooks at Blackboy, and "A" Company cooks at Mena—who went for a trip up the Nile the day after we all put in ten piastres a head to improve the tucker, and somebody suggested handing it over to the cooks to buy what they thought best for the troops. They bought what they thought best alright!

Dick Clarke of course, I remember very well. I wrote to him and had a reply a couple of years ago. Of the others named in your list I remember H. A. Haslant quite well as a sergeant on the Peninsula—he wouldn't remember me as I was, I think, then in "C" Company while I was in "A."

N. G. Holtzman I remember very well; he was a corporal in "D" Company of the battalion and was, I think, in my platoon through the Broodseinde Ridge and Passchendaele shows, the spells we were in the line at Messines Wytschaete, Spoorbaan, and during the last half of '18. He will I think, remember me as "Jack" Howe—I was always called Jack although my initials are H.V.

I shall be glad if you will convey very well indeed as must all the originals in Blackboy. He wouldn't remember me unless it was

Above: Article from WA Returned Soldiers' League newsletter *The Listening Post*, February 1963



Above: Images of the *Orvieto*

No. 25

ORIENT LINE  
OF  
ROYAL MAIL STEAM-SHIPS TO AUSTRALIA.

MANAGERS.

F. GREEN & Co.,  
13, FENCHURCH AVENUE, E.C.

ANDERSON, ANDERSON & Co.,  
5, FENCHURCH AVENUE, E.C.

1. A Contract Ticket in this Form must be given to every Person engaging a Passage in any Ship proceeding from the British Islands to any port out of Europe, and not within the Mediterranean Sea, immediately on the payment or deposit by such Passenger of the whole or any part of the Passage Money for or in respect of the passage engaged.  
2. The Victualling Scale for the Voyage must be printed in the body of the ticket.  
3. All the blanks must be correctly filled in, and the ticket must be printed in plain and legible characters, and legibly signed with the Christian Names and Surname and address in full of the person who issues it.

4. The Day of the Month on which the Passengers are to embark must be inserted in words, and not in figures.  
5. When once issued, this Ticket must not be withdrawn from the Passenger, nor any alteration, addition or erasure made in it.  
6. This Ticket is not transferable.  
7. A Contract Ticket shall not contain on the face thereof any condition, stipulation, or exception not contained in this form.

PASSENGERS' CONTRACT TICKET.

THE ORIENT LINE Steamship "ORVIETO," of 12,130 Tons Register, to take in Passengers at the Port of LONDON (TILBURY), for FREMANTLE, ADELAIDE (Outer Harbour), MELBOURNE, SYDNEY AND BRISBANE, on the eight day of July 1910

NAMES.	Age.	Equal to Statute Adults.
Mr H. S. Burton	37	
Berth in a Two Berth cabin		

This Steamer will not  
call at PLYMOUTH.

I engage that the Persons named in the Margin hereof shall be provided with a Third Class Passage to and shall be landed at the Port of Freemantle in AUSTRALIA, in the Steam-ship "ORVIETO" with not less than Fifteen Cubic Feet for Luggage for each Statute Adult, and shall be victualled during the Voyage and the time of detention at any place before its termination, according to the subjoined Scale, for the sum of £ 21 including Government Dues before Embarkation, and Head Money, if any, at the place of landing, and every other charge except Freight for excess of luggage beyond the Quantity above specified, and I hereby acknowledge to have received the sum of £ 21 in part payment.

The Luggage carried under this engagement, whether in excess of Fifteen Cubic Feet or not, shall be declared to be of a value not exceeding £10, unless the value in excess of that sum be declared and paid for.

The following Quantities, at least, of Water and Provisions will be supplied by the Master of the Ship, as required by Law: viz.—to each Statute Adult 4 quarts of Water daily, exclusive of what is necessary for cooking any article issued under this scale in a cooked state:—

		Provisions. Weekly per Statute Adult.		
		Lb. oz.	Lb. oz.	Lb. oz.
Beef or pork or party meat and partly the other	2 4	Bread or biscuit not inferior to quality to Navy biscuit..	2 8	Potatoes.. 2 0
Preserved meat .....	1 0	Raisins .. 0 6		Pepper, black or white, ground .. 0 04
Suet .....	0 6	Wheaten flour, not inferior to best quality ..	0 6	Turnips .. 0 0
Butter .....	0 4	best seconds .....	3 8	Sugar .. 0 0
		Oats, rice, and peas, or any two of them .....	2 0	Dinner pumpernickel .. 0 8
				vegetables .. 0 8
				Salt .. 0 2
				Vinegar or mixed pickles .. 0 04
				Mustard .. 1 gill

**BILL OF FARE.**  
The following indicates the range of dishes from which the daily Bills of Fare are compiled:—  
BREAKFAST, 8 a.m.—Porridge with Milk, Fish, Chops, Steaks, Sausages, Irish Stew, Curried Meat with Rice, Cold Meats (including Eggs, &c., with Fresh Bread, Butter, Jam, Marmalade, Tea and Coffee).  
DINNER . 1 p.m.—Soup, Fish, Potatoes, Fish, Biscuits and Boiled Meats, Fresh Vegetables, Puddings (various), Stewed Fruits, &c., Bread, Butter, Biscuits, Cheese.  
TEA . . 5 p.m.—Cold Meats (various), with Pickles or Salads, Cakes, Scones, Buns, &c. Bread, Butter, Jam, Marmalade.  
SUPPER . 8 p.m.—Bread, Butter, Biscuits, Cheese.  
Lighter Food is provided for Women and Children when necessary.  
Bedding, Cabin and Table requisites provided by the Ship.

On behalf of the Proprietors of the Orient Line,

KENNETH SKELTON ANDERSON,

per People  
5, FENCHURCH AVENUE, LONDON, E.C.

Deposit £ 21

Balance £ 21 to be paid to ANDERSON, ANDERSON & Co., at  
5, Fenchurch Avenue, three days before embarkation.

Total £ 21

Received the Balance, £ 21

Signature S

191

Permission is given to break the ~~steamer~~ steamer Orvieto and to proceed to Freemantle by a later steamer of the Line having room within 4 weeks on condition that the passenger signs his name on this ticket before disembarking, and again on re-embarking to complete the journey, and also obtains the Purser's endorsement.

NOTICE TO PASSENGERS.

- If Passengers, through no default of their own, are not received on board on the day named in their Contract Tickets or fail to obtain a passage in the Ship, they should apply to the Emigration Officer at the Port, who will assist them in obtaining redress under the Merchant Shipping Acts.
- Passengers should carefully keep this part of their Contract Ticket till after the end of the voyage.

N.B.—This Contract Ticket is exempt from the Stamp Duty.

SEE BACK

Above: Copy of my mother's family's ticket on the Orvieto.

## Chapter 2

### In The Beginning

How did Australia get into the bloody mess variously called ‘The Great War’, ‘The War to End all Wars’ or more simply ‘World War One’ (WW1)?

Even from this distance in time, the reasons for going to war seem just as suspect as the reasons for going to war now, but in the final analysis the war and our involvement in it was unavoidable, given our membership of the British Empire.

Sir Basil Liddell Hart’s (1) reasoning for WW1 was that the European ‘great’ powers of England France Germany Austria Italy Turkey and Russia, after decades or centuries of bickering, fighting, backstabbing, forming and breaking strategic alliances, and protecting their own patch through armed conflict and trade protection, and gunboat diplomacy, had enough arms, trained soldiers and sailors and pent-up hatred to settle once and for all who was the strongest European world-dominating power.

Unlike today, one possible cause for the war that did not seem to get much of a mention was religious differences. But the rest of the armour of civilised diplomatic endeavour was all there – formal alliances, secret treaties, scores to settle, racial prejudices, colonial empires to protect, autocratic monarchs deciding foreign policy in their own personal interest, the risk of being isolated by other-country alliances, bellicose attitudes – and so forth.

Bean (2) provides a chronology of the start of the war i.e. the collapse of all those years of political and diplomatic intrigue designed to avoid war. I have extracted some of his key dates (using Bean’s spelling of place names):

#### 1. At the European Level

28 Jun 1914	Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria in Serbia ( <i>at Serajevo, the Bosnian capital, by a few fired-up Slav nationalists</i> )
-------------	---

28 Jul 1914	Austria declares war on Serbia
1 Aug 1914	Germany declares war on Russia.
2 Aug 1914	German troops enter Luxembourg and France
4 Aug 1914	Germany invades and declares war on Belgium
4 Aug 1914	Great Britain declares war on Germany;
	Australia, Canada and New Zealand and others join in as Dominions of the British Empire
5 Aug 1914	Austria declares war on Russia
7 Aug 1914	Russia invades Prussia
10 Aug 1914	Austria invades Poland, and on the 13 <sup>th</sup> , Serbia
23 Aug 1914	Japan declares war on Germany
31 Oct 1914	Turkey enters the war
7 Nov 1914	Britain invades Mesopotamia (now Iraq)
3 Feb 1915	Turks attack Suez Canal
19 Feb 1915	Dardanelles (Turkey) campaign begins
17 Jul 1915	Secret treaty between Germany and Bulgaria signed
9 Mar 1916	Germany declares war on Portugal
24 Apr 1916	Outbreak of rebellion in Ireland
23 May 1916	Italy declares war on Austria-Hungary
5 Jun 1916	HMS Hampshire mined, Lord Kitchener drowned (see also Figure 1 at the end of this chapter).
	Arab revolt breaks out.
1 Jul 1916	1 <sup>st</sup> Battle of Somme, France, commences
19 Jul 1916	Battle of Fromelles, France, commences
23 Jul 1916	Battle of Pozieres, France, commences
20 Aug 1916	Italy declares war on Turkey
27 Aug 1916	Roumania enters war
28 Aug 1916	Italy declares war on Germany
14 Oct 1916	Bulgaria declares war on Serbia
15 Oct 1916	State of war between Bulgaria and Great Britain
19 Oct 1916	Italy declares war on Bulgaria
3 Jan 1917	Germany announces commencement of her unrestricted submarine campaign
12 Mar 1917	Russian revolution begins
6 April 1917	United States of America declares war on Germany
13 Aug 1918	The Czechoslovaks declare war on Germany

## 2. At the Australian Level

10 Aug 1914	Recruiting for Australian Imperial Force (AIF) begins
1 Nov 1914	1 <sup>st</sup> Aust and New Zealand contingent sails from Albany, Western Australia
4 Dec 1914	A & NZ Forces arrive at Cairo, Egypt
Early 1915	Australian and New Zealand Army Corps becomes known as ANZAC
25 April 1915	Allies land at Gallipoli
7 Dec 1915	British Government orders evacuation of Anzac and Suvla Beaches, Turkey (completed 20 December 1915). Australians return to Egypt
1 Mar 1916	11 <sup>th</sup> and 12 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalions split, 51 <sup>st</sup> and 52nd Battalions formed, each Battalion comprising original Gallipoli veterans and Gallipoli reinforcements, plus new reinforcements training in Egypt
20 Mar 1916	1st Anzac Corps begins landing in France (includes 12 <sup>th</sup> Bn)
7 Jun 1916	2nd Anzac Corps begins landing in France (includes 52 <sup>nd</sup> Bn)
22 Nov 1916	3 <sup>rd</sup> Australian Division begins landing in France
20 Dec 1917	Second Conscription Referendum in Australia defeated

Liddel Hart (3) sums the origins of the war as follows:

*Fifty years were spent in the process of making Europe explosive. Five days were enough to detonate it. To study the manufacture of explosive materials – which form the fundamental causes of the conflict – is neither within the scope nor space of a short history of the World War. On the one side we should have to trace the influence of Prussia on the creation of the Reich, the political conceptions of Bismarck, the philosophical tendencies in Germany, and the economic situation – a medley of factors which transmuted Germany's natural desire for commercial outlets, unhappily difficult to obtain, into a vision of world power. We should have to analyse that heterogeneous relic of the Middle Ages known as Austria-Hungary, appreciate her complex racial problems, the artificiality of her governing institutions, the superficial ambitions which overlay a haunting fear of internal disruption and frantically sought to postpone the inevitable end.*

*On the other side we should have to examine the strange mixture of ambition and idealism which swayed Russia's policy, and the fear it generated beyond her frontiers, especially among her German neighbours – perhaps the deadliest of all ingredients in the final detonation. We should have to understand the constant alarms of fresh aggression which France had suffered since 1870, study the regrowth of confidence which fortified her to resist further threats, and bear in mind the wounds left in her side by Germany's surgical excision of Alsace-Lorraine. Finally, we should have to trace Britain's gradual movement from a policy of isolation into membership of the European system and her slow awakening to the reality of German feeling towards her.*

*In such a study of European history during half a century, a generalisation can for once be closer to exactness than the most detailed history. The fundamental causes of the conflict can be epitomised in three words – fear, hunger, pride. Beside them, the international 'incidents' that occurred between 1871 and 1914 are but symptoms.*

So if it is good enough for Liddell Hart to dodge all this pre-history (and not having to put up with a computer telling him his sentences were hopelessly too long) then it is more than good enough for me.

### **Another Digression: Zepplimania and Unrestricted Warfare**

Bean (4) notes that during 1916 there were 38 German air raids on England, including 7 on London.

Liddell Hart (5), who always had an eye for technological development, states that Zeppelin or airship raids, commenced in January 1915 and reached their peak in the late summer of 1916, to be succeeded by aeroplane raids:

*The difficulty of distinguishing from the air between military and civil objectives smoothed the path for a development which, beginning with excuses, ended in a frank avowal that in a war for existence, the will of the enemy nation, not merely the bodies of their soldiers, is the inevitable target. Although the Zeppelin raids in 1915 and 1916, through misdirection, did little material damage and caused less than two thousand casualties, it has been estimated that, by their disorganising effect, about one-sixth of the total normal output of munitions was totally lost.*

This unrestricted approach to war was applied later to U-Boat attacks on civilian shipping and was a factor in America eventually joining the war on the allied side.

The Zeppelin raids gave rise to propaganda opportunities, not as good as ‘the rape of Belgium’ which we come to next, but useful all the same - see below - propaganda ‘stamp’ for the kiddies to collect (Figure 2).

### Pretty Sickly Sentiments – The Rape of Belgium

For a burst on ‘the rape of Belgium’ see the collection of tributes by all and sundry in the form of art, music, letters and poems in *“King Albert’s Book”* (7) published in England by the patriotic newspaper *Daily Telegraph* for the unwashed working-class masses, for Christmas 1914.

Here are three of the contributions:

By the Right Honourable Winston S. Churchill (as he then was):

*At this moment when their cities are captive, their country under the yoke, their government and army forced into exile, the Belgium nation is exerting an influence upon the destinies of Europe and of mankind beyond that of great States in the fullness of prosperity and power; and from the abyss of present grief and suffering Belgium looks out with certainty to a future more brilliant than any which she could have planned.* (7, p 28)

By that well known boy-scout, Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Baden-Powell

*It would be trite to quote David against Goliath in the case of gallant little Belgium standing up to the ogre of Prussian Militarism, but that historic fight had its counterpart recently where a peaceful, hard-working little tailor (i.e. Belgium) was set upon by a big, beery loafer (i.e. Germany). The neighbours (i.e. England and France), out of pity and sense of fair play, were prepared to run to the rescue, when they stood back to cheer, for the little man stuck up, on his own, to the bully, and punched him and tripped him and held him down till help arrived In a moment the insignificant little worker had changed into the hero of the village (then had the crap belted out of him by the Bully).*

*There are two things above all others which Britain, down to the very lowest among them, inherently appreciate, and those are Pluck and Fair Play. That is why their sympathy is hot and strong for the plucky little nation which stood up as a champion for liberty and fair play against the over-whelming tide of brute force.* (7, p 176)

And by Leonardo Bistolfi (who as you probably know, but I did not, was an Italian sculptor):

*The sublime sacrifice of the Belgium people will consecrate the blood-stained earth of its martyrs as an altar reared by the hands of Death to the pure and inviolable beauty of life.* (7, p 176)

I presume all this means something. What worries me most is that this book belonged to my grandparents and may have influenced my father's decision to sign-up. Who knows? At least towards the end of the war he got to fight in Belgium, so maybe it was written, as they say. He might have also been influenced by cigarette card propaganda (Figure 1).

## Pretty Picture

Just to show I'm not being just a little bit too cynical about the patriotic bit and can appreciate a moving, spontaneous, telling, non-sexist picture of the war when I see one, I have included a drawing by one other contributor to King Albert's Book - by in fact the illustrious Arthur Rackman, R W S, British artist and illustrator (never heard of him – nor had I) which portrays Belgium as a little plump-titted, barge-arsed ex-virgin, freshly raped, clad in a dirty sheet with tattered flag, and 'unconquerable' the morning after, all amongst the ruins of Belgium (see Figure 3).

And one last contribution from the newly appointed First Sea Lord, Admiral Lord Fisher of Kilverstone, who it would seem was just a simple sailor of few words (p 48):

*"The Lord God of recompenses shall surely requite."* Jeremiah, chap. 51, verse 56, and

*"One poor girl of nineteen was found stripped, outraged and dead."* quoting Special Correspondent of The Times Oct. 25, 1914.

## Pretty Stamps

In the meantime you might be interested in the pretty postage stamps (see Figure 4), issued 28 June 1917 by the Austrian Military Post, then in occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, to commemorate the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Countess Sophia (both pictured on the second stamp). The first stamp shows a proposed church monument that it was hoped to build from the proceeds of the sale of the stamps. I don't know if it was ever built.

Unfortunately for them, their assassination day was also the anniversary of their wedding day. To be married on your wedding day is bad enough but to be made a widower (she died first) and then to die yourself on your wedding anniversary is either triple-jeopardy or something worth your surviving friends going to war over. (Late Archduke below, CTO)





## Endnotes

1. Liddell Hart B H, *History of the First World War*, Pan Books, London, 1972 Chapter 1
2. *Official History* Vol 1, p xlivi
3. Liddell Hart p 1
4. *Official History* p xlivi
5. Liddell Hart p 76
6. In the author's possession
7. "King Albert's Book" published for Christmas 1914 in England by The Daily Telegraph in conjunction with The Daily Sketch, The Glasgow Herald and Hodder and Stoughton

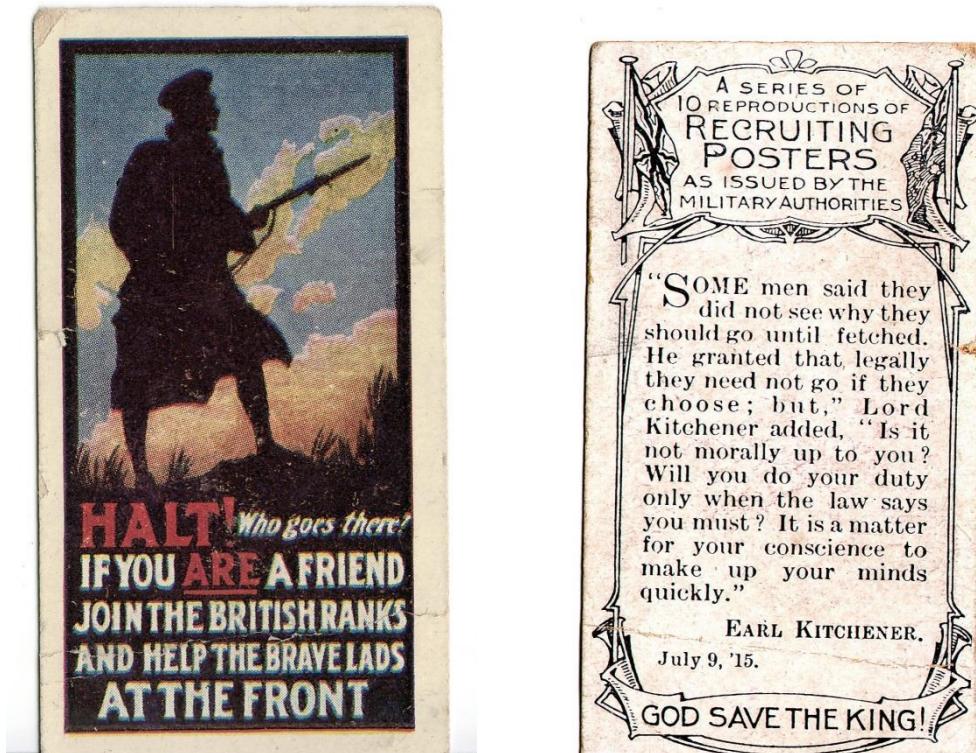


Figure 1.



Figure 2.



Figure 3.



Figure 4.

## Austrian Empire Stamps 1915-16

### Bosnia and Herzegovina

(Military Post)



### War Invalids Charity Stamps

5 Heller

Maimed Soldier

10 Heller

Blinded Soldier

## Chapter 3

### The 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion and the Early 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion Reinforcement Units go to Gallipoli

#### The Gallipoli Landing

On the morning of 25 April 1915, the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Infantry Division, the New Zealand & Australia Division (the latter comprising roughly equal numbers of New Zealand and Australian troops) and some assorted British, Indian and Dominion troops attacked the Turks at Gallipoli.

The newly formed 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Division joined the fight in August 1915.

Bean's (1) List of miscellaneous Units which landed in the first week with the ANZACs includes the:

- Ceylon Planters' Corps (151 troops)
- Zion Mule Corps (246 troops, a unit of the British army comprising Jews, living in Egypt, who had been deported by the Ottomans the previous year) and
- Indian Mule Cart Transport (229 troops, plus mules).

With help like this how could we possibly not win? But we did not.

LISTS OF UNITS AND DETAILS LANDED AT ANZAC, 25th APRIL TO 1st MAY, 1915.

1ST ANZAC CORPS TROOPS.			1ST AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.			N.Z. & A. DIVISION.			BRITISH AND INDIAN FORMATIONS.		
Unit.	Off.	O.R.	Unit.	Off.	O.R.	Unit.	Off.	O.R.	Unit.	Off.	O.R.
Corps H.Q. and Sig. Co.	25‡	100‡	Div. H.Q.*	35	177	Div. H.Q.*	20	135	Royal Naval Div.—		
Ceylon Planters' Rifle Corps	1‡	150‡	Artillery—†			Artillery—†			Marine Bde. H.Q.	7	28
Zion Mule Corps..	6‡	240‡	2nd Bde. H.Q. . . .	5	20	N.Z. F.A. Bde. . . .	4	25	Chatham Bn. . . .	13	550
Indian Mule Cart Transport	2§	227§	4th Bty. . . . .	4	50	No. 1 Bty. . . . .	5	65	Portsmouth Bn. . . .	7	446
Beach Parties	8	272	5th Bty. . . . .	3	57	No. 2 Bty. . . . .	5	65	1st Nav. Bde. H.Q. . . .	6	27
Fatigue Parties	8	400	2nd B.A. Col. . . . .	2	93	How. Bty. & Amm. Col. . . . .	5	93	Nelson Bn. . . . .	21	713
1st A. C. C. Stn. . . .	5	58	3rd Bde. H.Q. . . . .	11	105	N.Z. Inf. Bde. H.Q. . . . .	3	2	Deal Bn. . . . .	23	843
1st Aust. Dépôt Unit of Supply	1	13	7th Bty. . . . .	8		Auckland Bn. . . . .	25	912	No. 1 Fld. Amb. . . . .	3‡	110‡
			8th Bty. . . . .	9		Canterbury Bn. . . . .	25	912	No. 1 F.C. Eng. . . . .	6‡	150‡
			9th Bty. . . . .	10		Otago Bn. . . . .	25	912	No. 2 F.C. Eng. . . . .	6‡	150‡
			3rd B.A. Col. . . . .	2	45	Wellington Bn. . . . .	25	912	7th Ind. Mtn. Art. Bde. H.Q. . . . .	2	7
			Infantry—			N.Z. F.C. Eng. . . . .	5	139	21st (Kohat) Bty. . . . .	5	322
			1st Bde. H.Q. . . . .	4	7	N.Z. Fld. Amb. . . . .	5	120	26th (Jacob's) Bty. . . . .	5	323
			1st Bn. . . . .	30	943	4th A. Inf. Bde. H.Q. . . . .	5	3	Sec. Ind. Fld. Amb. . . . .	1	62
			2nd Bn. . . . .	31	937	13th Bn. . . . .	25	934	Sect. Amm. Col. . . . .	—	49
			3rd Bn. . . . .	30	939	14th Bn. . . . .	25	915	Supply Details . . . . .	—	5
			4th Bn. . . . .	32	935	15th Bn. . . . .	25	934			
			3rd F.C. Eng. . . . .	6	142	16th Bn. . . . .	25	934			
			1st Fld. Amb. . . . .	3	111	4th A. Fld. Amb. . . . .	7	184			
			2nd Inf. Bde. H.Q. . . . .	4	7	N.Z. & A. Div. Train. . . . .	14	69			
			5th Bn. . . . .	31	942						
			6th Bn. . . . .	31	942						
			7th Bn. . . . .	30	940						
			8th Bn. . . . .	31	938						
			2nd F.C. Eng. . . . .	6	150						
			2nd Fld. Amb. . . . .	3	112						
			3rd Inf. Bde. H.Q. . . . .	4	10						
			9th Bn. . . . .	32	937						
			10th Bn. . . . .	29	915						
			11th Bn. . . . .	30	940						
			12th Bn. . . . .	31	942						
			1st F.C. Eng. . . . .	7	158						
			3rd Fld. Amb. . . . .	3	114						
			Div. Train (less Trnspt. Sec.) . . .	15	140						
Total 1st Anzac Corps Troops ..	56	1460	Total 1st Aus. Div. . . . .	485	12748	Total N.Z. & A Div. . . . .	278	8265	Total B. & I. Form. . . . .	105	3785

GRAND TOTAL .. Officers, 924. Other Ranks, 26,258.

\* Includes also Sig. Co.; and Art. & Eng. H.Q. † The 1st A.F.A. Bde, 6th Bty, A.F.A., and Bty, N.Z.F.A. landed at Cape Helles. The 2nd A.F.A. Bde, 5th Bty, A.F.A., and 1st Bty, N.Z.F.A., landed at Anzac, the 5th Bty, A.F.A., having suffered casualties.

Strength on 12/6/15 landed, 1-4/5/15 apparently after having suffered  
losses, landed

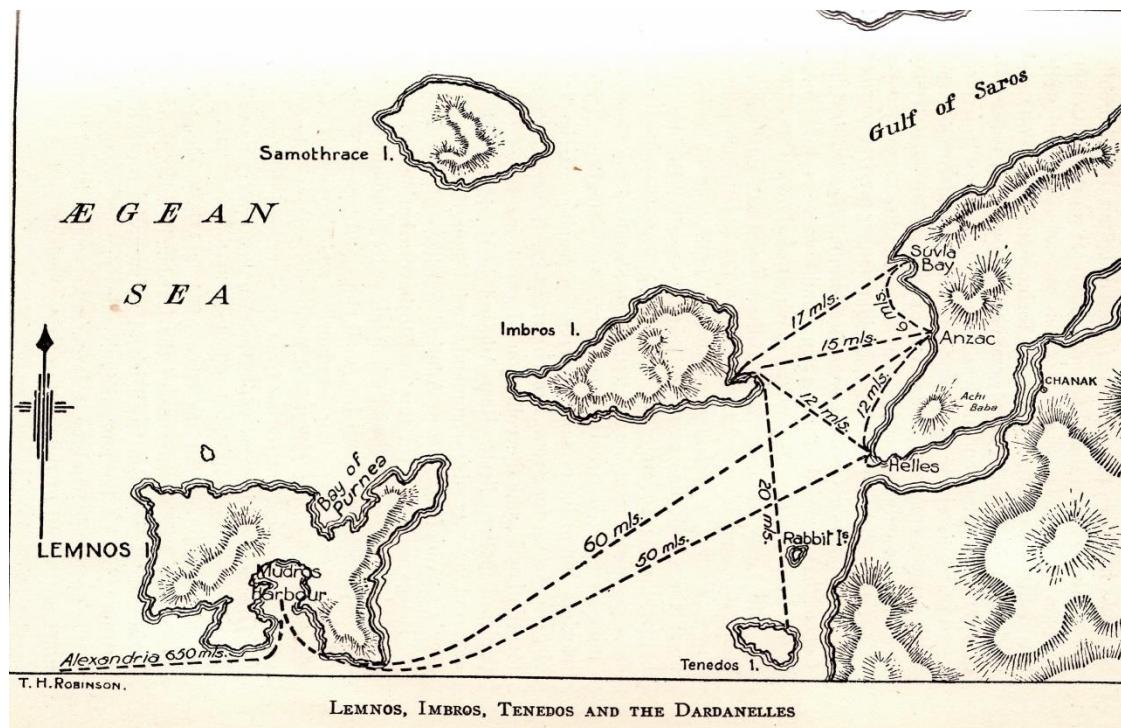
Bearer subdivisions only of Fld. Ambs., landed

As could be expected, from day one of the landing, the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion began to suffer gaps in the ranks (the landing place is more often referred to as Anzac Beach or just Anzac). Bean (2) estimates that over the period of the landing (25 April 1915 to 3 May 1915) the casualty loss at Anzac was about 8,500, including 2,300 who were killed or died of wounds.

Initially the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion's losses were plugged by the 1<sup>st</sup> Reinforcement force for 12 Bn, comprising in the main men who had joined the AIF around mid-November 1914 and who sailed for Egypt, then to the Port of Mudros on the Island of Lemnos. Mudros Bay is some 60 miles west from the mouth of the Dardanelles –see Bean's map (3). The following history of Lemnos is summarised from the *Official History* (4):

**Lemnos (and other nearby islands)**, although by WW1 inhabited by Greeks, had belonged to Turkey until the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, when Greece had seized them. After Turkey entered the war the Greek Government offered Lemnos to the Allies as a base for their fleet watching the Dardanelles. Greek

troops were withdrawn from the Island and a British Rear Admiral appointed governor and commander of the base. The Allies also occupied three other islands formerly comprising part of the old Turkish Empire – Tenedos, Imbros and Mitylene.



## Australian Service Records

The service records of Australian WW1 soldiers can be accessed, at times with a bit of patience and detective work, on-line through the National Archives of Australia web site. And this is where the hopefully value-added part of my story comes to the fore. The patchy history given so far is all second-hand and probably, in parts, inaccurate.

One matter I wish I had more information on is the fate of the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion soldiers comprising the 'originals' and the early reinforcements while serving at Gallipoli. What we know is that over the war the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion suffered a loss of 1,135 killed and 2,422 wounded. At the end of his book Carlyon (5) states that perhaps only one-quarter of the original force of 30,000 that left Australia

in 1914 survived, so presumably the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion originals suffered the same sort of loss.

Regardless, the Originals' losses were being continually made-up by reinforcing troops. At Gallipoli the Battalion drew its fresh troops from units known as 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion Reinforcements numbers 1 to 7.

## 12th Battalion AIF Reinforcement Troops

The 12th Battalion's (Infantry) Reinforcement Units 1 to 8 were raised between December 1914 and September 1915, Units 9 to 12 were raised between September 1915 and December 1915; Units 13 to 23 between January 1916 and December 1916; and Units 24 to 27 between February 1917 and February 1918.

The 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion had its own Reinforcement Units 2 to 9 raised between April 1916 and January 1917 and the 10<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement Unit in October 1917. (I don't know if there was a 52<sup>nd</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> reinforcements unit; I have seen no reference to one.)

The 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion's 1<sup>st</sup> Reinforcements soldiers joined (signed-on or enlisted in the Army) around mid-November 1914, and embarked for the middle-east in December 1914, where presumably most went to Gallipoli. I say presumably because I have not attempted to follow any 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion reinforcement unit in detail, except for the Western Australian enlistments for 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements Unit, and these latter soldiers did not serve in Gallipoli. I have however included details of a small ad-hoc 'random' sample of a few soldiers' service records from each of the 12<sup>th</sup> Bn Reinforcement units preceding the 11<sup>th</sup> to see what if anything emerges.

But first a glossary of the military shorthand in the service records:

AWL – absent without leave, military crime, usually resulted in a fine (stoppage of pay), confinement to barracks, extra duties, etc.

Btn or Bn – Battalion

Bomb – grenade type explosive thrown by hand

Cpl – corporal, also L/Cpl – Lance Corporal

C.O. – commanding officer

Coy or Co - company

GSW – gunshot wound (small arms, rifle or machine-gun wound, not shotgun)

HMAT – His Majesty's Auxiliary Troopship (troop ship, usually a former commercial passenger ship, sometimes lightly armed)

HMHS – His Majesty's Hospital Ship

KIA – killed in action

MIA – missing in action

MM – Military Medal, an award for personal bravery (called MC - Military Cross - if awarded to an officer)

NAA – National Archives of Australia

NCO – non-commissioned officer e.g. corporal, sergeant

NOK – next of kin (name and address of the person to whom telegrams and correspondence were addressed)

ORs – other ranks, non-officers

POW – prisoner of war

Reinf – Reinforcement Unit e.g. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> etc

Sgt - sergeant

SW – shrapnel wound

SOS – struck off strength (when a soldier left such and such a unit)

TOS – taken on strength (when a soldier joined a unit)

VD – venereal disease

WIA – wounded in action

yo – years old, soldier's age

By way of background, most of the wounded and sick at Gallipoli would have received some form of treatment on shore and then passed through a casualty clearing station, generally on an off-shore hospital ship, for treatment at one or more of the military hospitals at Lemnos, Malta, Egypt and England.

Readers are referred to confronting extracts from the diaries of Australian Nursing Sister **Alice Kitchen** quoted in *The Anzacs* (see Endnotes this Chapter).

Soldiers being discharged because of their wounds might also have received further treatment and rehabilitation in Australia, either whilst still serving or post discharge.

So here we go with *ad hoc* extracts from the NAA 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion service records.



**1st Reinforcements, 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Embarked from Melbourne on  
HMAT A32 "Themistocles" 22 December 1914**

**Service Number 1106 Arthur Edmond BRIDSON**

Joined 2 November 1914 in South Australia, 19 yo miner  
Embarked for middle-east 22 December 1914  
Wounded in action Gallipoli 7 August 1915 and 16 August 1915 –  
evacuated from Gallipoli  
Charged with gambling (O My God I hear you say) in the reading  
room at Mustapha (British convalescent depot near Alexandria,  
Egypt)  
Transferred to Postal Corps March 1916  
Returned to Australia September 1918  
Discharged January 1919

**Service Number 1107 Edward HEFRON**

Joined 9 November 1914 in South Australia, 34 yo labourer  
Taken on strength 12<sup>th</sup> Bn Reinforcements 7 December 1914  
Embarked 22 December 1914  
Back injury and shell shock Dardanelles 29 April 1915  
Evacuated to Australia 3 July 1915  
Discharged medically unfit 4 April 1916

**Number 1111 Tom Keith KNIGHT**

Joined 10 November 1914 in South Australia, 22 yo salesman  
TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 1<sup>st</sup> Reinf 7 December 1914  
WIA Gallipoli 25 April 1915 (first day of landing)  
Evacuated hospitals Cairo, Shezireh, Helouan and Zeitoun  
TOS Tel-el-Kebir Army Camp, Egypt with 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn  
Went to France aboard HMAT *Ivernia* 12 June 1916  
KIA France June 1916

**Number 1112 Edgar Victor Claude LARKING**

Joined 14 September 1914 in South Australia  
Discharged in Australia for refusing inoculations  
Re-joined 29 July 1915 as Service No. 3279.

NOTE: Aussie, Kiwi and Pommie troops were vaccinated against smallpox and inoculated against typhoid fever (6). This follows losses by the British in the Boer War where some 7,800 of their troops died in action or of wounds and an overshadowing 13,250 died of disease (7).

**2<sup>nd</sup> Reinforcements, 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Embarked from Melbourne, Adelaide and Fremantle on HMAT "Clan Macgillivray" February 1915**

Service Number 1404 Mathew CRAWLEY

Joined Western Australia 20 Nov 1914, 19 yo farm hand  
No further service record found

Service Number 1408 Alfred HOLLINGBERY

Joined Western Australia 12 Nov 1914, 37 yo draper  
Embarked 22 February 1915  
Landed Gallipoli 7 May 1915  
Extensive hospitalisation from August 1915 – diarrhoea, enteritis, piles, dysentery – to hospital Mudros, later Serapeum Camp, Egypt  
To France 12 June 1916 via HMAT *Ivernia* with 52 Bn  
Died of wounds 3 or 4 September 1916 (Mouquet Farm)

Service Number 1411 Richard Henry Phillip JONES

Joined Western Australia 12 Nov 1914, 32 yo labourer  
Landed Gallipoli 26 May 1915  
Sustained bomb wound to head 7 August 1915  
Evacuated to West Mudros Hospital  
Died of wounds 9 August 1915

Before we go on, it seems fair to point out that our little ad-hoc sample of Reinforcements are not travelling too well, especially the late **Private Tom KNIGHT** who was wounded on day 1 at Gallipoli and, within a few days of entering the front lines in France, was KIA. But let us search on.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Reinforcements; 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Embarked from Adelaide aboard HMAT A50 *Itonus* 15 February 1915 and Melbourne aboard HMAT A54 *Runic* 19 February 1915**

Service Number 1456 Ernest George BROOKS

Joined Western Australia 9 January 1915, 23 yo wheelwright  
To Gallipoli 7 May 1915  
WIA (head) 4 July 1915  
Died of wounds 10 July 1915  
Mother granted pension September 1915

Service Number 1458 Arthur CAM

Joined Western Australia 5 January 1915, 34 yo dairyman,  
9 yrs previous military service  
TOS 3rd Reinf 12th Bn 16 Feb 1915  
TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn Gallipoli 7 May 1915  
Bullet wound buttocks 8 August 1915. To hospitals Mudros and  
England, also diagnosed with dysentery and shell shock.  
Discharged 5 December 1916 medically unfit

Service Number 1461 George FORD

Joined Western Australia 5 January 1915, 39 yo butcher  
16 yrs previous military experience in the UK Not married  
TOS 3rd Reinf 12th Bn 16 February 1915  
TOS 12 Bn Gallipoli 7 May 1915  
GSW chest (severe) 19 May 1915  
Hospitalised Mustapha, Egypt  
Posted back to Gallipoli. July 1915 diagnosed with Chancre  
(venereal ulcer - VD)  
26 July 1915 Abbassia Detention Hospital Cairo Egypt  
Discharged 1 August 1916 (medically unfit Venereal Disease)  
Died Perth Public Hospital 8 June 1920 from Nephritis  
(inflammation of the kidneys) and Uraemia (morbid condition of  
the blood due to retention of urinary matter normally eliminated  
by the kidneys)

Rather a brutal experience for each of these 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 3<sup>rd</sup> Reinf soldiers.

**4<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Embarked from Adelaide, Melbourne and Fremantle aboard HMAT A17 *Port Lincoln*, HMAT A15 *Star of England* and HMAT A8 *Argyllshire* April 1915**

Note the month of embarkation, so guess where these blokes are headed. I've followed up on a few extra soldiers this time to give you some idea of just what a crappy and unhealthy place Gallipoli was.

**Service Number 1751 Henry Gresham BATH**

Joined 15 January 1915 in Western Australia 22 yo horse driver  
TOS Gallipoli 26 May 1915  
Evacuated sick Diarrhoea 13 Aug 1915 – to Malta, Mudros, England. France 9 May 1916, re-joined 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 4 Aug 1916  
KIA France 19/22 August 1916

**Service Number 1752 Sydney Ernest BERRY**

Joined 18 January 1915, 23 yo teamster  
Born UK 3.5 yrs previous experience with UK Territorials  
WIA Head wound Gallipoli 7 August 1915  
To France: Mar 1916 to 52 Bn, July 1916 to Artillery (trench mortars). WIA GSW thigh November 1916  
WIA GSW to hand, Oct 1917  
Serious AWL (absent without leave) offence (crime) UK Jan 1918  
Married UK 15 April 1918  
Discharged Australia 7 August 1919

Bit of a ‘heads up’ here because it will come up again when we get to the 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements. Over the war many of our troops got a “Blighty” to England for sickness or injury treatment or leave. Later, many were given temporary appointments as instructors to train other poor bastards destined for the trenches.

Quite a number of our soldiers married English girls in England during the war, especially in 1918. Guess there was a bit of an excess of unattached English girls, who sympathised with our lonely diggers.

According to Adam-Smith (8), our boys brought back to Australia 18,000 wives (I have a feeling most were called “Ethel” or something like it, but maybe that’s

just an impression of no great substance. I noticed from a May 2011 obituary that our last WWI veteran, **Claude CHOULES**, also married an Ethel.)

Married soldiers often had to hang around England after the war waiting for a married person's berth on homecoming ships.

#### Service Number 1753 **Wilfred Lawson BLACKSTONE**

Joined Western Australia 15 January 1915, 26 yo gardener  
TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn Gallipoli 26 May 1915  
WIA 14 July 1915 – GSW abdomen – (as a rough indicator soldiers had a chance of surviving bullet wounds to hands, shoulders, arms and legs; but rarely does anyone survive wounds, unless minor, to the head, chest or abdomen.)  
Died of wounds 14 July 1915 aboard HMHS Gascon at sea of Gaba Tepe (Gallipoli).  
Buried at sea 3 miles off Gaba Tepe

Our Willie left a Will dated 25 May 1915 stating:

*In the event of my death I give the whole of my property and effects to my (father nominated).*

Simple and effective for the local Public Trustee to administer. Would not want such economic and efficient wording to catch on as solicitors would be out of a job. Such simple Wills often crop up in the files of soldiers killed during the war, not that they had much of an estate, if we go by the miserable lists of returned personal effects.

#### Service Number 1754 **John BRADFORD**

Joined Western Australia 18 May 1915, 30 yo, shearer  
TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn Gallipoli 26 May 1915  
WIA GSW shoulder 7 July 1915  
Treated Malta and England, joined 48th Bn Tel-el-Kebir infantry camp Egypt (40 miles from Cairo) treated for VD April 1916  
Landed France 9 June 1916  
MIA 7 August 1916  
Court of Inquiry held 7 September 1916 found Pte Bradford

was KIA 7 August 1916.

Awarded Military Medal (MM) 27 October 1916 for conspicuous gallantry at Gallipoli: The official citation for the award reads:

*At Tasmania Post, Gallipoli, early in June 1915 he went out by daylight and bombed some of the enemy who occupied a position there, being wounded by fire from the enemy's snipers in returning.*

So there you go; a medal turning up a year and one-quarter after your brave act in which you were wounded, plus there's more - a trip to Malta and England to recover, all for another trip and a miserable death in France before you even knew of your medal.

#### **Service Number 1755, Harold Glynn CLIFTON**

Joined Western Australia 18 January 1915, 22 yo bank clerk  
After embarking for middle-east spent 16 weeks in a Suez  
hospital suffering pre-existing heart conditions, aggravated by  
poor medical treatment.

Discharged in Australia medically unfit 27 June 1916  
Still alive February 1959

#### **Service Number 1763 Bertrand John HILLARY**

Joined at Western Australia 18 Jan 1915, 19 yo boundary rider  
TOS Gallipoli 26 May 1915

Admitted hospital 17 August 1915, ear/eye problems, diarrhoea  
Sent to Mudros, Malta and England for treatment

Returned to Australia 8 May 1916, defective vision  
Discharged medically unfit 18 September 1916

Service Number 1764 **Frederick Arthur Montague HILLARY**

Joined at Western Australia 18 January 1915, 21 yo bridge builder, brother of above soldier

TOS Gallipoli 26 May 1915

Hospitalised 24 July 1915, Diarrhoea, Gastro Enteritis, Flu  
Treated Mudros

WIA Gallipoli 28 Sept 1915, leg/thigh, led to gas gangrene  
Leg amputated 14 October 1915

Returned to Australia from Suez December 1915

Discharged medically unfit 30 September 1916

Service Number 1768 **Herbert Walter LOVE**

Joined Western Australia 18 January 1915, 29 yo married clerk

TOS 12 Bn Gallipoli 26 May 1915

Hospitalised Malta July 1915, Flu

Returned to Gallipoli August 1915, evacuated to Egypt

To France 6 Jan 1916, hospitalised dental problems

MIA France 29 July 1916, GSW arm, treated England

27 July 1917 Returned to Australia for home service

Discharged medically unfit 2 November 1917

Pension from 3 November 1917

Alive in Canberra 4 September 1968

Anyway that might do for the Reinforcements for now. Those readers who can count will realise we still have some way to go before we get to the 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement Unit. We'll do that in **Appendix 2**.

## Gallipoli Really Was an Unhealthy Place

But before we go on it is time for a quick comment on the health of our boys, as the stalemate (undeclared defeat) at Gallipoli continues.

In good old Australian terms, soon after the April landing, Turkey was getting into blow-fly season. Bean (9) tells us that until the end of May 1915 the health of the troops at Anzac was perfect (aside one presumes from the effects of lack of sleep, eating badly, living in holes in the ground and being continually shot at or bombed). From May on, reports of diarrhoea and some form of dysentery/ enteric fever/ gastro enteritis started growing. By the end of July, losses from sickness only matched the numbers available to replace them, remembering that the sick were taken from the beaches onto hospital ships and then to hospitals at Mudros, Malta, Mustapha, Egypt and even England. They tended to be gone a long time for what today is a reasonably easily treated malady.

It was well that they had been vaccinated for smallpox and typhoid, otherwise epidemics of these diseases would also have broken out in the unsanitary conditions the troops were suffering: Let's see a list of what was going wrong:

- Winter cold was being replaced by summer heat
- Sanitation was always a problem – soldiers have to shit and piss somewhere and the latrines were primitive and close by
- Lots of dead bodies lying in open ground or poorly buried, and the interred getting blown up by continual bombardments
- Limited means of effective on-site medical treatment
- Rubbish piling up, especially uneaten food such as monotonous fly-attracting bully beef and stale cheese
- Lack of any fresh food such as milk, eggs and vegetables – leading to a general decline in health
- Very limited water for washing; one way of getting clothes and men 'clean' was to go for a salt-water swim, and then you did so at the risk of being fired on by Turkish snipers and artillery
- Generally very poor living conditions as you would expect from living in trenches and holes in the ground, dugouts etc
- Body lice and fleas which spread rapidly through the trenches and unwashed bodies and clothes
- Carrion-eating rats, which always got a bad press in WW1.

Bean even makes a sly suggestion that no matter what the Aussies did to improve things, the Turks weren't as clean as they might be (and flies do not respect each other's front line), but I don't believe this racial slur for a moment. Finally, unlike France and Egypt, there was nowhere for the men to go to spend their own money on fresh food, drink or a good time – no YMCA canteens, no little rustic pubs or roadside stalls, no souvenirs. But no local VD either. Just bloody nothing. Bean gives a pretty good summary of the 1915 summer holiday in one of his shorter and more straightforward sentences (10):

*Despite these measures\* of sanitation, the outstanding facts were that from June to October flies swarmed at Anzac; that the sanitary organisation, though it fought them with some success in the trenches, at no time succeeded in keeping them from the open latrines; and that, although food was generally covered, it was almost impossible to prevent them from settling upon it, even on its way to a man's mouth, while they swarmed over mess-tins and utensils and drowned themselves in the tea. The infection thus carried undoubtedly caused an important proportion of the sickness on the Peninsula.*

\* Burning and burying rubbish, boiling water, covering food, burying bodies where possible, use of mosquito netting, use of disinfectants and chemicals, generally keeping the trenches and latrines clean etc.

The biggest problem of course is that the planners blundered in many ways, but in particular in under-estimating the Turks. The troops did not succeed with their landing and got pinned down on a narrow, inhospitable piece of very hilly country. Provision of on-shore medical services was challenging. One problem with these out-of-the-way places is transport: how to get men and supplies in and how to get the sick and injured away. We only seemed to have produced one Simpson with one donkey\*; no doubt there were others. Sometimes priorities mean a healthier lifestyle gets second place. Surprisingly, the planners did not muck up the successful December 1915 evacuation.

\* (Jack) Simpson was not his real surname. He was a Pom who jumped ship and enlisted when war broke out, training as a stretcher bearer at Blackboy Camp, WA. At Gallipoli Private Simpson and stray donkey 'Murphy' survived 3 traumatic weeks – from 25 April 1915 to 19 May 1915- when both were killed in action. During that time they bought in many wounded and no doubt saved many Australian lives. And their bravery and legend live forever (see p 51).

## Service Numbers

Just before you escape to the next chapter or a cold beer, I want to touch on the service numbering system used by the Infantry Battalions. Each Battalion in theory started with soldier number 1, then 2 etc. Therefore there was potentially 'soldier 1' for each of the first 16 Battalions. The first soldier of the 1<sup>st</sup> Reinforcements would take the next number for the given Bn. So the first of our random soldiers above, number 1106, Private Bridson, was in theory the 1,106<sup>th</sup> soldier taken on strength by the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion's first Original soldier was warrant officer William Kennedy and the last 'original' for the 12<sup>th</sup> seems to have been the very unfortunate Private Percy Wilfred Winburn, service number 1052. There seem to be gaps of non-allocated numbers between various intakes as the first soldier of the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 1<sup>st</sup> Reinforcement is Percy Howard Bell, service number 1101. If I have got it right, the first and last 12Bn Original soldiers' service records are summarised below:

### Service Number 1 Captain William KENNEDY MC

Joined 22 August 1914, 29 years 9 months old serving militia (part-time) soldier, 4.5 years' service with 1/4<sup>th</sup> Aust. Inf. Regiment, born Greymouth New Zealand, 6 feet 0.75 inches (185 cms) tall.

Shipped to Egypt as Warrant Officer, went from Egypt to Gallipoli and promoted August 1915 to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. March 1916 transferred to 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn, made Temporary Captain Tel-el-Kebir. In May 1916 transferred to Training Bn England, hospitalised April 1917 scabies, re-joined 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn May 1917, made Temporary Major Nov 1917, WIA GSW leg April 1918, awarded Military Cross (11) May 1918, mentioned in dispatches November 1917 for distinguished and gallant service and devotion to duty September 1917.

Embarked for Australia October 1918, special leave and discharge.

### Service number 1052 Private Percy Wilfred WINBURN

Joined 8 September 1914 in Tasmania, 21 year 3 months old labourer, 5 feet 6.5 inches (169 cms) tall.

June 1915, sick Gallipoli gastro-dysentery, hospitalised Mudros, Malta and England. Hospitalised again England Nov 1916 bronchitis, re-joined 12<sup>th</sup> Bn in France Mar 1917, hospitalised England diarrhoea May 1917, re-joined 12<sup>th</sup> Bn December 1917, WIA GSW head January 1918, WIA multiple wounds legs, foot amputated July 1918, discharged medically unfit 31 May 1920.

Died September 1926, buried St John's Church, Canberra, Row 7 Plot 314 (see photos at the end of this Chapter).

As you will suspect **Private WINBURN** did not fare too well after his return to civilian life. In January 1925 he made a false declaration that he had lost his pension certificate (a document which allowed the holder to draw a pension). This act caught up with him. The *Argus* newspaper of Saturday 13 June 1925 carried a story that he had been arrested the day before for making the false statement.

In the Thursday 18 June 1925 edition of the *Gippsland Times* there is a similar article (p 5) on Winburn's arrest which added: "It is alleged that Winburn handed over the pension certificate to a man at Bairnsdale as security for a debt of 25 pounds and subsequently, by making a false declaration that it had been lost, obtained a duplicate".

*The Argus* of Saturday 20 June 1925 carried on page 18 a report of the Court proceedings. Winburn was described as a former soldier of no fixed address. The Special Magistrate hearing the case convicted him, after noting that Winburn had a good service record, had lost a foot and sustained other serious injuries and fined him 5 pounds. His status as a returned soldier probably saved him from jail. Still, the fine was heavy given that the pension was 4 pounds a fortnight. Later Winburn obtained a Federal Capital Territory labourer's job where work had commenced on the early roads and buildings of Canberra.

Winburn died in September 1926, aged 33 years, and his death was subject to a coronial inquiry which was reported in the *Queanbeyan-Canberra Advocate*, Thursday 30 September 1926 page 4 under the banner FATAL DRINK DEPRAVITY. It makes sober reading:

Perhaps the most shocking instance of the craze for alcoholic drink that has yet been made public was brought to light on Monday at an inquest held by Mr Coroner Gale on view of the body of a man named Percy Wilfred Winburn, who was found dead by a mate in his tent at Eastlake, F.C.T. (Federal Capital Territory) on Saturday last. Deceased was a returned soldier, and according to his mate's evidence, who had known him for three or four years, had been a heavy drinker of intoxicating liquors during the whole of that time. This witness last saw the deceased alive on last Saturday afternoon. The next he saw of him was when he went to the deceased's tent on Sunday last. But he was then dead. On the Saturday the deceased was very drunk. When, next day, he discovered his dead body, there was by his side a half-emptied beer bottle of methylated spirits, with three or four other empty bottles which had also contained methylated spirits. It appeared that, ordinary spirituous liquors failing to satisfy his lust for intoxicants, he had latterly taken to drinking of the latter, and according to Dr James' evidence, the post mortem investigation conducted by him by the Coroner's orders, revealed that his entire system, but more particularly the brain emitted the fumes of the spirit referred to. The doctor had preserved the stomach and contents for further examination if necessary. This, however, the Coroner deemed unnecessary, when the medical witness, in answer to a question unhesitatingly declared that the direct cause of death, was alcoholic poisoning by the excessive indulgence of this poisonous spirit as a beverage. In short the entire system of the deceased was such as would be seen in death from alcoholic poisoning. That death had occurred on the Sunday morning was clear from the testimony of Constable Lowther, to whom the death was first reported, and who stated that the body was still warm when he came to examine it. In view of the evidence of the whole the Coroner recorded his finding that death resulted from the continuous and excessive drinking of methylated spirits.

## Digression: A few Personal Experiences

No doubt there are many first-hand accounts by soldiers who fought at Gallipoli. An early (July 1916) 'novel' by Sydney LOCH published as *The Straits Impregnable*, which described Loch's Gallipoli experiences from an Australian perspective, was withdrawn from sale by the Australian wartime censor when it was revealed to be a work of non-fiction. Loch wrote his book

from a detailed war diary while convalescing from serious illnesses contracted at Gallipoli. It has recently been republished (12) and is worth a read.

As we saw earlier, the British suffered far more casualties in the Dardanelles campaign than Australia. **Leonard THOMPSON**, a Suffolk farm labourer, left a brief account of his Gallipoli and European war experiences quoted in a book by Ronald Blythe (13), some of which is extracted here. Thompson had enlisted in the British army in March 1914 to escape the hardships and uncertainties of being an agricultural labourer.

*I had 7s a week and sent my mother half of it. If you did this, the government would add another 3s 6d - so my mother got 7s. My father died early this year and my mother lived on this 7s a week for the whole of the war, adding a scrap to it by doing washing, and weeding in the fields. Neither of my parents lived long enough to draw the Old Age Pension. (p42)*

*The first thing we saw (after landing on the Hellespont, Dardanelles) were big wrecked Turkish guns, the second a big marquee. ... We rushed up to it, like boys getting into a circus, and then found it all laced up. We unlaced it and rushed in. It was full of corpses. Dead Englishmen, lines and lines of them, with their eyes wide open... Later that day we marched (towards the front line)... when we got to the communication trench we found it so full of dead men that we could hardly move. Their faces were quite black and you couldn't tell Turk from English. There was the most terrible stink and for a while there was nothing but the living being sick on the dead. (p43)*

*On June 4<sup>th</sup> went over the top. We took the Turk's trench and held it. It was called Hill 13. The next day...the Turks returned and recaptured their trench.... On June 6<sup>th</sup> ....we managed to get hold of Hill 13 again. Of the sixty men I had started out to war from Harwich (Suffolk) with, there were only three left. (p44)*

*We set to work to bury people. We pushed them into the sides of the trench but bits of them kept getting uncovered and sticking out, like people in a badly made bed. The bottom of the trench was springy like a mattress because of the bodies underneath. At night, when the stench was worst, we tried crepe round our mouths and noses. This crepe was given to us because it was supposed to prevent us from being gassed.*

*The flies entered the trenches at night and lined them completely with a density which was like moving cloth. We killed millions of them by slapping our spades along the trench walls but the next night it would be just as bad. We were all lousy and we couldn't stop shitting because we had caught dysentery. We wept, not because we were frightened but because we were so dirty." (p44)*

After Gallipoli, Thompson went to France and in April 1917 became a prisoner of war of the Germans, suffering considerable ill-treatment. He eventually returned to England and took work again as an agricultural labourer.

Thompson found that by 1920 working conditions had improved, but under his industry's award he was still working fifty-four hours a week with a one-half day holiday. There was an agricultural slump in 1921 due to a long hot dry summer and wages, which had been set by a Wages Board, were cut with many labourers losing their jobs. The local Union branch closed as no one could afford the dues. So much for being a returned soldier in England.

Apparently post-war life was not always that good for the 'better' classes either. Agatha Christie's 1922 book "The Secret Adversary" portrays Tommy as a demobbed junior officer and Tuppence as ex-VAD (voluntary nurses aid), both unemployed, both having spent most of their savings and demobbing gratuities, both living in cheap hostels, and both facing the prospect of having to move back home and sponge off their parents if they could not get work soon.

## And A Final Word on Mules

You remember my smug comment at the beginning of this Chapter about the "hi-tech" Zion and Indian mules. Well since then I have read Leon Uris's fact/fiction book (tome) *Redemption*, first published by Harper Collins in 1995.

If you can get past the first half of the book, much of which seems to more or less be a repeat of his earlier tome *Trinity*, we find the plucky heroes in the British Army in Egypt about to go to Gallipoli with their mules. And why mules? - because there was no other reliable pack animal, other than a soldier who came in a very poor second, that could handle the climate and terrain while carrying heavy loads day after day. An interesting read, both on training and using mules and a good Gallipoli story.

So I apologise profusely to all the legions of mule lovers out there.

## Endnotes

1. *Official History Vol 1* p 281
2. *Official History Vol 2* p xxiii
3. *Official History Vol 1* p183
4. *Official History Vol 1* p183
5. Les Carlyon, *The Great War*, Pan Macmillian Australia, Sydney, 2006 p 752
6. *Official History Vol 2*, p367
7. David Smurthwaite *The Boer War*, p172, 'Hamlyn history' publishers, Octopus Publishing, London 1999
8. Patsy Adam-Smith, *The Anzacs*, Sphere Books, Melbourne 1978, p 454
9. *Official History Vol 2* p 366
10. *Official History Vol 2*, p373.
11. For details of bravery awards see Neville Browning, *The 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion*, Advance Press, Bassendean Western Australia, 2005, p 330.
12. Susanna de Vries and Jake de Vries *To Hell and Back – The banned account of Gallipoli* by Sydney Loch, Harper Collins Publishers, Australia, 2007
13. Ronald Blythe Akenfield: *Portrait of an English Village*, Penguin, 1972, pp 33-48

Extracts from the Diary of Australian Army Nursing Service Sister Alice Kitchen as quoted in *The Anzacs* by Patsy Adam-Smith– see Ref 8.

Treating wounded in Egypt – p 98 to 100

Treating wounded in the Dardanelles p 108 to 112.

Treating the sick from Gallipoli p 151 to 152

The end of Gallipoli p 200 to 204.



One bearer there was whose name has become a tradition in Australia. A number of donkeys with Greek drivers had been landed on April 25th for water-carrying. The Greeks were soon deported, and after the first days the donkeys ceased carrying and fed idly in the gullies, till they gradually disappeared. Private Simpson,<sup>11</sup> of the 3rd Australian Field Ambulance, was seized with the idea that one of these might be useful for moving men wounded in the leg. On the night of April 25th he annexed a donkey, and each day, and half of every night, he worked continuously between the head of Monash Valley and the Beach, his donkey carrying a brassard round its forehead and a wounded man on its back. Simpson escaped death so many times that he was completely fatalistic; the deadly sniping down the valley and the most furious shrapnel fire never stopped him. The colonel of his ambulance, recognising the value of his work, allowed him to carry on as a completely separate unit. He camped with his donkey at the Indian mule-camp, and had only to report once a day at the field ambulance. Presently he annexed a second donkey. On May 19th he went up the valley past the water-guard, where he generally had his breakfast, but it was not ready. "Never mind," he called. "Get me a good dinner when I come back."

He never came back. With two patients he was coming down the creek-bed, when he was hit through the heart, both the wounded men being wounded again. He had carried many scores of men down the valley, and had saved many lives at the cost of his own.

<sup>11</sup> Pte. John Simpson Kirkpatrick (No. 202, 3rd Fld. Amb.). Ship's fireman; of Melbourne; b. Tyne Dock, South Shields, Eng., 6 July, 1892. Killed in action, 19 May, 1915. (Generally known as "Scottie" or "Murphy." His donkey "Duffy," beloved of the Indian Mule Drivers, was taken from Anzac by them at the Evacuation).

## Chapter 4

### 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements and the Formation of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion in Egypt

For a detailed history of the AIF in Egypt, Turkey and France the reader can trawl through the 12 volume *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-18*. A far more readable account is Les Carlyon's *The Great War* (Pan Macmillan Australia, Sydney, 2006).

The latter book is an informative read, the former a painstaking and accurate history that infuriates in its exactness and detail, then infuriates again in rarely getting down to the regimental/company/platoon level that I am interested in. Not surprising, I suppose, given the few hundred thousand Australians who served overseas in thousands of different capacities and units.

For an overall British view, read the book *History of the First World War* by Liddell Hart, first published in the 1930s. Only problem from my point of view is that the coverage is so wide that the Australian input does not get much of a mention.

So I'll probably break a few copyright rules here and paraphrase a bit of each of these histories.

The Australian and New Zealand forces extracted from Gallipoli and shipped to Egypt in December 1915 comprised three Divisions, two of which were wholly Australian. The other was the New Zealand and Australian Division.

Bean defines a 'Division' as the smallest formation of an army organisation which contains all the essential branches of the military service.

Division sizes varied between countries but in WW1 a British (and Australian) Division comprised 3 infantry brigades or 12 battalions, with between 2 and 4 brigades of artillery; all up about 18,000 soldiers.

## Re-organising the AIF 1916

In early 1916 there were between 35,000 and 40,000 Australian and New Zealand 'excess' reinforcement soldiers in Egypt, even after making up-to-strength the three divisions returning from Gallipoli. In addition, a further 50,000 troops had been promised by Australia. New Anzac divisions were proposed to absorb those still wishing to enlist. From the British perspective the Anzac troops had two objects: first to protect Egypt and the Suez Canal from Turkish attack from the Sinai desert, and to enter the fray in France.

To take advantage of the excess Australian reinforcement troops and healthy enlistment rates, it was agreed that a 3rd division would be raised in Australia (and trained in England) and new 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> divisions formed and trained in Egypt (1). As part of this expansion the New Zealand and Australia Division was to be disbanded, with the Australian troops comprising the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade (13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Battalions) going to the new 4<sup>th</sup> Division and the Kiwis to their own new NZ Division.

As well, the 1<sup>st</sup> Division was basically halved, with half staying and half going to the new 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Divisions. These organisational changes were made in February and March 1916. Reflecting the Gallipoli losses and the newly created Battalions, nearly three-quarters of the veteran Battalions (1<sup>st</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>) and new Battalions (45<sup>th</sup> to 60<sup>th</sup>) consisted of reinforcement troops.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, 17<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> Battalions, remained unchanged, while the unattached 29<sup>th</sup> to 32nd Battalions went to the new 5<sup>th</sup> Division.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Division was to consist of the new 33<sup>rd</sup> to 44<sup>th</sup> Battalions, to be raised in Australia and trained in Australia and England.

## New Camps in the Egyptian Desert

Originally the Australian army training camps in Egypt had centred on Cairo, but with growing numbers and discipline problems in Cairo the camps were dispersed to desert locations south of the Suez Canal – camps such as Tel el

Kebir and Serapeum. Morale was at times low for the veteran troops in the 'daughter' battalions as they had had to leave the 'parent' battalion in the February/March 1916 carve-up.

There were additional organisational changes in March 1916 with the formation of some new units and the enlargement of others:

- Pioneer Battalions, (pick-and-shovel and tradesmen soldiers), less skilled than Engineers, but more skilled than infantry troops, not expected to stay in the front line after their daily construction-type tasks completed
- Machine Gun Companies, one company per infantry brigade
- Artillery Units – gunner numbers to be doubled; this was all very well but, when in March 1916 it was decided that the Australian 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Divisions should go to France urgently, they had to take the new 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Division's artillery pieces
- Signallers – numbers to be increased
- Increased administrative and support staff such as supply and clerical, butcheries and bakeries and sanitation.

As we shall see, many of the 52nd Battalion troops from the Western Australian 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements took the opportunity to jump from Infantry into these newly formed units. Sensible chaps!

According to Bean (2), by the end of March 1916 this massive re-organisation of the Australian and New Zealand forces in Egypt 'was finished':

*Within six weeks of its inauguration the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Divisions were on their way to France; the New Zealand Division was preparing to follow them; the new 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Divisions were actually marching to the (Suez) Canal, and the Anzac Mounted Division was assembling there. Australia was maintaining a force of nearly 100,000, and when the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division – then forming in Australia- had arrived, the number would be reached which, in the opinion of the Australian Government, would represent the country's full effort.*

## Dad's Photos

My father had a primitive camera in Egypt and took a few photographs of his army life in Egypt (3). He also had two tourist photos.

The first photo shows obviously dusty **Privates John Every MACLEAN** (my father) and **John (Jack) Dunn MARSHALL** perched on a large graffiti-covered stone block on the summit of Cheops Pyramid on Sunday 18 January 1916, presumably on leave from 'Aerodrome Camp' which is pictured in the third photograph. The second photograph, a tourist photo, shows a group in front of the Sphinx, near the Giza pyramids. My father is standing far right and Jack is seated far right; the others are unknown but presumably were 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements.

The fourth photograph shows Tel-el-Kebir camp in early 1916. I assume the classy wooden buildings in the foreground are toilet and self-abuse blocks. There is a row of huts to the rear of the tents which are no doubt officer quarters, messes, cook houses, administrative buildings etc.

Finally, there is the fifth photo, a tourist postcard photo, showing 6 members of the 12 Bn 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements just after a meal at Tel-el-Kebir, sometime in the first two months of 1916. The soldiers are;

Back row left to right

Herbert William John BOUCHER  
Raymond Keith RANDALL  
Albert Henry EAGLETON  
John Every MACLEAN

Front row left to right

George Frederick MASTERSON – with Dog  
John Dunn MARSHALL

Within 6 months of this photo being taken, two of these soldiers would be killed in action in France. The other four survived, two being discharged as 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenants, my father as a corporal and Jack as a substantive Corporal - Temporary Sergeant. All but Jack were wounded and Jack won a military

medal for bravery (all their service records are summarised in later parts of this History).

This photo was printed as a post-card on which the men's address is shown as:

Tent No. 3  
No. 1 Mess  
11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements  
12<sup>th</sup> battalion  
3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade

(1<sup>st</sup> Division, AIF, Tel-el-Kebir Camp, Egypt)

Whatever the meal was, in came in 3 large tins and included tea. It must have been 'silly hats' day. The hats look stupid and the men happy. They seem to be decked out in a range of military non-parade gear and sport official army looking watches. The dog however looks decidedly non-military issue.

At this stage these men, who enlisted in Australia early in August 1915, would have been in the army some 6 months and be receiving their infantry corps training in the hot dry desert – just the thing for the cold/wet conditions in France in which they were about to be plunged.

## Life in Egypt

Around November 1914 when the first Australian/New Zealand contingent were eagerly sailing the Indian Ocean towards the Suez Canal, the English and Canadians training in England were having a hard time of it. It was very cold, wet and muddy on the Salisbury Plains, especially under canvas. It was decided to divert the Australians to Egypt, and work began at a pace to construct camps outside Cairo. Boats began arriving at Port Said in early December 1914.

The early camps were near the Pyramids in the desert Mena area and it was in the soft desert sand that training began, with limited after-hours leave to Cairo. Cairo then was small and a dive, with few amusements. There were too many high-spirited troops and discipline problems with heavy drinking, desertion, attacks on the natives, robbery and whoring (5). The more troublesome Australians were sent back to Australia and discharged and training

(‘slogging’) in the desert was increased. Adam-Smith (5) quotes from one Australian’s letter home:

*... Now for another dark patch. There are 400 cases on Venereal Diseases. We were warned on the ship of the terrible forms of Venereal Disease in this country but of course there were the usual scoffers. But honestly I believe the proportion of victims would not have been so great had we been worked sensibly and granted day leave. Night leave left the men with weaker natures and nothing to do but visit hotels and brothels.... (p 67)*

And the problem was? However with more and more Australian and New Zealand troops landing, new desert training camps were set up away from Cairo. All very well but:

*The training was simply the old British Army training. Little advice came from the Western Front. The Australian and New Zealand officers had to rely almost entirely on themselves. They had not seen a bomb (hand grenade); they had scarcely heard of a periscope (to see over trench ramparts). (6)*

Before our troops went to Gallipoli there was some diversion in that it was feared the Turks might attack the Suez Canal from the direction of the Sinai Desert. Rumours were rife in early 1915 that the Turks were building up for an attack, which they were. Fortification of the 99 mile north-south aligned Suez Canal began in earnest, the front line of which was to be the Canal itself. Our boys were on the West of the Canal with the desert and Turks to the East.

But the Turks faced all sorts of logistical problems with water and supplies, and with route marching men and dragging artillery guns and pontoons (to cross the Canal) through the desert.

Advance parties of Turks started, however, appearing towards the end of January 1915. Comic fighting broke out in early February. The Australians were not involved; the main Allied troops were Indian. By March 1915 the Turks had withdrawn. Then all the preparations were for Gallipoli.

## Sapper Heerey's Diary

One of our 70 soldiers, Sapper Francis HEEREY (he was one of the ones to transfer from the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion Reinforcements and join the Signals Corps)

wrote a number of diaries about his wartime experiences, two of which survive and have been published privately by his family (7).

In his first diary (from 24 April 1916 to 29 October 1916) he talks about his experiences in Egypt and then France.

His time in Egypt was spent between working as a sapper (manning telephones, laying and maintaining communications wire) and getting general supplies, to swimming in the canal (presume the Suez Canal), playing cards and talking to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion blokes, writing letters and doing the endless jobs allotted to him around various camps.

So that gives you some idea of what Egypt was like for some. Hot, sandy and no water for hot showers or baths. Basically boring, with no one shooting at you, and no night life.

He went with his unit to France in early June 1916, where he found it often cold and wet.

*21/6/16 On Duty sig office 2 to 4 am. After brek walked down to Div baths & had a lovely warm bath first for 8 months. (p 13)*

and later

*3/9/16 On phone 9 – 3, fairly quiet. During the night our Brigade made an attack & captured Mouquet Farm, held it for a long time but lost a portion during the day. Large number of casualties in the brigade. Fritz put a lot of big stuff down the gully through the day. Went to bed early. (p 23)*

But I'm getting ahead of myself. At this stage they were still in Egypt.

As with any army, things could go wrong for the individual as they did, unfortunately, for **Acting Corporal Frederick COLLINS**, who has the melancholy distinction of being the first death in the 52<sup>nd</sup> battalion.

**Acting Corporal Frederick COLLINS** Service Number 3792

Born London, Joined Perth Western Australia 28 September 1915, 34 year 10 months old station hand, not married, next of kin sister, previous military service with Royal Navy (and had the tattoos to prove it)

TOS (taken on strength) 12 Bn 12<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 28 October 1915 at Blackboy Hill and promoted sergeant. AWL (absent without leave) Egypt (Heliopolis) 22 January 1916 'drunk in town' and reduced to corporal. TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn 3 March 1916 as a private. Made acting corporal 10 March 1916.

Accidentally killed in a railway accident – fractured head, arm, leg - at Zagazig, Egypt near Alexandria 18 March 1916 and buried at Zagazig cemetery. Re-interred Tel-el-Kebir Military Cemetery, Egypt 4 September 1922.

Things also didn't go too well in Egypt for three of our '70' soldiers who, because of illness, were not posted to the new 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. Instead they stayed on the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion's strength as medical cases.

Each of them was shipped back to Australia during 1916 and discharged as medically unfit.

They were **Pte John Alexander ALLAN** (knee problems), **Pte David Gordon MICHAEL** (bowel problems) and **Pte Edmond RECK** (stomach ulcers). Summaries of their service records are provided in Appendix 4.

As we will see in Appendix 5, **Private Allan** married in Sydney in 1921 and had three children. He died aged 79 years in 1972.

**Private Michael** married in the 1920, and had a son, but I am unable to trace him past 1939.

**Private Reck** also beat the odds and died as a widower in 1959, aged 83 years, leaving 4 children and 5 grandchildren.

Good effort Edmondo!

## Endnotes

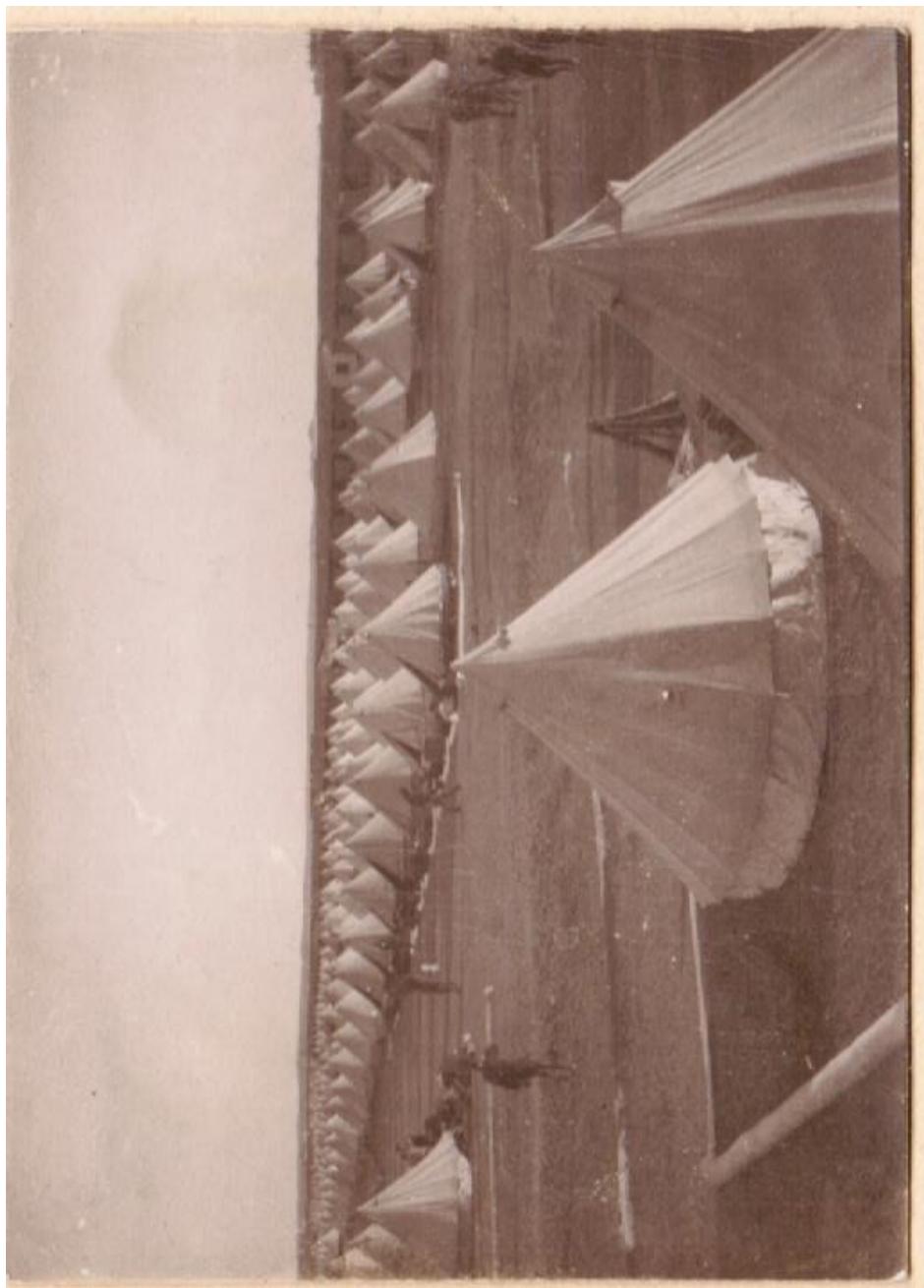
1. *Official History*, vol 3 p 42
2. *Official History*, vol 3 p 68
3. In the author's possession.
4. *Official History*, vol 1, p 128
5. Patsy Adam-Smith, *The ANZACS*, Sphere Books, 1979
6. *Official History*, vol 1, p 139.
7. F X Heerey, *A Tasmanian story of the great war*, the Heerey Family



Above: Privates John Every Maclean (L) and John Dunn Marshall (R)  
Atop Cheops Pyramid January 1916.



Above: 12 Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements Troops at the Sphinx January 1916  
Pte J E Maclean standing far right and Pte J D Marshall sitting far right.



Above: Aerodrome Camp Egypt Early 1916



Tel-el-Kebir camp.

Above: Tel-el-Kebir Camp Egypt Early1916



Above: Soldiers from 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion  
Tel-el-Kebir Camp, Egypt early 1916

Back row left to right

Herbert William John BOUCHER  
Keith Raymond RANDELL  
Albert Henry EAGLETON  
John Every MACLEAN

Front row left to right

Small Unnamed (*Fritzy?*) Bat Eared Fox Terrier \*  
George Frederick MASTERSON  
John Dunn MARSHALL

\* But more on Fritz the dog later.

## Chapter 5

### The 52nd Battalion Sails to France, 1916

To recap, the majority of the soldiers of the 12th Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement Unit commenced their basic training at camps in Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania around July and early August 1915. They were shipped to Egypt around November 1915. Luckily they were too late to participate in the madness of Gallipoli.

Around March 1916 these men were allotted to new units, most going to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion, the so-called 'daughter' battalion of the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion, in the newly created 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Division.

From the outset, the 4<sup>th</sup> Division was destined for the trenches of France. However, quite a few of the 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements transferred to other corps and units, notably Signals, Pioneers, Artillery and Machine Guns.

Since I wish to concentrate on the Western Australian 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements who served in the 52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion I have given a short service history of those who transferred to other corps and units in **Appendix 4**.

But before we let our 70 soldiers get broken up, let's get some idea of what the 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement Western Australian enlistees consisted of:

#### Where Born

Of the seventy soldiers, 54 or 77% were born in Australia, but only about one-quarter - 26% - in Western Australia. Thirty per cent were born in Victoria.

Of the remainder, 9 were born in England, 3 in Scotland, 2 in Ireland and 1 each in New Zealand (my dad) and Italy.

As could be expected, all 70 soldiers gave a Western Australian address on enlistment, even if it was only care of some local bush post office.

## Previous Occupations

Occupations varied widely, but by today's standards some 70% would be classified as blue-collar or labouring working class, perhaps reflecting both employment opportunities and the fact that all the enlistees were volunteers.

Clerks	24%
Trades other than tech/mech below	19%
Technical/mechanical	10%
Professional	7%
Transport	9%
Farming	7%
Retail	9%
Other	16%

Note: Rounding error 1%

I have separated the then new technical trades (mainly communication / telegraphy) and mechanical trades from the more traditional trades. Of the 'other occupations', six gave their occupation as labourer. On the sketchy details shown on the records there is a degree of arbitrariness in these allocations.

Comment: 39% had previous military experience from senior school cadets, citizen/militia forces or previous full time service.

## Age at enlistment (in years)

Minors - less than 21 years	12 (17%)
21 to 25 years	43 (61%)
26 to 30 years	10 (14%)
31 to 40 years	4
Over 40 years of age	1

Comment: The oldest soldier stated he was 44 years and 5 months on joining, but in fact was closer to 51 years 5 months. He struggled on for a couple of years until discharged medically unfit in December 1917 with senility and heart problems. Would-be soldiers under 21 years of age (the then age of becoming a legal adult) had to have a form signed by their next-of-kin before they could enlist and these consent forms are included in each soldier's service record.

## The Youngest

Service Number 3398 **John (Steven) ROWE**, blacksmith. Joined West Australia on 4 August 1915. Born Durham England, 18 years 7 months of age, height 5 foot 7.25 inches (171 cms), NOK mother, Durham England.

TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn, 3 March 1916  
 To France aboard *Ivernia* June 1916, detached to HQ  
 Crime AWL January 1918. Hospitalised March 1918  
 WIA GSW leg, slight, May 1918, evacuated England  
 Crime AWL Sep 1918, Hospitalised Jan 1919  
 Married in England, 30 December 1918 to Ethel May Helm  
 Returned to Aust 3 July 1919. Discharged 19 October 1919.

Well played young Johnnie Rowe! There were 3 other soldiers who were teenagers on joining: **Frederick William CORNISH** who transferred to Signals Corp, gained a Military Medal and survived the war, unwounded; **James Alexander GORDON** who transferred to Artillery as a driver (gun carriage horse team - quite a few of our soldiers became 'drivers' which is to be expected when horses were still the main form of transport for many, a driver in effect was a private, but received a slightly higher rate of pay). Jim was killed in action in October 1918. Finally **Rupert HALE** who rose to become a sergeant and survived the war unwounded. The service record summaries of these 3 soldiers are set out later in this History

## The Oldest (real age 51 years 5 months)

Service Number 3396, **Alfred RIGNEY**, fitter's labourer, joined Western Australia, on 2 August 1915, 44 years 5 months of age, height 5 foot 8.5 ins. (174 cms). Not married, NOK sister.

Hospitalised December 1915, pneumonia

March 1916 - transferred to Artillery as a driver (as in gun-carriage horse-team driver, such soldiers well noted for highly colourful and profane language)

Hospitalised 1917, hernia, exhaustion (all that swearing), pleurisy, chronic constipation

Returned to Australia September 1917

Discharged medically unfit for active service with senility and heart problems, December 1917

Rejected for pension as he was found to have no war related incapacity! (Very tough decision by today's standards!)

## The Second Oldest

Service Number 3394, **Edmond RECK**, chef, born Genoa Italy

Joined 2 August 1915, married, NOK wife, 5 feet 5.5 inches (166 cms).

Hospitalised Tel-el-Kebir (Egypt) May 1916 with Gastric Ulcers. Never went to France.

Returned to Australia from Suez/Egypt June 1916

Discharged medically unfit August 1916

Not a real success story for the original examining doctor! But he defied all odds, became a grandfather and lived to 83 years of age!

## Family Matters

Only 7 were married and 1 was widowed.

40 nominated their father as next of kin, 17 their mother, 7 their wife and 5 nominated other family members (and one I couldn't read). **Pte John SPENCE**'s wife had deserted him. Very few seem to have had children.

## Height

We hear a lot about the towering 6 foot Aussies hooling around the fleshpots and bars of Egypt at night, charging the Turks before breakfast, taking the bayonet up to the Huns and so forth, but the reality is that men were shorter on average than they are today.

In August 1914 enlistment standards were very high, in fact artificially high. These standards were set against an expectation that only 20,000 men would be recruited. And the first 20,000 were of superb physique (see *Official History Vol. XI, pp 211/12 – Very trifling physical defects, or slight doubts, were a ground for rejection. These standards were not demanded later, nor were they necessary.....As many as 3,000 out of 10,000 were set aside, on medical or other grounds....*) For a few days there was even an embargo on married men joining. By the end of August 1914 the Government had announced that a larger force would be required.

*The height (originally 5 foot 6 inches) (was) reduced in Feb, 1915, to 5 ft. 4 in; in May, 1915, to 5 ft. 3 in; in July, 1915, to 5 ft. 2 in; and in April, 1917 to 5 ft. The chest measurement was reduced to 33 in Feb, 1915 (Official History Vol XI page 439).*

In 1918 there was a careful consideration of lowering the physical fitness requirement in the AIF, noting that by 1916 all standards except physical fitness had been abandoned for the British Army. The Brits even had 'bantam regiments' of men under 5 feet; comprising strong small physically active men such as miners (see Google for more information on the British bantam units). There was however opposition to relaxing the standards for the Australian Army and up to 1918 there had always been some friction between the field and Australian medical authorities over the number of incoming soldiers who were not fit to serve in the trenches (some of our 70 show glaring examples). The Australians also rejected the British idea of forming 'labour battalions' of men who failed the recruiting standards.

This is how our 70 soldiers stood up around mid-1915:

Less than 5 foot 3 inches (less than 160 cms)	3 (4%)
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Between 5 foot 4 inches and 5 foot 6.75 inches (163cms to 170cms)	28 (41%)
Between 5 foot 7 inches and 5 foot 9.75 inches (170cm to 178cm)	33 (48%)
5 foot 10 inches and over (178cms and over)	5 (7%)

Comment: I could not read one record and there were only three at 6 foot. Remember the original height requirement was 5 foot 6 inches (167.6cms).

Unfortunately the records rarely record heights at discharge although such data was recorded on a soldier's Certificate of Discharge. My father's height on joining was recorded at 5 foot 7.5 inches (171 cms) but on discharge at 5 foot 10 inches (178 cms) and he was always described as a tall man.

The few other 'before/after' heights that show up in the records also indicate that men often continued to grow after enlistment and at ages we do not today associate with further growth.

## The Shortest

The shortest of our soldiers, at 5 foot 2 inches (157 cms), was **Frank Horace CAPLE**, service number 3358, a 24.5 year old horse driver, born Fremantle Western Australia, married. TOS 11<sup>th</sup> Reinf 12<sup>th</sup> Bn on 29 Oct 1915. He transferred to 20<sup>th</sup> AASC (Service Corps) in December 1915, and the 53<sup>rd</sup> Bn on 14 Mar 1916 (appointed Driver 4 Sep 1916). He was wounded in France in June 1916 (thigh mild) and again in May 1917 (GSW fractured arm, severe fracture). He returned to Australia in October 1917 and was discharged as medically unfit in June 1918, as a result of continuing problems with his arm injury, and was granted a pension.

In June 1915 his wife sent a telegram to the military authorities in Melbourne complaining that she had read in a newspaper that her husband had been wounded, but had herself received no official notification. Later she received an official apology, with details of his injury, by letter dated 6 Nov 1916.

And there was also the unfortunate **Claude John Holmes BROWN** (service number 3353) a 21 year old jockey who was born at West Perth, Western

Australia and stood 5 foot 2.25 inches (157 cms) in his khaki socks. He went to France in December 1916 (after TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn) and was hospitalised soon after in January/February 1917 with Paralysis and Hysteria (severe shell-shock). He was captured at Langicourt by the Germans in April 1917. He was interred at Limburg Germany and repatriated as a prisoner of war to England in December 1918. He holds the distinction of being the only POW amongst our seventy 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement soldiers.

## The Tallest

Our 3 six-footers (183 cms) had variable military careers:

**Robert BICKERSTETH** (Service Number 3349), 30 year 11 month old farmer, born Yorkshire England. Landed in France June 1916 with the 52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion as lance corporal, WIA August 1916 GSW ankle. Evacuated to England. Collected a few military charges in 1917. WIA France April 1918 (GSW back). KIA by sniper shot to head, Proyart, France, 4 August 1918.

**James JONES** (Service Number 3378), 22 years 3 months old carpenter, born Perth, Western Australia. Transferred to Signals Corps from 12<sup>th</sup> Bn. Won Military Medal September 1916 and Bar to Military Medal June 1917. Hospitalised with nasal problems. Discharged June 1919 as corporal. Changed name by deed poll to **James Jones COLLINS** around 1932 and worked as a war correspondent in WWII.

**Ernest Edward MALMGREEN** (Service Number 3384), 27 years 11 months old storeman, born South Australia, transferred to Artillery March 1916 as a runner/driver. Admitted hospital 1918 with trench fever. Discharged Australia May 1919.

## Destinations from Egypt

37 soldiers	embarked for France with the 52 <sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion, most in June 1916 on HMAT <i>Ivernia</i>
27 soldiers	transferred to non-infantry units around March 1916 or soon after, most went to France
3 soldiers	remained with 12 <sup>th</sup> Battalion

3 soldiers      shipped home to Australia for early medical discharge as unfit for service.

## Other Service Details

It should be noted that there are a number of other details recorded on each soldier's enlistment record, including the address of their next-of-kin, their chest measurement, whether they had any identifying marks and scars. For their religion see Appendix 5 (5 Catholics to 65 Protestants).

The service records vary from soldier to soldier; all include details of a soldier's movements between units, KIA/MIA/WIAs, hospitalisations, promotions, crimes and punishments. Often the record will include copies of letters and telegrams between authorities and between authorities and NOK, and copies of Wills, equipment issues and marriage certificates. There are also details on medal entitlements. They were all were eligible for the standard three service medals issued to Australians:

1914/15 Star  
British War Medal  
Victory Medal

This seems a very poor lot compared to the campaign medals that are issued nowadays.

Some of the most poignant records are the usually very small lists of effects of soldiers killed, which were returned in parcels to their NOK. Many files include anguished letters from family on these effects; no doubt looking for realistic mementos of their loved ones.

By today's standards there is one surprising omission from the service records and that is details of school education. Plus there is no record of a soldier's scholastic achievements on leaving school or post school, nothing on apprenticeships or 'night school', and no indication that there was any '3Rs' testing or teaching after recruitment, until 1918.

I have been told that all Australian soldiers had to be able to read and write (in English), but this still leaves open the questions of the minimum level of

acceptable reading and writing skills and who by/when such an assessment was made.

## Free One-Way Mediterranean Cruise

The 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion left the Port of Alexandra, Egypt on 5 June 1916 aboard HMAT ship *Ivernia* and disembarked at Marseilles France, on the 12<sup>th</sup> June, 1916.

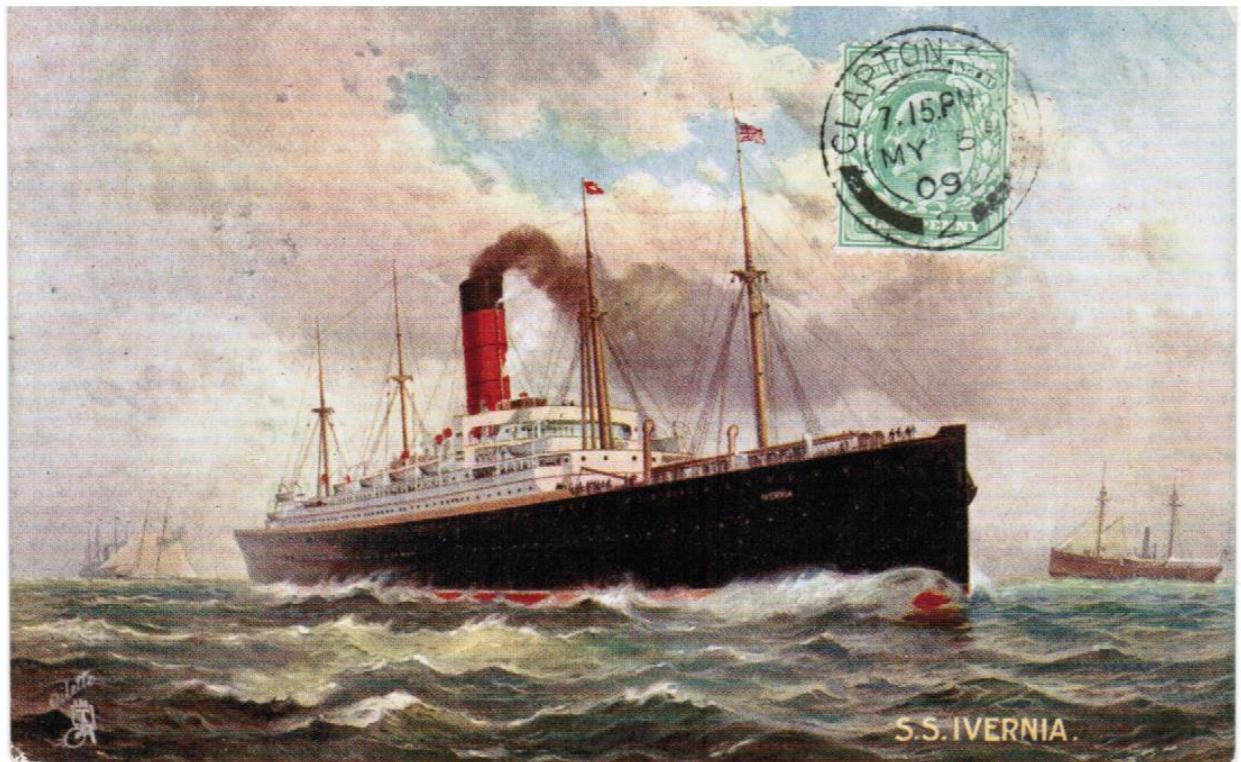
The men then journeyed by train to the North of France to the Australian portion of the British-held Western Front. And there the good times ended.

SS *Ivernia* was launched in 1899. It was owned by the British company Cunard and used in the immigration trade to America. In 1914 the ship was hired by the British Government and used as troop transport. She was sunk by a German U-boat on New Year's Day 1917 in the waters off Greece. There were 2,400 Scottish soldiers on board, of whom 85 were killed, along with 36 crew members. If it means anything, and I am sure it does, the *Ivernia* had the tallest single funnel ever fitted to a ship (picture below).

Size does count if you wish to be remembered.



Above: SS *Ivernia*



SS *Ivernia* from "The Cunard" Celebrated Liners

## Chapter 6

### 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements in the 52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion

#### Officers and NCOs

Before we become too immersed in the horrors and mud of France, I wish to side-track to look at the war records of certain officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs). When the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements of some 312 soldiers left Australia in October/November 1915: the West Australians from Fremantle, the Tasmanians from Melbourne and the South Australians from Adelaide; there were 5 temporary NCOs in the Western Australia contingent of 70 soldiers that we are following. (There were other temporary NCOs who joined in either South Australia or Tasmania and who were appointed to take charge of their respective State 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> troops on embarkation.)

In addition, there were 3 officers in overall charge of the 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements.

Of the five Western Australian temporary NCOs, one was appointed an officer in 1916 and the others achieved various levels of permanent NCO promotions. In addition, three more of the West Australian enlisting ORs were appointed as officers in the course of the war.

The service histories of these 11 soldiers, that is, the 3 original officers, the 5 temporary WA NCOs and the 3 other WA 12<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> soldiers promoted to be officers (rank is at discharge or death) follows:

1. **Captain James McNAMARA** 17.5 years continuous citizen forces service in 92<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Militia, Tasmania – citizen force rank of Lieutenant, joined AIF 19 September 1915, 38 years 6 months old machinist, born 12 April 1877, married, 5 foot 11.5 inches (162 cms) tall. Address on enlistment: Racecourse Crescent, Launceston, Tasmania.

Appointed AIF Lieutenant on 24 September 1915. Embarked overseas from Victoria on 10 November 1915 with 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> reinforcements as Lieutenant. TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn Tel el Kebir 12 March 1916. Promoted Captain 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion May 1916, at Serapeum, Egypt.

KIA Mouquet Farm 3 September 1916

Left Will dated 28 July 1916: *In the event of my death I bequeath my personal effects and belongings to my wife Mrs Effie McNamara.*

Mentioned *Official History* Vol 3 p 849

2. Lieutenant Francis William Samuel BAILEY: previous service in School Cadets and 86<sup>th</sup> Infantry militia, 20 years 8 months old, 6 foot 1 inch (185 cms) clerk from Robinson Street, Subiaco Perth, NOK mother same address, born Melbourne, not married. Appointed 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant AIF 16 September 1915 West. Australia and Lieutenant 11 April 1916 Egypt.

TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn from 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 1 March 1916

TOS 51<sup>st</sup> Bn 26 April 1916

KIA Mouquet Farm 3 September 1916. Body not recovered.

Mentioned *Official History* Vol 3 pp 845/6 and 851/2



3. **Lieutenant Robert Stewart JENKINS:** 2 years previous service with Devon Yeomanry, England, born Glasgow Scotland, joined Keswick South Australia 4 May 1915, 36 years 5 months old surveyor, not married, NOK sister, 5 foot 7 inches (170 cms) tall.

Arabic speaker who before the war had spent 3 years exploring and surveying in upper Egypt.

Transferred March 1916 to the 4<sup>th</sup> Imperial Camel Corps and later posted to the Eastern Arab Corps, Abbassia, Soudan [sic]. Wee Robbie seems to have got into a spot of military bother and in July 1916 was Court Martialled (offence unknown, hope it was nothing rude to do with camels), sentenced to a severe reprimand. Bet that hurt!

In July 1918 he transferred to the 14<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Regiment and was attached to the Egyptian Army as a camel purchasing officer for British forces. Discharged in Egypt at own request 6 June 1919 to take up position of "Inspector of Department of Mines", Ministry of Finance, Egyptian Government and was living in Cairo, Egypt 13 March 1925.

Not wounded, not hospitalised, probably saw no action.

Now how many wandering homeless Scots can come up with an experience and cv like that? Almost our very own Robert of Arabia! Only he was a Scot.

4. **Sergeant James McCULLY:** previous service in Signals Corps, service number 3341, joined 2 August 1915, born Scotland, 23 years 9 months old clerk, not married, NOK widowed mother (UK), 5 foot 6.25 inches (168 cms tall). Acting sergeant on embarkation from Australia, November 1915.

Promoted sergeant 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, March 1916. Landed France from HMAT *Ivernia* June 1916. WIA GSW - shoulder and back - 'mild' 3 September 1916 Mouquet Farm, evacuated to Birmingham. Crime October 1917 'failure to obey order'.

Returned to Australia October 1917, discharged medically unfit, problems with left ear, on 22 January 1918.



5. **Second Lieutenant Percy NORMAN:** previous service senior cadets, service number 3342, joined 2 August 1915 in West Aust, born Albany W.A., 24 years 3 months old farmer, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 5.5 inches (166 cms) tall. Acting sergeant on embarkation from Australia in November 1915.

Hospitalised mumps February 1916. To France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn on *Ivernia* June 1916. Promoted progressively corporal, sergeant and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant (11 February 1917).

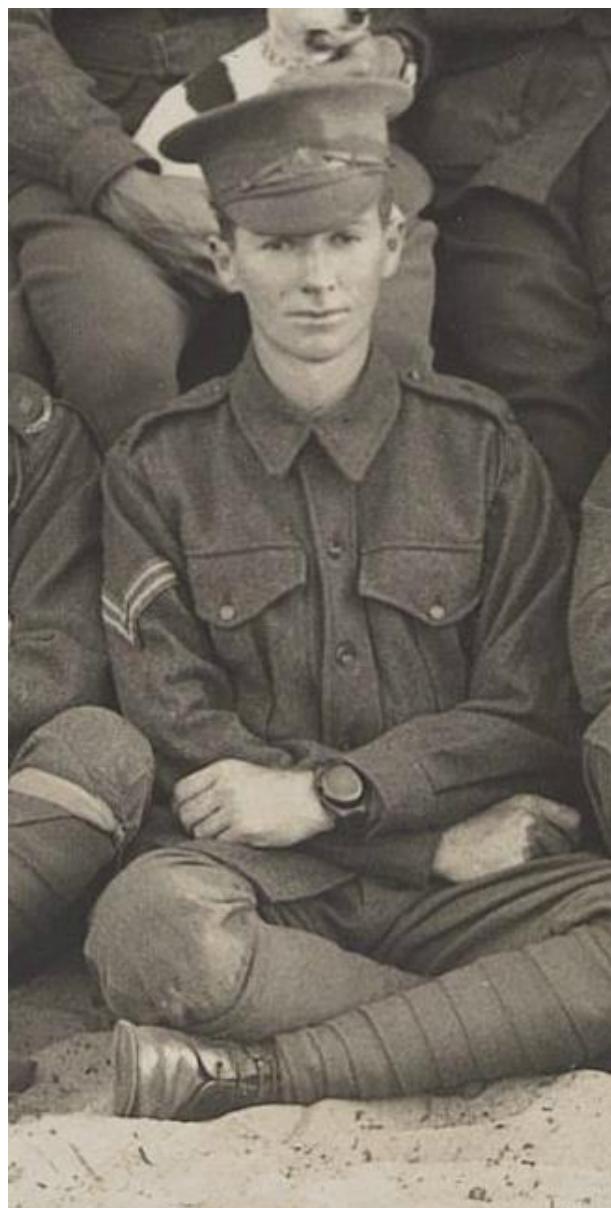
KIA France 29 March 1917 in the field by artillery fire.

6. **Bombardier George Stanley BROADLEY:** 2 years previous service with 88<sup>th</sup> Infantry Citizen Forces, service number 3343, born Perth, joined 28 July 1915 in West Aust, 20 years old letter carrier, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 6 inches (168 cms) tall.

Acting corporal on embarkation from Australia, transferred to Artillery March 1916 as a gunner, hospitalised July 1916

conjunctivitis, promoted bombardier November 1916, WIA  
France 21 March 1918 GSW thigh, fractured femur.

Died of wounds 23 March 1918



7. **Sergeant Walter Thomas BOWER:** 3 years previous service with 86<sup>th</sup> infantry citizen forces, service number 3344, joined on 2 August 1915, born Ballarat Victoria, 21 years 4 months old clerk, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 5.25 inches (166 cms) tall.

Acting corporal on embarkation from Australia, November 1915. TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn March 1916, went to France aboard *Ivernia* June 1916, WIA Sept 1916 GSW back hospitalised to March 1917, promoted corporal March 1916 and sergeant June 1917. WIA GSWs elbow and back September 1917 – evacuated England, arm amputated. Returned to Australia February 1918, discharged 22 May 1919.



8. **Corporal Thomas Egbert HAY:** 7 weeks previous service with Australian Light Horse, service number 3345, born Victoria, joined 11 February 1915, 30 years 5 months old clerk, married, NOK wife, 5 foot 7.5 inches (171 cms) tall.

Acting corporal on embarkation from Australia, November 1915. Promoted corporal 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, landed France from *Ivernia* June 1916.

KIA Mouquet Farm on 4 September 1916.



9. **Second Lieutenant Herbert William John BOUCHER:** no previous service, service number 3351, born Victoria, joined 2 August 1915 West Australia, 25 years old bank clerk, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 7.5 inches (171 cms) tall.

Embarked for France aboard *Ivernia* as lance corporal June 1916, promoted corporal June 1917 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant January 1918. Hospitalised France October 1916 to Jan 1917 with otitis media (ear problem). WIA October 1917 SW neck and thigh and treated in England. Returned to Australia March 1918 for invalidity discharge, medically unfit.

10. **Second Lieutenant William Frank Bernard CREECH:** no previous service, service number 3364, born Melbourne, Victoria, joined 2 August 1915 West. Australia, 31 years 6 months old postal clerk, not married, NOK mother, 5 feet 6.5 inches (169 cms) tall.

Promoted to Postal Corps corporal 5 April 1916. Promoted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant 8 February 1917, TOS 51<sup>st</sup> Battalion, WIA GSW neck severe September 1917, evacuated England, married Louise (date not shown). Returned to Australia July 1919, discharged 20 October 1919, alive 7 October 1963.

11. **Second Lieutenant George Frederick MASTERSON:** no previous military experience, service number 3386, born Melbourne Victoria, joined 2 August 1915 West. Australia, 22 years 6 months old bank accountant, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 5 inches (165 cms) tall.

Embarked for France aboard *Ivernia* as a private in June 1916, promoted lance corporal November 1916, corporal March 1917, sergeant July 1917 and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant August 1918. WIA and hospitalised France August 1916 SW head and November 1916 frontal neuralgia. February 1918 attended Officer Cadet Bn in England. Returned to Australia from Plymouth June 1919 and discharged 17 September 1919.

So in summary, two of the three original 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement officers were killed in action at Mouquet Farm, both within a few months of going to France, and the third would not seem to have been involved in any fighting at all, but no doubt put through a few good camel purchasing deals for King and country.

Of the five temporary NCOs, 3 were KIA, including 1 who was promoted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, and the other 2 were discharged medically unfit, one an amputee.

Of the four 12<sup>th</sup> 11th WA soldiers promoted during the war to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant, one was KIA (he was 1 of the 5 temporary NCOs above). The other 3 were all

wounded in action, one was discharged medically unfit and the other two enjoyed a normal discharge after the war ended.

Not one of these eleven soldiers received bravery awards!

Perhaps it is true that “Medals are so often just the badges of good luck.” (Ian Fleming *On Her Majesty’s Secret Service*, Chapter 27).

So looking at the score card: that’s 5/11 killed in action, 1/11 maimed, 2/11 discharged medically unfit, 2/11 seriously wounded in action, but who ‘recovered’ enough for a normal discharge after the war, and 1/11 wandering aging Scot who seems to have avoided all the setbacks of death and serious injury by buying camels, then resigning his commission for a better job in Egypt.

### **12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements’ Soldiers Posted to 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn**

Following are my summaries of the service records of the 37 Western Australian enlisting soldiers from the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements (in service number order) who were posted to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Infantry Division and who went to France (rank is at discharge or death) as infantrymen.

The service records of the 33 soldiers who transferred to other units or were discharged early are set out in Appendix 4.

1. **Sergeant James McCULLY:** service number 3341

(See above – officers and NCOs)

2. **2<sup>Nd</sup> Lieutenant Percy NORMAN:** service number 3342

(See above – officers and NCOs)

3. **Corporal Walter Thomas BOWER:** service number 3344

(See above – officers and NCOs)

4. **Corporal Thomas Egbert HAY:** service number 3345

(See above – officers and NCOs)

5. **Corporal Horace Beresford ALLEN, service number 3348**

Joined on 2 August 1915, no previous service, born Gippsland Victoria, 25 years 4 months old clerk, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 5.75 inches tall (167 cms).

Promoted lance corporal in Egypt 7 April 1916 and corporal 5 May 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion aboard HMAT *Ivernia* June 1916. KIA 4 September 1916 – Mouquet Farm.

6. **Private Robert BICKERSTETH Service Number 3349**

(See 'The Tallest' Chapter 5)



(COPY. D.16.)

HL.

No. 3349. Pte. BICKERSTETH. R. 42nd. Bn. A.I.F.  
Killed in Action 12.8.18.

No. 3349. Pte. Bickersteth was killed during the attack on Proyart on 12.8.18, on the left of the Chignolles-Proyart road. He was shot through the head by an enemy sniper, death being instantaneous. After he was killed his company was ordered to withdraw a short distance to the rear, and consolidate. Pte. Bickersteth's body was left in front of our line. It is not known if he was buried by any other Unit during the following advance.

(Sgd) ..... Lieut:  
For C.O. 42nd. Bn. A.I.F.

M.B. 20.

Australian Imperial Force.



A.I.F. KIT STORE,  
110, GREYHOUND ROAD,  
HAMMERSMITH,  
LONDON, W. 6.

Inventory of Effects of - No. 3349 Bickersteth R. 12th Battalion, A.I.F.

Forwarded to - Second And,

Elizabeth F. Bickersteth,  
West Lodge,  
Ripon,  
ENGLAND.

53588

Effects obtained from a Kit Bag held in Store. 7318  
1 Parcel (sealed) containing:-

1 Pr Knee Pads.

Effects received from the Field. W493.

2 Housewives, 1 Holdall, 1 Testament, 2 Handkerchiefs,  
1 Shaving Brush, 1 Pencil.

RECD FROM A.I.F. H.Q.  
P.E. NOT HANDED BY B.R.

No. of Package

D/S

41693

58/79

Checked by

6. **Second Lieutenant Herbert William John BOUCHER** Service Number 3351

One of the soldiers in my father's photograph.

(See soldiers promoted to officers above)

8. **Private James CALDER**: service number 3357

Joined on 3 August 1915, no previous service, born Scotland, 22 years 11 months old machinist, not married, NOK father (Fremantle), 5 foot 5.5 inches tall (166cms).

Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, aboard *Ivernia* June 1916. Transferred to Signals Corps May 1917. Hospitalised France September 1918 VD 67 days treatment, returned to Australia April 1919, discharged 27 July 1919.



9. Private James COPPIN MM: service number 3360.

Joined 2 August 1915, no previous military service, born Sussex England, 24 years 5 months old linotype operator, married for 5 years, NOK father (UK), 5 foot 7 inches tall (170 cms).

Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion June 1916, wounded France June 1917 SW arm and hand, awarded Military Medal\* 14 October 1917, hospitalised April 1918 scabies, TOS School of Instruction England, completed 6 month training course on full pay in 'motor engineering' in England, returned to Australia September 1919, Discharged 3 January 1920.

\* Recommended by Lieut. Colonel J L Whitham C.M.G., O.C. 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, A.I.F., 2 October 1917

*4<sup>th</sup> Aust. Division, 13<sup>th</sup> Aust. Inf. Brigade, 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn*

*For great bravery and devotion to duty in laying and maintaining signal communications at ZONNEBEKE, 24<sup>th</sup> September 1917. He repaired telephone wires under heavy enemy shell fire, assisting thereby in keeping up communication with Brigade Headquarters.*



10. **Lance Corporal Reginald Henry CORNISH:** service number 3362

Joined on 2 August 1915, no previous service, born Victoria, 24 years 9 months old clerk, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 9.75 inches tall (177 cms).

Hospitalised February 1916 mumps. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion June 1916 as lance corporal. WIA France August 1916 - GSW to knee and groin.

Died of wounds Estaples France 9 September 1916.



11. **Corporal Wilfred John CORMISH: service number 3363**

Brother of above soldier.

Joined on 2 September 1915, no previous service, born St Arnaud Victoria, 22 years 6 months old clerk, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 10.5 inches tall (179 cms).

Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion June 1916, WIA August 1916 GSW arm and shell shock, evacuated England. Crime July 1917 - severe reprimand. Hospitalised October 1917 boils, WIA April 1918 GSW arm, evacuated England. Embarked for Australia September 1918.

Discharged 11 December 1918 medically unfit for service.

12. **Private Albert Henry EAGLETON: service number 3366.**

Joined 2 August 1915, no previous service, born Melbourne Victoria, 23 years 7 months old grocer, not married, NOK mother, 5 foot 8.75 inches tall (175 cms).

One of the soldiers in my father's photograph (see page 65).

Offence of late for parade in December 1915. Shipped to France with 52nd Battalion June 1916.

KIA France 11 August 1916.

13. **Sergeant John Frederick GRAHAM: service number 3370.**

Joined on 3 August 1915, no previous service, born Bayswater Perth, WA, 22 years 6 months old clerk, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 3.5 inches tall (161 cms).

Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion June 1916, rose through ranks to Sergeant December 1917, offence of conduct to the prejudice

September 1917 - severe reprimand, hospitalised

March 1918 psoriasis (skin disease),

TOS 51stBn August 1918 (when 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion disbanded).

Married Ethel Straker 26 February 1919, Durham UK. Embarked for Australia June 1919, discharged 25 September 1919.



14. **Sergeant Rupert HALE: service number 3372B**

Joined on 2 August 1915, 4.5 months previous service 88<sup>th</sup> Infantry, born Melbourne Victoria, 19 years 8 months old packer, not married, NOK mother (Perth), 5 foot 8 inches tall (173 cms).

Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion June 1916. Promoted successively to reach Sgt in February in 1918. Transferred to 13<sup>th</sup> Brigade Training Bn England October 1916. Offence while on leave England January 1917 - severe reprimand, TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn France December 1917, TOS 51<sup>st</sup> Bn May 1918, Hospitalised May 1918 trench fever and pyrexia. Embarked for Australia February 1919, discharged 2 June 1919.

One of the few not wounded.



15. **Driver John HARVEY: service number 3374**

Joined on 2 August 1915, 2 years previous service Australian Light Horse, born Belfast Ireland, 35 years 6 months old electric linesman, married, NOK wife (Perth), 5 foot 6 inches tall (168 cms).

Hospitalised June 1916 synovitis rheumatism knee, myalgia, evacuated England, crime August 1916 disobedience, TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> June 1917. WIA September 1917 SW leg, February 1918 diarrhoea, appointed driver, WIA March 1918 SW hand, TOS 51st Bn and hospitalised synovitis knee April 1918 and bronchitis May 1918,

Returned to Australia January 1919, discharged 12 April 1919.

16. **Corporal John HOPKINS MM and Bar:** service number 3377.

Joined 28 July 1915, 3 years previous service with 86<sup>th</sup> Infantry, born Melbourne Victoria, 21 years 7 months old jeweller, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 6.25 inches tall (168 cms).

Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, WIA 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> of September 1916 GSW back, June 1916, hospitalised France rheumatism, crime March 1917 misuse of pass, promoted corporal, June 1917 awarded Military Medal \*, attended Lewis Gun course England, hospitalised January 1918 scabies, and mumps March 1918, WIA September 1918 remained on duty, Bar to Military Medal 22 October 1918 \*\*. Embarked for Australia April 1918, discharged 3 August 1919.

\* 51<sup>st</sup> Bn. 13<sup>th</sup> Aust. Inf. Brig, 4<sup>th</sup> Aust. Div. 22 August 1918

*During an attack on enemy position East of ETINEHEM near BRAY-SUR-SOME on night of 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> August, 1918, this NCO frequently under hostile\* shell and machine gun fire assisted his platoon, which was on the left flank of the company, to advance by boldly pushing forward with a Lewis Gun and firing on enemy machine gun posts and silencing them. On reaching the objective he immediately established his section on the exposed flank and harassed the enemy with fire from the Lewis Gun until the flanks of the Companies were in touch. His splendid courage and initiative greatly assisted the success of the operation.*

\* As opposed presumably to non-hostile shell and machine gun fire

Recommended by Lt-Col. R Christie DSO, CO 51<sup>st</sup> Bn.

\*\* Corporal Hopkins' Bar to his Military Medal was notified in the London Gazette of 11 February 1919 at page 2083 and the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette of 17 June 1919 at page 1015, but I have not been able to find a copy of the recommendation for the award.

Note: Corporal Hopkins service record includes a list of items issued to him on embarkation.

ARTICLES OF CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT IN POSSESSION ON DATE OF EMBARKATION							
ARTICLE	QTY.	ARTICLE	QTY.	ARTICLE	QTY.	ARTICLE	
CAPS, SERVICE DRESS		GREATCOAT, KHAKI	6	COMB, HAIR	1	SINGLETS	2
HATS, KHAKI FELT	1	BOOTS, ANKLE, BROWN	PR.S.	DISC, IDENTITY, WITH CORD	1	SOAP, PIECES	1
HATS, WHITE		LACES, BOOT, "	PR.S.	DRAWERS,	PR.S.	SOCKS, WOOLLEN,	3
STRAPS, CHIN, BR. LEA.	1	LEGGINGS, BR. LEA.,	PR.S.	DRESSINGS, FIELD		SPOON, F.B.	
BADGES, COLLAR, COP. OX.	2	BAGS, KIT, UNIVERSAL	1	FORK, F.B.		TOWELS	2
HAT,	1	BAGS, SEA KIT	1	HOLDALL		<u>EQUIPMENT</u>	
TITLES, "AUSTRALIA"	2	BELTS, ABDOMINAL		HOUSEWIFE, F.B.			
BREECHES, D. S., PR.S.	1	BRACES, PR.S.		JACKET, CARDIGAN			
JACKETS, DUNGAREE	1	BRUSH, HAIR		KNIFE, DINNER, F.B.			
B.D.	1	BRUSH, SHAVING		KNIFE, CLASP, WITH LANYARD	1		
PUTTEES, 3 YDS.	PR.S.	BRUSH, TOOTH		RAZOR AND CASE	1		
TRousERS, DUNGAREE		CAP, COMFORTER		SHIRTS, FLANNEL	2		
THIS SPACE RESERVED FOR INFORMATION, THE CHARACTER OF WHICH CANNOT BE FORESEEN AT PRESENT							
I HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE ARTICLES ENUMERATED ABOVE (TOTAL NUMBERS 41) WERE IN MY POSSESSION AT DATE OF EMBARKATION							
(SIGNATURE) Hopkins							
DATE OF EMBARKATION.							

LAMBON PARAGON LIMITED

### 17. Private Oscar LUNDGREN: service number 3382

Rejected on first attempt to enlist - bad teeth. Joined on 2 August 1915, no previous service, born Victoria, 22 years 5 months old horse driver, not married, NOK mother, 5 foot 9.5 inches tall (177 cms).

Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. Hospitalised October 1916 ankle sprain and in November 1916 with influenza. Transferred to 51<sup>st</sup> Bn October 1916 as a driver.

Not wounded, returned to Australia February 1919, and discharged 3 June 1919.

18. **Corporal John Every MACLEAN**: service number 3383A

Rejected on first attempt to enlist - bad teeth. Joined on 2 August 1915, no previous service, born Auckland New Zealand, 22 years 2 months civil servant, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 7.5 inches tall (171cms).

Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. WIA August 1916 nervous disability and GSW face and fractured tibia, evacuated England, back to France Feb 1917, WIA June 1917 GSW leg, promoted corporal

November 1917, attended sniper school England March 1918. Rejoined Bn Apr 1918. Hospitalised May 1918 pyrexia (trench fever). Returned to Aust. February 1919, discharged 3 June 1919 - see p343.

Served as sergeant between April 1942 and October 1945 in the Volunteer Defence Corps on part time war service. Died 1960.

19. **George Frederick MASTERSON** service number 3386

(See soldiers promoted to officers above, also a soldier in my father's photograph).



20. **Lance Corporal Frank Ozmond MONCK:** service number 3388

Joined on 3 August 1915, no previous service, born Victoria, 24 years jeweller, married, NOK wife, 5 foot 7.5 inches tall (171 cms).

Military offences December 1915 and February 1916 - late on parade (just not a morning person). Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion in June 1916. Promoted lance corporal September 1917, WIA April 1918 GSW face, evacuated England, family complained details of injury released to newspapers before family told, returned to Australia December 1918 and discharged 3 March 1919. Died 7 March 1960.

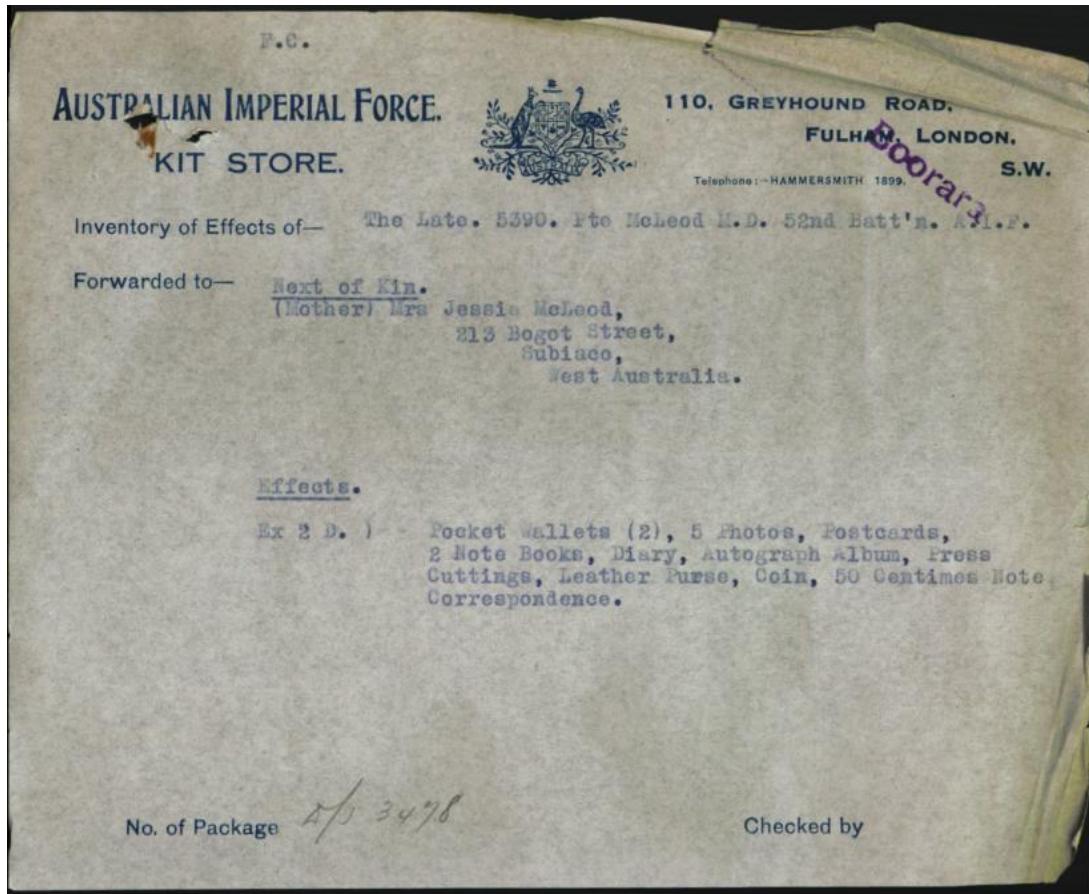
21. **Lance Corporal Malcolm Donald McLEOD:** service number 3390

Joined on 2 August 1915, no previous service, born Victoria, 26 years 7 months old electric tramways employee, not married, NOK mother, 5 foot 6.5 inches tall (169 cms).

Shipped to France with the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion and promoted lance corporal in August 1916. Hospitalised in July 1916 with septic hands and in August 1916 with exhaustion and shell shock.

KIA on 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> September 1916 in the Mouquet Farm attack.





22. Sergeant Michael O'KEEFE MM: service number 3391

Joined on 3 August 1915, no previous service, born Kanturf Ireland, 27 years old draper, not married, NOK brother (Ireland), 5 foot 4.5 inches tall (164 cms).

Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. Promoted lance corporal June 1916, corporal March 1917 and sergeant April 1917. WIA September 1916 slight GSW neck, evacuated England, hospitalised January 1918, acting Company Sergeant Major April 1918, TOS 51<sup>st</sup> Bn May 1918, WIA France June 1918 leg shattered by shrapnel.

Died of wounds 11 June 1918, buried France Franvillers.

Awarded Military Medal.

13th Aust. Inf. Brigade 4<sup>th</sup> Aust. Div. 5 May 1918

*During the counter-attack near VILLERS BRETONNEUX on the night of 25/26<sup>th</sup> April 1918 3 of the officers of his Company became casualties, and the remaining officer was detached with another company. The command of the Company fell to Sergeant O'KEEFE. His vigorous action, coolness under intense machine gun fire from the left flank – which was for a time quite exposed – and fine display of initiative in a very trying situation, were in a very large measure responsible for the successful consolidation of the left of the Battalion sector.*

Recommended by Lieutenant-Colonel J L Whitham C.M.G., O.C. 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, A.I.F.



23. Private Alan Stanley McKINLAY: service number 3389.

Originally rejected for service with bad teeth. Joined on 2 August 1915, about 1.5 years previous service with WA Infantry Regiment, born Victoria, 21 years 9 months old, railways porter, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 6.5 inches tall (169cms).

In March 1916 he transferred to Field Ambulance and then to 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn in April 1916. Shipped to France aboard *Ivernia* with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion June 1916. Initially reported MIA 14 August 1916, then WIA 16 August 1916 shell shock and middle-ear injury, hospitalised November 1916 and February 1917 concussion, and December 1916 influenza. Repatriated to Australia April 1917 concussion, deafness, headaches and sleeplessness. Discharged 27 July 1917 as medically unfit for active service and temporarily unfit for home service?



24. Lance Corporal Keith Raymond RANDELL: service number 3393

Joined on 2 August 1915, no previous service, born Perth W.A., 22 years 3 months old, civil servant, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 6.5 inches tall (169cms). (In 'meal' photo p 65)

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn 3 March 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion *Ivernia* June 1916. MIA 4 September 1916.

Court of Inquiry declared him KIA at Mouquet Farm. Later witness said he saw Private Randell sheltering with others in a shell hole which was hit by another shell killing 15 soldiers. Body exhumed 1931 and reburied, France.



25. **Private John (Steven) ROWE**: service number 3398

Joined on 4 August 1915, no previous service, born Durham England, 18 years 7 months old, blacksmith, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 7.25 inches tall (171cms).

(For service record, see 'The Youngest' Chapter 5)



26. **Private Ralph Victor SANDERS** service number 3399

Joined on 2 August 1915, no previous service, born Adelaide South Australia, 22 years 2 months old, draftsman, not married, NOK mother, 5 foot 5.5 inches tall (166 cms).

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn 3 March 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion *Ivernia* June 1916.

KIA 4 September 1916, Mouquet Farm



27. **Sergeant John Alexander SPENCE: DCM & MM service number 3400**

Joined on 2 August 1915, previous service in the Navy – recruiting doctor recorded lots of tattoos (see below), born Fremantle WA, 22 years 1 month labourer, married, NOK wife (who had deserted him and all his tattoos), 5 foot 5.75 inches tall (167cms).

- Eagle and Australian flag on back
- Chest – Australian Coat of Arms
- Left Arm – Advance Australia
- Right Arm – Unity
- Left Forearm – MR (whoever this is, maybe mother)
- Both Arms – swallows (Sweet! Clearly a sensitive Aust Federation type chap unless riled.)

Promoted lance corporal Serapeum Egypt, TOS 52Bn from 12Bn 3 March 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion *Ivernia* June 1916, minor injury finger 4 Sep 16. Promoted corporal September 1916, then to sergeant (same date as corporal). TOS Training Battalion England 25 June 1917, returned to France, awarded Distinguished Conduct Medal 27 August 1917 \* and Military Medal May 1918 \*\*, WIA GSW thigh severe, invalided to England 30 April 1918, left for Australia December 1918, discharged as invalid 22 March 1919.

\* From London Gazette 24<sup>th</sup> August, 1917 (and Commonwealth of Australia Gazette 20<sup>th</sup> December 1917), as quoted in a letter to his wife from the Officer in Charge of Base Records dated 12<sup>th</sup> January 1918.

*Awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the Distinguished Conduct Medal to the undermentioned non-commissioned officer, for acts of gallantry and devotion to duty in the Field: No. 3600 Sergeant J A Spence*

*For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He led his men to the attack with great courage, capturing two enemy field guns and killing the crews. He afterwards showed great fearlessness in patrolling under machine-gun fire, and worked with great energy during consolidation."*

It is interesting to compare this to the original recommendation before the spin doctors of that time had their go:

*During the operations of 7<sup>th</sup> June 1917 at MESSINES he shewed great courage and coolness leading his men in attack. He captured two enemy Field Guns killing or capturing the crews. During the action on 9<sup>th</sup> June at the same place he patrolled under machine gun fire and worked continuously at consolidating.*

Well almost interesting!

\*\* The recommendation for the Military Medal follows (recommended by our old friend Lieutenant-Colonel J L Whitham C.M.G., O.C. 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, A.I.F.). 15<sup>th</sup> Aust. Brigade, 4<sup>th</sup> Aust. Div, 12 April 1918

*For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty at DERUIANOCOURT (SW of ?) on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1918.*

*At daybreak, when leading a patrol, he came in touch with the enemy & returned with valuable information of an assembly for attack. Later during the attack he shewed great courage, engaging the enemy at close quarters. After the Coy. had been forced to withdraw, he led a party into a forward position & did excellent work, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. By his personal example and good leadership he continually rallied his men to greater efforts.*

28. Sergeant Thomas Wilkinson James TELFER: service number 3401.

Joined on 2 August 1915, 1 year previous service W.A.I.R., born Horsham Victoria, 27 years 1 month grocer/commercial traveller, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 4.25 inches tall (163cms).

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn March 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion *Ivernia* June 1916. Promoted lance cpl April 1916, corporal 28 October 1916 with Brigade Training Battalion England, and Pay Sergeant April 1917 with the Australian Army Pay Corps with responsibility for 13<sup>th</sup> Brigade.

No injuries or hospitalisation, not clear what this soldier did after landing in France in June 1916 and getting his promotion and posting to England in October 1916. Good luck to him and his money counting skills.

Photo next page.



28. **Private William John THORNTON:** service number 3402A

Joined on 2 August 1915, no previous service, born Middlesex England, 26 year old farm hand, not married, NOK mother (living in WA), 5 foot 7 inches tall (170cms).

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn March 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion aboard "Ivernia" June 1916. Service Record silent until May 1918 when TOS 51<sup>st</sup> Bn, AWL January 1918 and April 1919.

TOS as driver December 1918 (bit late!), married Gertrude 9 February 1919, left for Australia June 1919, discharged 23 September 1919.

Died on 4 January 1988 (98 years of age – our group's oldest survivor).

29. Private Harold Eastwood THOMSON: service number 3403

Previously rejected for enlistment due to small chest measurement. Joined on 2 August 1915, previous service in 86<sup>th</sup> Senior Cadets, born Fremantle Western Australia, 21 year 61 month old farmer, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 8 inches tall (173cms).

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn March 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion aboard *Ivernia* June 1916. TOS 50<sup>th</sup> Bn May 1918, married in England to Annie on 20 January 1919, undertook 3 months paid farming course in England 1919, embarked for Australia November 1919 and discharged 26 April 1920.

And that is all we know of this soldier, he does not appear to have been wounded or hospitalised. It is not clear whether he saw any fighting but presumably he did. Who said having a small chest was a problem?



30. **Corporal Alfred James WELLS: service number 3404**

Joined on 2 August 1915, no previous service, born Castlemaine Victoria, 25 years 7 months old, sign writer, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 4.75 inches tall (164cms).

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn March 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion aboard *Ivernia* June 1916 and promoted corporal same month. Hospitalised July 1916 and April 1918 with tonsillitis. TOS 42<sup>nd</sup> Bn August 1918.

WIA on 1 September 1918 GSW both hands and wrist, invalided to England, repatriated to Australia December 1918, discharged medically unfit 21 December 1919 (presumably he received a year's treatment in Australia for his wounds).



31. Private Ernest Harold WEST: service number 3405

Joined on 9 August 1915, no previous service, born Sussex England, 21 years 9 months old, plumber, not married, NOK father (England), 5 foot 7 inches tall (170cms).

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn March 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion aboard *Ivernia* June 1916. WIA shell shock August 1916, WIA GSW right leg and thigh 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4th September 1916 in Mouquet Farm attack and evacuated to England.

Still in hospital March 1917 necrosis of the bone (dying bone) June 1917 hospitalised 62 days VD.

Back to France September 1917. WIA GSW chest and axilla? Serious. Transferred to 42Bn September 1918 and 15<sup>th</sup> Bn October 1918 (in England?). AWL September 1918.

Returned to Australia April 1919 and discharged 27 July 1919.

All this and still alive Mt Hawthorn Western Australia in March 1967.



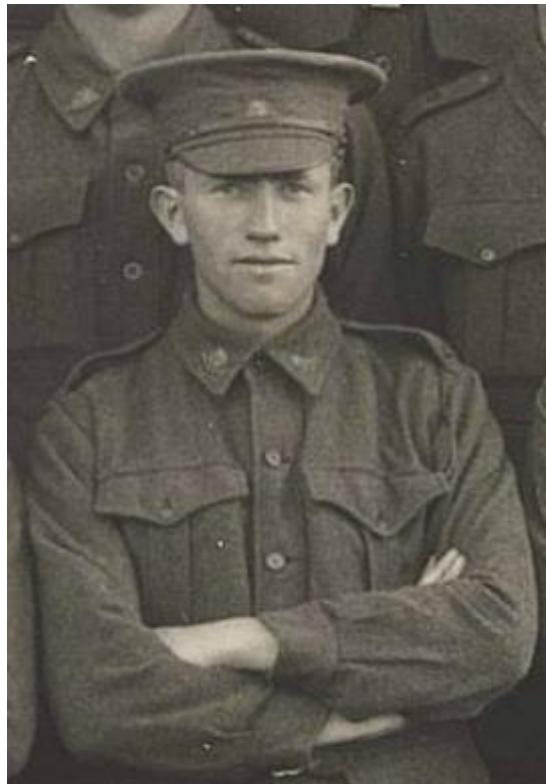
32. **Corporal Egbert Athelstone WILLS: service number 3406**

Joined on 2 August 1915, previous service with 86<sup>th</sup> Infantry, born Carlton Victoria, 20 years 7 months old clerk, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 9.75 inches tall (177cms).

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn March 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion aboard *Ivernia* in June 1916. Promoted lance corporal August 1916 and corporal March 1917.

WIA GSW wrist September 1916, WIA GSW leg June 1917 and evacuated to England. WIA GSW legs and shoulder and back to England October 1917.

Returned to Australia March 1918 and discharged 24 May 1918 medically unfit (I'm not surprised after being wounded on 3 occasions).



33. **Corporal Henry Andrew WILLIAMSON: service number 3407**

Joined on 4 August 1915, previous service with 88<sup>th</sup> Infantry, born York Western Australia, 20 years 7 months old, school teacher, not married, NOK mother, 5 foot 7 inches tall (170cms).

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn March 1916 and promoted corporal. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion aboard *Ivernia* June 1916. Sick August 1916. WIA 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> of September 1916 SW ear Mouquet Farm. To England for treatment and never returned to France. Hospitalised October 1916 acute rheumatism.

Transferred to Provost Corps September 1917, undertook 3 months chemistry course in England 1919, returned to Australia January 1920 and discharged 27 February 1920 with acute rheumatism.

Alive East Maitland NSW June 1947.



34. Lance Corporal George WILLIAMS: service number 3408

Joined on 16 August 1915, previous service with Bolder WA militia unit, born Kadina South Australia, 21 years 8 months old, iron-moulder, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 8.5 inches tall (174cms).

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn March 1916. Treated for VD Serapeum 18 days May 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion *Ivernia*. Hospitalised psoriasis (skin disease) December 1916. Hospitalised while on leave June 1917 with heatstroke (not a good sign for a bronzed Aussie) and also treated for VD 41 day's treatment. Promoted lance corporal July 1917. Treated for scabies (itch) March 1918.

KIA France 24 April 1918.



35. Lance Corporal Richard James WILLIAMS: service number 3409. Older brother of George Williams above

Joined on 2 August 1915, no previous service, born Kadina South Australia, 25 years 1 month old, telegraphist, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 4.5 inches tall (164cms).

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn March 1916 and promoted corporal. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion aboard *Ivernia*. Promoted sergeant August 1916. WIA September 1916 shell shock and evacuated to England. Hospitalised February 1917 while on leave VD 29 day's treatment. Transferred to Signals Corps as a sapper at own request April 1918 and promoted lance corporal November 1918. Discharged Australia 6 June 1919.



36. Private Walter Reginald WRIGHT: service number 3410

Joined on 20 July 1915, 3 years previous service with 88<sup>th</sup> Infantry, born Geraldton Western Australia, 20 years 7 months old, clerk, not married, NOK mother, 5 foot 4 inches tall (163cms).

TOS 52Bn from 12Bn March 1916. Shipped to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion aboard *Ivernia* June 1916. Transferred to Signals Corps March 1917 as a 'High Power Buzzer Expert'. (An army can't have too many HPBEs!) Hospitalised VD 51 day's treatment July 1917.

Not wounded. Returned to Australia April 1919 and discharged 8 June 1919.

## To Sum Up

So that is it for the thirty-seven "ex-Ivernians" of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion ex-12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements who enlisted in Western Australia around August 1915.

The statistics are disturbing. Of the 37 soldiers:

11 or 30% were killed

8 or 22% were discharged medically unfit

Of the 37 soldiers:

30 or 81% were wounded in action (many on more than 1 occasion) or killed in action/died of wounds, but despite the horror stories I found no example from this group of soldiers who was killed or hospitalised from a gas attack

20 or 54% were hospitalised for non-war related illnesses, several of whom contracted VD

Only 13 or 35% served throughout the war as Infantry

4 were married in England – 2 Ethel's, 1 Annie and 1 Gertrude; strong sexy lusty names!

Some caution needs to be exercised on these statistics as very few would have shared basically the same experiences. Obviously the less risky the position a soldier found himself in, the less was the likelihood of death or

injury. Soldiers spending their time basically in and out of trenches clearly suffered more chance of being a casualty. Soldiers evacuated to England through injury often took considerable time to recover, but at least it lessened their future time in the trenches.

A number of soldiers were accepted at training facilities in England (presumably to train the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division or reinforcements). These soldiers enjoyed better promotional opportunities, but, towards the end of the war, were often posted back to France as the reinforcement soldiers dried up and the battalions became seriously short-handed.

Of the soldiers commemorated for bravery, none were for acts in the 52<sup>nd</sup>'s first two months in France (August and September 1916) when the Battalion's WIA/KIA numbers were at their greatest. It would be easy to believe that many very brave acts were performed in the attack at Mouquet Farm which did not get recognised as such as the person or witnesses were dead. In fact of all the seventy 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement soldiers I was unable to find an instance where a soldier died in the action for which he was given a bravery award.

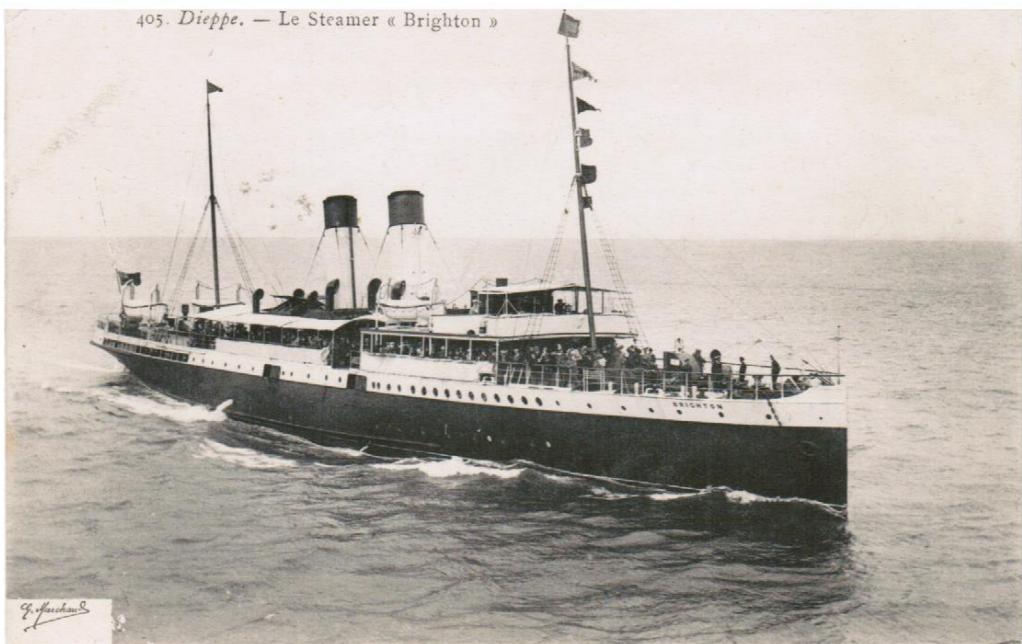
Of the two pairs of brothers, Cornish and Williams, one of each pair was killed in action. From time to time I came across brothers of our 70 soldiers in other parts of the service and some of these were killed, but I have not attempted to track down these siblings.

Whereas sketchy details are usually included on a soldier's record of what how/where he was wounded, no details are generally given as to how a soldier died. Sometimes there is information – e.g. killed by artillery shell or shot through head by sniper, but generally we are left to wonder. Did the soldier see who killed him (probably in most cases no) or was it the anonymous machine-gun bullet or artillery shell killing him without warning as he went about his duty to mates and country?

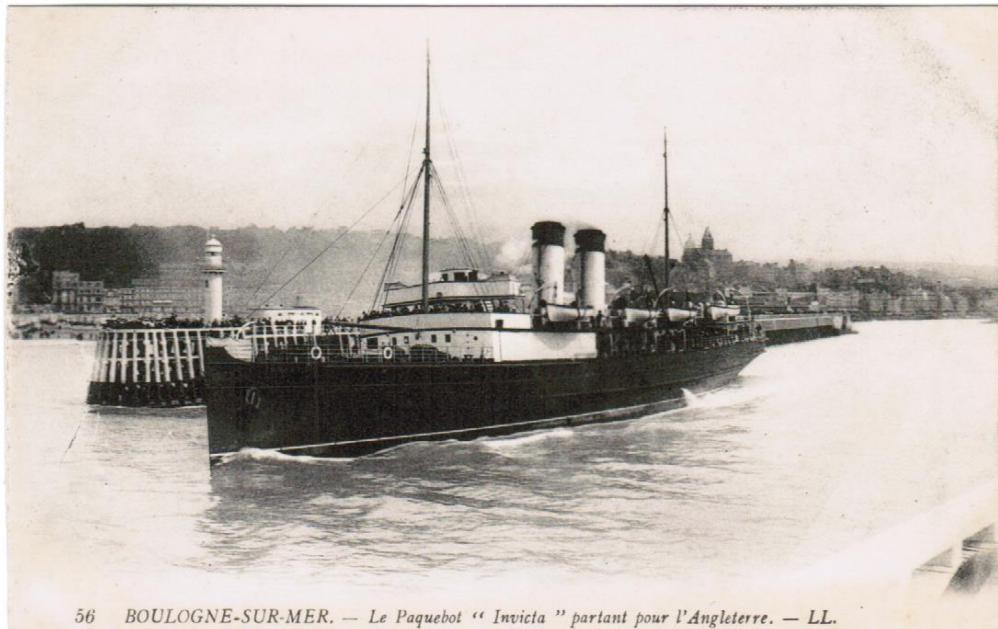
#### **Another digression: Little Boats on the English Channel**

Wounded soldiers evacuated to England were transported on Channel ferries taken over by the military. My wounded father went from Calais to the UK in August 1916 on *Hospital Ship Brighton* and returned Feb. 1917 on *SS Invicta*.

405. Dieppe. — Le Steamer « Brighton »



56 BOULOGNE-SUR-MER. — Le Paquebot "Invicta" partant pour l'Angleterre. — LL.



English Channel Ferries *Brighton* and *Invicta* used to  
transport wounded to/from France and England.

## Chapter 7

### Australia's Infantry in France 1916 - 1919

Early in August 1914 the Germans attacked neutral Belgium and Luxembourg in order to attack traditional enemy France. A British counter-attack in late August 1914 at Mons and a French stand in September 1914 (Battle of Marne) successfully halted the German thrusts.

The Germans started digging in to hold their invaded French territory and the trench system came into being, bounded by the sea to the north and Switzerland to the South.

Trench warfare was a natural result when two large opposing armies did not possess the technology or might to allow one side to successfully overrun the other. Trenches were generally immune from encirclement. Aerial bombardment was not a strategic factor. Small scale successful breakthroughs were quickly reversed by enemy counter-attack. Trenches became state-of-art. They were extensively protected from frontal attacks by barbed wire and machine guns. So the technology of all this trench armament was that it was strong enough to stop significant enemy breakthroughs, provided the supply of men and munitions could be maintained.

Trenches also proved resilient to measures such as artillery bombardment, gas attacks, tanks and flamethrowers, all designed to negate barbed wire and machine guns. The system of trenches became more and more complex with front line trenches, support trenches, reserve trenches, communications trenches and so forth. The Germans in particular were adept at constructing deep underground concrete bunkers in and around their front line which could survive heavy artillery. The whole stalemate depended on, til then, unheard-of numbers of soldiers being continuously fed into the trench system.

The Germans were the first to try a large-scale trench break-out; at Verdun in February 1916. By this time the Australian Army was safely out of Gallipoli and enjoying the sunshine, 'green' beer and attractions of Fatima and her working-mates in Cairo. After 5 months the German attack on Verdun failed, with very heavy casualties on both sides.

In July 1916 the British and Dominion forces launched a large scale attack in the Somme River region as a means to tie the German army up and relieve pressure on the French at Verdun. Giving truth to the saying that today's generals are very good at fighting the last war (in this case the Boer War) the British achieved 47,000 casualties very early, including almost 20,000 killed on the first day. By November 1916 the Somme campaign had petered out, with casualties of 1.5 million on both sides.

### Fromelles and Pozieres

New boys on the block, Australia, had a cannon-fodder role early in the Somme offensive. Attacks were made at Fromelles and later Pozieres and Mouquet Farm. The course of these battles was to be repeated again and again – inadequate opening artillery bombardment, infantry attacking over bombed churned-up no-mans-land by troops buggered from just getting to the front line. As always, the German front line was well designed and very resilient to frontal attack with well sited machine guns.

Attacking soldiers still alive after the initial attack then had to proceed through answering bombardments, overcome barbed-wire not successfully cut and machine guns which could fire at 500 rounds per minute. Often there were local gains of getting to a bit of smashed enemy trench (a sure death warrant for the successful soldiers). Then came the inevitable counter attacks: first artillery bombardment and then by fresh troops. Soon the attacking survivors had to retreat; past their wounded, and leaving the dead where they fell to be progressively blown apart in further bombardments – the “no known grave” soldiers. And this whole fiasco to be passed off as a successful attack (with the true casualty figure never told to the public). Good General-man-ship equated to a long list of casualties; it showed the General attacked with enthusiasm. Shell shock became more and more accepted as a genuine wound in action, worthy of proper medical treatment.

At Fromelles the Australian 5th Division (“*in one night's sharp fighting*” Bean, Vol III p442) suffered casualties of 5,533, the British 1,547 and the Germans less than 1,500. The Fromelles assault was described as a feint trying to lure the Germans into believing, unsuccessfully, that a major attack was to be mounted on the Fromelles front. *The 5<sup>th</sup> Australian Division was crippled by the fight at Fromelles, and not until the end of the summer, ...., did it regain its full self-confidence.* (Bean Vol 111, p 447)

Worse was to come. During the following Pozieres battles the Australian 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Divisions lost 10,800 soldiers killed, but this hardly attracted a mention in the official British war history.

But in the end the Allies were successful at both Fromelles and Pozieres although both of these French towns had long since been blown to pieces and even those remains obliterated. A third German strongpoint, Mouquet Farm remained in German hands, and it was the capture of this German position that was to occupy successive Australian, British and Canadian troops from 7 August 1916 to early September 1916.

### Attempts to Capture Mouquet Farm

Bean (Vol 3 pp 726 to 861) provides 135 pages of commentary on the Mouquet Farm attacks. The 'Farm' itself, which had been bombarded to pieces, was a strong point in the German front line. Beneath its trenches the Germans had developed an extensive network of virtually impregnable caverns and bunkers. The 1<sup>st</sup> Division AIF was ordered to attack the Mouquet Farm trench network on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1916. Hence began another month of waste and slaughter of Australian lives, best summarised by Bean (p728):

*The series of battles which ensued, repeating as they did within a narrower area most of the horrors of the Pozieres fighting, cannot be described with the minuteness hitherto employed. The reader must take for granted many of the conditions – the flayed land, shell-hole bordering shell-hole, corpses of young men lying against the trench walls or in shell hole; some – except for dust settling on them – seeming to sleep; others torn in half; others rotting, swollen and discoloured. He must also take for granted the air fetid with their stench or at times pungent with the chemical reek of high explosive; the troops of both sides – always in desperate need of sleep – working or fighting by night and living by day in niches scooped in the trench side – dangerous places perilously shaken with the crashing thump of each heavy shell whose burst might all too easily shovel them on top of their occupants. Little stretcher parties of four or five worked over the open – often, for want of a red cross flag, under a white handkerchief or other rag; and though the higher staffs, fearing German treachery or deception, frowned upon these proceedings, the front-line troops on both sides, whose mates were slowly dying in the space between the trenches, knew little of these prohibitions, and would not have heeded them if they had known. Battalion and sometimes company*

*headquarters were in captured German dugouts, where, by flickering candle-light and amid the smell of unwashed men, officers and signallers worked day and night, while the worn-out runners and reserves, crowding in all attitudes the staircases and corners, snatched a few minutes sleep before their next tour of duty. On nights of action, when the enemy's barrages fell, though candles and acetylene lamps were extinguished by the concussion of each heavy explosive, the deep dug-outs remained practically safe, but more than once certain shallower shelters proved dreadful traps, and men were suddenly called upon to rescue their groaning mates crushed by fallen roof-beams..... The most comfortable time for these activities was always from dawn until about 7 o'clock when the morning mist often veiled the battlefield and the guns of both sides almost ceased to fire, either because their ammunition allowance had been exceeded and not replenished or because their gunners were exhausted. All this, and the continuous tension and horror of that battlefield, the reader's imagination must supply.*

The Mouquet farm attacks faced almost insurmountable obstacles; the Germans knew where the Australians were and what their objective was, and often bombarded them during times of unit hand-over or when they were bunching for attack. Attacking troops could not tell precisely where they were as all land features had been obliterated and land communication lines lost. As a consequence they then ran the risk of going too far and missing what was left of a given trench and some protection, or getting bombed by their own artillery. No one was aware of just how deep and extensive were the German underground fortifications.

Attacks were launched almost daily from 8 August 1916. At great cost the trenches protecting Mouquet Farm were taken and held. The 12th Brigade's 50th Battalion took part in the 12<sup>th</sup> August attack and the 49th and 51st Battalions the day after. Our 52nd Battalion waited in reserve. Attack and counter-attack deadlocks developed and many casualties came from our own artillery. Lack of drinking water became a serious problem. Attacks on the 14<sup>th</sup> August founded against German machine guns. The 50th Battalion suffered 414 casualties and the 51st 300 by the time the 4th Division was relieved by the 1st Division on 15 August 1916 (with overall losses of 4,649). Losses for the other two 13th Brigade Battalions were 65 for the 49th and 77 for the 52<sup>nd</sup> – and this was as 'reserves'.

The 1st Division faced huge problems in that all the various trenches they had to occupy were shattered. Frantic work was undertaken to make

improvements faster than the enemy could destroy them. On the 21<sup>st</sup> August 1916 an attack was made in daylight for the first time on the map reference previously known as Mouquet farm itself. One battalion lost 120 men in the hour before the assault. Attacking behind a 'creeping artillery barrage' also had its problems in that the Germans fired their machine guns through the barrages and hit advancing soldiers sight unseen. On 22 August 1916 the 1st Division's attack, after losses of 92 officers and 2,558 other ranks, was called off.

*The progress achieved in its two attacks...had been trifling: the task- which had indeed long since reached the stage where further progress became impossible – was now handed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Division. (Official History Vol 3 p 802).*

The next attack on Mouquet Farm was planned for dawn 26 August 1916. Again there were partial successes later met by counter-attacks and again deadly defence by German machine gunners. And again there were confused or no communications and no bugger at the rear had a clear idea of who was where. In three days the 6<sup>th</sup> Brigade lost 896 men out of a fighting strength of 2,500. A further unsuccessful attack was made at midnight on 27 August 1916 and carried through to the next night.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Division, aided by elements of the 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Brigade now assembled for another go.

In all of this the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion fared fairly well in that it was not directly involved in any of the fighting. Its turn was coming with the seventh attack on Mouquet Farm.

### **The 7<sup>th</sup> Attack on Mouquet Farm**

At the end of August 1916 the 13<sup>th</sup> AIF Brigade, comprising the 49<sup>th</sup> to 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalions, was, with the exception of the 50<sup>th</sup> Bn, which was to form the reserve, strong and fresh. They had not taken part in the previous fighting. In early September 1916 other troops prepared the jump-off trench so the attacking troops would be fresh. Battalions 49<sup>th</sup>, 51<sup>st</sup> and 52nd attacked just before dawn on the morning of 3 September 1916. There were additional large-scale British attacks nearby – 'the main show of the day'. There were some initial successes and the Farm area occupied. As usual the Germans

survived the initial bombardment in their extensive network of underground bunkers and they were soon able to get a number of machine guns into action.

Let's see what Bean (*Official History Vol 3*, pps 839 to 858) says of the 52<sup>nd</sup>'s fate:

*The 52<sup>nd</sup> ... was a Battalion of magnificent material, but – through undue adherence to a system of seniority - most unevenly commanded..... For some reason the commander of the 52<sup>nd</sup> had not made his junior officers reconnoitre the ground over which they were to attack....the barrage fell, and in the half-light of dawn, the 52<sup>nd</sup> advanced. The troops, advancing towards the enemy line, and then pausing in shell-holes for the barrage to lift, were apprised of the lift by the din of an enemy machine-gun. Here, as in front of the 49<sup>th</sup>, the enemy had no (sic ?) deep dugouts to shelter in; a machine-gun was ready to fire, and the men of the German machine-gun corps, whose bravery was not surpassed in any army, had opened fire as soon as they could discern figures to shoot at....Of the officers of the 52<sup>nd</sup> in the front line of attack, nine were killed and two wounded. Its men were scattered....*

In mid-afternoon the survivors of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade attack received unexpected support from a company of Scottish Canadians. At dawn on 4 September 1916 what was left of the Australian attack was facing the enemy massing in front of them. The fighting continued; calls for artillery support failed. The Germans put up a severe counter-barrage which gradually wiped out the Australians and Canadians barricaded in the old German positions. The few who survived through the night were relieved by more Canadian troops at dawn on the 5th.

*Thus after one of the bitterest fights in the history of the AIF...The 13<sup>th</sup> Brigade lost 31 officers and 1,305 men... (Bean Vol 3, p858)*

49 <sup>th</sup> Bn casualties	3 officers	417 ORs
50 <sup>th</sup>	1	76
51 <sup>st</sup>	13	365
52 <sup>nd</sup>	12	438 (about 50%)
13 <sup>th</sup> M G Coy	2	9

*With the relief of the 49<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup>, the participation of the Australians in this phase of the Somme battle, and also the battering operations against Mouquet Farm, came to an end. Seven times the Australians had been*

*launched from the head of their salient (with attacks on Fromelles, Pozieres and Mouquet Farm).... Only the last and greatest effort had resulted in any gain of value, and that on a front so narrow that no troops in the world could have retained it against deliberate counter-attack. Such a counter-attack occurred early on September 8<sup>th</sup>, when, after two day's concentrated bombardment, in which the 16<sup>th</sup> Canadian Battalion suffered terrible loss, the enemy, attacking during the "change over" of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Canadian Battalions, retook (all the gains). (Bean p860)*

Bean (p862 Vol 3) gives the Australian battle losses as:

#### **Fromelles**

5 <sup>th</sup> Division	5,500 casualties
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#### **Pozieres (including Mouquet Farm)**

1 <sup>st</sup> Division	7,700 casualties
2 <sup>nd</sup> Division	8,100
4 <sup>th</sup> Division	7,100

That is a loss of 28,400 casualties in about 7 weeks or approximately the Australian losses at Gallipoli over 8 months.

In addition, the New Zealanders sustained 7,408 casualties and the Canadians 25,410 casualties in the same fighting.

So there we go, the First Anzac Corps, in about 2 months of fighting was left smashed and facing an up-hill battle to become an effective fighting force again for many months, with all the gains, which were precious few, lost!

As set out in Chapter 6, thirty-seven West Australian enlisting soldiers went to France with the 52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion. While their individual service records don't always tell us with certainty where they were in August and September 1916 it would seem reasonably to conclude that over the 2 months:

- 5 (14%) were not available to fight (HQ duties or in hospital)
- 12 (32%) were not wounded or killed
- 7 (19%) were killed or wounded before Mouquet Farm
- 13 (35%) were killed or wounded in the Mouquet Farm attack

Allowing for not available (5 soldiers) and wounded/killed August (7 soldiers) we can say that 25 of our 37 soldiers were available to participate in the early September 1916 attack on Mouquet Farm. Of these 12 (48%) were not wounded or killed, 5 were killed (20%) and 8 wounded (32%). So with 52% killed or wounded at Mouquet Farm 'our' soldiers seem to have suffered at about the same casualty rate as the whole Battalion. Cheerful statistics (for individual information see table at the end of this chapter).

The immediate problem from the Fromelles/Pozieres fiasco was how to make up the losses. A whip-around of what reinforcement and returning from hospital troops might be available in France, England and Egypt showed numbers were insufficient to bring the infantry divisions up to strength, and that they could not mount further large attacks as they were. One obvious source of new cannon fodder was conscription. Conscription had been introduced in England and New Zealand, but not Australia. An Australian referendum in October 1916 to introduce conscription failed.

With the approach of winter looming, the Australians were allocated a 'quiet' portion of the Ypres' front and began to improve the trenches and prepare underground quarters. Both sides also tunnelled away so they could at some time explode huge mines under the opposing trenches. Both sides began to only lightly man their front lines to reduce casualties in attacks, the idea being that the strength of their force was held somewhat to the rear out of harm's way ready to counter attack.

The following summing-up is taken from a recent local newspaper article \* on Pozieres:

The Battle of Pozieres started on July 23, 1916 – four days after the single-day Battle of Fromelles – and concluded on September 3. That featured the seizure of Pozieres town, attacks towards Thiepval and the Battle of Mouquet Farm, inevitably referred to by soldiers as "mucky farm".

This was all part of the British Battle of the Somme which started, disastrously, on July 1 with the aim of achieving the long-awaited breakthrough of German lines.

Although early in Australia's involvement on the Western Front, both Fromelles and Pozieres featured the very worst of Australia's experience of the Great War.

Australian War Memorial senior curator Peter Burness said, "Pozieres is the highest casualty rate that the Australians suffered in battles in the First World War. That's the percentage of men who were casualties against all those who took part."

In all, Pozieres cost Australia 23,000 dead, wounded, missing and prisoners. As a general rule of World War 1 casualty counts, one-third would be dead and two-thirds wounded.

"It literally was sheer hell," he said. The Germans remained determined to regain this vital high ground, launching repeated counter-attacks.

"We came under the heaviest bombardments that we ever encountered. Australians had never been under such intense continuous artillery bombardment" Mr Burness said.

One consequence was that towns such as Pozieres were completely obliterated. Mr Burness said soldiers in their diaries and letters repeatedly described Pozieres as hell on earth.

\* "Memorial marks anniversary of Pozieres battle" by Max Blenkin in *The Canberra Times* 6 August 2011. And as we will see in the next Chapter, which looks at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion's War Diary, 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion soldiers only had their first experience of a front line trench on 25 June 1916, when it relieved the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

## The Rest of the War at a Gallop

### 1916

The Brits attempted another large scale Somme attack in mid-September 1916 using their new secret weapon, the tank. The tanks failed, there was more carnage and it rained heavily. The Somme offensive was finally called off mid-October. The 1st and 5<sup>th</sup> AIF Divisions reoccupied trenches in October in the mud and got involved in some futile attacks in November 1916. In mid-

November the Allies agreed to resume the offensive in February 1917. And the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division finally finished its training in England and moved into wet cold muddy trenches for the winter. And the French army got a new leader, as did three of the Australian divisions.

## 1917

The Brits and French agreed to put off their big new offensives until April 1917 when things would have dried out a bit, but the smart-arse Germans, who knew a thing or two about mud and tactics, fooled everyone in February 1917 by retreating to new well-prepared trench lines which became known as the "Hindenburg Line". The Germans retired in stages and the Allies followed. Australians fought and suffered at Lagnicourt and Bullecourt. The long-awaited French attack in April 1917 was a major failure and the French changed commanders again, while some of the French troops mutinied. In the same month the Germans went on the offensive and the Aust 1<sup>st</sup> Division had a few setbacks. Australians fought in the second battle of Bullecourt, but it was the usual story – some early successes but our artillery could not cut all the wire or silence all the machine guns or prevent counter-attacks, although an attack at Messines was seen as a success. In both battles the Australian 4<sup>th</sup> Division suffered large losses.

Around the middle of 1917 the first American troops came into Europe and the Russians left the war. Meanwhile the Brits planned their third attack at Ypres - the battle which was to become known as Passchendaele, the objective being to free the Belgian ports in German hands since the beginning of the war. The Passchendaele attack commenced on 31 July 1917 in rain and mud. Again there were some successes but according to Carlyon (p 433) the allied and German casualties on the first day were each 27,000. And the rain continued for another month, the ground became completely waterlogged and the troops exhausted. By the end of August Allied casualties were around 60,000 and all forward momentum had virtually ceased in the mud.

Things had dried out enough by September 1917 for the attack to continue. In that month the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2nd Australian Divisions found themselves in the centre of an 11 division Allied attack at Menin Road against a lightly held German front line of machine gun pill boxes. The German strength was behind the front line. The Allies attacked behind a creeping barrage that for once worked and the goals of the advances were obtainable. Menin Road was a success but the casualties at 20,000 high, with Australian troops accounting for one-quarter.

There was no strategic gain flowing from the Menin Road success nor from the next Allied success, Polygon Wood, which involved the Australian 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Divisions. Again infantry troops advanced behind a creeping artillery barrage and were able to suppress the Germans before they got too many machine guns going. Again there were heavy casualties – 15,000 of which Australia chipped in 5,400. Many of the Australian casualties arose from a severe German barrage as the men were getting to their attack start points.

The next battle, early in October 1917, at Broodseinde, involved 4 Australian Divisions. Again there was a heavy German barrage just before the attack, but in this case the Germans were preparing for their own attack on Zonnebeke. The German barrage finished, the Allies' started, and then both troops attempted to attack. The Allies prevailed with another 20,000 casualties (Australian 6,432), but Passchendaele was finally in sight.

British bravado was high and despite the past losses and mud and exhausted troops a hurried attack was made on 9 October 1917, in which they ignored all the factors which had given them recent successes. Troops had difficulty getting through the mud to their attack points, rifles jammed in the mud, the barrage was hopelessly inadequate, German machine-guns survived, communications were almost non-existent and the fighting chaos. A follow-up attack three days later was also a costly blunder. The result: British losses 13,000, New Zealand 3,000, AIF 3<sup>rd</sup> Division 3,200 and the 4<sup>th</sup> Division in support 1,000 (Carlyon p 495). Later in October 1917 the Canadians succeeded in taking Passchendaele after painstaking planning but still at a heavy cost, and all for no strategic gain.

Australian losses in 1917 were 55,000 of which 38,000 were in Belgium. Reinforcements were down to a trickle and a second 'conscription referendum' in December 1917 was lost.

In November 1917 General Haig (the British commander) decided to give himself an early Christmas present and launch a surprise tank attack further South at Cambrai in an area not too churned up by previous bombardment. The 100s of tanks would be accompanied by infantry and cavalry. On day 1 the tanks were successful with 1,000s of Germans captured, but the cavalry failed to get to the right ground where the game was being played. On day 2 the Germans counter-attacked with fresh troops; something the Brits did not

have. The battle petered out in the snow and rain of early December 1917, with losses of 45,000 for each side.

In November 1917 what was left of the first and second Anzac Corps were combined under fully Australian leadership as the Australian Corps.

## 1918

At the beginning of 1918 Haig was spoiling for an after-winter attack but was hampered in not having enough troops, partly because the British Prime Minister, in a back-door attempt to control Haig, would not release new troops to France. Meanwhile the Germans had been developing a well thought-out plan – codename “Michael” – to break on a 70 kilometre front through the British line which would pin the British and Dominion troops (5 Divisions from Australia, 4 from Canada and 1 from New Zealand) to the coast.

While Allied intelligence knew the Germans were setting up for a major offensive, diversionary German activities at the edges of the British and French lines deceived the Allies as to the extent of the “Michael” attack. The new match kicked off with an extensive bombardment on 9 March 1918, concentrating on behind-the-line areas. The Germans started their ground attacks around 21 March 1918 and immediately achieved breakthroughs. For the Australians there was much confusion until they all eventually found new defensive position behind the old Somme lines of the early war. Early Australian-German contact was made near the villages of Hebuterne, Fonquervillers and Sailly-au-Bois and by 27 October 1918 the Australians were machine-gunning advancing Germans for a change.

In amongst all this confusion the Australian 4<sup>th</sup> Division was ordered to march to Albert, about 4 miles south-west of the obliterated Pozieres, and after a few more false starts, bus trips and marches, found itself head-quartered at Dernancourt Village (a mile or two south of Albert) on 27 March 1918, waiting for the still advancing Germans. The 13 Brigade was assembled near Helencourt and soon after were ordered to Lavielle, a few miles west of Albert. When everyone was finally settled the 4<sup>th</sup> Division held the railway between Dernancourt and Albert.

And so it went on, attack and counter-attack, confusion and bravery. The Germans intensified their efforts against the Australians around the end of

30 March 1918. Australian interest now swung to the area around Villers-Bretonneux, which the Germans successfully attacked in strength on 4 April 1918 and were successfully counter-attacked the next day. In all of this the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion was in the front lines somewhere near the Dernancourt railway, with the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Brigades. They were attacked on 5 April 1918. And, as they always say, the battle raged to and fro all that day. The 13<sup>th</sup> Brigade was finally relieved on 8 April 1918. The 12<sup>th</sup> Brigade suffered 580 casualties and the 13<sup>th</sup> 500, including 8 officers and 146 ORs of the 52 Battalion (Bean vol 5, p 412). The 52<sup>nd</sup> saw more action that month, and as detailed in its war diary (see Chapter 8), its losses for April 1918 were: killed/died 2 officers & 47 ORs; wounded 10 officers & 180 ORs and missing 10 ORs.

Carlyon notes (pp 589/90) that in fifteen days the Germans had recaptured most of the towns lost in 1915 and 1916 and had captured 75,000 English prisoners, with losses of 250,000. British and French losses were put at 240,000. Haig was desperately trying to protect the northern French ports where his supplies came from and the French wanted to protect Paris at all costs. The Germans, despite their gains, had not achieved anything of strategic value. The Germans launched a second offensive in Flanders. Australians were heavily involved in this battle, which, like its predecessor, had failed to produce any strategic gain for the Germans.

One of the German successes was a concentrated attack on Villers-Bretonneux, which fell on 24 April 1918. The 13<sup>th</sup> Brigade was in the fore amongst the troops trying to win the town back, and incurred 1009 casualties in successfully doing so.

Carlyon sums up the March/April 1918 battles in this way:

*Ludendorff's (German head man) two big offensives had faltered and died. The costs on both sides had been terrible. British casualties for the forty-odd days after the opening of Operation Michael on March 21 came in at 236,300, nearly as high as the Passchendaele offensive, which had lasted sixty-five days longer. The figure was worse than it looked: it included 70,000 men taken prisoner, which meant they were out of the war just as surely as dead. The French had lost some 90,000, which brought the allied casualties to around 326,000. The Germans appeared to have lost slightly more than this. And Germany, unlike the allies, was running out of men. (p 622)*

On 27 May 1918 the Germans had another go, this time at the French, with about 100,000 casualties on each side by the time it ended. And the war goes on. In July 1918 the Australians planned an attack at Hamel, using 60 tanks instead of the standard creeping barrage, but in the end tanks and artillery were used, as well as 1,000 Americans. The attack was a resounding success.

The Australians refined further a technique they had developed of ‘peaceful penetration’ – small scale harassing attacks by raiding parties, seeking small gains, taking prisoners, scaring shit out of the Germans and the like.

Two weeks after Hamel the French mounted a major and successful attack on the Marne.

In August 1918 the battle of Amiens, an Anglo-French offensive was launched on weakly prepared German lines 20 miles ahead of the Hindenburg Line. All of the Australian and Canadian corps were involved. There were initial successes, then a grinding fight.

As noted by Carlyon (p 674) by mid-August 1918 the Australian Divisions had been fighting almost continuously and had racked-up another 5,900 casualties, which were not being replaced.

Rapid advances by the allies continued for the rest of August 1918. At the end of August the Australians were trying to find a way across the Somme River at a strong point, Mont St Quentin and Peronne. Once again Australian forces enjoyed success and captured the strong point, with the Germans basically giving in, but by now the severely depleted battalions were close to being spent. A German counter-attack was successful for a day or two.

Everywhere the Allies pushed forward and in early September 1918 the Germans retreated to their Hindenburg Line, the place from which Operation Michael had launched in March.

Monash, the Australian commander wanted to keep the pressure on the Germans before they reorganised (and before winter came on). Of course there were further attacks and further casualties and even some Australian mutinous rumblings over battalion amalgamations. As well, 800 of the remaining 6,000 ‘original’ 1914 soldiers were given leave home to Australia, much against Monash’s wishes.

Early attacks in late September 1918 on the thoroughly prepared Hindenburg Line failed or stalled, again at the hands of German machine gunners. Fresh, untried American troops in particular suffered.

By early October the Australians had taken their allotted bit of Hindenburg Line and incurred yet another 1,000 casualties. The last battle the Australians were to take part in was an attack on the village of Montbrehain on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 1918. Elsewhere the British, New Zealanders, Canadians and Americans were busily breaching their bits of the Hindenburg Line.

Germany was all but finished.

Slowly the two sides groped towards an armistice as Germany approached revolution at home. Under the armistice, Germany agreed to leave all occupied territory, hand over much of their military equipment and pay war reparations.

And the Kaiser abdicated and went into a presumably comfortable exile in neutral Holland, and slowly our troops would return to Australia.



1914-18 German Occupation of Belgium Stamps  
Contemporary Stamps of German Overprinted 'Belgien'.

**Fate of the 37 ex 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Bn WA Soldiers Posted to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn  
Between 25 June 1916 (when the 52nd first occupied 'training'  
trenches) to 4 September 1916 (and the catastrophic failure of  
the Mouquet Farm attack)**

June 1916	Driver J Harvey Cpl A J Wells	Hospitalised Hospitalised
August 1916	Pte R Bickersteth L/Cpl R H Cornish Cpl W J Cornish Pte A H Eagleton Pte J Maclean Pte G Masterson Pte A McKinlay	WIA WIA (DOWs) WIA KIA WIA WIA WIA
September 1916	Cpl H B Allen Cpl W Bower Cpl T E Hay Cpl J Hopkins Sgt J McCully L/Cpl M D McLeod L/Cpl M O'Keefe L/Cpl K Randell Pte R Saunders Pte E H West Cpl E A Wells Cpl H A Williamson Sgt R J Williams	KIA WIA KIA WIA WIA KIA WIA KIA KIA WIA WIA WIA WIA

Some soldiers were hospitalised/WIA on more than 1 occasion in this period. Some of the KIA may also have been previously recorded as being hospitalised/WIA. Such multiple occurrences are not recorded separately above.

The 15 soldiers of this group of 37 not listed above would appear not to have been hospitalised (illnesses, accidents etc), WIA or KIA in the period reviewed, although at times the service records are a little difficult to interpret.

## Chapter 8

### Extracts from the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion's Monthly War Diary

The Australian War Memorial has produced very short histories for many units, including the 12<sup>th</sup>, 51<sup>st</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalions. These are reproduced at Appendix 1. At the end of each history there is a small list of references.

For the lucky researcher someone has already written a history of the unit he or she is interested in. Such histories existed for the 12<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> Battalions when I commenced my research:

L.M. Newton, *The story of the twelfth: a record of the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion, AIF during the Great War of 1914-1918*, Swanbourne: John Burridge Military Antiques, 2000 (first published J Walsh and Sons Pty Ltd, Hobart, Tasmania 1925)

N Browning, *Fixed bayonets: the history of the 51<sup>st</sup> Battalion*, Bayswater, W.A.: Neville Browning, 2000.

Later I found a limited edition history of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion.

N Browning, *The 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion: The History of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion AIF 1916-1918*, Advance Press, Bassendean, WA, 2005

Included in the references is mention of each Battalion's 'war diary' – a diary compiled (at first in handwriting and later typed) within the headquarters of each of the Battalions.

The 52nd Battalion's diary, which I presume is representative of the other infantry battalion diaries, while only occasionally providing detail of the fortunes and misfortunes of individual soldiers, does give some idea of what life at the front was like.

As would be expected, the diaries are fairly sanitised – there is never any hint of criticism or whingeing, or much specific detail on casualties.

The following snippets have been extracted and summarised from the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion's diary and, after the May 1918 battalion amalgamations, the 51<sup>st</sup> Battalion's war diary.

One thing that comes across is the amount of material attached to each month's diary reflecting the growing complexity of the war through time, to which my brief summaries cannot do justice. Clearly bureaucracies and bureaucratic practices can flourish even under the most trying of circumstances. Readers interested in the diaries should do their own research as my summaries no doubt include errors due to difficulties at times in reading the digitalised copies.

Note: The diaries were divided into months. Not every day merited an entry. The 'headings' following the Month and Year in the summary below have been added by me to give a rough idea of what I think was happening at the time. Words in italics, brackets or Comments are my additions.

Details of individual soldiers are my summaries of their service records.

### March 1916: Reorganisation at Tel el Kebir Camp, Egypt

- 1<sup>st</sup> A draft of 11 officers and 384 ORs arrived from the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion to form the 52<sup>nd</sup> battalion. Names of officers ... (11 officers named)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> First draft of reinforcements arrive from 3<sup>rd</sup> Training Battalion at Base (*12<sup>th</sup> Bn Reinforcements*). Consisting of 3 officers and 483 ORs – men of good physique, well equipped, no arms
- 5<sup>th</sup> Lieut. Colonel M F Beevor joins to command. Transferred from 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion
- 14<sup>th</sup> 100 ORs transferred to 4<sup>th</sup> Division Field Artillery
- 16<sup>th</sup> 56 ORs transferred to Pioneers Bn 4<sup>th</sup> Aust Div
- 18<sup>th</sup> 30 ORs transferred to 13<sup>th</sup> Machine Gun Company
- 31<sup>st</sup> (0600) Commencement of route march to Serapeum, arrived MAHSAMA 11.20 am same day. Weather cool, food good. Total distance 14 miles. (1 man fell out).

Comment: During its first month the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion suffered its first death:

## Acting Corporal Frederick COLLINS Service Number 3792

Born London, joined Perth Western Australia on 28 September 1915, 34 years and 10 months old station hand, not married, NOK sister. Had previous military service with Royal Navy. TOS 12 Bn 12<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 28 October 1915 at Blackboy Hill and promoted sergeant.

AWOL Egypt (Heliopolis) 22 January 1916 'drunk in town' and reduced to Corporal. TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn 3 March 1916 as a Private. Appointed acting Corporal 10 March 1916.

Accidentally killed in a railway accident – fractured head, arm and leg - at Zagazig, Egypt near Alexandria 18 March 1916 and buried at Zagazig cemetery. Re-interred Tel-el-Kebir Military Cemetery, Egypt 4 September 1922.

### April 1916: Training at Serapeum Army Camp, Egypt

- 1<sup>st</sup> Continued route march to Moascar
- 2nd Finished route march to Serapeum Army Camp  
A further 83 OR reinforcements TOS
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Took over 120 men of 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion details (hired workers) left here when 1<sup>st</sup> Division left for France. Indifferent class.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Continued in training - elementary  
Rest on month: training at Serapeum

### May 1916 Egypt: Diary for this month not with the AWM on-line record when this research undertaken!

The following is extracted from Browning's 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion book (1)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion issued with a single Lewis Gun
- ? Scout Platoon raised – *under command of an Intelligence Officer, scouts were usually hand-picked, preference going to men who were country bred, intelligent, well-educated and first class shots. The scouts were exempt from fatigues and were detailed to carry out sniping, observing and patrolling tasks. My father told me he was a scout, but whether he was selected in the initial*

*group or later is not known. I have not seen such details in the individual service records.*

- ? Bombing (*hand grenades*) platoon formed from graduates of a short bombing course.
- May Training with emphasis on route marches, close order drill, bayonet practice and trench excavation, firing range (10 rounds per soldier), new pattern .303 rifle issued, joint battalion exercise with 51st Bn
- 16<sup>th</sup> Marched to Suez Canal defences
- 17<sup>th</sup> relieved 46<sup>th</sup> Bn at front line (*the front line in question is the Suez Canal then dividing Egypt from the Turkish held Sinai Desert*), while in front line work done on improving trenches, and on live musketry\* (.303 rifles), bomb throwing and Lewis gun practice.

\* *Now a term more associated with antique pistols and rifles*

- 27<sup>th</sup> relieved from front line by 51<sup>st</sup> Bn
- 28<sup>th</sup> Church service
- 29<sup>th</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> Brigade withdrew to railhead and relieved by British Brigade, pending 4<sup>th</sup> Division's deployment overseas

#### June 1916: Embarkation for France, trip through France

- 4<sup>th</sup> Commencement of railing 28 officers and 970 ORs to Qabbary Quay, Alexandria, Egypt and commenced boarding *HMAT Ivernia*
- 6<sup>th</sup> Finished boarding HMAT "Ivernia" (other Army units also on board). Sailed under escort 9am. The adventure begins.
- 11<sup>th</sup> Arrived Marseilles, Southern France
- 13<sup>th</sup> Two days on train to Sailby, Northern France
- 25<sup>th</sup> Started relieving 12<sup>th</sup> Bn in trenches, improving trenches etc.
- 29<sup>th</sup> '*Desultory bombardments were fired over the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion's lines and casualties were inflicted. Lance Corporal T K Knight and Private H T Parker became the first men from the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion to be killed in action.*' (2)

**Lance Corporal Tom Keith KNIGHT Service number 1111**

Born Bordertown South Australia, joined on 10 November 1914, 21 years 11 months old, salesman, 5 foot 10 inches (178 cms), no previous service, not married, NOK mother Glenelg South Australia, TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Infantry Bn Reinforcements 7 December 1914.

WIA Gallipoli 29 April 1915, GSW forearm – ulna broken, evacuated Egypt, 2 operations to remove bullet, 9 August 1915 discharged to light duties, December 1915 hospitalised enteritis, transferred to 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn from 12 Bn on 1 March 1916.

Shipped to France aboard *Ivernia* 5 June 1916, promoted L/Cpl.

KIA 29 June 1916. Buried near Armentieres, France

(He also had a brother who was killed in action.)

Their mother was granted a pension in August 1916.

**Private Harry Thornton PARKER Service number 3736**

Joined on 2 August 1915, born Pooncarria NSW, 31 years 11 months old, grazier, no previous service, not married, NOK mother (widow) Adelaide PARKER, 5 foot 8.75 inches tall (175 cms)

TOS 12 Bn 12 Reinforcements, hospitalised mumps March 1916, temporary rank of Cpl, TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn Tel el Kebir as a Private, shipped to France aboard *Ivernia* in June 1916.

WIA, died of wounds, 29 June 1916, buried France near Armentieres.

**July 1916: In the “Training Trenches” of France**

*Note: From here on in until the war’s end the 52<sup>nd</sup>’s experiences in France were basically those of trench warfare: The Battalion was either resting in rear areas from the trenches (bils and camps), or moving through the extensive network of support trenches and roads to or from the front line trenches in the*

*capacity of supply, reserve or relieving troops, or occupying a front line trench. In addition, the 52<sup>nd</sup> occupied a number of different front line sectors; it was not a case of that's our bit of the front and we go in and out of the same bit.*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Raid by 9<sup>th</sup> Bn on right flank, gas alarm
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Raid by 11<sup>th</sup> Bn who lost 4 men
- 3<sup>rd</sup> "Quiet" – cas. (casualties) 1 K (killed) 2 W (wounded)
- 5<sup>th</sup> 2 cas. German artillery
- 6<sup>th</sup> Bombardments 13 cas 2 K 11 W
- 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> quiet 1 K 1 W
- 9<sup>th</sup> 3 W
- 10<sup>th</sup> 2 K 3 W
- 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>. 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn relieved by 58<sup>th</sup> Bn, 52<sup>nd</sup> to billets, training
- 27<sup>th</sup> 38 reinforcements arrive
- 30<sup>th</sup> 'spelling' (resting) in Toutencourt

Comment: The 52<sup>nd</sup> were in the trenches for some 3 weeks on their first outing and taking the reinforcements intake of 38 as a guide, probably lost about that many troops as casualties. It needs to be remembered that for the time in the trenches there were no baths and only primitive washing and toiletry options, limited or no opportunity to change outer clothing and underwear, not much in the way of hot meals, but there were lice, fleas, rats, smells of death and the constant fear of snipers, artillery barrages and gas attacks. There was little sleep or rest, but plenty of sentry duty. And that is without the fear of charging off into no-man's land and the almost certain prospects of death, injury and failure. It needs to be remembered that supplies (basically trench building materials, sand bags, ammunition, food and water) at the trenches were carried in by support soldiers being 'spelled' from the front line (support work was not necessarily a safe detail – see below).

## August 1916: Training and Carrying

- 2<sup>nd</sup> At Harponville, general training
- 6<sup>th</sup> and after - at Brickfields (Albert), carrying and trench work
- 11<sup>th</sup> **Private A H Eagleton** \* killed by enemy shelling (3). In 9 days of support duties the 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn sustained casualties of one officer and seventy-six ORS killed or wounded, mainly from shelling. At the same time the 50<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> Bns in the front line suffered over 700 casualties (4).

- 13<sup>th</sup> To Tara Hill
- 14<sup>th</sup> To Wire Trench
- 15<sup>th</sup> Ration carrying for Brigade, attack practices, marching about etc. for rest of month
- 25<sup>th</sup> More reinforcements ORs 42 men, and details 45 men
- 30<sup>th</sup> Full parade before General Birdswood (1<sup>st</sup> Anzac Corps Commander), resting before going into action.

\* *Private Bert EAGLETON is one of the 6 men in my father's Aerodrome Camp photograph, and the first of our 70 soldiers to be killed (See Chapter 4 and Chapter 6 for service record).*

### September 1916: More than a Baptism of Fire at Mouquet Farm

- 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> at La Boiselle preparing for attack and moving into front line 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 5th, attack on Mouquet Farm. (*The short 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Australian War Memorial history at Appendix 1 states that in this attack "the 52<sup>nd</sup> had a key assaulting role and suffered heavy casualties – 50 per cent of its fighting strength" – all within just over 2 months of entering the trenches in France. Readers are referred to Major D A Lane's (acting Battalion Officer in Command) report on the Mouquet Farm attack, which forms an Appendix to the September 1916 Diary, as does the Operational Order for the attack. By my reading the report does not address the question as to why things went so horribly wrong. War Historian Bean was more forthcoming - see his commentary on the sad debacle of seven failed Allied attacks towards the capture of Mouquet Farm in Chapter 7.*)
- 5<sup>th</sup> To Albert billets, rested
- 6<sup>th</sup> To Warloy to take on strength
- 7<sup>th</sup> To Amplier
- 8<sup>th</sup> To Steenvoorde
- 9<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>: reorganising, training, football matches, inspections and presentation of medals
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Chippewa camp billets, gas and helmet training
- 24<sup>th</sup> Church parade, cable laying (communication lines), drill
- 25<sup>th</sup> Through to end of month – instruction, drills, bayonet fighting drill etc.

## October 1916: Slowly Getting Back Into an Effective Fighting Unit

- 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Training etc. Chippewa Camp
- 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> entered Spoilbank Trench area held by 16<sup>th</sup> Bn
- 10<sup>th</sup> onwards, trench warfare, some arty strafing, trench repair, wet
- 23<sup>rd</sup> relieved by UK Bn 11<sup>th</sup> Queens
- 24<sup>th</sup> refitting new uniforms and under-clothing
- 25<sup>th</sup> different camps, training and inspections

## November 1916: Filling in Time

- 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> route marching and inspections from Buighay L'Abbe to Mouflers to St Vast, equipment make-ups, church parade
- 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade stunt (*small scale attack but always incurring casualties with little, i.e. nothing, achieved*)
- 9<sup>th</sup> bussed to Vignacourt, route marches to Buire, more training and gear inspections
- 11<sup>th</sup> Brigade stunt
- 12<sup>th</sup> To Fricourt, 13<sup>th</sup> to Delville Wood, very cold. Working on shelters, working party for trenches.
- 26<sup>th</sup> Moved for support line and front line from Flers, heavy muddy trenches, men on working and carrying parties

Comment: running a Battalion is becoming more and more complex as can be seen by the 'War Intelligence Summary' report for the month. Major D A Lane is now Lieutenant Colonel.

## December 1916: Our First White Christmas

*(We seem to have a new keen Bn clerk as the typed diary gets more verbose.)*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Usual trench work, feet inspections, regular shelling  
Bn strength 23 officers 608 ORs in Bn, 6 officers 90 ORs detached
- 6<sup>th</sup> On the move, route marches, in and out of trucks
- 7<sup>th</sup> 128 on sick parade – mainly colds and feet, men went through baths and change of clothes

8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>. Wet, hot drinks for men, route marches, inspections, range practice, 70 reinforcements arrive 'quite a good lot'

17<sup>th</sup> 'entrained' for Vignacourt, 18<sup>th</sup> billets

19<sup>th</sup> TOS 63 partially trained reinforcements

20<sup>th</sup> rest of month: training, route marches, preparations for Xmas, harriers run, boxing tournament, duty Bn, church parade, Xmas dinner, Lewis Gun practice, training syllabus, kit inspections, wet – indoor training, musketry practice.

*And the never-ending business of training goes on (see Syllabus of Training for December 1916)*

As recorded in Browning's 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion A.I.F. Honour Roll (pps 261 to 275) the Battalion's deaths in France for 1916 were:

June 1916	2 deaths
July 1916	12 deaths
August 1916	15 deaths
September 1916	179 deaths (mainly arising from the attack on Mouquet Farm)
Oct/Nov/Dec 16	23 deaths – including the following 3 deaths from disease in December. Happy Xmas!

### **Pte Tasman GALLAGHER Service number 4500.**

Born Franklin Tasmania. Joined on 7 December 1915 in Tasmania, 19 year 6 months old motor mechanic. Suffered shell shock August 1916 and again in September. Hospitalised in October 1916 with 'flu. Contracted bronchitis December 1916 and died of nephritis (inflammation of the kidneys) on 6 December 1916 at No 8 General Hospital Rouen, buried France.

### **Pte David HANSEN Service number 1652.**

Born Queensland, joined on 11 October 1915, 18 year 11 months old station hand. TOS 2<sup>nd</sup> reinforcements 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn 27 September 1916. Hospitalised December 1916 France with bronchitis, died 11 December 1916 of bronco-pneumonia in No 2 General Hospital Le Havre, buried France.

The following sad letter, from his father living at Carpella, Queensland, is on Pte Hansen's file.

*"Capello  
To The Officer in Charge  
Dear Sir*

*I received the parcel with my poor boys effect and  
I thank you very (har) heartley*

*I remain  
Yours Faithfully  
C Hansen"*

**Pte Thomas Edward MANSELL** Service number 5151.

Born Ireland, joined on 25 January 1916 in Tasmania, 24 year 7 months old farm labourer from Cape Barren Island.

TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn 12 September 1916 in France. Hospitalised November 1916 with 'flu. Died 5 December 1916 of bronco-pneumonia in No 2 General Hospital, buried Le Havre France on the same day.

#### **January 1917: And so it Grinds on in the Wet and Snow**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Holiday
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Lewis Gun and live bomb practice, route march
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Marched to Rainneville and on 4<sup>th</sup> to Buire
- 5<sup>th</sup> Strength 32 off 771 ORs, foot inspection
- 6<sup>th</sup> Marched to Sydney Camp, Fricourt, very muddy and wet when off duckboard walks
- 8<sup>th</sup> Relieved 12<sup>th</sup> Bn at Banea, work on switch and gap trenches (see Operational Order 42)
- 11<sup>th</sup> Snowing again, rain, more active enemy shelling
- 12<sup>th</sup> Working parties, wet weather, shelling casualties 1 K 7 W, dugouts blown in by shells
- 16<sup>th</sup> Officers inspected front line, freezing, duck walks very slippery, usual shelling but no damage done, heavy snow

- 17<sup>th</sup> Relieved 50<sup>th</sup> Bn in A area (front line) Bullsroad, 4 inches of snow, muddy underneath (see Operational Order No. 43)
- 18<sup>th</sup> Hot stew experiment – stew sent up to line, quite hot when it reached front trench
- 19<sup>th</sup> Front line activities – work on trenches and communications lines and dugouts, barrages, changing and relieving companies, aerial activity (photographs), work difficult due to hard ground, photos show false tracks, patrolling in no-mans-land, weather freezing and difficult to work in.
- 27<sup>th</sup> Bn relieved by 49<sup>th</sup> Bn, moved to Darwin Camp, working parties for front line (see Operational Order 44)

### February 1917: Greatcoats on/greatcoats off: Junior Officer Training?

*Our Diary Clerk is becoming still more verbose – maybe it keeps him out of the cold?*

Marching, cleaning, repairing, drill, attention to equipment, clothing and health (baths and inspections). Casualties 1 K 4 W

### March 1917: Things Warming Up

- 1<sup>st</sup> and following days: Route marching Buire, Hametz, Warlencourt, Faucourt, training, church parades
- 26<sup>th</sup> Relieved 19<sup>th</sup> Bn Lagnicourt front line. 6 K 3 W during moving into front trenches
- 27<sup>th</sup> Enemy shelling
- 29<sup>th</sup> Companies interchanged, two 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenants badly shell-shocked – buried by high explosive shells. (Aside from dodging HEs other front line activities include– digging dugouts and shelters for men, elaborate practice attack involving aeroplanes, machine guns, trench mortars, and artillery support.)

### April 1917: Hindenburg Line Advances

*In February/March 1917 the Germans withdrew away from the trenches occupied in 1916 to a new, carefully prepared system of trenches called by the*

Allies the Hindenburg Line. There followed a general chasing by the Allies of the retiring Germans, who at selected points offered strong, and from the Allied perspective, costly resistance. The retreat also threw into some disarray French and British plans for their summer of 1917 attacks.

Liddell Hart (*History of the First World War, Pan Books 1970 Edition, p316*) comments on the German move as follows:

“And before it (planned Allied 1917 offensive) could begin the Germans had disrupted its foundation – by a strategic withdrawal....An absurd attempt was made to picture this as a British triumph and the fruit, even if it was a little late in garnering, of the Somme offensive. It was the fruit, but not in the sense that the British command suggested – for the method of petty limited attacks throughout the autumn had given the Germans ample opportunity to dig, literally and metaphorically, a pit for their assailants. Straightening their front by retiring to the newly build Hindenburg Line; they left the British to follow laboriously through the intervening desert which, with immense thoroughness of destruction, they had created. By nullifying the Allies preparations for attack this withdrawal restricted them to sectors on the two flanks of the evacuated areas.” And that was written by a Brit!

- 1<sup>st</sup> At Lagnicourt, heavy shelling, some casualties.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Attack to capture Norevil, snow, cas. 6 K 19 W plus two mules pulling a rations' cart killed (*oh the horrors of war!*).  
*From then on the usual shelling, marching in the snow and the wet.*
- 15<sup>th</sup> Bn resting, cas. 27/3/17 to 15/4/17 - 7 offs 250 ORs
- 16<sup>th</sup> Feet and boot inspections, hair cutting, repairs to clothing etc.  
Pay issued
- 25<sup>th</sup> Anzac Day holiday – church parade, sports afternoon, tug-of-war competition, extra ‘comforts’ (beer) issued and charged to corps funds. ‘Fine day enjoyed by all troops.’
- 27<sup>th</sup> Court of Inquiry reported on the Bn’s 95 missing soldiers – it was found that 94 were KIA (93 at Mouquet Farm) and that the other soldier was still on duty. (Presumably the bodies of the 93 killed in action were not recovered.)
- 29<sup>th</sup> Brigade church Parade, MM ribbons issued by General Birdwood, in afternoon voting in Federal Election, issue of pay, disinfection of blankets, weather fine since 20<sup>th</sup>.

## May 1917: More of the Same

- 8<sup>th</sup> Training as per Syllabus
- 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>: Divisional Rifle competition, marching and train movements
- 26<sup>th</sup> Camped after route march, Bn out-of-practice pitching tents.
- 27<sup>th</sup> Officers & senior NCOs reconnaissance of Messines Ridge
- 31<sup>st</sup> Marched to Morbecque.

## June 1917: Yet Another Major Engagement for the Summer – Messines Ridge

Strength 41 officers 914 ORs with 61 on detachment or sick.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Preparations for attack
- 6<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. Attack (see Report on Operations)
- 12<sup>th</sup> Bn out of front and billeted
- 13<sup>th</sup> Reorg, shortages made up, training etc.
- 28<sup>th</sup> **Lance Corporal Bates** killed at live bombing practice \*
- 29<sup>th</sup> Some temporary amalgamations of platoons following Brigade orders that no platoon is to have less than 38 men

Casualties 1/6/17 to 12/6/17: Officers 16 – 7 K and 9 wounded and 62 ORs killed, 244 wounded or missing.

\* **Lance Corporal Charles BATES** service number 1875.

Born Hobart Tasmania, painter, joined 11 November 1915, aged 18 yrs 7 mths, 5 foot 8.25 inches tall, NOK father. Had 8 months previous service, not married.

TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 25 March 1915, TOS Gallipoli 26 Mar 1915, hospitalised pyrexia and ‘flu. Evacuated to Egypt and in Oct 1915 to England. In March 1916 returned to Alexandria, AWL offences – 28 days detention. TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn April 1916. Boarded “Ivernia” for France June 1916, WIA France September 1916 – GSW left thigh. Hospitalised England, April 1917 attended NCO school. June 1917 returned to 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn. Accidentally killed during bombing practice 28 June 1917. Court of Enquiry – no one to blame – late explosion. Buried France. Mother granted a pension of 30/- per fortnight.

## July 1917: Now Camped at De Seule

- 4<sup>th</sup> His Majesty passed by the Camp, Bn formed along the road to greet him (*presume the troops were unarmed!*)
- 10<sup>th</sup> Enemy shelled camp with long-range 4.2 inch guns
- 11<sup>th</sup> 1 officer and 5 ORs proceeded on leave to England
- 13<sup>th</sup> Relieved 51<sup>st</sup> Bn front area
- 15<sup>th</sup> Wet and slippery, 3 K by HE (high explosive)
- 16<sup>th</sup> Enemy dropped shells around Bn HQ – no effect. Enemy artillery used new ‘mustard gas’ shells – few men slightly affected
- 19<sup>th</sup> Heavy shelling, Bn relieved and returned to old Camp De Seule, bombed by German planes – no casualties
- Training, cleaning, route marches, bathing, clothing changes, games, syllabus training (often involves specialist skills training e.g. communications)
- 30<sup>th</sup> Lecture on Venereal Disease by ADMS (*some sort of medico?*) and (*wait for it*) The Very Reverend Archdeacon Ward. Lecture to officers on contacting aeroplanes.

(Just to recap, the Diary entries are becoming more comprehensive, with reams of Appendixes such as routine orders and training syllabi. I am mentioning only some of the entries, trying in part to quote ‘new topics’ not previously seen.)

## August 1917: Berquin Area No. 1

- Heavy rains early in month, route marches, training, games, working parties, salvaging
- 16<sup>th</sup> Bn bathed at Lindenhoek and issued with clean clothes
- 18<sup>th</sup> Capt. Arnott killed at Wytschaete
- 21<sup>st</sup> 22<sup>nd</sup> Getting ready to relieve front line, 1 K 7 W (*artillery?*)
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Trench work, artillery and machine gun exchanges
- 26<sup>th</sup> Attempted enemy raid – artillery and aerial bombing
- 27<sup>th</sup> Difficult to improve trenches, new work floods
- 29<sup>th</sup> 52 Bn relieved by 17<sup>th</sup> Bn Manchester Regiment
- 30<sup>th</sup> Usual post-line activities – baths, cleaning, pay, marching to billets

## September 1917: Bureaucracy on the Rise: 45 pages of Diary

- 1<sup>st</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> Route march from Aldershot Camp then training etc.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Recce of forward area Westhoek Ridge
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Bn to front line, Bn HQ in concrete 'pill box' at Garter Point, night patrolling (*no man's land*) 6 K 15 W
- 24<sup>th</sup> Fog, some prisoners taken as prisoners
- 27<sup>th</sup> Moved from trenches to bivouac huts, baths, pay
- 30<sup>th</sup> Marched to (*another camp*), all ranks bathed and clean shirts and socks issued
- 30<sup>th</sup> Bn strength statement for month includes:  
3 officers W, 21 ORs K, 76 ORs W, 5 ORs missing, 14 ORs to detention, and 53 ORS in hospital sick.

Attached to the Diary are various papers and reports, for example, training syllabi, Operational Orders, attack plans and notes, Brigade attack orders, signalling instructions, maps, secret instructions, Table of Moves for attack, Preliminary Instructions for attack, attack message form, Bn strength.

## October 1917: Another Bad Month for Casualties

- 1<sup>st</sup> Strength 35 officers 799 ORs including detached, Bn engaged in usual out-of-line activities
- 9<sup>th</sup> Concert in evening
- 10<sup>th</sup> route marches and train to Ypres and issued with extra ammunition, bombs and tools. Moved to forward area Menin Road and occupied reserve trenches, with 49<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> in front line and 50<sup>th</sup> in support trenches.
- 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>: Working and carrying parties, some heavy rain and hail, heavy enemy shelling
- 14<sup>th</sup> relieved 51<sup>st</sup> at front line in evening with B and C companies in front line, A coy in support and D coy in reserve
- 15<sup>th</sup> heavy shelling 8 ORs K & 12 W, on 17<sup>th</sup> 4 K & 28 W
- 18<sup>th</sup> enemy adopted spasmodic shelling tactic, anywhere any time. ORS – 9 K 19 W 3 missing 6 gassed
- 19<sup>th</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut HWJ Boucher wounded by shellfire (*this soldier one of our 11th reinforcement soldiers in 'the meal photo' – he had only been TOS with the 52<sup>nd</sup> this month*). 52<sup>nd</sup> relieved by 45<sup>th</sup> Bn and

moved to Ypres where bivouacked in Infantry Barracks. OR casualties 3 K 10 W 1 gasses and 1 missing

20<sup>th</sup> cleaning and resting

21<sup>st</sup> route march, shelled 7 K 3 W

22<sup>nd</sup> Bathing, cleaning equipment clothing etc. 'A large number suffering from colds and coughs, also loss of voice apparently from effects of gas.' 28 ORs hospitalised due to gas

23<sup>rd</sup> to end on month - usual out of line activities

31<sup>st</sup> clipping of horses and mules, horse rug issued to each horse clipped. Concert in evening in YMCA tent.

Strength at 31 October 1917: 39 officers 690 ORs, in month 1 officer K & 6 W. ORs 37 K 141, W 3 missing, 70 hospitalised.

### November 1917: A Month in Which No One Gets Shot or Blown Up – How can you run a war this way?

Whole month spent on behind the line activities such as route marches (on 9 separate days!), church parades, training, inspections, and sport. Bn ended up at Feuquieres-en-Vimeu.

Bn strength at 30 November 1917 44 officers and 838 ORs, including 14 ORs who returned from detention and 143 reinforcements and reliefs, less 9 ORs sent to prison and 54 laid-up in hospital. No casualties.

### December 1917: Another Cold Month of No Casualties. Happy Xmas

1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>, route marching, training, inspections

8<sup>th</sup> Earth walls built around tents as protection from splinters from enemy aeroplane bombs

11<sup>th</sup> Warning to be ready to 'move forward'  
Voting for Military Service Referendum \* – 674 voted

(\* *Vote for or against conscription: both this and the first referendum in October 1916 were rejected by narrow margins, although it is said the Australian soldiers in France were strongly opposed to conscription and voted accordingly.*)

13<sup>th</sup> Lewis Guns mounted for defence against enemy aircraft.  
 Football match against 51st Bn (*pussies*) which the 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn won by 4 points. (*Go Team!*)

14<sup>th</sup> Debate at YMCA Tent (*Young Men's Christian Association*)  
 "Is Australia Excessively Addicted to Sport", 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn argued the negative and 'secured the referee's verdict'.

15<sup>th</sup> Bathing parades, working parties, sport

17<sup>th</sup> Snow – training suspended. Snow clearing by party of 6 officers and 300 ORs. (*Some party!*)

20<sup>th</sup> Marched to Moislains

25<sup>th</sup> Christmas Day – voluntary church parades, Bn dinner for officers, ORs had company dinners. Gifts of socks and cigarettes etc. distributed to the men.

26<sup>th</sup> Manoeuvres in preparation for Brigade stunt (*small scale attack in which some unlucky ORs are always killed*)

28<sup>th</sup> Training stunt

29<sup>th</sup> Officers attended sanitary demonstration (*I won't comment*)

30<sup>th</sup> Church parade and recreation

31<sup>st</sup> "The Battalion bathed today." Soccer match against 49<sup>th</sup> Bn who won 4 goals to 2.

Bn strength at 31/12/17: 46 officers, 838 ORs including 79 TOS from hospital less 72 admitted to hospital. No K or W

### January 1918: Miserable Winter Conditions

1<sup>st</sup> At York Camp, Moislains, sports, enemy planes bombed in vicinity, enemy plane brought down, 2 prisoners taken

2<sup>nd</sup> Soccer match against 49<sup>th</sup> Bn. Lost (*again!*) 3 to 1

6<sup>th</sup> Church Parade RCs 9.15 am, C of Es 11.15am. Special prayers of intercession for peace (*nothing else seems to work*)

7<sup>th</sup> cold and frosty, 4<sup>th</sup> Division Concert Troop gave a performance at night

8<sup>th</sup> snow and wind, draughty huts, men suffering colds

9<sup>th</sup> marched to train station, roads extremely slippery, many falls

10<sup>th</sup> 11<sup>th</sup>, eventually arrived at Courte Croix

12<sup>th</sup> moved to Parret Camp, constructed earth works around huts to prevent bomb damage, camp work, cold conditions

17<sup>th</sup> preparation to relieve 46 Bn in line, working parties in forward areas

Strength 31 January 1918: 45 officers 773 OR's, The OR decrease included 54 hospitalised, 2 to prison and 4 to detention, 3 W and 1 transferred to the Australian Corps Salvage Company (*waste not want not*).

### February 1918: No one Killed

1<sup>st</sup> At Ridgewood Camp, all men on working parties. 'The rum issue was reduced considerably today, only men on night work received an issue.' (*again, war is hell etc.*)

7<sup>th</sup> Officers attended lecture on 'Employment of Tanks'

8<sup>th</sup> marched to Spoilbank, working parties to 17<sup>th</sup> and preparations to take-over line

18<sup>th</sup> relieved 51<sup>st</sup> Bn. Quiet, no casualties, some shelling and machine gun fire

23<sup>rd</sup> a supply of daily newspapers arranged to go to front line each day, also soup powders, cocoa, tommy cookers and cigarettes from the Australian Comforts Fund, in addition to their normal rations

25<sup>th</sup> MG and arty exchanges

26<sup>th</sup> No Man's Land (NML) patrols; moved to within 10 yards (*old speak for about 9 metres*) of enemy wire – 6 foot high 4 foot wide with concertina wire in centre, staked. (*Each day there is patrolling in NML and blowing up or capturing armaments – especially the much feared flammenwerfers – flame throwers.*)

28<sup>th</sup> Bn relieved strength: 49 officers 829 ORs 53 hospital 14 W

## March 1918: Shits are Trumps as the Germans Have Another Go

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn transferred by light rail to Loker in Belgium and met by a pipe band
- 2<sup>nd</sup> usual just out of trenches activities, weather bad
- 3<sup>rd</sup> reading and writing established at YMCA, quoits, cards, dominoes and cigarettes place in recreation room
- 4<sup>th</sup> ORs eating well: breakfast bacon and tea, midday meal vegetable stew, evening meal potato pie and tea, all with full issue of bread, jam, butter and cheese, training and sports.
- 24<sup>th</sup> Bn about to proceed to forward area, working parties
- 25<sup>th</sup> big move, whole Brigade on 200 buses and motor lorries, to Monchiet.
- 26<sup>th</sup> enemy advancing in heavy masses on a front from approximately Arras to Noyon. Word received Germans had achieved breakthroughs at ?? Bn marched/moved to Buire.
- 27<sup>th</sup> Moved about all day in response to confusing orders. Took up defensive position on Henencourt to Millencourt line. Some shelling, 13<sup>th</sup> Brigade in reserve with 12<sup>th</sup> Brigade in line
- 29<sup>th</sup> heavy rain, much forward line activity, Bn in support of 51<sup>st</sup> Bn in line between Buire and Dernancourt.

## April 1918: Heavy Fighting and End of the Red Baron. More heavy fighting - Villers Bretonneux

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn between Buire and Lavieville in support of 51<sup>st</sup>, relieved 51<sup>st</sup> night of 3/4th
- 4<sup>th</sup> Enemy expected to make large-scale attack
- 5<sup>th</sup> Enemy attacked in force, fight lasted all day but completely unsuccessful. 2 officers & 32 ORs killed, 4 officers & 119 ORs wounded, 10 ORs missing.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Bn sector quiet, no further offensive, line further consolidated, relieved by 50<sup>th</sup> Bn. It was a wet, cold and dark night.
- 7<sup>th</sup> enemy aeroplanes very active, dropped bombs, Bn engaged in post-line activities in billets at La Neuville, Bn in support
- 14<sup>th</sup> Bn relieved by 49<sup>th</sup> 2 ORs K & 2 W (both died of wounds)
- 15<sup>th</sup> exceptionally cold weather, shelling with HE and gas
- 21<sup>st</sup> Much in-air activity: "Hun planes very active. One, manned by Captain Baron Richthofen flew very low over our HQ in Vaux and

followed one of our planes almost to the ground. He was shot down by the 24<sup>th</sup> Machine Gun Company in J.19.d. (map ref \*)". Bn moved from Vaux to Bonnay.

*\* Bean has a fair bit to say about the competing Aust/Brit/Canadian claims as to who killed the Red Baron (see pages 363 to 701, where my father even gets a mention as a witness), but the most logical culprit was an Australian Vicker's Gun fired by Sergeant Cedric Basset POPKIN of the 24<sup>th</sup> Australian Machine Gun Company. Go Poppy!*

- 22<sup>nd</sup> Moved to Pont Noyelles
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Re-org and clean up. Lewis Gunners paraded in afternoon.
- 27<sup>th</sup> start of move to reserve trench
- 28<sup>th</sup> liaison established with French Moroccan Division on Bn's right. Bn intelligence officer bought in two German prisoners whom he captured in a cellar in Villers-Brettoneux (*probably the most famous place name to Australians from WW1, after Gallipoli*).
- 30<sup>th</sup> Summary of Evidence on two captured Germans who entered Allied lines under white flag of truce – Germans to be 'trialed' by Court Martial later in the week (i.e. we thought they were spies).

Appendices Part 1 (Many, many detailed pages)  
Casualties 5/4/18 during Dernancourt operations

K: 1 officer and 32 ORs  
W: 1 officer (died of wounds) and 119 ORs  
Missing: 1 OR

Appendices Part 2 (112 pages of reports, maps, signals etc.)  
Casualties 25/4/18

K: 2 officers 46 ORs  
W: 10 officers. 181 ORs (1 died of wounds)  
Missing: ORs 10

Appendices Part 3 (70 pages)  
Strength 30/4/18: 33 officers & 631 ORs. In addition 55 ORs hospitalised.

**May 1918: (Diary in handwriting, hard to read –and a sad emotional month with the breaking-up of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion)**

1<sup>st</sup> Companies in Aubigny reserve trench system west of Villers-Bretonneux, much detail of officer movements and command, working parties and the weather  
heavy use of Allied artillery

16<sup>th</sup> 'warm sunny weather – Australian weather for the last day of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion in the field' (despite some *initial rumblings, threats of mutiny and refusals to obey orders* a number of Battalions were disbanded and the survivors allocated to remaining Battalions to make up for losses that could no longer be made-up by dwindling numbers of reinforcement troops).

The men were urged to do as well in their new units as they had done in their old – 52<sup>nd</sup> marched under a pipe band to the 49<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> or 51<sup>st</sup> Bns on a State by State (of enlistment) basis. One Appendix indicates there were only 34 surviving West.

*Australians in the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, all of whom went to the 51<sup>st</sup> Bn, a Western Australians only Battalion.*

Appendices (91 pages) of handwritten patrol reports, maps, signals etc. and various operational orders.

Casualties and sick evacuations 3 to 15 May 1918: K 2 ORs, W 14 ORs, gassed 35 ORs, 32 ORs to hospital.

So ended the 52nd Battalion.

The rest of this Chapter provides extracts from the War Diary of the 51st Bn (the primarily all West. Australian Battalion).

**16 May 1918: The New Home**

16<sup>th</sup> 9 officers and 189 ORs taken on strength from 52 Bn, usual re-orgs, inspections, training, bathing, sports plus decontamination of blankets

30<sup>th</sup> officers' recee of front line held by 32<sup>nd</sup> Bn

Strength 15<sup>th</sup> May 1918: 29 off 560 ORs and at 31 May 1918: 39 officers, 734 ORs. Casualties of 51<sup>st</sup> for month, 2 Off W (1 died), 20 ORs W 2 K and 3 gassed.

### June 1918: Good Sign - Fine Weather all Month

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn moved to trenches Laneuville – Bonnay and relieved 32<sup>nd</sup>
- 2<sup>nd</sup> worked on trenches, some POWs taken, light shelling
- 8<sup>th</sup> gas and HE shell attack
- 10<sup>th</sup> attacked German front line with some success, result -officers 1 K, ORs 7 K and 22 W
- 16<sup>th</sup> Bn relieved by 48<sup>th</sup>, Rest on month cable laying, working parties, bathing etc.
- 30<sup>th</sup> Bn strength 34 officers, 738 ORs, K 8 W 57 including 10 gassed

### July 1918: What War?

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn at Hamelet, reserve trenches
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn relieved by 43 rd.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn at Daours resting, training etc.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Bn West of Hamel, working parties, training, church parades
- 11<sup>th</sup> Bn relieved
- 16<sup>th</sup> 2 officers & 50 OR's given leave to visit Village of St. Oven
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Holiday for 4<sup>th</sup> Division. Race meeting using Bn horses.

Races included

- Pozieres Stakes
- 'Quandong'
- Mouquet Farm Plate
- Dernancourt Flutter

*(Carlyon, p 647, says some 11,000 of various ranks and nationalities attended the meeting, and that two officers fell and were killed in the first race, but this was kept from the crowd.)*

31<sup>st</sup> Order to relieve 332th Regt French Infantry at Domart-Sur-La-Luce Sector. Strength 40 offs & 789 ORs, no casualties.

But the 'Diet-Sheet' seems to show the boys are eating well, with none of that European garlic or croissants stuff.

## August 1918: Some German Resistance

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn at Glisy making ready to move to front line, relief of French troops completed.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> scattered artillery
- 4<sup>th</sup> enemy mounted evening attack and succeeded in penetrating Bn position K 20 ORs, W 3 off & 11 ORs, missing 6 ORs
- 5<sup>th</sup> Canadian Officers reconnoitring Bn sector, night patrols no-mans-land
- 7<sup>th</sup> Bn relieved by 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> Inf Bde
- 8<sup>th</sup> billets at Longeau
- 9<sup>th</sup> marched to Morcourt and relieved 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn holding Canal defences at Chipilly. Patrolled Somme Canal – no enemy seen
- 10<sup>th</sup> Bn in support of 49<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> attack to clear Village of Etinehen
- 13<sup>th</sup> Relieved from front line
- 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> – usual out of line activities and salvaging and dugout work, recees
- 19<sup>th</sup> marched to reserve position
- 24<sup>th</sup> relieved from reserve by French, moved to billets at Rivery, attention to equipment and training
- 31<sup>st</sup> strength 49 officers 810 ORs, 55 evacuated to hospital in month (18 with 'flu), casualties 6 K 57 W 6 missing.

Influenza: Bean is probably not the best source on information on the 'flu outbreaks of 1918 but this is how he saw it when writing in the 1920s and early 1930s (vol 6). "An epidemic of flu, apparently coming from Spain, affected both sides from the end of May 1918 onwards. With the Germans feeling the effects a little before the Allies. By mid-June 1918 Spanish "flu was raging" ... this was not the severe form of pneumonic influenza, which supervened at the end of summer, but a feverish disturbance, acute for a few days and then quickly passing." (p399)

Writing about the initially slow rate of homeward bound troops in December 1918 Bean has this to say: *"In the early stages, indeed, it was difficult to fill the ships; but the deadly epidemic of pneumonic influenza that followed the milder epidemic of the summer was then at its height and the medical authorities agreed upon a wider spacing of hammocks."* (p 1060). Later he says: *"The greatest strain on the discipline of the (returning) force actually came when transports reached Australia and, sometimes through the detection of a single case of influenza, were quarantined although the epidemic was already beginning to spread through-out the country. It is said that by delaying the epidemic the quarantine probably saved Australia a heavy toll of life."* (p 1073).

The deadly epidemic is reputed to have killed some 20 million people or more than those killed in the war (some say between 20 million and 40 million) world-wide, with 12,000 deaths in Australia. It seems to be accepted that returning servicemen brought the disease back with them to Australia and New Zealand. This would seem logical as the only way to get to Australia was by boat and available shipping, especially passenger shipping, had been requisitioned for the war effort.

### September 1918: Finally the Upper hand

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn at Rivery
- 9<sup>th</sup> relieved 54<sup>th</sup> in support area
- 10<sup>th</sup> relieved 31<sup>st</sup> in front line
- 14<sup>th</sup> relieved by 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn Welsh Regt
- 15<sup>th</sup> advanced 500 yards into enemy line, captured equipment, prisoners, machine gun and trench mortars
- 16<sup>th</sup> relieved from front line by 48 Bn – moved to Poeuilly
- 18<sup>th</sup> Bn moved forward and occupied old front line
- 24<sup>th</sup> billets at Guynenicourt
- 30<sup>th</sup> strength 44 officers 765 ORs, W 2 offs 54 ORs 1 gassed, K 7 ORs, German prisoners 2 off 64 ORs (6 W)

*Plus we seem in danger of winning the war: See Intelligence Report 7<sup>th</sup> – enemy is retiring across the Australian front line*

## October 1918: No casualties, Athletics Carnival and Horse Gymkhana

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn at Guie – Nemicourt, training and route marching
- 5<sup>th</sup> Bn athletics to choose reps for 13<sup>th</sup> Brigades sports day
- 8<sup>th</sup> commenced building concert hut
- 9<sup>th</sup> sports day. Bn got highest aggregate points. *Events 100, 220, 440 yards, 120 yards hurdles, high jump, tug of war, cooks' race, kicking football, rifle grenade lobbing, 3 legged race, throwing hand grenades, band race, mule race 3 and 5 furlongs – plus all sorts of horsey things in the gymkhana plus bookies for the punters.*
- rest of month marching, training etc., no front line duties
- 31<sup>st</sup> strength 40 Offs & 811 ORs, no casualties

Appendices: there was a serious look in the Battalion at the AIF Education Service – designed to educate troops, subjects include maths, shorthand, French, chemistry, electricity, iron moulding, dairying, pigs poultry and bees, music, correspondence, farming, social problems, blacksmithing and architecture (Bn committee formed to identify instructors, accommodation, texts, supplies etc.). Classes in math, history, geography, French, shorthand and English commenced on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

## November 1918: Armistice

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn at Guic – Nemicourt
- 2<sup>nd</sup> sweep of surrounding villages for absentees, football match in afternoon
- 4<sup>th</sup> dental inspection all ranks, 4<sup>th</sup> Division boxing tournament  
*(Good for the teeth)*
- 5<sup>th</sup> heavy rain, confined to billets
- 10<sup>th</sup> marched to St Quentin
- 11<sup>th</sup> train to billets at Roisel

*'afternoon rumour that Germany had agreed to the terms of Armistice & had signed them at 11am on 11<sup>th</sup> but it was not until 3pm that definite news was obtained from a passing Dispatch Rider who had a copy of the 'Daily News' which contained the news & terms ..... it is interesting to note that no official notification was received by the Bn regarding the Armistice.'*

- 13<sup>th</sup> new billets, 14<sup>th</sup> at Fresnet-La-Grand. (*from here on marching, sport, bathing, discussions on moving troops towards Rhine with route marches almost every day*)
- 22<sup>nd</sup> marched to Pauril – first village Bn has seen not damaged by shell-fire, 27<sup>th</sup> to Siury
- 30<sup>th</sup> strength 46 off 767 ORs, sick evacuations 107 including 56 'flu and 11 VD (*where there's a willy there's a way!*)

Appendices include education test results

### December 1918: Education and Route Marching - Tourists

- 1<sup>st</sup> From Dargines to Peronne 7<sup>th</sup>, to Etricourt 8<sup>th</sup>, to Templeux-La-Fosse 9<sup>th</sup>, to Moislans 21st
- 31<sup>st</sup> salvage parties, clearing roads of snow

### January 1919: Education and Starting to go Home

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn at Bouvignies (all month, filled in the days with sport and recreation, education classes, cross-country activities, lectures e.g. 'Egypt: Its People, Customs and Religions'. (*riveting stuff*). Weather cold, snow
- 31<sup>st</sup> strength down to 45 officers 490 ORs after repartitions

### February 1919: Marking Time

- 1<sup>st</sup> still at Bouvignies.

*To make up men being repatriated home and demobilised companies combined, much sport, recreation, cleaning and education classes. Most daily reports are about the old standby - the weather!*

- 28<sup>th</sup> strength 45 offs 490 ORs

## March 1919: Becoming Bad Neighbours

1<sup>st</sup> Bn still at Bouvignes  
9<sup>th</sup> new billets at Denee and Le Roux  
30<sup>th</sup> 6 officers and 95 ORs marched out with No. 25 Quota (*units were given quotas for selecting and sending men home in batches*) en route for Australia  
31<sup>st</sup> 49<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> Bns amalgamated, strength 33 officers 352 ORs

And, as detailed in an Annexure, some bastards (sorry poor cold ORs) had been pinching wood for fires, resulting in claims of recompense from the locals! To handle the claims the Adjutant set up the following claims processing procedure, a process worthy of any public servant:

1. 51<sup>st</sup> Bn Claims Commission (CC) of 7 members established
2. CC to inspect all billets to note any damage inflicted by 51<sup>st</sup> Bn and damage which occurred prior to the 51<sup>st</sup>'s occupation (*too many shonky claims?*)
3. Inventory to be made of all timber in triplicate to be signed by owner and the particular Company occupying the billet
4. CC to make further inspections 3 times a week, with wood losses to be investigated
5. CC to prepare investigation reports for Adjutant; if loss can be pinned on a soldier he will pay the loss and be severely dealt with by the C.O.
6. If a claim is submitted outside the process of inspections the CC will bear the responsibility for the claim
7. All reports of inspections to be with Adjutant before 0900 hours the day following inspection
8. All claims for damage or loss to be investigated by at least 5 of the 7 members of the CC.

The men must have pissed themselves laughing.

## April 1919: Why Are We Waiting?

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn at Le Roux – usual inspections, rifle competitions, lectures, medical examinations, sport, equipment checks
- 10<sup>th</sup> 5 horses and 21 mules sold at horse sale
- 12<sup>th</sup> arrangements made with local coal mine for fuel for hot water and showers
- 13<sup>th</sup> “Going Home” quota 35: 11 officers and 11 ORs head home
- 17<sup>th</sup> farewell dinner for 4<sup>th</sup> Division officers
- 21<sup>st</sup> quota 40: 1 officer and 16 ORs go home
- 25<sup>th</sup> ‘Anzac Day’ dinner
- 30<sup>th</sup> strength 16 officers and 137 ORs

And Major-General E G Sinclair MacLagan says goodbye (see end of Chapter).

## May 1919: Finally Going Home

- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn at Aiseau, town of Charle Roi placed out of bounds in case of any May Day civilian demonstration
- 10<sup>th</sup> remainder of 13<sup>th</sup> AIF Brigade marched to Charle Roi to join 52 quota for demobilisation – 51 officers and 119 ORs

“The only members of the Battalion who did not march out with it were 6 o/ranks who have been absent for some time.”

“This being the final stage of the 51<sup>st</sup> Battalion as a Field Unit in this campaign this Diary is the last one to be written.”

“It is hoped that the memories, traditions and spirit of the Battalion built up by the hard fighting, strenuous work and sacrifice of its members in France and Belgium will be cherished and maintained by the 51<sup>st</sup> Aust. Inf. Regt. in Western Australia – R Christie, Lieut. Col. C.O. 51<sup>st</sup> Battalion.

Closed 10 May 1919.”

## After-thoughts

By my reckoning the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, and between 1 March 1916 and 11 November 1918, the 51<sup>st</sup> Bn, had been deployed as follows:

1.	From 1 March 1916, training in Egypt and getting to the trenches in France	111 days
2.	In the frontline trenches France and Belgium	179 days
3.	Rear trenches, rear areas, working parties, route-marching	358 days
4.	Rear areas, billets etc.	335 days

This is not to devalue the additional service of the 'Originals' from the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion and all the 12<sup>th</sup> Bn Reinforcements who had done time at Gallipoli and/or Egypt before the formation of the 51<sup>st</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalions.

There is some guessing involved in deciding what is a rear trench area and a safe rear area when reading the Diaries. Clearly the rear areas directly behind the trenches could be hit by artillery and were so. These areas also would have had few buildings or established army camps, and no bathing or washing facilities.

The furthest rear areas were safe from 'normal' artillery bombardment, but not from aeroplane bombing and very long-range large guns. Troops would be housed in French buildings (bils) or permanent allied camps, and could hold sporting events and be entertained.

Taking as a starting time the 20<sup>th</sup> of June 1916 when the 52<sup>nd</sup> relieved the 12<sup>th</sup> Bn in a quiet trench and going through to Armistice Day, I estimate the 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn (and later 51<sup>st</sup> Bn) was deployed for:

- 179 days (21%) in frontline areas,
- 358 days (41%) in the rear trench areas, and
- 335 days (38%) in rear billet/camp areas.

## Endnotes

1. N Browning, "The 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion: The History of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion AIF 1916-1918", Advance Press, Bassendean, WA, 2005, pps 18-20.
2. Browning p 24.
3. Browning p 36
4. Browning p 38.



From the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial list of No Known Graves

51st Battalion, A.I.F.

EDUCATION SERVICE.  
REPORT FOR WEEK ENDINGS 3/1919-FORWARDED 8/3/1919  
EDUCATION OFFICER LT.R.A.JOHNSTONE.AVERAGE RATION STRENGTH FOR WEEK-348- TOTAL ENROLMENT IN CLASSES-143-  
% OF RATION STRENGTH-45%AVERAGE ATTENDANCE-70-  
% OF RATION STRENGTH-22%

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TOTAL ENROLMENT HAS INCREASED BY-9-DURING WEEK.  
NEW CLASSES FORMED DURING WEEK-NIL-  
CLASSES DISBANDED DURING WEEK-NIL-

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE HAS DECREASED BY-4-

CLASSES BY OPERATION	ENROL MENT	AVERAGE ATTENDANCE	PER CENT	NAMES OF INSTRUCTORS	CLASSES CONTEMPLATED	ENROL MENT	REMARKS
ARITHMETIC	7	1	14%	LT.L.R.CHARLTON			
ALGEBRA	4	1	25%	LT.L.R.CHARLTON			
FRENCH	15	9	60%	LT.F.WHARMOND			
FRENCH(ADVANCED)	5	5	100%	LT.F.WHARMOND			
ENGLISH	8	1	12.5%	LT.L.R.CHARLTON			
SPECIAL CLASS	2	1	50%	LT.R.A.WOOD			
BOOKKEEPING	12	4	33%	LT.R.A.WOOD			
SHORTHAND	6	5	83%	SGT.J.FOX			
CORRESPONDENCE	7	5	71%	SGT.J.FOX			
BOOTMAKING	5	3	60%	PTE.A.C.MARTIN			
LOJO CLASS	10	6	60%	PTE.R.MORE			
FARRIERY	12	(No class, Inst. on Leave)		DVR.J.MCCRORY			
CA. PENTRY	12	9	75%				
FITTING & TURNING	2	2	100%				
MECHANICAL DRAWING	1	1	100%				
APPLIED MECHANICS	9	6	66%				
MOTOR ENGINEERING	12	8	66%				
FRUITGROWING	3	1	33%				
WOOLCLASSING	8	6	75%				
GARF & BREEDING	3	1	33%				
OF STOOGHEART & WHEAT & CEREAL CULTURES							

*R.A.Johnstone Jr.*  
Education Officer,  
51st Battalion, A.I.F.

FOURTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

XII

Headquarters, Gépinnes, Belgium.  
19th April, 1919.

S P E C I A L   O R D E R .

by

Major-General E.G. SINCLAIR MACLAGAN CB. DSO.

C O M M A N D I N G

On relinquishing command of the Fourth Australian Division I desire to convey to all ranks my deep gratitude for, and appreciation of, their loyal, gallant and devoted service for AUSTRALIA and the EMPIRE.

To the Staffs and Commanders of all formations I am deeply indebted for their cheerful, loyal and able co-operation and assistance given often under conditions of utmost strain and difficulty, but never with-held.

The Division achieved success from its first entry into Battle under the most severe conditions in July 1916 at POZIERES and MOQUET FARM.

From that time until the Armistice its record is one of almost continuous and toil - NOREUIL, BULLECOURT, MESSINES, PASSCHENDAEL RIDGE, HEPUTERNE, DERNANCOURT, VILLERS BRETONNEUX" HAMEL" BATTLE OF AMIENS (8th AUGUST 1918) and following weeks, culminating in the glorious action of 18th SEPTEMBER in the capture of the HINDENBERG OUTPOST LINE by the FIRST and FOURTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISIONS, recall the more prominent actions taken part in by the Division and of which it has every reason to be proud.

The fact that the FOURTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION was classed by our enemy as a first class "STORM DIVISION" soon after its appearance on the battlefields of BELGIUM and FRANCE, is convincing testimony as to its weight in the Battlefield.

The extraordinary gallantry, resource and initiative of all ranks under the ever varying conditions of ground and climatic conditions, the skilful and careful work of Staffs and Commanders of all formations - together with the dogged resolution and perseverance, the loyal unselfish co-operation of individuals and units of all arms and services - enabled on occasions even the "apparently impossible" to be successfully accomplished.

All honor to our gallant comrades who have fallen and to whom we owe so much of our success. May everlasting happiness be theirs.

To all members of the Division I tender my best wishes for your future - May you each and every one reap a full reward for work truly and nobly done during the war. May you continue as citizens in peace that great hearted unselfish devotion to the community and your country which you have shown during the last four years.

GOODBYE - GOOD LUCK - BON VOYAGE - and a HAPPY REUNION in your BELOVED AUSTRALIA.

(signed) E.G. Sinclair MacLagan,

Major-General,

Commanding FOURTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION.

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51st. Battalion,  
10th. March, 1919.

Company Circular Memo No. 32.

During the period the Battalion was stationed at BOUVIGNES a large number of "Claims" were submitted by the residents for damages done and burning of wood, by members of this Battalion.

In almost every case the claim was justified and in consequence was assessed against the unit.

In most cases it was not possible to place the blame on individuals concerned and the Battalion funds had to be used to pay the amounts assessed, as this fund is for the benefit of all the members of the 51st. Battalion, it is not quite the right spirit for a few careless individuals of the Battalion, who commit the unpardonable crime of damaging or using material that does not belong to them, to expect the Battalion funds to be used to pay for their carelessness.

To avoid unnecessary claims and to place the responsibility on the individual concerned, the following will be appointed a "Claims Commission" in the Battalion. 1 Officer Battalion Claims Officer, 1 Officer, ~~10~~ <sup>rank</sup> 1 O/Rank from each Company and Headquarters, total 7 and commencing 10th. March 1919, they will with the owner inspect all billets occupied by the Battalion and the area adjacent thereto and note any damage to property and crops, which occurred prior to arrival of the Battalion in the area. Where any damage has taken place it will be pointed out to the owner and all responsibility by this unit denied.

An inventory will be made of all timber( description to be given or approx. number of feet) broken windows or any other damage in the billets and area occupied, also the general condition of such billets.

The above inventory will be made out in triplicate and signed by the owner and company claim's representatives, as correct. One copy to be handed to the owner and one to the Adjutant, and one will be retained by companies. After the above inspection has been completed the "Claims Commission" will make similar inspections on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday of each week, when the original inventory will be checked and should any damage have been committed or any articles in the billets be not accounted for, the case will be thoroughly investigated and a report rendered at once to the Adjutant, detailing the damage or loss and assessing claim. Should any member of the Battalion be found responsible for such damage or loss, he will pay the amount claimed and in addition will be severely dealt with by the C.O.

Should a claim be submitted subsequent to above periodical inspections, which it was their duty to have noted and reported, the responsibility of the claim will be borne by the "Claims Commission" unless a very satisfactory explanation can be given, as to the failure in reporting same.

Inspection and all other reports will be handed to the Adjutant before 0900 hours on the day following each inspection.

Company representatives will inspect and report on their own Company areas, but all damage or loss reported or claims lodged will be investigated by at least 5 of the 7 members of the "Claims Commission".

*L.R. Oberholser*  
Lieut. &  
Adjutant, 51st. Battalion.



EDUCATION TIMETABLE.

BATTALION CLASSES

*aff 1*

MONDAY	0930-1030	SHORTHAND	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	0930-1030	FRENCH "B"	Recreation Room.
	1030-1130	CORRESPONDENCE	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1000-1100	FARRIERY	Engineering Shop.
	1000-1100	LOCO CLASS	Recreation Room.
	1300-1400	BOOKKEEPING "A"	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1400-1500	BOOKKEEPING "B"	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1400-1500	ARITHMETIC	Recreation Room.
TUESDAY	0930-1030	FRENCH "A"	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1000-1100	BOOTMAKING	Bootmakers Shop.
	1030-1130	ENGLISH	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1300-1400	ALGEBRA	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1400-1500	SCIENCE	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
THURSDAY	0930-1030	SHORTHAND	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	0930-1030	FRENCH "B"	Recreation Room.
	1030-1130	CORRESPONDENCE	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1000-1100	FARRIERY	Engineering Shop.
	1300-1400	BOOKKEEPING "A"	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1400-1500	BOOKKEEPING "B"	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1400-1500	ARITHMETIC	Recreation Room.
FRIDAY	0930-1030	FRENCH "A"	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1000-1100	BOOTMAKING	Bootmaking Shop.
	1030-1130	ENGLISH	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1300-1400	SCIENCE	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.
	1300-1400	LOCO CLASS	Recreation Room.
	1400-1500	ALGEBRA	"A" Coys. Schoolroom.

Loco Class parade as under at B.O.R. in order to visit the Railway Yards in DINANT.

MONDAY 1230.  
THURSDAY 1230.

31st January 1919.

*R.A. Johnstone.* Lieutenant.  
E/0.51st Battalion. A.I.F.

## APPENDIX

CIVIL XIV

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51st. Battalion, A.I.F.

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Sick Evacuations for month ending 30th.

November 1918

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Tonsilitis	1
Influenza	56
Pleurisy	4
V.D.	11
Keratitis	1
X Ray exam	1
Septic Wounds	4
Old Wounds	1
Synovitis	3
Piles	1
Furunculosis	4
Pharyngitis	1
Rheumatism	2
Otitis	1
Nephritis	1
Incontinence of Urine	1
Bronchitis	3
Gingivitis	1
Erysipelas	1
Flat feet	1
Chafed feet	2
Corneal ulcer	1
Inguinal adenitis	1
Tachycardia	1
Diarrhoea	3

Total	107
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*R. Christie*

Lieutenant-Colonel,

Commanding 51st. Battalion, A.I.F.

B.H.

Original

51st. Battalion,  
13th. July 1918.

Apr VI

## SYLLABUS OF TRAINING FOR WEEK ENDING - 20/7/18.

Day.	9 a.m. - 10 a.m.	10 a.m. - 11 a.m.	11 a.m. - 12 Noon.	2 p.m. - 3 p.m.
Monday. 15th.	Close Order Drill.	Musketry, Rapid Loading, Indication and recognition of targets.	Platoon training, Instruction of Lewis Gunners, rifle Grenadiers and Bombers.	Recreational Parades.
Tuesday. 16th.		ROUTE MARCH BY COMPANIES.		do.
Wednesday. 17th.	Close Order Drill. Gas Drill.	Musketry, Rapid Loading. Fire direction and control.	Platoon training, Instruction of Lewis Gunners, rifle Grenadiers and Bombers.	do.
Thursday. 18th.		ROUTE MARCH BY COMPANIES.		do.
Friday. 19th.	Close Order Drill. Guards & Sentries.	Musketry, Rapid Loading, Fire direction and control.	Platoon training, Instruction of Lewis Gunners, rifle Grenadiers and Bombers.	do.
Saturday. 20th.	Gas Drill, combined with Close Order Drill.	do.	do.	

Os.C. Companies will discuss with their Platoon Comdrs. each evening the work to be carried out the next day. Coy. Signallers and Scouts will report at 9.15 a.m. daily to Sig. Officer and Scout Officer respectively. Stretcher Bearers will report to the M.M.O. for instruction at 11 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Specialist Officers. Lewis Gunners and Bombers will be trained by the Platoon Comdrs. The Lewis Gun and Bombing Officers will assist in every way. They will confer with the coy. Comdrs daily and arrange to what way their assistance is most required. Route marches. These will not be less than 5 miles. Dress. Fighting Order, wearing felt hats. Route will be selected by Coy. Comdrs and notified to Bn. H.Q.Rs. ~~daily and arranged on~~ on previous evening. Range Practices. A range will be available and will be allotted to Companies. Discipline. Special attention will be paid to saluting, turnout and dress.

(signed) R. ALBRECHT, Captain &  
Adjutant, 51st. Battalion.

FIRFLY

9

## Chapter 9

### A Bit of Fun in Europe and Going Home to Family Life

#### Getting Back Home

As we have seen 15 of our 70 soldiers paid the ultimate price and died in Europe, nine in 1916 - the year they went to France, one in 1917 and the other five in 1918.

Of the 55 survivors, two were discharged in 1916, six in 1917 and eight in 1918. These 16 soldiers, or almost 30% of the survivors, were discharged as medically unfit.

Of the remaining 39 survivors, 33 were discharged in 1919 and 6 in 1920. As far as I can determine, those with a 1920 discharge date had their discharges delayed due to them getting married in England and having to wait for a married person's shipping berth or because they undertook some form of post-war occupational training in England.

#### England and the jollies and wives

As recorded in their service records, the majority of our 70 infantry recruits were single and under the age of twenty-five on their date of enlistment.

While a number of opportunist soldiers married English women, these marriages tended to have been towards the end of the war, with the men surviving the war.

Children were a rarity. An indication of just how few children our WW1 soldiers in general had can be seen in the following statement:

*The Repatriation commissioners estimated in 1921 that there were in Australia 11,791 children whose fathers either had lost their lives or had been totally and permanently incapacitated through the war.....It was*

*at first estimated that less than 12,000 children would have to be assisted*

*(at a cost of 1.25 million pounds to 1942). But the number of soldiers likely to die during the years immediately following the war was much underestimated, and this amount has already been exceeded (by the mid-1930s). (1)*

## **Occupational training**

As we have also seen from the records, a few of the survivors were accepted for occupational training in England before coming home. And no doubt a number attended the 'in-house' basic education courses run by the Army towards the end of the war. But the information on what the returning soldiers did in terms of employment after returning to Australia is sketchy at best.

## **Post War Life and Death**

*Some 61,700 Australians didn't come home....The wounded ran to 155,000, or about half the 324,000 men who served overseas, and this figure excludes a large number who were gassed but did not seek treatment and spent the rest of their lives coughing and scratching. The Australian casualty rate was the highest among the British Empire forces. Perhaps one-quarter of the original force of about 30,000 that left Australia in 1914 had survived...The casualties were still being counted during the 1930s. By then another 60,000 had died from wounds or illness caused by the war. (2)*

Unfortunately it is not possible to give a useful indication of how the survivors of the seventy men we are following fared in their post-war lives. As could be expected, the individual service records of those who survived the war generally stop with these soldiers' discharge from the army, or the issue of medals (e.g. acknowledgments of receipt). Sometimes their war record includes information that they were alive at such and such a time (and where they were living) because they had written to the central army records organisation seeking information on medals or requesting a statement of service. Sometimes such requests were made by family members after a returned soldier had died and thus the fact of the death is recorded on the file.

But these snippets give no indication of whether their post-war lives were free from trauma and illness and psychological scars, successful or unsuccessful, or happy or sad. Carlyon's statistic that almost as many survivors died following the war, of war related ailments, as those who died in the war, indicates that many survivors and their families did not travel too well.

Personal records on those who survived were now taken over by other organisations responsible for matters to do with pensions, repatriation, veterans, soldier settlements, returned soldiers and hospitals and the like and I did not, with a few exceptions, seek access to these records, even if available to the public.

Browning (3) includes in his history of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion an Honour Roll for those Battalion members who died of disease, illness or wounds and those who were killed in action. Logically you would expect only to see names for those who died in service, not post-discharge.

Browning has however identified four 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion soldiers who died in 1919 and three in 1920. This reflects the fact that a cut-off date of 'up to 1921' has been set for war related deaths to be classified as a war death; after 1920 a war related death is classified as a 'post war' death. I assume this is all to do with claiming pensions and right to be listed on the WW1 Honour Roll.

On searching the individual records for these men I found that 7 soldiers died in Australia after being discharged and only one from a war injury. The others died of war-related illnesses. A brief summary follows (noting that none of the 7 are from our "70" WA 11<sup>th</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements):

**Pte William George LUCAS** Service number 2930.

Died 8 February 1919. Born Tasmania, joined on 22 July 1915, 28 year old, 5 foot 5 inch tall labourer. TOS 12 Bn 9<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 21 September 1915.

Contracted mumps in Egypt, went to France with the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion on the "Ivernia" in June 1916.

Discharged 3 May 1918 as medically unfit with pleurisy (inflammation of the pleura – membranes lining the throat and enveloping the lungs – usually caused by chill and marked by pain in chest or side, fever etc.).

Exact cause of death not stated but appears to have been admitted first to No. 12 Australian General Hospital, Melbourne and then hospitalised in Hobart.

**Pte Percival John READ Service number 1966**

Died 10 July 1919. Born Queensland, joined on 18 January 1916, 21 year 9 month old, 5 foot 9.5 inches tall selector (farmer).

WIA France 25 September 1917 shrapnel ball wound to forehead.

On 30 January 1918 returned to Australia for discharge with depressed fracture of the skull, discharged 25 April 1918. Exact cause of death not stated.

**Lance Corporal Jeremiah Hubert FOLEY Service number 3814**

(Note: Browning shows this soldier with a surname of Fitzpatrick but there is no record for a soldier of this name that fits the details known. Going by the service number, the embarkation record and date of death the correct soldier is J H Foley.)

Died 25 July 1919 at the 20<sup>th</sup> Australian Auxiliary Hospital. Born Cornwall, England, joined in Western Australia on 27 August 1915, 36 year old, 5 foot 8.5 inches tall Western Australian Government Railways locomotive driver. TOS 12Bn/12<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements Blackboy Hill 16 October 1915. Married. TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn 3 March 1916.

Bit of early trouble with insubordination and AWL, hospitalised boils, 'flu, trench feet and trench fever. In December 1917 it came to light soldier had lied about age on enlistment and was in fact 45 years old.

Returned to Australia for discharge – over age and medically unfit. Discharged 28 December 1917. Exact cause of death not stated.

**Lance Corporal Robert Charles FISHER Service number 2456**

Died 12 November 1919. Born Tasmania and joined on 6 July 1915, 19 year 7 month old, 5 feet 8.5 inches tall farmer. TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 4 August 1915 and 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn 1 March 1916.

Treated for significant sicknesses in Egypt and England, including pneumonia.

Returned to Australia with active tuberculosis of the lungs 27 July 1917 and discharged 5 November 1917. Exact cause of death not stated, but you can make a reasonable guess.

**Pte Duncan MORRISON Service number 2210**

Died 27 February 1920 at 27<sup>th</sup> Australian Auxiliary Hospital of arteriosclerosis, anaemia, and coma. Born Victoria, joined at Bundaberg, Queensland on 30 March 1916, married, 38 year old, 5 foot 11 inches tall dairy farmer with previous military experience.

TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn/4<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 6 July 1916?? and 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn on 23 December 1916.

Hospitalised trench fever May 1917 and varicose veins December 1917, discharged medically unfit varicose veins 17 May 1918.

**Pte Archie HILLAM Service number 3278**

Died 14 June 1920. Born South Australia, joined 10 August 1915, 21 year 3 months, 5 foot 5.5 inches tall labourer with previous service.

TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn/ 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements. In September 1916 was treated for appendicitis, shipped to Australia for discharge October 1917 with ventral hernia, hospitalised January 1918 to May 1918 with chronic nephritis (inflammation of the kidneys). Discharged 7 June 1918. Exact cause of death not stated.



## Private Harold PORTER Service number 2048

Died 10 August 1920 at 17<sup>th</sup> Australian General Hospital of premature pulmonary laryngeal tuberculosis. Born NSW joined in Queensland on 30 January 1916, 26 year old 5 foot 6 inches tall piano tuner with previous service.

Embarked overseas May 1916, extended periods of illness in England, 'flu and bronchitis. Returned to Australia January 1918 for discharge – senility, debility, asthenia, heart failure. Discharged as medically unfit on 19 April 1918.

## The Fate of the 55 West Australian 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Survivors

I have set out in Appendix 5 what I have been able to find out about the year in which the 55 survivors died. In short:

Before 1929	3
1930s	1
1940s	4
1950s	6
1960s	19
1970s	11
1980s	7
Unable to trace	4
Total	55

The oldest survivor was **William John THORNTON** who died in 1988 at the age of 98 years having, with a little help, produced 3 children, 10 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

**Ernest Harold WEST**, who died in 1970 aged 75 years, chipped in with 8 children, 22 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild.

There were some other surprises:

**Edmond Candido RECK** (one of the “oldest”) who was discharged medically unfit in August 1916 due to gastric ulcers, died in 1959 aged 83 years, leaving 4 children and 5 grandchildren. **Horace ROSE**, who was discharged in 1917

with tuberculosis, re-enlisted and served in a domestic capacity for over 2 years in WW2, died in 1969 aged 79 years. And finally **Claude John Holmes BROWN** (one of the “shortest”) who spent over 1.5 years as a POW when things were pretty bleak for POWs, died in 1969 aged 75 years, leaving 3 children and 8 grandchildren.

The following table sets out age at death (including deaths while serving):

**Died aged (years)**

20 – 24	6
25 – 29	7
30 – 34	4
35 – 39	0
40 – 49	1
50 – 59	2
60 – 69	13
70 – 79	20
80 – 89	11
90+	2
Unknown	4
Total	70

Of the 51 survivors with known deaths 33 or 64% lived to an age greater than 69 years which for many years approximated the average male life expectancy.

### **Sewing Their Oats**

Of the 15 men killed only one was married and he was 31 year old Corporal **Thomas Egbert HAY** who, in 1910, married Lilian Muriel FERGUS - Perth

registration 415/1910. There is no record of children for the marriage or of her remarrying in WA.

Of the remaining 55 survivors, 8 were married on joining, with only two to 'Ethel's'. **Frank CAPLE** and **Will CREECH** both married in 1915. I have included in the 'married' **William GRENFELL** who was a widower and **John Alexander SPENCE** who had been deserted by his wife.

From the records I have it would appear a further 6, and I am assuming a seventh, **James COPPIN**, may never have married.

For the numerate that leaves 40 eager soldiers to account for.

As we have seen, 6 opportunists married English girls in England, 5 in 1919 with young **Johnnie ROWE** jumping the gun with a 1918 hitchment. Needless to say he married an Ethel.

So that leaves 34 eager soldiers still standing. One, **Walter Vernon HALL** married, but I have not been able to find a date for his marriage to Olive Pearl Hall.

That leaves 33. Eleven of these returning heroes, heedless of the risks, married in Australia in 1920 or before. Very quick off the mark.

Another twelve fell to eager wives between 1921 and 1925 and another eleven fell after 1925 and before 1939. That's 34 you say: well one chap, **Ernest MALMGREEN**, married twice in the 1920s. Again there were two 'Ethel's', but three with the sexy name of Doris – which, for a further piece of useless information, was also the name of one of my favourite aunts who made great pikelets when I was a kid.

So of the 55 survivors, a known 25 (45%) were married at some time or other by 1921. By 1926, a known 37 (67%) had married and a further 9 (16%) between 1926 and 1939 (including my dad in 1933 – see p177).

And as stated, it would appear 7 failed to keep a girl honest at all.

A few may have had wives (I think this was before the days of ‘partners’) of different Family names at their death so I assume their first wives had ‘gone west’ one way or another and a new relationship legitimised.

Some of the early marriages undoubtedly were to girls who had pinned long and hard whilst their betrothed went off to war and a quick marriage after all that anxious waiting was in order. But the important thing is our boys acquitted themselves well.

There would appear also to have been a small number of separations and possible divorces, but I have not attempted to follow these up.

And with all their progeny their history lives on.

Most of the next of kin, marriage and death information I have unearthed is contained in **Appendix 5**.

And finally, by my rough reckoning, allowing for a couple of second marriages, there were 35 marriages to women whose first name was 5 letters or less as opposed to only 10 marriages to partners whose first name was 6 letters or more in length. Easier to remember them?

**Appendix 6** provides a reference list of all 70 soldiers and the various other soldiers mentioned in the history.

## Endnotes

1. Ernest Scott “Australia During the War” Volume XI of the “Official History”, Angus and Robertson 1936 pages 847/48
2. Les Carlyon, op cite, pages 752/3
3. Browning pages 261 to 275



**Miss Winifred May BURTON photographed in 1925**

**In 1933 married Mr John Every MACLEAN**

## **Appendix 1: 12<sup>th</sup>, 51<sup>st</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Australian Infantry Battalions Australian War Memorial Short Histories**

### **The 12<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion**

The 12th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Half of the battalion was recruited in Tasmania, a quarter was recruited in South Australia, and a quarter from Western Australia. With the 9th, 10th and 11th Battalions it formed the 3rd Brigade.

The battalion was raised within three weeks of the declaration of war in August 1914 and embarked just two months later. After a brief stop in Albany, Western Australia, the battalion proceeded to Egypt, arriving in early December. The 3rd Brigade was the covering force for the ANZAC landing on 25 April 1915 and so was the first ashore at around 4:30 am. Lieutenant Colonel L. F. Clarke, commander of the 12th Battalion, was killed by a sniper within hours of the landing. The battalion was heavily involved in establishing and defending the front line of the ANZAC position, and in August contributed two companies to the attack on Lone Pine. It was the only battalion in the brigade to do so. The 12th served at ANZAC until the evacuation in December.

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the 12th Battalion returned to Egypt and, in March 1916, sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918 the battalion took part in bitter trench warfare. The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley in July 1916. After Pozieres, the battalion fought at Ypres in Flanders and then returned to the Somme for winter.

In 1917 the battalion took part in the brief advance that followed the German Army's retreat to the Hindenburg Line. For their valorous actions near Boursies during this advance, Captain J. E. 'Jim' Newland, commanding A Company, and Sergeant J. W. Whittle were each awarded the Victoria Cross. The battalion subsequently returned to Belgium to participate in the offensive that became known as the Third Battle of Ypres.

In March and April 1918 the battalion helped to stop the German spring offensive, and later participated in the great allied offensive of 1918, fighting near Amiens on 8 August 1918. This advance by British and empire troops was the greatest success in a single day on the Western Front, one that German

General Erich Ludendorff described as "the black day of the German Army in this war".

The battalion continued operations until late September 1918. At 11 am on 11 November 1918, the guns fell silent. Soon after, the members of the AIF began to return to Australia for demobilisation and discharge.

References	L.M. Newton, <i>The story of the twelfth: a record of the 12th Battalion, AIF during the Great War of 1914-1918</i> (Swanbourne: John Burridge Military Antiques, 2000). AWM4/23/29/1-23/29/49
Conflict	First World War, 1914-1918
Significant people	Clarke, Lancelot Fox Newland, James Ernest Whittle, John Woods
Related places	Albany Western Front German Spring Offensive Battle of Amiens
Related events	The landing at ANZAC Cove Battle of Lone Pine Versailles Peace Treaty Somme, 1916, '18 Pozières Bullecourt Ypres, 1917 Menin Road Polygon Wood Broodseinde Poelcappelle
Battle honours	Passchendaele Lys Hazebrouck Amiens Albert, 1918 Hindenburg Line Epéhy France and Flanders, 1916-18 Anzac

	Landing at Anzac Defence of Anzac Suvla Sari Bair-Lone Pine Gallipoli, 1915 Egypt, 1915-16
<b>Commanding officers</b>	Elliott, Charles Hazell Clarke, Lancelot Fox Gellibrand, John Smith, Ernest Hilmer Hawley, Sidney Whitham, John Lawrence
<b>Decorations</b>	2 VC; 1 CB; 2 CMG; 5 DSO, 1 bar; 31 MC, 2 bars, 1 2nd bar; 23 DCM, 1 bar; 132 MM, 16 bars, 3 2nd bars; 5 MSM; 59 MID; 8 foreign awards
	12 Battalion 12 Bn 12 Infantry Battalion 12th Australian Infantry 12th Battalion
<b>Alternative names</b>	12th Battalion (Infantry) 12th Battalion Attached 1st Australian Divisional Headquarters 12th Battalion Attached 3rd Light Trench Mortar Battery 12th Battalion Light Trench Mortar Battery 12th Bn Australian Army Medical Corps Attached 12th Battalion

Taken from <https://www.awm.gov.au/unit/U51452/>

## The 51st Australian Infantry Battalion

The 51st Battalion was raised in Egypt in the first week of March 1916, as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Approximately half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 11th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 11th, the 51st was predominantly composed of men from Western Australia. The battalion became part of the 13th Brigade of the newly-formed 4th Australian Division.

Arriving in France on 12 June 1916, the 51st moved into the trenches of the Western Front within a fortnight. It fought in its first major battle at Mouquet Farm in August and September, and suffered casualties equivalent to a third of its strength in both of the attacks (14 August and 3 September) it launched. After Mouquet Farm, the battalion saw out the rest of the year, alternating between front-line duty, and training and labouring behind the line. This routine continued through the bleak winter of 1916-17.

Early in 1917, the battalion participated in the advance that followed the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line. On 2 April it attacked at Noreuil, a village which had been fortified to delay the Australian advance. Later in the year, the focus of the AIF's operations moved to the Ypres sector in Belgium. There the battalion fought in the battle of Messines between 7 and 12 June and the battle of Polygon Wood between 26 and 27 September. Another winter of trench routine followed.

With the collapse of Russia in October 1917, a major German offensive on the Western Front was expected in early 1918. This occurred in France in late March and the 4th Division moved to defend positions around Dernancourt on the River Ancre. The 51st Battalion assisted in the repulse of a large German attack on 5 April, launching a critical counter-attack late in the day. The German threat remained until late April, and in the early hours of ANZAC Day 1918 the 51st participated in the now legendary attack to dislodge the enemy from Villers-Bretonneux.

When the Allies launched their own offensive in early August, the 51st Battalion was among the units involved and played an active role until the middle of that month, before moving to duties in the rear area. The battalion was ordered forward again in early September, in preparation for its last major operation of the war. On 18 September it provided part of the 4th Division's reserve for the attack on the Hindenburg "outpost line". Not long after the

Armistice on 11 November 1918, drafts of men began returning to Australia for discharge. With the departure of the last of these on 5 May 1919, the 51st Battalion disbanded.

References	N. Browning, <i>Fix bayonets: the unit history of the 51st Battalion</i> , (Bayswater, W.A.: Neville Browning, 2000). AWM4/23/68/1-23/68/39: 51st Battalion war diary
Conflict	First World War, 1914-1918
Related place	Mouquet Farm Expansion and re-organisation of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) in Egypt Hindenburg Line Battle of Messines Third Battle of Ypres German Spring Offensive
Related events	Battle of Villers-Bretonneux Battle of Amiens Hindenburg Outpost Line Attacks on Dernancourt Battle of Polygon Wood Attack on Noreuil Somme, 1916, '18 Pozières Bullecourt Messines, 1917 Ypres, 1917 Menin Road Polygon Wood Passchendaele
Battle honours	Ancre, 1918 Villers-Bretonneux Hamel Amiens Albert, 1918 Hindenburg Line Epéhy France and Flanders, 1916-18 Egypt, 1916

Commanding officers	Ross, Arthur Murray Ridley, John Cecil Thomas Edmund Charles Christie, Robert
Decorations	1 VC; 1 DSO, 1 bar; 1 OBE; 16 MC, 2 bars; 16 DCM; 122 MM, 5 bars; 8 MSM; 25 MID; 8 foreign awards  13th LTM Bty (51st Bn) 51 Battalion 51 Bn
Alternative names	51 Infantry Battalion 51st Battalion 51st Battalion (Infantry) 51st Bn Australian Army Medical Corps Attached 51st Battalion

Taken from <https://www.awm.gov.au/unit/U51491/>

### The 52nd Australian Infantry Battalion

The 52nd Battalion was raised at Tel el Kebir in Egypt on 1 March 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Approximately half of its recruits were veterans from the 12th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 12th, the 50th was a mix of men from South and Western Australia and Tasmania. The 52nd became part of the 13th Brigade of the 4th Australian Division.

After arriving in France on 11 June 1916, the 52nd fought in its first major battle at Mouquet Farm on 3 September. It had been present during an earlier attack mounted by the 13th Brigade between 13 and 15 August, but had been allocated a support role and missed the fighting. In this second attack the 52nd had a key assaulting role and suffered heavy casualties- 50 per cent of its fighting strength. The battalion saw out the rest of the year alternating between front line duty, and training and labouring behind the line. This routine continued through the bleak winter of 1916-17.

Early in 1917, the battalion participated in the advance that followed the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line, and attacked at Noreuil on 2 April. Later that year, the focus of AIF operations moved to the Ypres sector in Belgium. There the battalion was involved in the battle of Messines between 7

and 12 June and the battle of Polygon Wood on 26 September. Another winter of trench routine followed.

Utilising troops freed by the collapse of Russia in October 1917, the German Army launched a major offensive on the Western Front at the end of March 1918. The 4th Division was deployed to defend positions south of the River Ancre in France. At Dernancourt, on 5 April, the 52nd Battalion assisted in the repulse of the largest German attack mounted against Australian troops during the war. The German threat persisted through April, and on ANZAC Day 1918 the 52nd participated in the now-legendary attack to dislodge the enemy from Villers-Bretonneux.

The defeat of the German offensive had come at a cost though. Due to heavy casualties and a lack of reinforcements from Australia, three brigades were directed to disband one of their battalions to reinforce the other three. The 13th Brigade was one of these, and on 16 May 1918 the 52nd Battalion was disbanded.

References	<i>52nd Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, (France: 52nd Australian Infantry Battalion, 1918).</i> <i>AWM4/23/69/1-23/69/26: 52nd Battalion war diary</i>
Conflict	First World War, 1914-1918
Related place	Mouquet Farm Expansion and re-organisation of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) in Egypt Hindenburg Line Battle of Messines Third Battle of Ypres
Related events	German Spring Offensive Battle of Villers-Bretonneux Battle of Amiens Hindenburg Outpost Line Attacks on Dernancourt Battle of Polygon Wood Attack on Noreuil Somme, 1916, '18
Battle honours	Pozières Bullecourt Messines, 1917

	Ypres, 1917 Menin Road Polygon Wood Passchendaele Ancre, 1918 Villers-Bretonneux France and Flanders, 1916-18 Egypt, 1916
<b>Commanding officers</b>	Beevor, Miles Fitzroy Lane, Denis Arthur Pope, Harold Whitham, John Lawrence
<b>Decorations</b>	2 DSO; 17 MC, 1 bar; 8 DCM; 88 MM, 1 bar; 1 MSM; 20 MID; 5 foreign awards 13th Light Trench Mortar Battery Ex 52nd Battalion 14th Bde (53rd Bn) 52 Battalion 52 Bn 52 Infantry Battalion 52nd Battalion 52nd Battalion (Infantry) 52nd Battlalion 52nd Bn 52nd Infantry 52th Bn Attached 52nd Battalion Australian Army Medical Corps Attached 52nd Battalion
<b>Alternative names</b>	

Taken from <https://www.awm.gov.au/unit/U51492/>

## **Appendix 2: Fate of Randomly Selected Members of 12<sup>TH</sup> Battalion's 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement Units**

### **5<sup>TH</sup> REINFORCEMENTS – EMBARKED APRIL 1915**

**Harold George ERRINGTON** Service Number 1955.

Joined Western Australia 5 March 1915, 23 year old (yo) tramway employee  
TOS 5<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 24 April 1915,  
TOS Gallipoli 16 June 1915  
Hospitalised 25 August 1915 – variously described as diarrhoea and dysentery; evacuated to Malta then England  
Transferred to Machine Gun Company November 1916  
Hospitalised Flu' November 1917  
Disembarked Fremantle, WA 27 April 1919  
Discharged 5 May 1919

**David John EDMUNDS** Service Number 1956.

Joined Western Australia 6 March 1915, 29 yo labourer  
TOS 5<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 24 April 1915  
TOS Gallipoli 16 June 1915  
WIA head/thigh shrapnel 27 June 1915  
Hospitalised Malta, transferred to Artillery Corps  
To France 16 April 1916  
Hospitalised December 1916 with bronchitis, to England  
Whilst in England charged with AWL and treated for VD  
Served in France 1917  
Returned to Australia 20 December 1918  
Discharged as sergeant 21 March 1919

**Horace Alexander FORTH** Service Number 1958.

Joined Western Australia, 5 March 1915, 25 yo hardware assistant  
TOS 5<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 24 April 1915  
TOS Military Police Egypt 1915  
Court martialled 25 July 1916 for punching a local in the face  
Penalty – ‘reduced to the ranks’ from corporal  
Crime of AWL England 1917  
Caught flu’ in France June 1918  
WIA France August 1918 – wound to hand  
Returned to Australia 6 October 1919  
Discharged corporal 24 November 1919

#### **6<sup>TH</sup> REINFORCEMENTS – EMBARKED JUNE 1915**

**Sherwin ARUNDEL** Service Number 2156.

Joined Western Australia 26 April 1915, 32 yo, pearler, married  
TOS 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 17 May 1915  
TOS Gallipoli 6 August 1915  
Hospitalised December 1915 Jaundiced  
Landed France 5 April 1916, In England August 1917  
Discharged 21 December 1917 as medically unfit, dilated action of heart  
Died Queensland 11 November 1958

**Benjamin John BLYTHE** Service Number 2159.

Joined Western Australia 5 May 1915, 19 yo butcher  
TOS 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 17 May 1915  
TOS Gallipoli 6 August 1915  
Hospitalised 28 August 1915 gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea  
Evacuated to Mudros then Malta Dysentery  
Re-joined 12<sup>th</sup> Bn March 1916 at Serapeum Egypt  
Landed France 5 April 1916 as lance corporal  
KIA 10 November 1916

**Stanley Joseph Callow CHAMPION** Service Number 2161.

Joined Western Australia 3 May 1915, 24 yo orchardist  
TOS 6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 17 May 1915  
TOS Anzac/Gallipoli 6 August 1915  
Hospitalised 9 August 1915 Abscess. Evacuated Mudros then  
England. Crime AWL England January 1916 – fined 2 days' pay.  
Re-joined 12<sup>th</sup> Bn Serapeum Egypt 11 March 1916  
Landed France 5 April 1916 as a private  
KIA 25 July 1916

**7<sup>TH</sup> REINFORCEMENTS – EMBARKED FREMANTLE 18 JUNE 1915**  
**HMAT A51 “CHILKA”**

**John BROSNAN** Service Number 2385.

Joined Western Australia 20 May 1915, 31 yo case maker  
TOS 7<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 14 June 1915, Blackboy Hill, Helena Vale  
TOS Gallipoli 6 August 1915  
Hospitalised Diarrhoea, Enteric, Dysentery 4 September to  
30 December 1915, Treated at Mudros and England  
TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 15 July 1916, France  
KIA France 24 July 1916

**Ernest George CAMDEN** Service Number 2386.

Joined Western Australia 22 May 1915, 19 yo farmer  
TOS 7<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 14 June 1915  
TOS Anzac/Gallipoli 11<sup>th</sup> Bn 7 22 August 1915  
WIA leg/eye, evacuated to Malta, blinded left eye  
Treated in England from 15 October 1915  
Left Suez for Australia 24 June 1916  
Discharged medically unfit Australia 25 September 1916

**George Deslander CAMERON Service Number 2387**

Joined on 21 May 1915, 20 yo printer  
TOS 7<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 14 June 1915  
TOS Gallipoli 14 August 1915  
Hospitalised Gonorrhoea  
TOS 13<sup>th</sup> Machine Gun Coy 22 March 1916  
Transferred to 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn 20 Apr 1916  
To Marseilles, France via HMAT "Ivernia" 12 June 1916  
Hospitalised August 1916 shell shock  
Hospitalised 1917 VD  
Hospitalised 1918 Influenza  
1919 returned to Australia for discharge

**8<sup>TH</sup> REINFORCEMENTS – EMBARKED FREMANTLE  
2 SEPTEMBER 1915 HMAT A68 "ANCHISES"**

**Albert John APPLEYARD Service Number 2608**

Joined Western Australia 22 June 1916, 24 yo iron moulder  
TOS 8<sup>th</sup> Reinf/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 26 August 1915 at Blackboy Hill, Helena  
Vale, Western Australia  
TOS Mudros, 27 November 1915  
TOS Egypt, 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn 1 March 1916  
Hospitalised France, shell shock, GSW hands 9 August 1916  
Evacuated England for further treatment  
Re-joined unit 2 January 1917  
WIA France 7 June 1917, GSW leg, evacuated to England  
Returned to Australia 27 September 1917  
Discharged wounded 12 May 1918

## Evelyn William BEALE Service Number 2609

Joined West. Aust. 22 June 1916, 26 yo labourer, born UK  
TOS 8<sup>th</sup> Reinf/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 26 Aug 1915 at Blackboy Hill, Helena Vale, Western Australia  
TOS Mudros, 27 November 1915  
Hospitalised Mudros Pleurisy and Pneumonia  
TOS Serapeum, Egypt, 12<sup>nd</sup> Bn 11 March 1916  
To France 5 April 1916  
Hospitalised accidental injury, finger 28 June 1916  
Married Constance Kaye, UK 27 July 1917?  
Discharged medically unfit in England 14 March 1919

## Thomas Edward Claude BRIDGER Service Number 2610

Joined Western Australia 22 June 1915, 21 yo electrician  
TOS 8<sup>th</sup> Reinf/12<sup>th</sup> Bn 26 August 1915 at Blackboy Hill, Helena Vale, WA  
TOS Mudros, 27 November 1915  
To France with 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 5 April 1916.  
Promoted L/Cpl 1 September 1916  
Act of bravery 4 November 1916, awarded military medal \*  
Detached to Army School of Instruction, UK, 1 Feb 1917  
Attended Officer Training, 5 May 1917, graduated 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant  
Promoted Lieutenant 16 December 1917, TOS France 12<sup>th</sup> Bn.  
WIA August 1918, GSW left thigh and fractured femur  
Hospitalised February 1918  
Returned to Australia January 1919  
Discharged 5 May 1919  
Alive NSW 28 March 1933  
Deceased 25 September 1987.

\* “At Pozieres, France 23/25<sup>th</sup> July 1916, Pte Bridger, while on visual signalling station showed great coolness during heavy shelling, getting his message through to Brigade Headquarters. On July 23<sup>rd</sup> he volunteered and laid a line under heavy shell fire, from Battalion to Brigade Headquarters and patrolled same for six hours endeavouring to keep in repair.”

**9<sup>TH</sup> REINFORCEMENTS – EMBARKED FREMANTLE  
1 OCTOBER 1915 HMAT A20 “HORORATA”**

**Eric May ALLEN Service Number 2831**

Joined Western Australia 13 July 1915, 21 yo farmer (born California)  
TOS 9<sup>th</sup> Reinf/12<sup>th</sup> Bn, 28 September 1916, Blackboy Hill, Western Australia  
Tel-el-Kebir Camp, Egypt, 7 January 1916  
Hospitalised Mumps, February 1916  
TOS 52<sup>th</sup> Bn 3 March 1916, promoted corporal  
France 12 June 1916 via “Ivernia”  
WIA GSW fractured arm, 14 August 1916  
Returned to Australia 12 November 1916  
Discharged as medically unfit 5 July 1917

**James Sommerset BUTLER Service Number 2837**

Joined Western Australia 13 July 1915, 23 yo artist (born Scotland)  
TOS 9<sup>th</sup> Reinf/12<sup>th</sup> Bn, 28 September 1916, Blackboy Hill, Western Australia  
Tel-el-Kebir Camp, Egypt, 7 January 1916  
TOS driver 1 June 1916 12<sup>th</sup> Bn  
To France 12 June 1916 via “Ivernia” with 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn  
1916 – much correspondence about this soldier’s real name. His mother, who lived in Melbourne, was the ‘Countess of Carrick’ and in a statutory declaration said her son was J S Carrick aka Butler. He responded that Carrick was a title, not his surname (the family is mentioned in British Peerage – Google the names)

Transferred to staff, 1<sup>st</sup> Anzac Corps as a compositor/printer in March 1917. December 1917 promoted corporal  
On leave in Paris April 1919, and in May/July was granted paid leave to undertake post-army employment training in sculpture.  
To Australia from England 6 October 1919  
Discharged 17 January 1920

**Francis Charles COOK Service Number 2838**

Joined Western Australia 15 July 1915, 18 yo labourer  
TOS 9<sup>th</sup> Reinf/12<sup>th</sup> Bn, 28 September 1916, Blackboy Hill, Western Australia  
TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn, Tel-el-Kebir Camp, Egypt, 19 January 1916  
Transferred to Pioneer Bn 13 March 1916  
WIA France July 1916, shell shock, evacuated to England Hospital November 1916 VD  
May 1917 AWL, Back to France 2 March 1918  
October 1918 hospital, Appendicitis  
Discharged Australia 20 April 1919

**10<sup>TH</sup> REINFORCEMENTS – EMBARKED FREMANTLE  
13 OCTOBER 1915 HMAT A32 “THEMISTOCLES”**

**Joseph Stanley BOTTRELL Service Number 3063**

Joined Western Australia 12 July 1915, 28 yo labourer  
TOS 10<sup>th</sup> Reinf/12<sup>th</sup> Bn, 11 October 1916, Blackboy Hill, Western Australia  
TOS Serapeum Egypt, 29 January 1916  
TOS 48th Bn 26 April 1916, TOS 12th Bn August 1916  
France 22 August 1916  
Hospitalised December 1916, ulcers and gingivitis  
October 1917, hospitalised England while on leave, Mumps  
Mumps related problems persist for over 1 year, scabies January 1918  
Returned to Australia 10 December 1918, chronic otitis media (ear problem)  
Discharged 25 March 1919

## Cyrus Edward CHARGE Service Number 3069

Joined Western Australia 18 June 1915, 21 yo labourer (born UK)  
TOS 10<sup>th</sup> Reinf/12<sup>th</sup> Bn, 11 October 1916, Blackboy Hill, Western Australia  
TOS Tel-el-Kebir camp Egypt, 7 January 1916  
France 5 April 1916 with 12<sup>th</sup> Bn  
Hospitalised trench feet, 27 November 1916, England  
Transferred 70<sup>th</sup> Bn 5 February 1917  
Offence July 1917, neglecting routine orders, 7 days confined to barracks, transferred 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 9 October 1917 France  
Hospital VD December 1917  
Influenza June 1918  
Landed Albany, Western Australia 7 April 1919

Discharged Australia 3 June 1919

## Percy CLIFFORD Service Number 3096

Joined Western Australia 26 July 1915, 29 yo acrobat  
TOS 10<sup>th</sup> Reinf/12<sup>th</sup> Bn, 11 October 1916, Blackboy Hill, Western Australia.  
TOS 52nd Bn Egypt, 3 March 1916  
France "Ivernia" 12 June 1916  
Charge 'making false statement to officer' 26 July 1916  
Hospitalised Gastritis, infection in stomach August 1916  
Re-joined 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn 7 February 1917  
Accidentally injured – concussion and alcoholism slight (?)  
TOS Veterinary Hospital, Calais England 21 April 1918  
Returned to Australia 9 December 1918

Discharged medically unfit, defective vision, 23 March 1919.

And that is it for this potted summary of a few randomly selected soldiers from the early 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion reinforcement units. There were many more Reinforcement troops but their histories and misfortunes are beyond the scope of this story. Look them up on the National Archives of Australia website.

## **Appendix 3: 11th Reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion Australian Imperial Force - Western Australian Contingent of 70 soldiers.**

### **Introduction**

The unit known as 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF comprised some 316 soldiers, most of whom undertook basic training during August to September 1915 at camps in Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia.

The majority of the Western Australian contingent of 70 soldiers enlisted at Blackboy Hill Army Camp, Helena Vale, Perth, in early August 1915.

After completing basic training, they were allocated 12th Infantry Battalion service numbers and taken on strength with the 11th Reinforcements on 29 October 1915.

They all embarked for Egypt from Fremantle aboard the troop ship *Benalla* on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1915.

Details from each soldiers' enlistment record (source Australian National Archives online or AIF Nominal Roll) are set out in this Appendix. Detail of each soldiers' war service is set out in Chapter 6 and Appendix 4 (for those who transferred out of Infantry Corps). Details of each soldiers' fate through life, whether short or long, are set out in Appendix 5.

The rank shown is that at the time of their embarkation overseas. Age is in years and months, e.g. 23 9/12 is 23 years and 9 months, at the time of enlistment.

Not too much faith should be placed in the permanency of enlistment and NOK addresses. The addresses recorded were that at enlistment, but many records show changes of NOK address, often several, as the war progressed. Some 43 lived with a family member or wife on enlistment.

With regard to nominated religion I was surprised how relatively few Roman Catholics there were and the diverse range of Protestant religions. Many gave their religion simply as Protestant which is defined in the Shorter Oxford Dictionary as "any of the Christian bodies that separated from the Roman communion in the Reformation (16<sup>th</sup> century) or their offshoots".

Amongst the 70 soldiers there were 5 Roman Catholics (7%), 15 Church of England (21%), 13 Methodists (19%) and 24 'Protestants' (34%). The rest were Presbyterian and Wesleyan (4 of each), Baptists (3) and the Congregationalist and Church of Christ each had one adherent.

Handwriting on the service records can be a problem, but much of the enlistment detail is repeated in the embarkation record. Service Record abbreviations are set out in Chapter 3. Each soldier had the option of electing to allocate some of their pay, normally to a family member. The 70 soldiers, in service number order, were:

**1. 3341 Acting Sgt McCULLY James**

Born Glasgow Scotland, clerk, NOK mother both of Hamersley Road Subiaco, Perth, no previous enlistment rejection, previous service 4 years with signals.

Aged 23 9/12, height 5 foot 6.25 inches, not married.

Allocated 4/5th of pay to widowed mother, Presbyterian

**2. 3342 Acting Sgt NORMAN Percy**

Born Albany WA, farmer, NOK father both of Postmaster's house Albany, no previous enlistment rejection, previous service senior cadets.

Aged 24 3/12, height 5 foot 5.5 inches, not married, Methodist, no pay election.

**3. 3343 Acting Cpl BROADLEY George Stanley**

Born Perth WA, letter carrier, NOK father both of Burt Street North Perth, no previous enlistment rejection, previous military experience – 2 years with 88<sup>th</sup> Inf.

Aged 20 years, height 5 foot 7.5 inches, not married, and allocated 2/5<sup>th</sup> of pay to mother, Church of England.

**4. 3344 Acting Cpl BOWER Walter Thomas**

Born Epping Victoria, clerk, NOK father both of 87 Monger Street West Leederville WA, not married, no previous enlistment rejection, previous military experience – 3 years with 88<sup>th</sup> Inf.

Aged 21 4/12, height 5 foot 5.25 inches, Methodist, pay election 3/5 to mother.

**5. 3345 Acting Cpl HAY Thomas Egbert**

Born Victoria, clerk, NOK wife Lilian Muriel Hay both of Geraldine Street West Guildford. Enlisted February 1915, no previous enlistment rejection, previous military experience 7 weeks with Aust Light Horse plus February enlistment.

Aged 30 5/12, height 5 feet 7.5 inches, Roman Catholic, no pay election.

**6. 3346 Pte AINLEY Fred Wilfred**

Born Ballarat Victoria, telephone mechanic, NOK father of Cardigan Terrace Jolimont WA. Enlisted at Kalgoorlie, address not given, not married, no previous enlistment rejection, no previous military experience, and no pay election.

Aged 25 7/12, height 5 foot 5.25 inches, Church of England.



7. **3347 Pte ALLAN John Alexander**

Born Glasgow, Scotland, labourer, NOK sister of Main Street, West Wemyas, Galic, Scotland. Enlisted Ridge Hill WA, not married, no previous rejection, no previous military service, no pay election.

Aged 21 7/12, height 5 foot 6.5 inches, Presbyterian.

8. **3348 Pte ALLEN Horace Beresford**

Born Gippsland Victoria, clerk, NOK father, both of Rupert Street, Subiaco, Perth, no previous enlistment rejection, not married, no previous military experience, and no pay election.

Aged 25 4/12, height 5 foot 5.75 inches, Baptist.



9. **3349 Pte BICKERSTETH Robert**

Born Yorkshire England, farmer, NOK aunt of Ripon England. Enlisted Balinup Road, Zannup, WA, no previous enlistment rejection, previous military experience – cadets in England, not married, no pay election.

Aged 30 11/12, height 6 feet, Church of England.

10. **3350 Pte BOLLARD Maurice Montgomery**

Born Newcastle NSW, clerk, NOK mother, both of Fitzgerald Street, North Perth, no previous enlistment rejection, no previous military experience, not married, no pay election.

Aged 23 6/12, height 5 foot 8 inches, Wesleyan.



11. 3351 Pte BOUCHER Herbert William

Born Chilhon Victoria, bank clerk, NOK father of Chilhon Victoria, no previous enlistment rejection, no previous military experience, not married, enlisted Bank of NSW Perth but no address, no pay election.

Aged 25 years, height 5 foot 7.5 inches, Church of England.

12. 3352 Pte BRIDGER Hugh

Born Hillston NSW, horse driver, NOK father, both of Newcastle Street, Perth, WA, no previous enlistment rejection, previous military experience Goldfields Inf. Reg., not married, and enlisted Perth, no pay election.

Aged 24 9/12, height 5 foot 5 inches, Church of England.



**13. 3353 Pte BROWN Claude John Holmes**

Born West Perth West Australia, jockey, NOK father John (and mother) of Dwyer Street, West Perth. Enlisted Perth, same address as parents. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military experience with 88<sup>th</sup> Inf Citizen Force, not married, no pay election.

Aged 21 yrs, height 5 foot 2.25 inches, Protestant (not specified).

**14. 3354 Pte BUCHANAN Robert Charles**

Born Ipswich Suffolk England, clerk. NOK father, both of Leake Street, North Perth WA, no previous enlistment rejection, 3 years previous military experience with 30<sup>th</sup> Engineers, not married, no pay election.

Aged 20 10/12, height 5 foot 10 inches, Church of England.



**15. 3355 Pte BUCK Felix George**

Born Bunbury Western Australia, butcher. Father Mr George Richard Buck, Busselton WA, enlisted at Bunbury WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military experience, not married, no pay election.

Aged 21 11/12, height 5 foot 5 inches, Protestant.



**16. 3356 Pte BURGESS Leonard**

Born Perth Western Australia, labourer. NOK father, both of Edward Street, Perth WA, no previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 23 4/12, height 5 foot 5.75 inches, Protestant.

**17. 3357 Pte CALDER James**

Born Inverness Scotland, machinist. NOK father, both of Mary Street, North Fremantle, WA, no previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 22 11/12, height 5 foot 5 inches, Protestant.

**18. 3358 later 8807A Pte CAPLE Frank Horace**

Born Fremantle West. Australia, horse driver. NOK (i) father of Fishers Avenue, South Fremantle, WA and (ii) wife of 48 Herbert Street South Fremantle, enlistment address Sinclair Street South Fremantle WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, married, no pay election!

Aged 24 6/12, height 5 foot 2 inches, Protestant.

**19. 3359 Pte COOMBE William Henry**

Born Clunes Victoria, grocer. NOK father both of Brisbane Street, Perth, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 22 yo, height 5 foot 8.5 inches, Protestant.



**20. 3360 Pte COPPIN James**

Born Brighton, Sussex, England, linotype operator. NOK father of King Street, Brighton, England, enlistment address Henry Street, East Perth, no previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 24 5/12, height 5 foot 7 inches, Protestant.

**21. 3361 Pte CORNISH Frederick William**

Born Ballarat Victoria, clerk. NOK father both of Argyle Street, Leederville, WA, no previous enlistment rejection, previous military service Engineers, not married, no pay election.

Aged 19 6/12, height 5 foot 3.5 inches, Methodist.

22. 3362 Pte CORMISH Reginald Henry

Born Victoria, clerk. NOK father both of St Leonard's Avenue, West Leederville WA. Previous enlistment rejection for varicose veins, no previous military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 24 9/12, height 5 foot 9.75 inches, Methodist.

23. 3363 Pte CORMISH Wilfred John

Brother of above.

Born St Arnaud Victoria, clerk. NOK father both of St Leonard's Avenue West, Leederville, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 22 6/12, height 5 foot 10.5 inches, Methodist.



24. 3364 Pte CREECH William Frank Bernard

Born Melbourne, Victoria, postal clerk. NOK (i) mother of West Leederville (ii) wife of Cambridge Street, Leederville (not clear when married), no previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 31 6/12, height 5 foot 6.5 inches, Protestant.



**25. 3365 Pte DENTON Arthur Jacob**

Born Hobart, clerk. NOK father both of Tower Street, Leederville, WA. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service Signals Goldfields Infantry Regiment, not married, no pay election.

Aged 24 8/12, height 5 foot 6.5 inches, Protestant.



**26. 3366 Pte EAGLETON Albert Henry**

Born Melbourne, grocer. NOK divorced mother, both of Lord Street, Perth, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 23 7/12, height 5 foot 8.75, Methodist.

27. 3367A Pte FAIRWEATHER Groves Samuel

Born Devon England, labourer. NOK mother of Devonshire, England. Geraldton WA enlistment, but no address given. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 20 1/12, height 5 foot 5.5 inches, Protestant.



**28. 3368 Pte GILBERT Richard**

Born Sydney NSW, commercial traveller. NOK wife both of Barratt Street, West Fremantle, WA. Previous enlistment rejection – bad teeth. No previous military service, married, no pay election!

Aged 26 3/12, height 5 foot 8.5 inches, Protestant.



**29. 3369 Pte GORDON James Alexander**

Born Mt Pleasant South Australia, blacksmith. NOK mother Mary Ritchie of Popanyinning via Pingelly, WA. No enlistment address. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 19 years, height 5 foot 9.25 inches, Anglican.

**30. 3370 Pte GRAHAM John Frederick**

Born Bayswater Western Australia, clerk. NOK father both of Bayswater, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 22 6/12, height 5 foot 3.5 inches, Methodist

**31. 3371 Pte GRENFELL William**

Born Cornwall England, miner. NOK 12 yo daughter of Lake Street, Trafalgar via Kalgoorlie.

No previous enlistment rejection or military service, widower, pay election 3/5 to daughter. Enlistment address Workers' Club, Henry Street Fremantle.

Aged 35 3/12, height 5 foot 7 inches, Wesleyan.

**32. 3372B Pte HALE Rupert**

Born Melbourne Victoria, packer. NOK mother both of Hay Street, Perth, WA.

No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service 88<sup>th</sup> Infantry, not married, no pay election.

Aged 19 8/12, height 5 foot 8 inches, Roman Catholic.

**33. 3373A Pte HALL Walter Vernon**

Born South Aust, bricklayer. NOK father of Echunga, SA.  
Enlistment address c/o Beverley Post Office, WA. No previous  
enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 30 11/12, height 5 foot 7 inches, Protestant.



**34. 3374 Pte HARVEY John**

Born Belfast Ireland, electric linesman. NOK wife of Harwood Place,  
Perth, WA. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service  
with Aust. Light Horse.

Married, pay election 4/5s to wife.

Aged 35 6/12, height 5 foot 6 inches, Presbyterian.

**35. 3375 Pte HAYDON Lewis**

Born Hampstead Road London England, farm hand. NOK mother of Beaconsfield Road, Leytin England.

Enlistment address Popanyinning, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 25 7/12, height 5 foot 9 inches, Anglican.



**36. 3376 Pte HEEREY Francis Xavier**

Born Beaconsfield, Tasmania, telephone mechanic. NOK mother of Beaconsfield, Tas. Enlistment address Railway Hotel Kalgoorlie WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, pay election 3/5 to mother.

Aged 23 yo, height 5 foot 8.25 inches, Roman Catholic.

**37. 3377 Pte HOPKINS John**

Born Melbourne, Victoria, jeweller. NOK father both of Kimberley Street, Leederville WA. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service 3 years 86<sup>th</sup> Citizen Force, not married, no pay election.

Aged 21 7/12, height 5 foot 6.25 inches, Baptist.

**38. 3378 Pte JONES James**  
(from 1932 deed poll to James Jones COLLINS)

Born Perth WA, carpenter. NOK father both of Parry Street, Perth WA. Previous enlistment rejection – hernia, no previous military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 22 3/12, height 6 feet, Protestant.



39. 3379 Pte JUDGE John Bertram

Born Geraldton WA, labourer. NOK (i) mother and (ii) sister both of Nangareen, WA. Enlistment address Edward Street West Perth, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 27 2/12, height 5 foot 8.25 inches, Protestant.



40. 3380 Pte KIDD Joseph Sawden

Born Sydney NSW, motor mechanic. NOK father both of Connelly Street, Leederville, WA. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service 4 yrs 30 Signals Coy Engineers, not married, no pay election.

Aged 21 7/12, height (not stated), Methodist.



41. 3381 Pte KNEALE Bertram Hugh.

Born Perth, law clerk. NOK father both of Lake Street, West Perth. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service 1 year 88<sup>th</sup> Inf, not married, no pay election.

Aged 20 11/12, height 5 feet 7.25 inches, Protestant.



42. 3382 Pte LUNDGREN Oscar

Born Burnley Victoria, horse driver. NOK mother both c/o Fremantle Fire Station. Previous enlistment rejection – teeth, no previous military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 22 6/12, height 5 foot 9.5 inches, Protestant.

**43. 3383A Pte MACLEAN John Every**

Born Auckland, New Zealand, civil servant. NOK father both of Joel Terrace Mt Lawley, WA. Previous enlistment rejection – teeth, no previous military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 22 2/12, height 5 feet 7.5 inches, Church of England.

**44. 3384 Pte MALMGREEN Ernest Edward**

Born Semaphore, South Australia, Storeman. NOK father (address unknown) mother Kennedy Street, Maylands WA. Enlistment address Lion Mill? WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 27 11/12, height 6 foot, Wesleyan.

**45. 3385 Pte MARSHALL John Dunn**

Born Goodwood, South Aust, clerk. NOK father, both of Riley Street, Claremont WA. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service Royal Australian Navy Reserve, not married, no pay election.

Aged 21 yo, height 5 foot 8 inches, Protestant.

See next page for photo.



**46. 3386 Pte MASTERSON George Frederick**

Born Brunswick, Melbourne, Victoria, bank accountant. NOK father both of Cambridge Street, Leederville, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 22 6/12, height 5 foot 5 inches, Protestant.

See Meal photograph p 65 for photo.

47. 3387 Pte MICHAEL David Gordon

Born Adelaide, South Australia, hardware assistant. NOK father c/o Adelaide Oval, Adelaide SA. Enlistment address Bedford Avenue, Subiaco WA. Previous enlistment rejection varicose veins, cadet military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 21 2/12, height 5 foot 9.5 inches, Protestant.



**48. 3388 Pte MONCK Frank Ozmond**

Born Melbourne, Victoria, jeweller. NOK wife both of Nicholson Road, Subiaco WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, married, pay election 4/5<sup>th</sup> to wife.

Aged 24 yo, height 5 foot 7.5 inches, Protestant.

**49. 3389 Pte McKINLAY Alan Stanley**

Born South Yarra, Melbourne, Victorian Railways porter. NOK (i) father address unknown (ii) brother of 9 Dorgon, Street Perth WA. Previous enlistment rejection – bad teeth. Previous military service – 1yr 5mth WA Inf Reg, not married, no pay election. Enlistment address Slangan Street, Perth.

Aged 21 9/12 height 5 feet 6.5 inches, Protestant.

**50. 3390 Pte McLEOD Malcolm Donald**

Born Victoria, electric tramways employee. NOK mother both of Bogot Road, Subiaco, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 26 7/12, height 5 foot 6.5 inches, Protestant.

**51. 3391 Pte O'KEEFE Michael**

Born Kenturk, County of Cork Ireland, draper. NOK brother Ireland. Enlistment Narrogin, WA but no address. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 27 11/12, height 5 foot 4.5 inches, Roman Catholic.

52. 3392 Pte POWELL Percy Benjamin

Born Victoria, telephone mechanic. NOK father of Alvan Street, Subiaco, WA. Enlistment address George Street, Kalgoorlie, WA. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service – 3.5 years 88<sup>th</sup> Inf., not married, no pay election.

Aged 23 2/12, height 5 foot 4.5 inches, Church of England.



**53. 3393 Pte RANDELL Keith Raymond**

Born Perth WA, civil servant. NOK father both (presume) of Hooper Street, West Perth. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 2 3/12, height 5 foot 6.5 inches, Congregationalist.

**54. 3394 Pte RECK Edmond Candido**

Born Genoa Italy (naturalised), chef. NOK wife Mrs Annie Reck both of 29 Orient Street, South Fremantle. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, married, pay election 4/5ths to wife.

Aged 39 6/12, height 5 foot 5.5 inches. Roman Catholic.

**55. 3395 Pte RENNER James Davie**

Born Mullewa, WA, motor mechanic. NOK mother of Ocean Road, Cottesloe, WA. Enlistment address Fire Station Fremantle – see No 42 above. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 20 1/12, height 5 foot 8.5 inches, Protestant.

**56. 3396 Pte RIGNEY Alfred**

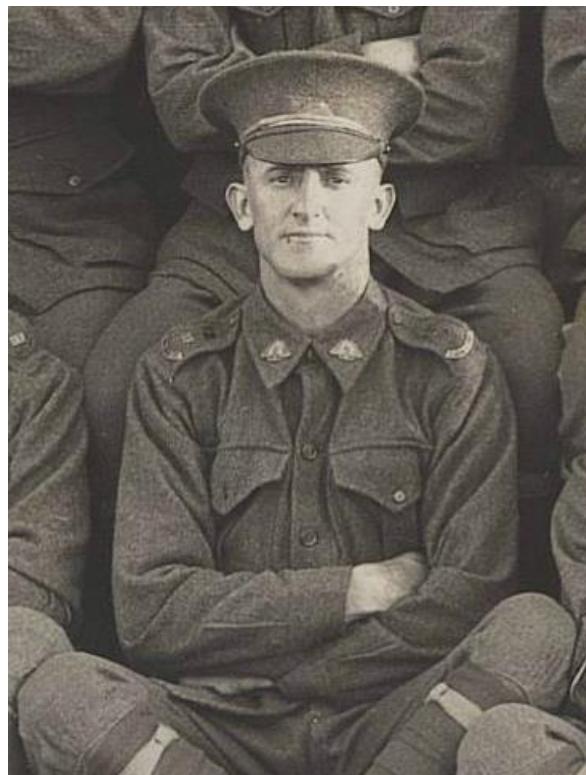
Born Launceston Tas, fitter's labourer. NOK sister of Horton House, Hotham Street, East St Kilda Vic. Enlistment address South Street, Fremantle. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

At Aug 15 stated his age as 44 5/12, his actual age was 51 5/12. Height 5 foot 8.5 inches, Church of England.

57. 3397 Pte ROSE Horace

Born Perth, WA, clerk. NOK father William Carter Rose of Daveyhurst (East Goldfields). Enlistment address Lindsay Street, Perth, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 25 2/12, height 5 foot 8 inches, Presbyterian.



58. 3398 Pte ROWE John

Born Durham, England, blacksmith. NOK mother Rebecca Rowe of Sunderland, Durham England. Enlistment address Collie Post Office, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 18 7/12, height 5 foot 7.25 inches, Methodist

**59. 3399 Pte SANDERS Ralph**

Born Adelaide, South Australia, draftsman. NOK mother St Georges Terrace, Perth, WA. Enlistment address Blencowe Street, West Leederville WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 22 2/12, height 5 feet 5.5 inches, Protestant.

**60. 3400 Pte SPENCE John Alexander**

Born Fremantle, WA, labourer. NOK wife (who had deserted him – address unknown). Enlistment address Howard Street, Fremantle, WA. Previous enlistment Navy, no previous rejection, married, no pay election.

Aged 22 1/12, height 5 foot 5.75 inches, Church of England.

**61. 3401 Pte TELFER Thomas Wilkinson James**

Born Horsham, Victoria, grocer. NOK father both of Leonard's Avenue, Leederville, WA. No previous enlistment rejection, 1 year with WA Inf. Regt, not married, no pay election.

Aged 27 1/12, height 5 feet 4.25 inches, Methodist.

**62. 3402A Pte THORNTON William John**

Born Middlesex, UK, farm hand. NOK mother both of Popanyinning via Pingelly, WA. (See also soldier 29 above) No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 26 years, height 5 feet 7 inches, Anglican.

**63. 3403 Pte THOMSON Harold Eastwood**

Born Fremantle, WA, farmer. NOK father both of East Street, East Fremantle, WA. Previous enlistment rejection – small chest, previous military service senior cadets, not married, no pay election.

Aged 21 6/12, height 5 feet 8 inches, Church of England.

**64. 3404 Pte WELLS Alfred James**

Born Castlemaine, Victoria, sign writer. NOK father both of Robertson Street, Bayswater, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 25 7/12, height 5 feet 4.75 inches, Methodist.

**65. 3405 Pte WEST Ernest Harold**

Born Brighton, Sussex, England, plumber. NOK father Brighton, Sussex England. Enlistment address Monger Street, Leederville, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 21 9/12 height 5 feet 7 inches, Methodist.

**66. 3406 Pte WILLS Egbert Atholstone**

Born North Carlton, Victoria, clerk. NOK father both of Oxford Street, Leederville, WA. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service 86<sup>th</sup> Inf., not married, no pay election.

Aged 20 7/12, height 5 feet 9.75 inches, Baptist.

**67. 3407 Pte WILLIAMSON Henry Andrew**

Born York WA, school teacher. NOK mother Yarloop, WA. Enlistment address Ida Street Laverton, WA. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service 88<sup>th</sup> Inf., not married, no pay election.

Aged 20 7/12, height 5 foot 7 inches, Church of Christ.

**68. 3408 Pte WILLIAMS George**

Born Kadina, South Australia, iron moulder. NOK father both of PO Trafalger, WA. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service Goldfields Inf. Regt., not married, no pay election.

Aged 21 8/12, height 5 foot 8.5 inches, Wesleyan.

**69. 3409 Pte WILLIAMS Richard James**

Brother of above. Born Kadina, South Australia, Telegraphist. NOK father of PO Trafalger, WA. Enlistment address Electric Telegraph Office, Kalgoorlie, WA. No previous enlistment rejection or military service, not married, no pay election.

Aged 25 1/12, height 5 feet 4.5 inches, Methodist.

**70. 3410 Pte WRIGHT Walter Reginald**

Born Geraldton, WA, clerk. NOK mother of Sandune Road, Geraldton, WA. Election address Marine Terrace, Geraldton, WA. No previous enlistment rejection, previous military service 3 years 88<sup>th</sup> Inf., not married, no pay election.

Aged 20 7/12, height 5 feet 4 inches, Church of England.

**Lt BAILEY Francis William Samuel**

**KIA aged ~ 21 years**

Joined 1914 (this soldier was not part of 11<sup>th</sup>12th Reinforcements, but was the only Western Australian officer posted with this particular unit on embarking overseas).

Born Melbourne, clerk, NOK mother both of Robinson Street, Subiaco WA. Not married.

Previous military service with school cadets and 86<sup>th</sup> Inf.

At October 1915 aged 20 years 8/12, height 6 foot 1 inch, Roman Catholic.

Appointed 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant 16 September 1915.

KIA 3 September 1916 at Mouquet Farm, France.

## **Author's Licence**

On the following page I have exercised a right to include 3 photos of 'the author'. These 1967-68 style 'selfies' were taken in and around Sydney. In the first two I am being instructed on using a Sub-Machine Gun and a General Purpose Machine Gun to shoot and kill imaginary Viet Cong then infesting outer Sydney military training bases. My main memory is that it would always be far better to be on the trigger end rather than the muzzle end of a GPMG. That was pretty well as close as I got to army shooting in my 2 years as a National Serviceman, other than listening to corporal drill instructors shooting off their mouths on the parade ground. Following basic training I was posted to an office job and trained as a psychological (psychological testing) examiner.



## Appendix 4: Service Records of 12 Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements (Western Australian enlistments only) Who Transferred to Non- Infantry Corps/Occupations in Egypt in March/April 1916

For an explanation of the many abbreviations used in the Service Records see Chapter 3.

### SIGNALS CORPS

#### Fred Wilfred AINLEY

No previous military service, service number 3346, born Ballarat, Victoria, 25 years 7 months of age on joining on 3 August 1915, telephone mechanic, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 5.25 inches (166 cms).

Promoted from Sapper to Lance Corporal. Not wounded but hospitalised for influenza August 1918. Awarded a Meritorious Service Medal (see below) in 1918. Married Elsie in Manchester England 30 April 1919, returned to Australia 1 June 1919, Discharged 4 November 1919.

*Citation: 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Division Signal Company*

*“For conspicuous good work and devotion to duty. This N.C.O. since 25<sup>th</sup> February 1918 to 16<sup>th</sup> September 1918, has been doing duty as Brigade Section mechanic, and has carried out his duties under very adverse circumstances, in a highly efficient manner. At HAMEL on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1918 and CHIPILLY on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1918, he, when all linesmen were out on faults, went out and mended breaks under heavy enemy shell fire. His work has at all times been characterised by great cheerfulness and has been a splendid example to the men of his section.”*

*C H Joseph, Major, Officer in Charge, Signal Company.*

## Robert Charles BUCHANAN

3 years previous militia service with 30<sup>th</sup> Engineers, service number 3354, born Suffolk England, 20 year 10 month old clerk on joining 2 August 1915, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 10 inches (178 cms) tall.

Served in France as a sapper, lance corporal and corporal, not wounded, hospitalised with influenza October 1918. Awarded Military Medal 1916 and Bar to Military Medal 1917 (see below). Discharged Australia 27 July 1919.

### *Citations*

Military Medal: *“During the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September 1916 Sapper Buchanan assisted Sgt Sharp in maintaining telephone lines from POZIERES. During the above period he showed great gallantry and devotion to duty, and did splendid work in mending lines under heavy fire.”*

Bar to Military Medal, No. 4 Section, 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Division (attached 15<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Brigade); *“On 26<sup>th</sup> September 1917 near ZONNEBEKE whilst working as a linesman with Brigade Forward Party this man worked continuously during operations laying and maintaining lines. On various occasions he volunteered to go out and repair lines cut by enemy shell fire. This work entailed great risk and required exceptional bravery, but in every case he accomplished his job perfectly, and by his example encouraged and helped other members of his party. On the evening of the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 1917 during a particularly heavy barrage he went out and repaired a line which had been cut. To do this it was necessary for him to go through an area which at the time was being shelled very heavily. He also assisted in bandaging and carrying back wounded over ground swept by enemy snipers fire.”*

*Recommended by Lieut. Carlton, O.C. Bde Forward Party.*

## **Leonard BURGESS**

No previous military experience, service number 3356, born Perth, joined 4 August 1915, 23 years 4 months old labourer, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 5.75 inches (167 cms) tall.

Transferred to Signals Corps March 1916 as a sapper. Hospitalised September 1916 to England, trachoma. Two AWL charges 1917. Returned to Australia January 1918, discharged medically unfit 17 May 1918 (defective vision, possibly a pre-existing condition aggravated by service).

## **Frederick William CORNISH**

Previous militia service with 36<sup>th</sup> Signals, Engineers, service number 3361, born Ballarat, Victoria, clerk on joining 2 August 1915 at 19 years 6 months of age. Not married, NOK father, 5 foot 3.5 inches (161 cms) tall.

Transferred to Signals Corps February 1916, not wounded and no hospitalisation. Awarded Military Medal for action September 1917 (see below). Returned to Australia March 1919 and discharged 27 July 1919.

Military Medal, No. 4 Section, 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Division (attached 15<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Brigade); *“On 26<sup>th</sup> September 1917 near ZONNEBEKE whilst working as a linesman with Brigade Forward Party he showed conspicuous coolness and courage in carrying out duties allotted to him. He volunteered to return to a position from which just previously the party had been blown out by enemy shell fire to salvage some signalling instruments left behind. He carried out his job with great bravery it being necessary for him to cross ground swept by enemy snipers, and to enter the position mentioned which was at the time still being shelled heavily by the enemy. His brave action was instrumental in saving much valuable material and enabling the party to establish again.”*

*Recommended by Lieut. Carlton, O.C. Bde Forward Party.*

## **Arthur Jacob DENTON**

Previous service, 1 year signals, service number 3365, born Hobart, 24 year 8 month old clerk, not married, NOK father (Perth), joined 2 August 1915, 5 foot 6.5 inches (169 cms) tall.

Transferred to Signal Company as sapper March 1916. Shipped to France June 1916.

KIA France 5 December 1916.

## **Francis Xavier HEEREY**

No previous militia experience, service number 3376, joined 3 August 1915, born Tasmania 23 year old telephone mechanic, not married, NOK mother (solely supported by Frank), 5 foot 8.25 inches (173 cms) tall.

Transferred to Signals Coy March 1916, August 1917 AWL, November 1917 hospitalised with laryngitis, promoted lance corporal March 1918. Not wounded. Undertook two months post-war telegraphy course in England mid-1919, embarked for Australia October 1919, discharged 7 August 1920.

## **James JONES**

No previous militia service, previously rejected AIF because of hernia, service number 3378, joined 2 August 1915, 22 year 3 month old carpenter, born Perth, W.A. Not married, NOK father. Six foot tall (183 cms).

Transferred to Signals Corps March 1916, awarded MM for action 4 September 1916 and Bar to MM for action June 1917 (see below). Hospitalised August 1917 for deflected spectrum and nasal problems and October 1917 for abrasions on penis! Promoted corporal, embarked for Australia February 1919, discharged 24 June 1919. Changed name to James Jones COLLINS by deed poll 1931.

Military Medal: 4<sup>th</sup> Division Sig Coy, number 4 section: “*During the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> August Sapper Jones assisted by Sergeant Sharp in keeping*

*forward communication from CHALK PIT. During the above period he showed great devotion to duty. Was always keen for duty, and on several occasions he went out and mended telephone wires under terrific fire."*

Bar to MM: I have not been able to locate a copy of the award recommendation, but Sapper Jones was still with the same unit. The award was notified in the London Gazette of 16 August 1917, page 8417 and in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette of 20 December 1917, page 3376.

### **Joseph Sawden KIDD**

4 years militia service with 30 Sig Coy, Engineers, service number 3380, joined 7 August 1915, 21 years 7 months old motor mechanic born Sydney NSW, not married, NOK father. Height in service record indecipherable.

Transferred to Signals Company March 1916, promoted to corporal July 1916. Hospitalised trauma knee in France December 1917. Awarded Military medal (see below) as dispatch rider (horse) November 1917. Hospitalised tonsillitis December 1918. Returned to Australia June 1919, discharged 29 October 1919. Still alive Wembley West. Australia April 1967.

Military Medal: 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Division Signal Company: "For extreme bravery and devotion to duty near ZONNEBEKE. Corporal Kidd on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October 1917 was carrying important despatches to the Brigade in line. He came under very heavy shellfire as the enemy was shelling Zonnebeke Road. After several unsuccessful attempts to get through, Cpl Kidd who was mounted, proceeded across country which was extremely swampy and shell holed. After being bogged several times Corporal Kidd abandoned his horse and proceeded on foot and delivered his despatches, although Brigade Headquarters was being badly shelled at the time. He left Brigade Headquarters almost immediately with despatches for Division, and recovering his horse returned. He showed extreme bravery and persistence in carrying out his duties in the face of most hazardous and difficult conditions. The above programme was almost repeated daily during this Division's tenure of the line. His work during the period was untiring."

*Recommended by Major J E Fraser O.C. 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Division Signal Company.*

## **Percy Benjamin POWELL**

3.5 years previous service with 88<sup>th</sup> Infantry Bn – militia, service number 3392, joined 3 August 1915, 23 years 2 months old telephone mechanic, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 4.5 inches tall (164 cms).

Transferred to 4<sup>th</sup> Division Signals Company March 1916, hospitalised France August 1916, and September 1917 shell shock, March 1918 injury thigh and November 1918 influenza. Returned to Australia June 1919, discharged 27 September 1919.

## **James Davie RENNER**

2.5 year previous militia service, service number 3395, joined 2 August 1915, born Mullewa W.A. 20 years 1 month old motor mechanic, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 8.5 inches (174 cms) tall.

Transferred to 4<sup>th</sup> Division Signals Company March 1916, May 1916 promoted to lance corporal and corporal in France July 1916. Hospitalised while on leave, Dover, England. Returned to Australia June 1919 and discharged 7 September 1919. Still alive 1962.

**Comment:** Of the ten Western Australian enlisting soldiers who transferred from 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements to the Signals Corps, one was killed in action, one was discharged early as medically unfit and 5 were decorated (two twice) with awards for bravery. All but one of the survivors was hospitalised at least once for injury or disease. Almost all hospitalisations involved evacuation to England after initial treatment in France.

## **ARTILLERY CORPS**

### **George Stanley BROADLEY**

2 years previous service with 88<sup>th</sup> Infantry Citizen Forces, service number 3343, joined 28 July 1915, born Perth, 20 year old letter carrier, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 6 inches (168 cms) tall.

Acting corporal on embarkation from Australia, transferred to Arty March 1916 as a gunner, hospitalised July 1916 conjunctivitis, promoted bombardier November 1916, WIA France 21 March 1918 GSW thigh, and fractured femur.

Died of wounds 23 March 1918.

### **Groves Samuel FAIRWEATHER**

No previous militia service, service number 3367A, joined 4 August 1915, born Devon England, 20 years 1 month old labourer, not married, NOK mother (UK). 5 foot 5.5 inches (166 cms) tall.

Transferred to Arty March 1916, hospitalised France November 1916 with trench feet and chilblains, promoted lance bombardier, hospitalised April 1918 with accidental injury to knee and trench fever. Returned to Australia from Plymouth September 1919, discharged 2 January 1920.

### **Richard GILBERT**

No previous militia service, service number 3368, joined 3 August 1915, born Sydney NSW 26 years 3 months old commercial traveller, married, NOK wife (living at Fremantle WA), 5 foot 8.5 inches (174 cms) tall.

Transferred to Arty March 1916, hospitalised October 1916 piles and flu', 1917 rheumatism and VD, 1918 flu and VD, charges in 1917 and 1918. Left England for Australia as medically unfit August 1918, discharged medically unfit neurasthenia (nervous debility). Despite all this still alive in NSW March 1986.

## **James Alexander GORDON**

No previous service, service number 3369, born South Australia, joined 4 August 1915, 19 year old blacksmith, not married, NOK mother, 5 foot 9.25 inches (176 cms) tall.

Transferred to Arty March 1916 as a gunner and appointed driver (horse team) November 1916. Shipped to France June 1917, hospitalised January 1917 with pneumonia and inflammation of the larynx and March 1917 pleurisy.

KIA France 3 October 1918.



## **William GRENFELL**

No previous service, service number 3371, joined 2 August 1915, 35 years 3 months old miner, born Cornwall, England, widowed, NOK daughter, 5 foot 7 inches (170 cms) tall.

Transferred to Arty March 1916 as temporary driver, hospitalised (?) England June 1917, crime AWL August 1917, hospitalised November 1918 boils, returned to Australia November 1918, discharged 5 April 1919.

## **Ernest Edward MALMGREEN**

No previous militia service, service number 3384, born South Aust 27 years 11 months old storeman, not married, NOK father, 6 foot (183 cms) tall.

Transferred to Artillery March 1916 as a runner/driver. Admitted hospital 1918 with trench fever. Left Weymouth, England for Australia February 1919, discharged Australia 2 May 1919.

## **Alfred RIGNEY**

No previous service, service number 3396, born Launceston Tasmania, joined 2 August 1915, not married, NOK sister.

(For this soldier's war record see "Oldest" Chapter 5.)

## **Horace ROSE**

No previous service, service number 3397, joined 2 August 1915, 25 years 2 months old clerk, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 8 inches (173 cms) tall.

Hospitalised January 1916 tuber gland of neck (TB). Transferred Arty March 1916, hospitalised dangerously ill Cairo June 1916 malignant discharge/haemorrhage tongue.

Embarked for Australia from Suez June 1916. Two AWL offences early 1917 (fined day's pay 5/- each offence), discharged medically unfit 26 March 1917. Rejected for disability pension as not unfit for work because of military service. What can one say!

**Comment:** Of the eight 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement Western Australian enlisting soldiers who transferred from the Infantry Corps to Artillery two were killed in action, two were discharged early on medical grounds and the other four, while surviving the war, were hospitalised at least once for injury or disease whilst overseas.

## PIONEER BATTALION

### William Henry COOMBE

No previous service, service number 3359, joined 2 August 1915, born Victoria, 22 year old grocer, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 8.5 inches (174 cms) tall.

Transferred to 12<sup>th</sup> Bn Pioneers March 1916. Hospitalised August 1917 VD, crimes 1917 AWL, drunkenness, theft of leave pass. Returned to Australia, discharged 3 June 1919.

### Walter Vernon HALL

No previous service, service number 3373A, born South Australia, 30 year 11 months old bricklayer, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 7 inches (170 cms) tall.

Hospitalised dangerously ill December 1915, pneumonia. Transferred to Pioneer Bn March 1916. Hospitalised April 1917 sprained ankle. AWL and failure to salute charges November 1916 and May 1917. Embarked for Australia May 1919 and discharged 24 July 1919.

### John Bertrum JUDGE

No previous militia service, service number 3379, born Geraldton W.A., joined 4 August 1915, 27 year 2 months old labourer, not married, NOK mother, 5 foot 8.25 inches (173 cms) tall.

Sailed to France with 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn June 1916, crime of drunkenness France June 1915, transferred to Pioneer Bn July 1916.

Court Martial in September 1916 for 3 days desertion at the front (28/8/16 to 31/8/16), sentenced to 7 years servitude in a military prison, November 1916. Sentence commuted to 2 years, released September 1917 on suspended sentence and TOS back at unit, remainder of sentence suspended December 1917. Embarked for Australia February 1919, discharged 3 June 1919, entitled to the same three service medals as his fellow 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements soldiers.

## Bertrum Hugh KNEALE

1 year previous service with 88<sup>th</sup> Infantry Citizen Forces, service number 3381, joined 2 August 1915, 20 year 2 months old law clerk, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 7.25 inches (171 cms) tall.

Hospitalised December 1915 with measles and VD. Transferred to 4<sup>th</sup> Pioneer Battalion March 1916. Promoted lance corporal May 1916 and corporal August 1916.

KIA Mouquet Farm, 1 September 1916.

**Comment:** Bit of a mixed bunch this four. Pioneer Battalions arose from the Indian Army experiences of Lord Kitchener. In his 1914 proposals for new Divisions he included Pioneer Battalions and such units were added to British Army territorial and regular divisions in 1915, and to Australian Divisions from March 1916: Bean explained the rational for their creation in these terms:

*“For military works requiring for their construction training less expert than that of engineers, but more skilled than that of infantry, “pioneer battalions” were being formed, one for each infantry division. These, though organised as infantry, were not intended, except in emergencies, to live in the trenches, but usually came up for their daily, or nightly task, returning to their camps or billets when it was ended.”* (p 54 Vol III)

In my view, the soldier who did it toughest of the four Pioneers, and probably for the whole 70 soldiers of 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 11<sup>th</sup> reinforcements that we are following, was **Private JUDGE**. No doubt he panicked during the Mouquet Farm bombardments and made himself scare for 3 days – desertion on the field of battle! To spend a year in a Military Prison would be an experience not recommended for anyone; the fact that he survived and was released early and eventually had the rest of his sentence suspended says a lot for the man's fortitude. It was only fitting that he was discharged honourably when his time was up. No doubt the British would have had him shot at dawn for desertion.

## **12th Battalion**

### **Maurice Montgomery BOLLARD**

No previous service, service number 3350, joined 2 August 1915, born Newcastle NSW, 23 year 6 month clerk, not married, NOK mother, 5 foot 8 inches (173 cms) tall.

Hospitalised Egypt early 1916 hernia, TOS 12<sup>th</sup> Bn March 1916, France April 1916 and in June 1916 transferred to 12<sup>th</sup> Bn Field Ambulance. Hospitalised June 1916 bronchitis and February 1917 septic hands. Promoted lance corporal October 1917, WIA April 1918 GSW leg, evacuated to England where leg amputated. July 1918 evacuated to Australia, discharged Fremantle 28 August 1918, medically unfit.

### **Claude John Holmes BROWN**

1 year previous militia service with 88<sup>th</sup> infantry, service number 2253, joined 2 August 1915, born West Perth 21 year old jockey, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 2.25 inches (158 cms) tall.

(For this soldier's war record see 'Shortest" Chapter 4.)

### **Felix George BUCK**

No previous service, service number 3355, joined 3 August 1915, born Bunbury, WA, 21 year 11 month old butcher, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 5 inches (165 cms) tall.

Variously hospitalised November 1915 to July 1916, VD and piles. WIA France August 1916 GSW back, buried by shell burst, evacuated England. Returned to Australia October 1916, AWL 1 day in March 1917, discharged medically unfit – shell shock and neurasthenia (nervous debility), 21 May 1917.

Comment: Wounded, sick and convalescing soldiers such as Private Buck were posted to light, training or other duties either in England or Australia when not in hospital. Before his discharge Private Buck spent 6 months on funeral home services in Australia. Charming for a returned soldier!

Private Buck died an accidental death in Western Australia in May 1920, the accident being subject to a coronial inquiry.

## MACHINE GUN COMPANY

### Hugh BRIDGER:

Previous citizen forces service with the Goldfields Infantry Battalion, joined 2 August 1915, born Hillston NSW, 24 year 9 month old horse-driver, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 5 inches (165 cms) tall.

Transferred to Machine Gun Company 13<sup>th</sup> Brigade March 1916. Hospitalised France August 1916, evacuated England September 1916 double pneumonia severe (really?). Left Plymouth for Australia February 1917. Discharged medically unfit pneumonia and pleurisy 26 June 1917.

### John Dunn MARSHALL

Previous service with naval reserve, service number 3385, joined 2 August 1915, born South Australia, 21 year old clerk, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 8 inches (173 cms) tall.

Transferred to 13<sup>th</sup> Machine Gun Company March 1916 and went to France on HMAT "Ivernia" June 1916. Promoted corporal 1918 and sergeant 1919. Hospitalised influenza November 1918. Not wounded, awarded Military Medal February 1919 (see below). Embarked for Australia February 1919 and discharged 4 June 1919.

*Recommendation by Lieutenant. Colonel ?, C.O. 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Division Machine Gun Battalion, 15<sup>th</sup> Company:*

*"On the night of the 24/25<sup>th</sup> April 1918 in the counter attack at VILLERS BRETONNEUX this soldier displayed conspicuous gallantry and coolness in handling his machine gun after his Section Officer and Sergeant had become casualties. Under a very heavy barrage of H.E. (high explosive artillery shells) and machine gun fire he brought his gun into action and opened fired on the enemy with excellent results. Later on he mounted a German machine gun and*

*with it greatly increased the strength of his position. He set a splendid example throughout."*

Comment: So just 2 machine gunners, 1 unfortunate with a medical discharge and one hero with a military medal.

## OTHER

### Frank Horace CAPLE

No previous service, service number 3358, joined 2 August 1915, born Fremantle W.A., 24 year 6 month old horse driver, married, NOK wife, 5 foot 2 inches (157 cms) tall.

(for service record see Shortest Chapter 4)

### William Frank Bernard CREECH

No previous service, service number 3364, joined 2 August 1915, 31 year 6 month old postal clerk, not married, NOK mother, 5 foot 6.5 inch (169 cms) tall.

April 1916 promoted corporal Postal Corps, promoted 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant 8 February 1917, 51<sup>st</sup> Battalion, WIA September 1917 GSW neck severe, evacuated England, married Louisa England date unknown.

Returned to Australia July 1919 and discharged 20 October 1919.

Alive 7 October 1963.

### Lewis HAYDON

No previous service, service number 3375, joined 4 August 1915, born London, 25 year 7 month old farm hand, not married, NOK mother (UK), 5 foot 9 inches (175 cms) tall.

Appointed records section as corporal May 1916. October 1916 promoted sergeant and August 1917 appointed sergeant (3<sup>rd</sup> Echelon Records Section).

Married Alice Ethel 22 September 1919, took indefinite leave 19 September 1919 awaiting 'family ship', returned to Australia January 1920, discharged 27 April 1920.

## DISCHARGED EARLY AS MEDICALLY UNFIT

### John Alexander ALLAN

No previous service, service number 3347, joined 4 August 1915, born Scotland, 21 year 7 month old labourer, not married, NOK sister (Scotland), 5 foot 6.5 inches (169 cms) tall.

TOS 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion. Hospitalised March 1916, Egypt with synovitis knee. July 1916 evacuated to Australia, discharged 24 August 1916 synovitis both knees (synovitis - inflammation of the membrane that secretes the lubricating fluid in a joint).



## **David Gordon MICHAEL**

Previous service senior cadets, service number 3387, joined 4 August 1915, born Adelaide South Australia, 21 year 2 month old hardware assistant, not married, NOK father, 5 foot 9.5 inches tall.

Hospitalised Heliopolis Egypt – prolapse of the rectum.

Invalided to Australia from Suez for operation January 1916.

Discharged 3 January 1917.

## **Edmond RECK**

No previous service, service number 3394, joined 2 August 1915, born Genoa Italy, naturalised, 39 year 6 month old chef, married, NOK wife, 5 foot 5.5 inches (166 cms) tall.

Hospitalised Tel-el-Kebir Egypt May 1916 gastric ulcers, evacuated from Suez to Australia June 1916.

Discharged 7 August 1916. Entitled to the normal 3 service medals.

## **Photos From the Front**

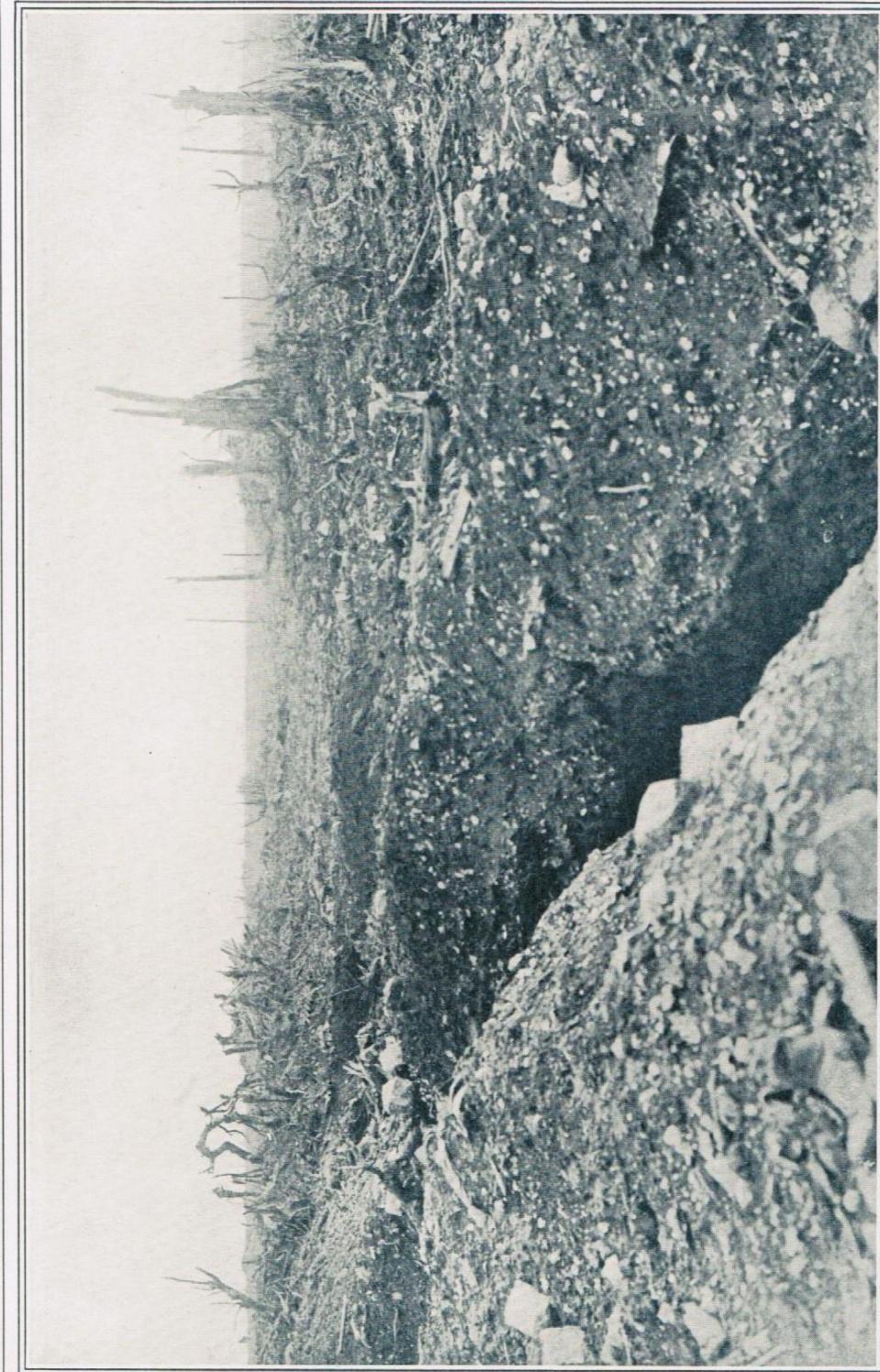
Next I have included a few photos from a publication "*From The Australian Front – Xmas 1917*", Cessel and Company, Ltd, 1917 which provide a brief glimpse of what some of our soldiers were getting up to.



Australians Re-entering the Somme in the Autumn, 1916. Mud-splashed  
Gun-teams along the road to Montauban.



**Mouquet Farm : The Next Stage in the Pozières Fight.**  
Looking towards Pozières, which is about a mile away beyond the crest.



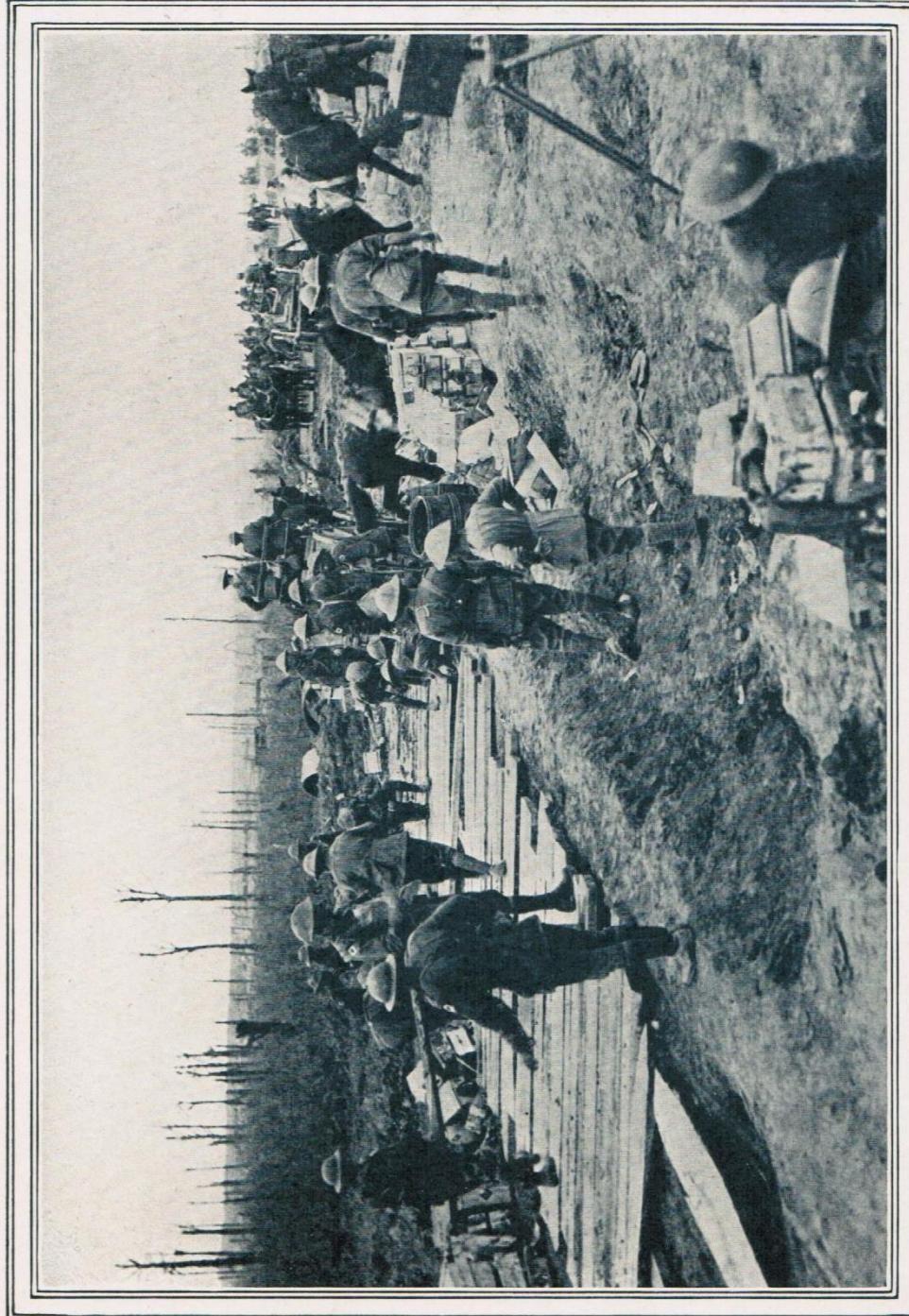
The Main Street of Pozières from Centreway Trench.



Machine-gunner crews coming out past Casualty Corner : Contalmaison in the distance.



Ammunition Wagons galloping past the Long Guns in Sausage Valley.



Australian Pioneers construct a Roadway while the Battle is proceeding.



Communications must be kept up at all costs, and these men are seen going to run out New Lines during the Battle of Zonnebeke.



The Church at Pozières.

## Appendix 5: The Grim Reaper Abroad and at Home.

### PART 1: Official Records Search for WA 12<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcement Soldiers

#### Introduction

With access to their Service Records it is not difficult to identify the soldiers who died whilst serving. Fifteen of the original 70 Western Australian enlistees of the 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Bn Reinforcement Unit died in Europe, as well as the Western Australian ‘escorting officer’, Lt Francis Bailey, who died in the attack on Mouquet Farm in that disastrous early September 1916 battle, which started with the Pozieres attack in July.

Fromelles and Pozieres were the first two battles in France in which Australia’s casualty toll was appalling. There were to be heavy losses in other battles, but these two were the worst. And to repeat Carlyon: (1)

*“Some 61,700 Australians didn’t come home.... The wounded ran to 155,000, or about half the 324,000 men who served overseas, and this figure excludes a large number who were gassed but did not seek treatment and spent the rest of their lives coughing and scratching. The Australian casualty rate was the highest among the British Empire forces. Perhaps one-quarter of the original force of about 30,000 that left Australia in 1914 had survived...The casualties were still being counted during the 1930s. By then another 60,000 had died from wounds or illness caused by the war.”*

There are some sources of information about when and where the survivors of our ‘70’ died, and I have been able to track most, but not all, of them down. What I have found is set out below. I was surprised that many lived to relatively ripe old ages and had not been part of Carlyon’s 60,000 dying in Australia of wounds and illness by the 1930s.

What is beyond the scope of this study is the unfolding challenging experiences that the returning soldiers faced; from the economic ups and

downs of the 1920s, the depression and feeble economy of the 1930s, WW2 (in which many WW1 soldiers served in Australian based units), the Cold War, Korean War, Malaysian Emergency, Vietnam War, the 1960s boom, the general prosperity of the 1970s and 1980s and so on.

A telling flavour of the inter-war decades is contained in George Johnston's autobiographical book "My Brother Jack", first published in 1964 (2). The narrator Davy talks of convalescing men ('the derelicts of war') whom his mother, a nurse who had served overseas during the war, brings to their home, and what post-war conditions were like. He tells us how his brother Jack and himself, as well as putting up with an abusive returned soldier father (the boys had been left in the care of their grandmother for the war), had to give up their bedroom due to the:

*“...constant presence in our house of all the derelicts of war whom mother brought home to stay, since we had been turned out of our room, and for years we shared a makeshift bed on the floor of the sleep-out, which was really only a section of the back veranda partitioned off by flywire screens and a lot of damp ferns. But there must have been a great deal of this sort of thing at the time —being turned out of beds and sleeping in provisional rooms, I mean. Not only in our house or our suburb, but everywhere. All over the world.”*

*“There was a lot of mess to be cleaned up in those years of 1919 and 1920, after the war and the Spanish influenza: the bodies of the dead to be located and the great cemeteries set up, and all those military hospitals in France and Flanders and Britain and Italy to be cleaned out of colonial troops so that there would be space in which to try and heal the indigenous maimed. Back to Melbourne then the hospital ships and transports were bringing sick and wounded Anzacs by the thousands, and in the big military hospital where mother worked temporary wards were added to temporary wards and beds were shifted out on to verandas or even crowded into hastily erected canvas marquees....Even so, things finally got to such a pass that any on the patients who seemed capable of existing on their pensions in the civilian world outside were quickly discharged and repatriated to make room for the newcomers. So there were quite a few disabled men, still pretty infirm, who suddenly found themselves demobilised and alone and helpless outside the army organisation which for four years had enveloped every second of their*

*activities, and with no place to go. These were the ones mother brought to our house.....”*

*“And it went on for years. There was no corner of the house....that was not littered with the inanimate props of that vast, dark experience, no room that was not inhabited by the jetsam that the Somme and the Marne and the salient at Ypres and the Gallipoli beaches had thrown up.”*

Some twenty years later, Jack, who has enlisted for WW2, ended up as a result of a training accident, in the same hospital his mother had previously worked in. He tells his wife and Davy:

*“...when we were little nippers we used to come here on Sundays to flog post-cards for the Red Cross. We'd go all round the wards – you know they don't look much different from the way I remember 'em.....do you know there are blokes still here from then. There's a couple of old jokers in this ward, up at the end there, they've been stuck in this place twenty-bloody-two years!”*

Well you get the idea. No doubt conditions for many, especially those without immediate family, were harsh and if you took up a soldier settlement scheme farm, very harsh. But soldier settlement scheme injustices have been done to death and as none of our chaps seemed to have succumbed to that folly we will ignore it.

Having said that, short of contacting surviving relatives, again beyond the scope of this research, there is precious little information on how the returning soldiers earned a living. Some information has come to light in Death and Funeral notices and this is included below.

The cause of death is also a vexing issue - was death war-caused or war-related, or some other factor? For many the answer probably lies in the files of the Department of Veterans Affairs, previously called the Repatriation Commission or Repatriation Department.

Many of the soldiers seem to have died in war veteran hospitals, but that in itself really does not tell us much, as they were returned servicemen anyway with a right to be treated in such hospitals.

Finally, there are some soldiers who have taken all their secrets to the grave, and have not left traces of their life that I have been able to find. No doubt there are families around who know exactly what happened to grand-father John or Great Uncle Fred and perhaps this book will spur them to share that information.

Anyway after a number of years of, at times frustrating, research, I'll call it a day.

And to my 70 soldiers, good luck and thanks to all of you. I'm sorry you went through it and I am proud to have known you, even from this distance in time.

## The Last Post

### 1. 3341 Sgt McCULLY James Died aged approx. 64 years

Born Glasgow Scotland, NOK mother Mrs Jane McCully of 3 Ballarat Street, West Perth. At Aug 15 he was aged 23 9/12 (3). Therefore born ~ 1892 (I use ' ~ ' to mean approximately).

Discharged early January 1918, medically unfit (ears).

WA BDM: married Thelma E CUMMINS registration Perth 443/1932.

Repat 'flimsy' (4) on service record dated 27 June 1927 Ref Perth R5336.

WA BDM (5) Death: James McCULLY, 63 yo, (*Born approximately 1893*) father James, mother Jane, Perth district deaths registration 1956.

Death Notices: The West Australian (6) 4 October 1956 – died on 3rd October 1956, late of 81 Dalkeith Road, Nedlands WA, formerly of 12<sup>th</sup> Bn 1<sup>st</sup> AIF and Jenkins Spring Works, Adelaide Terrace, husband of Thelma, father of Robert and Donald, grandfather of 2.

Funeral: Presbyterian Cemetery, Karrakatta.

2. **3342 Lt NORMAN Percy**  
**KIA 26 years**

Name: NORMAN, PERCY  
Initials: P  
Nationality: Australian  
Rank: Second Lieutenant  
Regiment/Service: Australian Infantry, A.I.F.  
Unit Text: 52nd Bn.  
Age: 26  
Date of Death: 28/03/1917  
Additional information: Son of John and Eliza Ann Norman, of Albany Post Office, Western Australia.  
Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead  
Grave/Memorial Reference: VIII. B. 18.  
Cemetery: [QUEANT ROAD CEMETERY, BUISSY](#)

Source: The details for Lt Percy and the other 14 who died overseas have been extracted from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission web site.

3. **3343 Bombardier BROADLEY George Stanley**  
**DOW 22 years**

Name: BROADLEY, GEORGE STANLEY  
Initials: G S  
Nationality: Australian  
Rank: Gunner  
Regiment/Service: Australian Field Artillery  
Unit Text: 112th Howitzer Battery. 12th A.F.A. Bde.  
Age: 22  
Date of Death: 23/03/1918  
Service No: 3343  
Additional information: Son of James Herbert and Ada Mary Ellen Broadley, of Burt St., Perth, Western Australia.  
Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead  
Grave/Memorial Reference: II. B. 25.  
Cemetery: [OUTERSTEENE COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION, BAILLEUL](#)

4. **3345 Cpl HAY Thomas Egbert**  
KIA 31 years

Name: HAY, THOMAS EGBERT  
Initials: T E  
Nationality: Australian  
Rank: Corporal  
Regiment/Service: Australian Infantry, A.I.F.  
Unit Text: 52nd Bn.  
Date of Death: 04/09/1916  
Service No: 3345  
Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead  
Memorial: [VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MEMORIAL](#)

WA BDM: married Lilian Muriel FERGUS - Perth registration 415/1910.

5. **3344 Sgt BOWER Walter Thomas**  
Died aged 86 years

Born Epping Victoria, NOK father David John Bower of 87 Monger Street, West Leederville WA. At Aug 15 was aged 21 4/12 therefore born ~ 1894. Wounded, part of arm amputated. Discharged May 1919.

WA BDM: married Mildred LAWFORD Perth registration 774/1920.

Service Record: Letter from Commonwealth Repatriation Department (West Aust. Branch) requesting service details; dated 6 June 1962, Ref M6271.

WA Karrakatta Cemetery Search (7): late of Nedlands, died aged 86 years on 3 February 1981, interred Crematorium Rose Gardens.

Death Notice: The West Australian 4 February 1981, died peacefully 3rd February 1981 at Hollywood Village Hospital, husband of Mildred for over 60 years, in his 87<sup>th</sup> year, uncle to many.

Funeral Notice: late of McLaren & Stewart Chartered Accountants and 12/52<sup>nd</sup> Battalions 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, service at Crematorium Chapel Karrakatta.

6. **3346 L/Cpl AINLEY Fred Wilfred MSM**  
**Died aged 89 years**

Born Ballarat Victoria, NOK father of Cardigan Terrace Jolimont WA. At Aug 15 was aged 25 7/12. Born 23 November 1889 – see WW2 below. Married in England to Elsie Gertrude Shaw April 1919. Discharged November 1919. Enlisted Citizen Military Forces WW2 (8) at Claremont WA on 20 April 1942. Service No. W78152, DOB, 23 November 1889, NOK Elsie Ainley. No other details.

No Repatriation correspondence on service file.

WA Karrakatta Cemetery Search: late of Attadale, died aged 89 years on 19 April 1979, interred Crematorium Rose Gardens.

Death Notice: The West Australian 20 April 1979, died April 18, husband of Elsie (deceased), father of Bob, Alec and Phyllis (both deceased), grandfather of 2, aged 89 years.

Funeral Notice: late of 7/425 Canning Highway Attadale WA, Anglican Service at Karrakatta Crematorium Chapel. Worthy Brother of Lodge of Service No. 135 WAC (West Aust Chapter?).

7. **3347 Pte ALLAN John Alexander**  
**Died aged 79 years**

Born Glasgow, Scotland, NOK sister Jane Allan of Main Street, West Wemyas, Galic Scotland. At Aug 15 aged 21 7/12. Born ~ 1894.

*Probably the John Allan (born 1894 Scotland, aged 20, farm hand) who migrated to Australia aboard steamship "Australind", leaving London 28 February 1914 and arriving Fremantle 63 days later. (West Australian immigration records)*

Discharged October 1916, medically unfit – severe synovitis both knees, no information whether granted war pension or not. Did not leave Egypt for France.

WA BDM: no record of a marriage. Death: John A ALLAN Perth rego 1951. Not correct person.

Service Record: 'Where are my Medals?' letter dated 24 August 1921: address "S S Leuaka", c/o Australasian United Steam Navigation Co. Ltd, Sydney, NSW.

Service Record: Communication dated 3 November 1949 from Commonwealth Department of Repatriation, Sydney NSW seeking service details, no reference given.

NSW BDM death certificate: John Alexander ALLAN engineer aged 79 years, DOD 11 August 1972 at St George Hospital Kogarah (Sydney) late of 30 Ann Street, Arncliffe, born Kirkcaldy Scotland, in Australia 50 years, no details on father or mother, married Redfern NSW aged 26 years to Lillian Ball (NSW BDM John A Allan married Lillian Ball Sydney registration 14561/1921), 3 living children Betty (49 years), Gordon (47 years) – who died 14 May 1997 see SMH 17 May 1997, late of Eastwood. husband of Josie, father of John and Jane, and Patricia (45 years). Informant G A Allen son of 7 Walsh Street, Eastwood, interred Church of England Lawn Cemetery, Rookwood (Sydney).

Death Notice: SMH 14 August 1972, John.....late of 30 Ann Street, Arncliffe and 18<sup>th</sup> Infantry (sic), 13<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, husband of Lillian, father of Betty, Don and Pat, grandfather of John and Jane Allan.

Funeral Notice: SMH 15 August 1972 – no additional information.

*With regard to the war record in the Death Notice John went from 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion (part of the 13<sup>th</sup> Brigade) in early March 1916, then to hospitals in Egypt and then to Australia in July 1916 for October 1916 invalidity discharge. "18<sup>th</sup> Infantry" should either be 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion or 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion.*

8. **3348 Cpl ALLEN Horace Bersford**  
KIA ~ 26 years

Name: ALLEN, HORACE BERESFORD  
Initials: H B  
Nationality: Australian  
Rank: Corporal  
Regiment/Service: Australian Infantry, A.I.F.  
Unit Text: 52nd Bn.  
Date of Death: 04/09/1916  
Service No: 3348  
Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead  
Memorial: [VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MEMORIAL](#)

9. **3349 Pte BICKERSTETH Robert**  
KIA 33 years

Name: BICKERSTETH, ROBERT  
Initials: R  
Nationality: Australian  
Rank: Private  
Regiment/Service: Australian Infantry, A.I.F.  
Unit Text: 42nd Bn.  
Date of Death: 12/08/1918  
Service No: 3349  
Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead  
Memorial: [VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MEMORIAL](#)

10. **3350 L/Cpl BOLLARD Maurice Montgomery**  
Died aged 60 years

Born Newcastle NSW, NOK mother Mrs Alice W Bolland of 140 Raglan Road, South Perth WA. At August 15 aged 23 6/12 Born ~1891. WIA leg amputated 1918. Discharged July 1918.

WA BDM: married Queenie C L LEDGER Perth registration 974/1923.

Letter dated 5 February 1951 to Commonwealth Repatriation Commission Perth with service details, Ref R 4540.

From 'war grave' Plaque Photograph Karrakatta Cemetery WA:  
"3350 Lance Corporal M M Bolland 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 5<sup>th</sup> November 1961 aged 69.  
Beloved husband of Queen. Father of Keith and John" (9).

**11. 3351 Lt BOUCHER Herbert William  
Died aged 83 years**

Born Chelton (?) Victoria. At Aug 15 aged 25 yo, NOK father Joseph William Boucher and mother Clara of Chelton Victoria. Born ~ 1890. Discharged medically unfit March 1918 with disability pension of 60 shillings per fortnight from 5 April 1918.

WA BDM: married Eileen V TAYLOR in 1918 (Perth registration 278/1918).  
An Eileen BOUCHER died Perth, registration 2530/1949.

Repatriation Commission Sydney request for records 22 August 1938, Ref 95116 or R9546.

Victoria BDM (10) Death Certificate: Herbert William BOUCHER died 1974 (no age given) registration number 10457 (father Joseph William B and mother Clara Louise Williamson). First wife EV Taylor, second wife Constance Williamson – married Campbelltown, NSW when aged 48 years.

Death Notices: "The Age" 13 May 1974, on May 12<sup>th</sup> at Mornington Victoria, TPI (totally and permanently incapacitated) of 41 Hampton Street Mornington, husband of Constance nee Williamson (Note: 2<sup>nd</sup> wife, first wife Eileen Vera nee Taylor), aged 83 years, late of 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, father of Geoff, Margot and John, grand-father of 8, great grand-father of 2.

Funeral Notice: Church of England Service Queen Street Mornington, cremation at the Necropolis Springvale.



12. 3352 Pte BRIDGER Hugh  
Died aged 79 years

Born Hillston NSW, NOK father John Bridger of Newcastle Street Perth WA.  
At Aug 15 aged 24 9/12. Born ~ 1891. Discharged with disability pension  
June 1917, reduced to 15 shillings a fortnight from 20/12/1917, medically unfit  
with pneumonia and pleurisy.

WA BDM: married Myrtle M HUNT Perth registration 578/1917.

Department of Repatriation documents request 29 May 1930, no reference  
number.

RSL WA "Last Post", Listening Post May 1970 (11), died March 1970.

Death Notices The West Australian 9 March 1970, died 6 March 1970 at RGH, Hollywood, husband of Myrtle, father of Joan, Hugh, Verna and Bob, grandfather of 13 and great grand-father of 1.

Funeral Notice: The West Australian 9 March 1970, late of 27A Manjaway Way, Nollamara, formerly of the Claremont Post Office and the 11<sup>th</sup> Bn 13<sup>th</sup> Machine Gun Company 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, Anglican Service at Karrakatta Crematorium Chapel.

**13. 3353 Pte BROWN Claude John Holmes**  
**Died aged 75 years**

Born West Perth West Australia, NOK father John Brown and mother Jessie Brown of Dwyer Street West Perth. At Aug 15 aged 21 yrs.  
Born ~ 1894. Discharged 1919.

Captured and made POW in Germany April 1917 and repatriated to England December 1918.

WA BDM: no marriage recorded. There is something of a mystery re Claude's married life. His 1969 Death Notice described him as the husband of the late Ada Brown; which is not an easy name to trace. There are two NSW marriages for the name Claude J H Brown:

(i) NSW registration 11382/1928 Claude J H Brown married Ada STEPHENS at Rockdale. I found 9 no Electoral Roll entry for the newly-weds in Sydney.

(ii) NSW registration 1257/1935 Claude J H Brown married Phyllis E R HARRIOTT at Bungendore (no NSW death registration to 1978, no electoral roll entries).

*Note: So the possibilities are (i) neither 'Claude' is our man or (ii) only one our man. On the basis of his Death Notice below I am assuming the first marriage is 'our Claude'.*

Service record correspondence: (1) Request for copy of discharge June 1935 address Caroline Street Redfern NSW (2) Statutory Declaration 22 June 1935 same address (3) 15 January 1942 medal inquiry address 171 Halifax Street, Adelaide, SA.

Repatriation Department Adelaide request for records 3 July 1962, Ref M39134.

Vets Affairs (12): DOD 16 April 1969, South Australia. Aged ~ 75 years(?).

Death Notice: "The Advertiser" 18 April 1969, died April 16 at the Repatriation General Hospital, husband of late Ada Brown, father of Jess, Joy and Joe, 8 grandchildren, aged 72 years, late 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion 1<sup>st</sup> AIF.

Funeral Notice: late of 3 Ellen Street Richmond SA, privately conducted funeral on April 18 at the WA Norman Chapel, Centennial Park Crematorium, Adelaide.

**14. 3354 Cpl BUCHANAN Robert Charles MM and Bar  
Died aged 85 yrs.**

Born Ipswich Suffolk England, NOK father Francis Taylor Buchanan of 27 Leake Street North Perth WA. Mother Ada Harriett Buchanan. At Aug 15 aged 20 10/12 Born ~ 1895 Discharged July 1919.

WA BDM: married Dora HUNTINGTON Perth registration 7/1924.

Repatriation Commission Perth request for records 29 November 1951, Ref R15066.

Death Notices: The West Australian 7 April 1980, MM and Bar, 4<sup>th</sup> Division Signals, 1st AIF, former Registrar of Titles, on 4<sup>th</sup> April, aged 85 years, husband of Dora, father of Jim, Robert (deceased) and Don, numerous grandchildren.

Funeral Notice: late of 24 Edward Street, Nedlands Western Australia, Crematorium Chapel Karrakatta, Anglican Service.

**15. 3355 Pte BUCK Felix George  
Died aged 26 years**

Born Bunbury Western Australia. Father Mr George Richard Buck of Busselton WA. At Aug 15 aged 21 11/12 Born ~ 1893.

Discharged May 1917 medically unfit with shell shock and neurasthenia.

Pension from 22/5/1917 of 45 shillings per fortnight, reduced to 30/- from 20/12/1917.

WA BDM: no marriage record, assume never married.

Note on Service Record dated 18/8/1924: "Died since discharge 1924".

WA BDM: death of Felix G BUCK, registration district Sussex, number 10/1920. Busselton Family History Society Website: died 22 May 1920 and buried in Busselton Pioneer Cemetery in a now unmarked grave.

Family Information: from his niece Val McDonald of Busselton WA. - Felix (known as Sonny) died accidentally from a gunshot wound, the death being subject to a Coronial Inquiry.

Accidental Death: report in "South Western News" 28 May 1920.

Coroner's Report: report in "South Western News" 4 June 1920. Verdict was death from a gunshot wound on or about the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May (1920), the result of an accident, self-inflicted.

There was a brother Percy who served with the 44<sup>th</sup> and 51<sup>st</sup> Battalions who, according to Val, met an untimely death as a result of his wounds.

### **2143 Pte Alexander Percy Buck**

Enlisted 30 March 1916. NOK father George Richard Buck of Jarrah Street Bunbury, 4 July TOS with 4<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 51<sup>st</sup> Battalion. January 1917 suffered GSW face, (classed as 'mild' but fractured skull).

Later accidentally wounded in foot. Discharged medically unfit GSW face 8 November 1918. Repat correspondence 1923/24.

WA BDM registration of death Wellington District No. 119/1923.

16. 3356 Sapper BURGESS Leonard  
Died aged 74 years

Note: Cemetery Information records a middle name of **Sylvester**.

Born Perth West. Australia, NOK father Edward Thomas James Burgess of 97 Edward Street Perth WA. At Aug 15 aged 23 4/12 Bn ~ 1892. Discharged May 1918 medically unfit for general service, fit for home service, with defective vision aggravated by conditions in Egypt.

WA BDM: married Clara G MUTTERAM Perth registration 539/1923.

Repatriation 'flimsy' on file dated 13 December 1926, possible Perth Ref C1149.

Death Notices: The West Australian 7 October 1966, aged 74 on October 5th at Hollywood Repatriation Hospital, father of Betty and Ron (no mention of their mother).

Funeral Notice: late of 103 Glendower Street, West Perth, and the Swan Brewery and 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion (?) (Note: service record shows 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion transferred to Signals) AIF, Anglican Service at Crematorium Chapel Karrakatta.

17. 3357 Sapper CALDER James  
Aged 79 years

Born Inverness Scotland, NOK father James Calder and mother Christina Calder of Mary Street North Fremantle WA. At Aug 15 aged 22 11/12. Born 1892. Discharged July 1919.

WA BDM: married Susan McLOUGHLIN Fremantle registration 64/1926.

Repatriation Department Perth request for records 6 January 1961, Ref. M15069.

RSL WA: 'Last Post' Listening Post February 1972.

Death Notices: The West Australian 18 November 1971, at his residence, husband of Susan, father of Jock and Joan, grandfather of 5.

Funeral Notice: late of 2 Talbot Place Bentley WA, late of Fraser Street, Bicton WA and 12<sup>th</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> Battalions, 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, Crematorium Chapel Fremantle, Congregational service.

**18. 3358 later 8807A Driver CAPLE Frank Horace  
Aged 65 years**

Born Fremantle West. Australia, NOK (i) father William Caple of Fishers Avenue South Fremantle WA and (ii) wife Edith Ivy Caple 48 Herbert Street South Fremantle. At Aug 15 aged 24 6/12 Born 1891.

WA BDM: married Edith I LESTRANGE Fremantle registration 190/1915.

Discharged June 1918 medically unfit, severe fracture arm from gunshot wound. Disability pension granted June 1918, 31/- per fortnight.

Repatriation Department 'flimsy' 23 February 1956, Ref. R7850.

WA BDM: Frank Horace CAPLE Fremantle registration of death 1956 aged 65 yrs (Bn ~1891).

Death Notices: The West Australian Tuesday 10 April 1956, on 8 April at Fremantle Hospital, of 396 South Terrace South Fremantle, husband of Edith, father of Allan, aged 65 years.

Funeral: late of 1<sup>st</sup> AIF and State Electricity Commission Fremantle, interred Anglican portion Fremantle Cemetery.

**19. 3359 Driver COOMBE William Henry  
Aged 75 years**

Born Clunes Victoria, NOK father John Henry Coombe of 76 Brisbane Street Perth WA. Aug 15 aged 22 yo. Born ~ 1893. Discharged June 1919.

WA BDM: see below: no record of WA marriage, no Australian electoral roll entries before 1931 for either William Henry or Nellie Josephine Coombe (see below). Only child Kenneth William Coombe WA BDM born 1931 - Perth registration 59/1931. For my marriage statistics I have assumed their relationship started between 1926 and 1931, possibly overseas.

WW2 enlistment at Cunderdin WA service number W94183, DOB 28 July 1983, NOK Nellie Coombe. No other details.

Department of Repatriation Perth request service details 27 February 1962, Ref. M11670.

RSL WA: "Last Post" Listening Post August 1969.

Death Notices: The West Australian 8 May 1969, on 7 May 1969 at RPH, late of 204 Belmont Avenue, Kewdale WA, husband of Nell, father of Ken. The West Australian 11 August 1973 (same address) Nellie Josephine Coombe died 10 August 1973, buried Catholic Lawn Cemetery Karrakatta. The West Australian 11 July 2006 death notice for Kenneth William Coombe (no children) 75 years old, died Como WA.

Funeral Notice: formerly of PMG (Postmaster General's) and 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, service at Catholic Lawn Cemetery, Karrakatta.

**20. 3360 Pte COPPIN James M M  
Died aged 90 years**

Born Brighton Sussex England, NOK father William John Coppin of 17 King Street Brighton England. At Aug 15 aged 24 5/12.  
Born ~ 1891. Discharged January 1920.

WA BDM: possible marriage to Beryl HEDLEY Perth registration 534/1919. No WA death record for John or Beryl. Comment: James Coppin is a relatively common name and given our soldier's 1920 discharge date a 1919 marriage is unlikely.

Repatriation Commission Sydney request for service record 15 July 1953, Ref. C87048.

Vets affairs: died 16 March 1982, NSW. Approx. 90 years old.

Death Notice: Sydney Morning Herald 20 March 1982 "COPPIN James, March 16 1982 at his War Veterans Home Narrabeen, late of Long Jetty. A memorial service will be held in The Entrance Anglican Church Sunday March 21 at 7.00pm. Privately cremated." (no family details)

For my Chapter 9 statistics I have assumed James never married.

**21. 3361 Sapper CORNISH Frederick William M M  
Aged 74 years**

Born Ballarat Victoria, NOK father William John Cornish of Argyle Street Leederville WA. At Aug 15 aged 19 6/12. Born ~ 1896. Discharged July 1919. Not wounded.

WA BDM: married Doris A BLACKMORE Perth registration 1179/1920.

WW2 enlisted Wembley Park, WA. Service number W69369. DOB 3 January 1896, NOK Doris Cornish. No other details.

Repatriation Department Perth letter requesting service details dated 9 July 1962, Ref. M15078.

RSL WA: "Last Post", Listening Post December 1971, died September 1971, 4<sup>th</sup> Division Signals Corps.

Funeral Notices: The West Australian 22 September 1971, died 20 September at home, husband of Dot, father of Geoff, Keith (deceased), Gordon, Audrey and Roy, grandfather of 12.

Funeral Notices: The West Australian 22 September 1971, late of 15 Joseph Street, West Leederville WA, 4<sup>th</sup> Division Signal Company, 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, Methodist Service at Karrakatta Crematorium Chapel, member of Leederville Bowling Club, Temperance RA Chapter No. 19 and Excelsior Lodge N. 61 WAC (late treasurer).

22. 3362 Pte CORMISH Reginald Henry  
DOW 25 years

Name: CORMISH, REGINALD HENRY  
Initials: R H  
Nationality: Australian  
Rank: Lance Corporal  
Regiment/Service: Australian Infantry, A.I.F.  
Unit Text: 52nd Bn.  
Date of Death: 09/09/1916  
Service No: 3362  
Additional information: Son of Charles and the late Ada Kiddell Cornish, of 44, St. Leonard's Avenue, West Leederville, Western Australia.  
Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead  
Grave/Memorial Reference: X. C. 16A.  
Cemetery: [ETAPLES MILITARY CEMETERY](#)

23. 3363 Cpl CORMISH Wilfred John MBE  
Died aged 76 years

Awarded MBE (Civil List) 1 January 1967 in recognition of service to migrants as welcoming officer of the Methodist Church migration committee, WA Branch – see report from The West Australian 2 January 1967.

RSL WA: "Last Post", Listening Post February 1970, died Nov. 1969.

Death Notice: The West Australian 1 December 1969, died 29 November 1969 at Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital, husband of Doris, father of Joan and Ron, grandfather of 5.

Funeral Notices: The West Australian 2 December 1969, late of 13 College Road Claremont, formerly of Northam and late 12/52<sup>nd</sup> Bn 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, Methodist

**Mr W. J. Cornish,  
M.B.E.**

**Wilfrid John Cornish, M.B.E.** has for eight years been the welcoming officer of the Methodist Church migration committee, W.A. branch, responsible for meeting incoming migrants, helping them to find accommodation and employment, and giving advice on migration.

He has also been W.A. delegate to the church's federal migration committee.



*From The West Australian Monday 2 January 1987*

Brother of Reginald above. Born St Arnaud Victoria, NOK father Charles Cornish of St Leonards Avenue West Leederville WA. At Aug 15 aged 22 6/12. Born ~ 1893. Discharged December 1918 medically unfit for service.

WA BDM: married Doris M STEPHENS Perth registration 995/1921.

Service Record: 'Medals letter' dated 4 March 1954, address 13 College Road Claremont WA.

No Repat letter.

Service Stirling Highway Claremont at the Karrakatta Crematorium Chapel. Also notices from Golden West Rose Croix Chapter 163, Swanbourne RAC No. 45, 12/52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Association and Avon Lodge No. 12 WAC.

**24. 3364 Lt CREECH William Frank Bernard  
Died aged 83 yrs**

Born Melbourne, Victoria NOK (i) mother Louisa Mary Jessop of West Leederville WA (ii) wife Mrs Louise Waltina Creech of Cambridge Street Leederville WA. At Aug 15 aged 31 6/12. Born ~ 1884. Discharged 1919.

WA BDM: married Louisa W M RUSSELL Subiaco registration 71/1915.

Service Record: In 1922 applied for educational course. No other details.

Service Record: letter regarding replacement of certificate of discharge dated 7 October 1963 (approx. age 79 yrs).

Died 30 August 1966 (aged ~ 82 yrs), source letter from 51st Battalion AIF WA Association letter on Service Record. Also RSL WA "Last Post" Vol 45 No. 5.

Death Notices: The West Australian, 1 September 1966, "Bill" passed away suddenly at RPH, of 225 Cambridge Street Wembley (formerly of Perth Post Office and 1<sup>st</sup> AIF), husband of Louie, father of Kona and Trevor, 2 grandchildren, aged 83 years. Cremated Karrakatta, Anglican service.

There were a number of notices published, including the Partially Blinded Soldiers Association and Freemasons Lodge, Robbie Burns.

**25. 3365 Sapper DENTON Arthur Jacob  
KIA aged 26 years.**

Name:	DENTON, ARTHUR JACOB
Initials:	A J
Nationality:	Australian
Rank:	Sapper
Regiment/Service:	Australian Engineers
Unit Text:	4th Div. Signal Coy.
Age:	26
Date of Death:	05/12/1916
Service No:	3365
Additional information:	Son of Frank and Elizabeth Denton. Native of Tasmania.
Casualty Type:	Commonwealth War Dead
Grave/Memorial	
Reference:	II. D. 6.
Cemetery:	<a href="#">GUARDS' CEMETERY, LESBOEufs</a>

26. 3366 Pte EAGLETON Albert Henry  
KIA 25 years.

Name: EAGLETON, ALBERT HENRY  
Initials: A H  
Nationality: Australian  
Rank: Private  
Regiment/Service: Australian Infantry, A.I.F.  
Unit Text: 52nd Bn.  
Age: 25  
Date of Death: 11/08/1916  
Service No: 3366  
Additional information: Son of Robina Celia Emma Heron Watts (formerly Eagleton), of 306, Lord St., Perth, Western Australia.  
Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead  
Memorial: [VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MEMORIAL](#)

27. 3367A Gunner FAIRWEATHER Groves Samuel  
Died (Suicide see Trove search) aged 32 years

Born Devon England, NOK mother Fanny Louisa Fairweather of Devonshire England. At Aug 15 aged 20 1/12. Born ~ 1895. Discharged Jan 1920.

WA BDM: probably married as Samuel Groves FAIRWEATHER to Emma A BURDEN Northampton registration 2/1920.

There is no death record for Emma FAIRWEATHER before 1962, there are 3 Northampton birth registrations (with no details of parents shown) registration 23/1920 Dennis K FAIRWEATHER (lost twins at birth 1957), registration 42/1922 Norman W FAIRWEATHER (no further record) and registration 27/1926 Noel L FAIRWEATHER (died Perth registration 402/1939).

No Repat letter. WA Karrakatta Cemetery Search: late of Midland Junction WA, died 10 July 1927 aged 32 years, buried Anglican Cemetery Karrakatta.

Funeral Notice: The West Australian 13 July 1927, formerly of 12<sup>th</sup> FAB (? First Australian Battalion) AIF and late of Midland Junction, interred Church of England portion of Karrakatta Cemetery. "Friends wishing to attend the service may proceed by the 11.45 o'clock train from Perth."

28. 3368 Bdr GILBERT Richard  
Died aged 83 years

Born Sydney NSW, NOK wife Ethel Victoria Gilbert of Barratt Street West Fremantle WA. At Aug 15 aged 26 3/12 Born ~ 1889 (service record contains statutory declaration dated 19 April 1966 giving DOB 11 April 1889). Discharged Oct 1918.

WA BDM: there is no WA registration of the marriage to Ethel.

Department of Repatriation Sydney letter 23 January 1933, Ref. R99984.

Service record: Alive 31 March 1966 (lost medals letter) approx. 77 years old, address 36 Hercules Street, Chatswood, NSW.

NSW BDM deaths to 1978 (13) – registration no. 1095/1973, of Summer Hill Sydney, aged 83 years (born ~ 1890).

Ryerson Index Death Notices Aust Newspapers (14): Richard Gilbert, formerly of Chatswood died 9/2/1973 see Sydney Morning Herald 10/2/1973.

Death Notice: SMH 10 February 1973, Richard GILBERT died at hospital after a long illness, formerly of Windsor gardens, Chatswood, father of Allan, 3 grandchildren. No wife named. RSL Funeral Notice: Petersham Branch.

29. 3369 Driver GORDON James Alexander  
KIA 22 years

Name:	GORDON, JAMES ALEXANDER
Initials:	J A
Nationality:	Australian
Rank:	Driver
Regiment/Service:	Australian Field Artillery
Unit Text:	11th Bde.
Age:	22
Date of Death:	03/10/1918
Service No:	3369

**Additional information:** Son of Mary Ritchie (formerly Gordon), of Popanyinning, Western Australia, and the late Allan Douglas Gordon.  
Native of South Australia.  
**Casualty Type:** Commonwealth War Dead  
**Grave/Memorial Reference:** II. C. 6.  
**Cemetery:** [BELLICOURT BRITISH CEMETERY](#)

**30. 3370 Sgt GRAHAM John Frederick**  
**Died aged 87 years**

Born Bayswater Western Australia, NOK father Charles Graham of Bayswater WA. At Aug 15 aged 22 6/12 Born ~ 1893. Discharged Sept 1919. Married Ethel Straker in England 20 March 1919.

Repatriation service record request February 1929, Ref. Perth R18849.

Web 'WA Obituaries' John Frederick GRAHAM died aged 87 yrs in 1980 (born~ 1893).

WA Karrakatta Cemetery Search: late of Cottesloe WA, died on the 24th of September 1980, aged 87 years, interred Crematorium Rose Gardens.

Death Notice: The West Australian 27 September 1980, died at Hollywood Repatriation Hospital Sept 24, husband of Ethel deceased, father of Madge, Geoff, Mel (deceased) and Pat grand-father of 7, great grand-father of 4, member of Swanbourne Bowling Club.

Funeral Notice: notification for relative and friends of private service at Crematorium Chapel Karrakatta on Friday 26 September 1980, late of 4 Balfour Street, Cottesloe WA.

**31. 3371 Driver GRENFELL William**  
**Died aged 58 years**

Born Cornwall England, NOK 12 yo daughter (he was a widower) Lilian, Lake Street, Trafalgar. At Aug 15 aged 35 3/12 Bn ~ 1880. Discharged April 1919.

Department of Repatriation Perth communication 22 May 1931, no ref.

WA BDM: no marriage registration, death Perth registration 1938.

Garden Family (15): Service Number 3371, Driver William GRENFELL, 12<sup>th</sup> Army FA Brigade died 1 November 1938. Therefore aged 58 years approx.

Death Notices: West Australian 4 November 1938, "Billie" died 1 November 1938, Perth, husband of Minnie, father of Lillian Jones, grandfather of 2, aged 61 years. Privately interred Methodist Cemetery, Karrakatta.

**32. 3372B Sgt HALE Rupert  
Died aged 63 years**

Born South Yarra Melbourne Victoria, NOK mother Mary Hale of Hay Street Perth WA. At Aug 15 aged 19 8/12. Born 3 October 1896 (see WW2). Discharged June 1919.

WA BDM: married Olive M BUCK Perth registration 188/1927.

WW2: service number W29301, enlisted Mt Hawthorn Perth WA on 31 October 1940, NOK Olive Hale, discharged 28 September 1942 as Sgt from 1 D BN. (? 1<sup>st</sup> Div. Battalion).

Repatriation Commission Perth: communications 9 October 1944 and 16 October 1950, Ref RX6528.

WA BDM Rupert HALE aged 63 (born approx. 1897) Perth rego district 1960, father William, mother Mary (correct mother re service record).

Death Notices: The West Australian 7 April 1960: died at home on 5 April 1960 at 78 Kalgoorlie Street Mt Hawthorn, husband of Olive Mary Hale, father of Rod, Keith and Max, 9 grandchildren

Funeral Notice: formerly 51<sup>st</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalions, Mass to be celebrated St Mary's Church Leederville, interred Catholic Cemetery Karrakatta, late of Boans Ltd (then a very large department store in Perth).

**33. 3373A Pte HALL Walter Vernon**  
**Died aged 77 years**

Born South Aust, NOK father Robert Hall of Echunga SA. At Aug 15 aged 30 11/12 Born 23 August 1884 (SA Birth Indexes – at the Echunga Diggings mother Margaret nee Porteous). Not wounded. Discharged July 1919. Believed to have married in SA, date unknown, to Olive Pearl Hall.

Repat letter Adelaide 30/11/1955, no reference.

South Aust Genealogy & Her Soc Cemetery Index Walter Vernon HALL – source date 1962.

Death Notice: “The Advertiser” (SA) Saturday 9 June 1962, on 8<sup>th</sup> June at Echunga, husband of Olive, father of Robert and Marjory, 7 grandchildren, aged 77 years. Late 1<sup>st</sup> AIF. Interred Echunga Public Cemetery.

**34. 3374 Driver HARVEY John**  
**Died aged 68 years**

Born Belfast Ireland, NOK wife Jane Harvey of Harwood Place Perth WA. At Aug 15 aged 35 6/12. Born ~ 1879. Discharged April 1919.

WA BDM: 2 possible registrations but no obvious marriage involving a ‘Jane’.

Repatriation Commission Perth: communication 19 September 1927 and 13 July 1928, Ref. R9757.

Garden Family: No 3374, Driver John Harvey 12th/52nd Battalion, died 15 May 1947 aged 68 years: Therefore born ~ 1879.

Death Notices: The West Australian 16 May 1947, John, late of 41 Roseberry Street, Jolimont and 12<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Batts 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, at Hollywood Hospital, Ward 13, husband of Jane Inglis, father of Grace and Jack, grandfather of 12, GGF of 2, aged 69 years.

WA Cemetery Search: Jane Inglis HARVEY died 15 June 1963 aged 84 years at Scarborough, buried Karrakatta Cemetery, Presbyterian Section Plot HA 0767.

Funeral Notices: interred Presbyterian Cemetery Karrakatta, "12<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Association", West Leederville/Wembley/Floreat Park RSL Sub-branch.

**35. 3375 Sgt HAYDON Lewis**  
**Died aged 76 years**

Born Hampstead Road London England, NOK mother Louisa Sarah Haydon of Leytin England. At Aug 15 aged 25 7/12. Born ~ 1890. Not wounded. Married Alice Ethel Sturtivant in UK September 1919. Discharged April 1920.

Service Record : Medal note 11 April 1927 Perth (no details).

Repatriation communication, Perth 11 April 1927, Ref 24772.

WA Karrakatta Cemetery Search: late of Mount Hawthorn WA, died 5 December 1966 aged 75 years, interred Crematorium Rose Gardens.

Death Notices: The West Australian 6 December 1966, on December 5, suddenly at his home, husband of Alice Ethel Haydon, one notice from Mr and Mrs Bowers (possibly soldier No. 5 above).

Funeral Notices: late of 68 Flinders Street Mt Hawthorn, late of Popanyinning and 12th Battalion AIF, Anglican Service Crematorium Chapel, Karrakatta, Mt Hawthorn RSL Sub-branch.

**36. 3376 L/Cpl HEEREY Francis Xavier**  
**Died aged 72 years**

Born Beaconsfield Tasmania, NOK mother Nora Heerey widow of Beaconsfield Tas. At Aug 15 aged 23 yo. Born 21 September 1891 (see below).

Discharged Aug 1920.

Possible Repat records inquiry 26 January 1927, Hobart no reference.

Victorian BDM: married Jean Eileen BRADY of Hawthorn Melbourne, registration 5691 of 1938.

Held seat in Tasmanian House of Assembly for Australian Labor Party 1937 and 1945.

From Web search: [www.parliament.tas.gov.au/history/tasparl/heereyf437.htm](http://www.parliament.tas.gov.au/history/tasparl/heereyf437.htm)

Surname: HEEREY

Given Names: Francis Xavier

Title and Honours: Mr

Qualifications:

Date and Place of Birth: 21 September 1891 –  
Beaconsfield, Tasmania

Date of Death: 15 March 1964 - Hobart, Tasmania

House of Assembly: (1) 20 February 1937

(2) 20 December 1945

Electorate: Denison

Party: ALP

Positions Held:

Minister: No

Date of Departure: (1) 13 December 1941

(2) 23 November 1946

Reason for Departure: (1) Defeated. (2) Defeated.

Comments: Elected second time by recount on death of Dwer-Gray. War diaries FX Heerey A Tasmanian's Story of the Great War published 2004 and held by Parliamentary Library.

Death Notice: "The Mercury" 16 March 1964, Funeral Notice 17 March 1964: died 15 March 1964 at a private hospital, Hobart, husband of Jean Eileen Heerey of 28A Pillinger Street, Hobart, father of Peter and Susan 5<sup>th</sup> son of Luke and Nora Heerey of Beaconsfield, late 52<sup>nd</sup> Bn, 1<sup>st</sup> AIF. Requiem Mass at St Joseph's Church, interred Cornelian Bay Cemetery.



37. 3377 Cpl HOPKINS John (Creswell) MM and Bar  
Died aged 75 years

Cemetery Record shows middle name of “Creswell”, not used at enlistment.

Born Melbourne Victoria NOK father David Hopkins of 89 Kimberley Street Leederville WA. At Aug 15 aged 21 7/12. Born ~ 1894. Discharged Aug 1919.

WA BDM: (i) a possible marriage to Ivy C H GUNST Perth registration 423/1920 (who died 22 July 1930 in child-birth, Perth registration 1224/1930, of Subiaco). Cemetery Search: Ivy Caroline Hope Hopkins and baby, buried Plot AO 0053 Anglican Section Karrakatta Cemetery. Child Gwyneth F HOPKINS born 1924 Perth registration 839/1924.

Death Notice: The West Australian 23 July 1930 “HOPKINS – on July 22, Ivy Caroline, of 269 Roberts Road, loving wife of Jack Hopkins, and loving mother of Gwyneth, daughter of Mr and Mrs S Gunst, late of Perth (WA) sister of Will (London), Eva, Mrs Livingston (Perth), Rude and Barney (Melbourne), Cyril. Child stillborn.”

(ii). No WA BDM record of a marriage to Alice before 1962. No WA BDM marriage for either Gwyneth or Joyce Hopkins before 1962.

Repatriation Department WA Branch letter 23 December 1960,  
Ref. M14295[R3].

WA Karrakatta Cemetery Search: late of West Leederville.

John's Death Notice: The West Australian 6 October 1969,  
husband of Alice, father of Joyce.

Funeral Notices: late of 85 Kimberley Street West Leederville, Presbyterian Service at Crematorium Chapel Karrakatta Cemetery, invitation to members of 12<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Association members.

Note: when Corporal Hopkins joined up and was discharged his parents were living at 89 Kimberley Street West Leederville – see excerpts from Australia's Fighting Sons of the Empire at the end of this Appendix. Later John and his wife Alice lived at 85 Kimberley Street West Leederville. Clearly the Hopkins had an attachment to this street.

Alice's Death and Funeral Notice: The West Australian 12 October 1971, Death of Alice Ethel Hopkins on October 10 at RPH, dearly loved mother of Joyce, mother in law of Ian ? (no mention of late husband John). Presbyterian funeral service at West Leederville church - late of 85 Kimberley Street, West Leederville, Crematorium Chapel Karrakatta. Cemetery Search aged 63 years, born ~ 1908. There is no obvious WA birth for a child with first names of 'Alice Ethel', but there were 13 'Alice E' little girls born in WA between 1907 and 1909. Which, if any, is our little Alice E. is not obvious, especially as the second Christian name is not shown in the search record.

**38. 3378 Cpl JONES James MM and Bar MBE  
(aka James Jones COLLINS)  
Died aged 87 years**

Born Perth WA. NOK father James Jones of 135 Parry Street, Perth WA. At Aug 15 aged 22 3/12. Born ~ 1893 (WW2 Service Record shows born 8 June 1895). Had been an apprentice for 2 years with Bunning Brothers Pty Ltd (timber merchants) on joining. Discharged June 1919.

WA BDM: married Henrietta NICOL Perth registration 158/1922.

Service record: Changed name by deed poll 1932 in Sydney to James Jones COLLINS

Awarded MBE for contribution to the 150 years of 'white' settlement celebration.

Applied 16/12/1941 to be war correspondent. Two address (i) 206B Bellevue Hill NSW and (ii) Entertainment Officer, Eastern Command (enlisted WW2 Paddington NSW, service number NX147535, NOK Henrietta Collins), Victoria Barracks, NSW (statutory declaration 16/12/1941).

Repat communication Sydney 25 March 1958, Ref. X251959.

Ryerson Index: James Jones Collins, died 18 May 1983 at Pindarra Hospital, Gold Coast, late of Surfers Paradise, SMH 19 May 1983 (approx. 87 years 11 months old).

Death Notice: SMH 19 May 1983, James Jones Collins, MM and Bar, MBE and TPI – died 18 May 1983, of Thornton Towers, Surfers Paradise, father of Douglas and Beryl, cremated Allambie Gardens. No wife named.

39. 3379 Pte JUDGE John Bertram  
Died aged 73 years

Born Geraldton WA, NOK (i) mother Mrs Janet Growden and (ii) sister Elsie Judge both of Nangeenan WA. At Aug 15 aged 27 2/12 so born ~ 1888 (understated age by 2 years – see below). Serious Court Martial and military imprisonment in France/UK for desertion September 1916. Various pardons and good service lead to normal discharge June 1919.

WA BDM: no record of a marriage.

No Repat record on service record.

WA Cemeteries Search: John Vernard (sic) Vandileur Judge, died 29 October 1959 aged 73 years (born approx. 1886) at Midland Junction WA. Ashes scattered over Rose Garden at Karrakatta Cemetery.

WA BDM: John Bernard Vandileur JUDGE. Registration Swan 137/1959 (Born approximately 1886), father John & mother Janet (correct mother re service record).

Electoral Roll: (i) 1949 Division of Swan, subdivision Guildford, John Bertram JUDGE of 22 Byers Road, West Midland, blacksmith's striker (no other person in this subdivision with surname of Judge). (ii) 1961 Division of Stirling, subdivision Guildford, John Bertram JUDGE of 52 Railway Parade, Midland, blacksmith's striker (no other person in this subdivision with surname of Judge). As John died in 1959, apparently without friends or family, there would appear to have been no one to alert the electoral authorities. Does no one remember this man but me?

I was unable to find a 'The West Australian' newspaper death or funeral notice for this death so the question is – is this our man? Working from first principles using official WA BDM information:

NOK 1: Janet HAYARD (later GROWDEN) married John Richard JUDGE at Geraldton in 1885.

5 children born –John Bernard Vandele 1886, Thomas Clement 1889, May Murchison 1891, Elsie 1894 and Robert Maidstone 1896.

1909 – John Judge (senior) died Geraldton WA

1914 - Janet Judge married Frederick Growden

1942 - Janet Growden died at Northam WA

NOK 2: Elsie Coraline JUDGE married Archibald S PRICE at East Coolgardie in 1920 registration 100/1920.

1958 - Archibald Stuart PRICE aged 87 yrs died Perth rego 1601/1958.

1962 - Elsie Coraline PRICE died Perth registration 1360/1962, father John R and mother Janet.

The J B V JUDGE who died 1959 had parents Janet and John R. Where the name Valdileur came from is a mystery. It was not used on his enlisting papers (no bloody wonder). On at least the balance of probabilities this represents the JUDGE family and Private John Bertram JUDGE was the first son.

Thomas, the second son, also enlisted:

From John's WW1 Service File: When she had not heard from her son John for a while (he was in a military jail doing 7 years) John's mother wrote to the military authorities, saying, amongst other things, her other son Tom had also not heard from his brother. Tom was the unfortunate **Private Thomas Clement Haywood JUDGE**, service number 1331, whose war record was:

Enlisted 15 July 1915, 26 6/12 years old, 'motor expert and station overseer' (turned out he had never really worked at all as most of his life his health was seriously affected by malaria contracted when quite young).

Allocated to 10<sup>th</sup> reinforcement 10<sup>th</sup> Light Horse as a signaller.

Got sick in middle-east at Abbassia – effects of malaria, weak heart, debility. Given a medical discharge and a pension May 1917.

From WA BDM married Vera B HEAL Fremantle registration 144/1918 and died Fremantle registration 88/1923, apparently without children. A rather sad life.

Youngest son Robert also enlisted and fared only a little better:

2878 Trooper **Robert Maidstone JUDGE**, farm hand, joined 17 April 1916 at 19 yrs 4 months, 5' 7.5", NOK mother, appointed 20<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> Light Horse on 22 July 1916. Served in many places in the desert campaign.

Discharged medically unfit 1 November 1919 after suffering a range of illnesses/hospitalisations: malaria, debility, tonsillitis, sand-fly fever, trachoma and VD (the latter requiring an 8 month course of treatment).

#### 40. 3380 Cpl KIDD Joseph Sowden MM Died aged 85 years

Born Sydney NSW, NOK father Harry Kidd of Leederville WA. At. Aug 15 aged 21 7/12. Born ~ 1894. Discharged Oct 1919.

WA BDM: married Ethel A RICHARDS Perth registration 747/1921.

Service Record: Medal letter 3 November 1924 of Baker Road Subiaco WA.

Repatriation Commission Perth communication dated 17 May 1955, Ref. R17583.

Service Record: Alive 3 April 1967 re medal application; address 17 Gregory Street, Wembley WA.

WA Karrakatta Cemetery Search: late of Subiaco, died 24 March 1979 aged 85 years, interred Garden of Remembrance EC Section.

Death Notices: The West Australian 26 March 1979, died March 24 at Repatriation hospital, husband of Ethel, father/in-law of Ron/Phyllis and Norm/Marie, grand-father of 9, great grand-father of 2.

Three Funeral Notices: late of Unit 2 179 Bagot Road Subiaco, formerly of Gregory Street Wembley, MM WW1, Methodist/Uniting Church Service Subiaco and then Crematorium Chapel Karrakatta, Pride of Leederville Lodge No 341 UAOD and Brethren of Excelsior Lodge No 61 WA esteemed past master.

41. 3381 Cpl KNEALE Bertram Hugh  
KIA 22 years.

Name:	KNEALE, BERTRAM HUGH
Initials:	B H
Nationality:	Australian
Rank:	Corporal
Regiment/Service:	Australian Infantry, A.I.F.
Unit Text:	4th Pioneers.
Date of Death:	01/09/1916
Service No:	3381
Casualty Type:	Commonwealth War Dead
Memorial:	<a href="#">VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MEMORIAL</a>

42. 3382 Driver LUNDGREN Oscar  
Died aged 65 years

Born Burnley Victoria, NOK mother Maria Lundgren c/o Fremantle Fire Station. At Aug 15 aged 22 6/12, born 6 March 1894 see WW2 below. Discharged June 1919.

WA BDM: married Emily E GARDINER Perth registration 71/1925.

Repat communication 31 July 1928, Ref. R11953 and medals letter 24 June 1929.

WW2 service number W31842, enlisted at Claremont WA on 30 November 1940, DOB 6 March 1894, NOK Ellen Lundgren, discharged 9 March 1944 as Lance Sergeant, posted to Detention Barracks.

WA BDM Oscar Rudolph LUNDGREN Perth rego 1960 aged 65 yo, (born ~ 1895); father August, mother Maria (correct mother re service record).

Death Notice: The West Australian 27 January 1960, on Jan 26 at Hollywood Hospital aged 65 years, late of 7 Kanimbla Road Bicton, husband of Emily (Nellie), father of May, Tom and Ernest, grandfather of four.

Funeral Notice: late of 51<sup>st</sup> Battalion 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, interred Anglican portion of Fremantle Cemetery from St John's Church Fremantle, late Committeeman of 51st Battalion Association.

**43. 3383A Cpl MACLEAN John Every  
Died aged 66 years**

Born Auckland New Zealand, NOK father Benjamin John Maclean of 17 Wright Street Highgate Hill WA. At Aug 15 aged 22 2/12.  
Born 8 May 1893, see WW2 below. Discharged June 1919.

WA BDM: married Winifred May BURTON Northam registration 35/1933.

WW2 service number W75615, enlisted at Bruce Rock WA on 12 April 1942, DOB 8 May 1893, NOK Winifred Maclean, Sergeant, no discharge date given, posted to 15 Battalion. Repatriation Commission request for documents March 1958, Ref. M11967.

Died Perth WA 1 January 1960 aged 66 years, worked at Rural and Industries Bank, held qualifications in accountancy. Death Notices: The West Australian 4 January 1960, died at his home, 5 Corbett Street Scarborough, husband of Win, father of Jessie and John, interred Anglican Section, Karrakatta Cemetery.

44. **3384 Driver MALMGREEN Ernest Edward**  
Died aged 60 yrs

Born Semaphore South Australia. NOK father Paul August Malmgreen, address unknown and mother Minnie Agnes Malmgreen of Maylands WA. At. Aug 15 aged 27 11/12 Born ~ 1887. Discharged May 1919.

WA BDM: (i) married Dora M KITCHENER Perth registration 501/1920 (died Swan registration 26/1921) and (ii) Edith M JOHNS Wellington registration 37/1928.

Service Record: No Repat communication.

WA BDM Ernest E MALMGREEN Perth registration 1947

Death Notice: The West Australian 26 February 1947, on February 25 at his late residence 14 Kennedy Street Maylands WA, husband of Edith Malmgreen, father of Mary and Peggy, no grandchildren mentioned, aged 60 years.

Funeral Notices: Methodist Cemetery Karrakatta, also notices from Australian Natives' Association, Artillery Comrades Association, Maylands Sub-Branch RSL – late 12<sup>th</sup> Bn, and 12<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Association

45. **3385 Cpl (Temporary Sgt) MARSHALL John Dunn MM**  
Murdered August 1942 aged 48 years.

Born Goodwood, South Aust. NOK father George Waddell Marshall of Riley Road Claremont WA. At Aug 1915 aged 21 yo Born ~ 1894. Discharged June 1919.

WA BDM: no record of a WA marriage.

Commonwealth Electoral Roll: Recorded "Fremantle" 1925, but not 1936. Was a member of Royal RAN Naval Reserve before 1915 so may have left Australia in a maritime capacity.

Father died 30 April 1938 (The West Australian 3 May 1938) at Cottesloe, WA husband of Margaret, father of George, Mollie, John and Nance, aged 67 years,

cremated Karrakatta. Mother died 6 July 1953 (The West Australian 9 July 1953) of 150 Adelma Road Dalkeith, mother of George, Mollie, Nance and the late John.

Department of Veterans' Affairs letter dated 16 October 2009: their record search showed a person of this name as a PNG civilian.

Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) search:

"Civilian John Dunn Marshall, civilian war dead who died age 47 on 29 August 1942, of Rabaul, New Britain. Son of George Waddell and Margaret Marshall. Died at Rabaul PNG. Remembered with honour. (Note Nationality shown as United Kingdom)."

The information on John's death (apparently he was still known as Jack as he was in Egypt in 1915) is sketchy. When WW2 broke out John was a customs service clerk as part of the PNG Rabaul administration. The Japanese began air raids against Rabaul in early January 1942. Most women and children had been evacuated in late 1941. Land attacks began 22 January 1942 and before a greatly superior force local resistance soon crumbled. Some massacres of civilians and captured troops followed.

Jack was part of a small group who hid out in the jungle, eventually 6 being captured in July 1942. By then almost all other captive civilian and military POWs – 1053 in all - had been loaded onto the Japanese ship Montevidea Maru for shipment to the Philippines. On 1 July 1942 this boat was sunk by an American submarine (Australia's greatest maritime disaster).

The group of 6 captives, of which Jack was one, arrived too late to go with the Montevidea Maru. They were 'executed' by the Japanese at the end of August 1942, it would appear because they refused to surrender when called on to do so. Only 4 or so civilians survived Rabaul, as well a few soldiers who escaped following the Japanese landing, and some nurses who were taken to Japan. The fate of those massacred after the landing or lost on the Montevidea Maru or executed/died as POWs was not known in Australia until after the war, but it was the few survivors who were able to tell the world what happened in Rabaul.

There is much feeling amongst many surviving family members that the Curtin Government abandoned the residents of Rabaul, including some 800 troops, who had been sent to protect them. There is also considerable pressure on the Government to find the sunken ship and declare it an official war grave.

A rather miserable and unexpected end to a decorated soldier who had survived WW1 unwounded.

John's brother, **George Steel MARSHALL**, served in the 44<sup>th</sup> Battalion and died in October 1966 (RSL WA "Last Post", Listening Post No.8 Vol 45).

The West Australian 4 November 1966, died 3 November, husband of Phyllis Rose Marshall of Garden Island, father of Steel and Joan, grandfather of 5, brother of Mollie and Nance (no mention of John), late of 44<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Presbyterian Service at Karrakatta Crematorium Chapel, Life Member of Claremont Yacht Club.

**46. 3386 Lt MASTERSON George Frederick**  
**Died aged 64 years**

Born Brunswick Melbourne Victoria, NOK father William Masterson. At Aug 15 aged 22 6/12, born 1 February 1893 see WW2 below. Discharged Sept 1919.

WA BDM: married Ruby J P TAYLOR Perth registration 1224/1920.

WW2 enlisted Surrey Hills Victoria on 21 April 1942, service number V363827, DOB 1 February 1893, NOK Ruby Masterson, discharged 31 October 1945 as Lieutenant, posting at discharge Asst. L D Corp HQ VDC (which might mean something to somebody).

Service Record: Application of 10 November 1943 for War Service Loan.

No Repat correspondence.

Victoria BDM: George Frederick MASTERSON died 1957 (no age given) rego no. 12838, father William, mother Edith Ross (service record records father William Masterson as NOK).

Death Notices: "The Age" 14 October 1957, died October 12<sup>th</sup> at 96 Glydon Road, Camberwell, Victoria, husband of Ruby, father of Joan and David, grandfather of 5.

Funeral Notice: Methodist Service, Methodist Church Toorak Road, South Camberwell, then to Spring Vale Crematorium.

**47. 3387 Pte MICHAEL David Gordon  
Alive 1939, see 'Trove Search' article for divorce, Part 2 p 324.**

Born Adelaide South Aust., NOK father John Joseph Michael c/o Adelaide Oval Adelaide SA. At Aug 15 aged 21 2/12. Born ~ 1894. Discharged medically unfit in January 1917 after serious illness in Egypt, no pension details.

WA BDM: Marriage - David G Michael married Doris E(lle) PAINTON Perth registration 19/1923 and birth of Geoffrey G(ordon) Michael Perth registration 495/1924.

Service Record: October 1924 letter to father's Adelaide Oval address returned to sender. Repat 'flimsy' 1 November 1928, Ref. Perth R5802.

Electoral Roll search: 1925 Division of Perth, sub-division of Maylands, Doris Ella MICHAEL, home duties and David Gordon MICHAEL, salesman, both of 51 Fourth Avenue Maylands. It would appear they separated for by 1931 Doris was still at this address, but David's electoral address was Division of Perth, sub-division of East Perth living at 179 Adelaide Terrace, salesman (no one else at this address with the MICHAEL surname). That is the last electoral entry that I could find for David Gordon Michael. Doris Ella Michael remained on the roll, being joined in the Perth electorate by her son Geoffrey Gordon Michael in 1949 and 1954.

No trace of death for David Gordon MICHAEL.

Death and Funeral notices: The West Australian 25 April 1973, Doris Ella Michael, aunt of 5 and beloved mother of Geoffrey, late of Home of Peace Subiaco, formerly of Arbordale, St Georges Terrace, Perth, Anglican service Karrakatta Crematorium. No mention of husband.

**48. 3388 L/Cpl MONCK Frank Ozmond**  
**Died aged 69 years**

Born Melbourne, Victoria, NOK wife Ethel Violet Monck of Nicholson Road Subiaco WA. At Aug 15 aged 24 yo. Born ~ 1891.  
Discharged March 1919, possibly as an invalid.

WA BDM: no marriage record found.

Service Record: Department of Repatriation Perth letter requesting service details, dated 24 July 1930, no reference number.

WA BDM: Frank Ozmond MONCK Perth rego 1960, aged 68 yrs (Bn ~ 1892)  
Father Louis, mother Sarah.

Service record note: deceased 7 March 1960. Aged ~ 69 yrs, source "CWGC"  
(Commonwealth War Graves Commission).

Death Notice: The West Australian 9 March 1960. On 7 March 1960 died at home peacefully, of 98 Angelo Street South Perth, late of WA Newspapers and 12<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalions 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, husband of Ethel, father of Rene, Ron, Norm and Don, grandfather of 4. Privately cremated.

**49. 3389 Pte McKINLAY Alan Stanley**  
**Probably died between 1954 and 1976.**  
**No trace of death.**

Born South Yarra Melbourne Victoria, NOK (1) father Thomas William McKinlay address unknown (2) brother Thomas George McKinlay of 9 Dorgan Street Perth WA. At Aug 15 aged 21 9/12. Born ~ 1892. Discharged July 1917, medically unfit.

WA BDM: Possible marriage Alan S McKinlay married Irene S(uzette) NOBLE Perth registration 174/1925 (no death record for either). Births: Margaret J McKinlay Perth registration 280/1927 and Raymond S(tanley) Perth registration 914/1929.

Department of Repatriation letters 15 January 1931 and 6 April 1933, Perth Ref. R3897.

Cemetery Records Search: Irene Suzette McKinlay died aged 76 years on 20 May 1976. The West Australian 22 May 1976, wife of the late Alan, mother of Margaret and Ray, mother-in-law of Ross, late of 135 Coode Street, Bedford, Anglican Service, Karrakatta Crematorium. Raymond Stanley McKinlay of Wembley died 6 December 1995 aged 66 years, Roman Catholic Service.

Electoral Roll Search: 1936 Division of Fremantle/Claremont Irene at 49 Wood Street, Swanbourne, married and 1936 Division of Perth/North Perth Alan at 21 Money Street, railway employee. It would appear from the electoral rolls that the two McKinlays were, at some time, separated or divorced. The last recorded electoral year that I found for Alan was 1954 (Division of Perth, sub-division of East Perth living at 119 Wellington Street with no occupation shown and no other person at this address with a McKinlay surname). For Irene the last year I bothered to look at was 1961 (Division of Stirling, sub-division of Balcatta living at 215 Huntress Street Killarney, home duties, also at that address her son Raymond Stanley McKinlay, clock repairer).

50. 3390 L/Cpl McLEOD Malcolm Donald  
KIA 27 years.

Name:	McLEOD, MALCOLM DONALD
Initials:	M D
Nationality:	Australian
Rank:	Lance Corporal
Regiment/Service:	Australian Infantry, A.I.F.
Unit Text:	52nd Bn.
Date of Death:	between 03/09/1916 and 04/09/1916
Service No:	3390
Casualty Type:	Commonwealth War Dead
Memorial:	<a href="#">VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MEMORIAL</a>

51. 3391 Sgt O'KEEFE Michael MM  
DOW 30 years

Name:	O'KEEFE, MICHAEL
Initials:	M
Nationality:	Australian
Rank:	Sergeant
Regiment/Service:	Australian Infantry, A.I.F.
Unit Text:	51st Bn.
Date of Death:	11/06/1918
Service No:	3391
Awards:	M M
Casualty Type:	Commonwealth War Dead
Grave/Memorial Reference:	I. E. 21.
Cemetery:	<a href="#"><u>FRANVILLERS COMMUNAL CEMETERY EXTENSION</u></a>

52. 3392 Sapper POWELL Percy Benjamin  
Aged 76 years

Born Abbot Grove Victoria, NOK father Edwin Powell of Evan Street Subiaco WA. At Aug 15 aged 23 2/12. Born ~ 1892.

Discharged September 1919.

WA BDM: married Ethel H DUNKLING Perth registration 640/1921.

Repatriation Commission Perth letter 28 March 1955, Ref. R17654.

Web 'WA Obituaries': Percy Benjamin POWELL died 1968 aged 76 yrs  
RSL WA: "Last Post" Listening Post November 1968.

Death Notices: The West Australian 30 October 1968, died 28 October 1968 at Hollywood Hospital, husband of Ethel Helen Powell, stepfather of Freda and Stan, uncle of 4, grand-uncle of 6.

Funeral Notice: late of flat 4, 61 Stirling Highway, Nedlands, formerly of PMG Department Perth and 4<sup>th</sup> Division Signal Company 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, Crematorium Chapel Karrakatta, Church of England service.

53. 3393 L/Cpl RANDELL Keith Raymond  
KIA ~ 23 years.

Name: RANDELL, RAYMOND KEITH  
Initials: R K  
Nationality: Australian  
Rank: Lance Corporal  
Regiment/Service: Australian Infantry, A.I.F.  
Unit Text: 52nd Bn.  
Age: 23  
Date of Death: 04/09/1916  
Service No: 3393  
Additional information: Son of Samuel Joseph and Charlotte Kate Randell, of 10, Hooper St., Perth, Western Australia.  
Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead  
Grave/Memorial: XXXIII. G. 1.  
Reference: Cemetery: [SERRE ROAD CEMETERY No.2](#)

54. 3394 Pte RECK Edmond Candido  
Died aged 83 years

Born Genoa Italy (naturalised British subject), NOK wife Mrs Annie Reck of 29 Orient Street South Fremantle. At Aug 15 aged 39 6/12 Bn ~ 1876. Never left Egypt for France due to illness. Discharged Aug 1916 medically unfit with gastric ulcers.

WA BDM: married Annie CONNOLLY Geraldton registration 25/1907.

Service Record: Repatriation Commission Perth communication dated

29 August 1939, Ref. R1246.

WA BDM: Edmond Candido RECK, male 83 yrs, father Osvaldo, mother Maria, Perth rego 405/1959 (born ~ 1876).

Death Notice: The West Australian 10 February 1959, on Feb 9 at RPH, late of 171 Royal Street, East Perth, husband of the late Annie Reck, father of Clement, Louis, Edmond and Bernard, grandfather of 5. Formerly of 1st AIF, Requiem Mass funeral, St Mary's Cathedral Perth, interred Catholic Cemetery, Karrakatta.

**55. 3395 Cpl RENNER James Davie  
Died aged 77 years**

Born Mullewa WA. NOK mother Mrs Mary Agnes Renner of Ocean Road Cottesloe WA. At Aug 15 aged 20 1/12. Born ~ 1895. Discharged Sept 1919.

WA BDM: marriage James D Renner to Mary P(hillis) FIELD, Fremantle registration 227/1927 (no births recorded for these parents but possible children include James D RENNER Perth 177/1925, Audrey B RENNER Fremantle 33/1926, Charles A RENNER Fremantle 4554/1928 and Dorothy J RENNER Fremantle 35/1931).

Service record: Still alive 25 July 1962 per letter from Repatriation Department, WA Branch, Ref. M17658.

WA Fremantle Cemetery Search: late of Bicton WA, died 23 July 1973 aged 77 years, cremated, ashes scattered in Garden of Remembrance.

Death Notices: The West Australian 25 July 1973, died July 23<sup>rd</sup>, husband of Phill, father of Charles, Doss and Ray, 7 grand-children, also from the staff of Kevin Duff's Aquatic centre, Melville Amateur Swimming Club, 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF (W T Bowers President), West Aust Amateur Cyclists Union, Cockburn Cycling Club, Floreat Golf Club and Fremantle Districts Amateur Cycling Club.

Funeral Notice: late of 31 Yeovil Crescent Bicton, late of 12<sup>th</sup> 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion AIF, Church of England Service, Crematorium Chapel, Karrakatta.

WA Cemeteries Board: Mary Phyllis Renner of Bicton, aged 78 years, died 23 November 1979, ashes at Garden of Remembrance, Fremantle Cemetery.

56. **3396 Driver RIGNEY Alfred**  
**Died aged 60 years**

Born Launceston Tasmania, NOK sister Janice McMullin of Horton House, Hotham Street East St Kilda Victoria. At Aug 15 his stated age was 44 5/12, real age 51 5/12. Born ~ 1864. Discharged December 1917 medically unfit after a serious hernia operation, and suffering with chronic constipation and senility.

But on 29 March 1918 was rejected for a disability pension as he had 'no incapacity'! Unbelievable.

Service record: No Repat. references.

WA BDM: no marriage record but a death record for Alfred RIGNEY Perth rego 1385/1925. Aged ~ 61 yrs.

WA Fremantle Cemetery Search: late of East Perth WA, died 14 October 1925 aged 60 years, interred Anglican Section.

Funeral Notices: The West Australian 15 October 1925, formerly of L(ight) 12th Howitzer Battery, AIF and late of State Implement Works, North Fremantle, interred Church of England Cemetery, Fremantle. Friends of executors Mr E Mosley of Parra Street Bicton and of Mr W Grenfell of Fremantle (possibly Driver William Grenfell above) invited to attend.

57. **3397 Gunner ROSE Horace**  
**Died aged ~ 79 years**

Born Perth WA, NOK father William Carter Rose of Daveyhurst (East Goldfields). At Aug 15 aged 25 2/12. Born 23 May 1890 - see WW2 below. Discharged March 1917 medically unfit (TB), but rejected for disability pension as not unfit for work because of military service!

WA BDM: marriage Lillian WALKER Perth registration 499/1929.

WW2: service number W18592, enlisted 7 August 1941 at Mount Hawthorne WA, DOB 23 May 1890, NOK Lillian Rose, discharged 12 November 1943 as Corporal, posting at discharge Ordnance Depot AAOC.

Repatriation Department WA Branch letter 20 June 1961, Ref. M7063.

Vets Affairs advice: Died 21 December 1969 aged ~79 years.

Death Notices: The West Australian 23 December 1969, on 21 December 1969 at Hollywood Hospital, "Mick" husband of Lillian, father of Ron, grandfather of 2. Sympathy from the WA Division of the Institute of Purchasing Supply. (*Good life for a bloke diagnosed with tuberculosis in 1917*)

Funeral Notice: late of Flat 110a Wandanna, Thomas Street Subiaco, Crematorium Chapel Karrakatta, Congregational service.

**58. 3398 Pte ROWE (Steven?) John  
Probably alive 1952**

Comment: I notice on John's English marriage certificate a middle name of 'Steven' is recorded, but there was no use of this name elsewhere in his Service Record.

Born Durham England. NOK mother Rebecca Rowe of Sunderland Durham England. At. Aug 15 aged 18 7/12. Born ~ 1897. Married Ethel May Helm 1918 in the UK. Discharged Oct 1919.

Possible WA electoral roll entry Fremantle 1936.

Repat information, Brisbane 28 April 1952 Ref. R34909 and C31663.

No trace of death

**59. 3399 Pte SANDERS Ralph Victor  
KIA ~ 23 years.**

Name:	SANDERS, RALPH VICTOR
Initials:	R V
Nationality:	Australian
Rank:	Private
Regiment/Service:	Australian Infantry, A.I.F.

Unit Text: 52nd Bn.  
Date of Death: 04/09/1916  
Service No: 3399  
Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead  
Memorial: VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MEMORIAL

**60. 3400 Sgt SPENCE John Alexander DCM MM**  
**Died aged 69 years**

Born Fremantle. WA. NOK (i) wife Nellie Spence (who had deserted him – address unknown, later Randwick, Sydney NSW) and (ii) mother Lucy Spence Howard Street, Fremantle. At Aug 15 aged 22 1/12. Born 1893. Discharged March 1919 as an invalid.

WA BDM: no obvious marriage record.

Service Record: Repat. Comm. 28 March 1958, Perth Ref. R9927.

Garden Family: Sergeant J A Spence 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, died 20 November 1962, aged 69 years. Therefore born ~ 1893.

Death Notices: The West Australian 21 November 1962, at RGH Hollywood after much suffering and courage, late of 5 Nicholas Crescent, Hilton Park, husband of Edie, father of Trevor, step-father of Norman and Ken, Pop of 3. Formerly of the RAN late of 12<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Batt WW1. Presbyterian Cemetery, Fremantle.

Service Record: Joined Australian Navy 13 July 1912, No. 1921, for 5 years. Served 3 years and joined Army. DOB 12 July 1893, NOK mother Louisa Spence Duke Street, East Fremantle and a mysterious Agnes Laurie. Tattoo on left arm “MR & JS”. (*I guess things did not work out with MR.*)

**61. 3401 Pay Sgt TELFER Thomas Wilkinson James**  
**Died aged 58 yrs**

Born Horsham Victoria. NOK father James Gibson Telfer of Leederville WA. At. Aug 15 aged 27 1/12. Born 27 June 1888 - see WW2 below. Discharged Sept 1919 from Australian Army Pay Corps.

No repat. record.

WA BDM: married Alice R (Ruth?) DIXON Swan registration 78/1926.

WW2: enlisted at Wembley WA on 22 March 1942, service number W69161, DOB 27 June 1888, NOK Alice Telfer, discharged as sergeant, posting on discharge 3 Bn Swan Bn Volunteer Defence Corps.

WA BDM: Thomas W J TELFER Perth rego 1947.

Death Notices: The West Australian 12 May 1947, died on 10 May 1947 at St John of God Hospital Subiaco WA, late of 54 Connolly Street, Wembley and of the Lands Department Perth, husband of Ruth, father of James (born 1918) and Lyle, son of James Gibson Telfer of Dalkeith, aged 58 years.

Funeral Notices: Presbyterian Service, Crematorium Chapel, Karrakatta, late member of West Leederville-Wembley and Floreat Park RSL sub-branch

**62. 3402A Driver THORNTON William John  
Died aged 98 years**

Born Dalton Middlesex UK, NOK mother of Popanyanning via Pingelly WA. At Aug 15 aged 26 years. Born ~ 1889. Discharged Sept 1919. Married Gertrude Ellen English in UK, 9 February 1919.

Service file "Deceased 4 Jan 1988". Also a 'medals letter' dated 23 March 1967, address then 299 Salvardo Road, Floreat Park, West Australia.

Service Record: Repat. Letter 25 November 1952, Perth Ref. R18917.

Garden Family: William John THORNTON AIF,  
Died 4 January 1988 aged 98 years.

Death Notices: The West Australian 5 January 1988, died at RPH on 4 January, late of the War Veterans' Home (lived there for 3 years), husband of the late Gertrude, father of Bill, Joan and George (Jim), 10 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren, aged 98 years.

Funeral Notices: late of RSL War Services Home Mt Lawley, late of Government Tramways and 12<sup>th</sup> 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion AIF, service at Crematorium Chapel Karrakatta, PGD brother member of UAOD (?).

**63. 3403 Pte THOMSON Harold Eastwood**  
**Probably alive 1937, No trace of Death**

Born Fremantle WA. NOK father Samuel Thomson of East Street, East Fremantle. At Aug 15 aged 21 6/12. Born ~ 1894. Married in UK to Annie May TORN on 20/1/1919 (she aged 29). Completed 3 months paid leave farm training course in England. Discharged April 1920.

WA BDM: Possible re-marriage Harold Thomson married Lillian H O WADE Perth registration 1524/1930 (no WA death for either).

Repatriation Commission Melbourne letter dated 11 August 1937, Melbourne Re. 25700.

**64. 3404 Cpl WELLS Alfred James**  
**Died aged 70 years**

Born Castlemaine Victoria NOK father Alfred Henry Wells of Robertson Street Bayswater WA. At. Aug 15 aged 25 7/12 Born ~ 1890. Discharged medically unfit December 1919.

WA BDM: married Daisy HOOD Perth registration 291/1919.

Service Record: Repat flimsy Perth 10 June 1927 Ref. R10270.  
WA Karrakatta Cemetery Search: late of South Como WA, died 9 May 1960 aged 70 years, interred Anglican Cemetery Karrakatta.

Death Notice: The West Australian 11 May 1960, late of 4 Mount Henry Road, South Como, died suddenly in Chicago USA, father of Betty and Alf., united with Daisy? Date of Funeral Service to be notified (*presumably for body/ashes to be returned, no newspaper notification found*). Also from staff of Rich Signs. (Note WA BDM: marriage of Alfred J Wells and Daisy Hood Perth registration 291/1919 and possible death for Daisy Perth rego 533/1959.)

**65. 3405 Pte WEST Ernest Harold**  
**Died aged 75 years**

Born Brighton Sussex England NOK father ?. At Aug 15 aged 21 9/12. Born 18 December 1893 (see WW2). Discharged Sept 1919.

WA BDM: married Dorothy W AYLETT Perth registration 431/1922. Possibly the Dorothy Winifred WEST who died Perth 2906/1960 aged 60 yrs.

WW2: enlisted Claremont Perth WA on 26 October 1940, service number W31712, NOK Dorothy West, DOB 18 December 1893, discharged 26 January 1942 from 5 Garrison Battalion as a Private.

Service Record: Repat letter Perth 9 May 1961, Ref. MX63539.

Service Record Alive 25 May 1967. 'Medals letter', address 64 Hobart Street, Mt Hawthorn West. Australia.

RSL WA: "Last Post", Listening Post February 1971, died November 1970.

Death Notices: The West Australian 1 December 1970, died on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November at RGH, Hollywood, husband of Vera, father of Fred, Ray, Maurie, Joan, Len, Rodney, Laurel and Ian, grand-father of 22, great grand-father of 1, aged 75 years.

Funeral Notices: late of 64 Hobart Street Mt Hawthorn and 12/52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, Anglican Service at Karrakatta Crematorium Chapel, notices from 12<sup>th</sup> Btn Association and PAFS Loyal North Lodge No. 14.

**66. 3406 Cpl WILLS Egbert Athelstone**  
**Died aged 85 years**

Born North Carlton Victoria. NOK father John Wills of Oxford Street Leederville WA. At Aug 15 aged 20 7/12. Born ~ 1895. Wounded in France on 3 occasions. Discharged May 1918 medically unfit.

WA BDM: married Myra G TIPPETT Perth registration 171/1920.

Service Record: Repatriation Commission Perth letter dated 22 February 1957, Ref. R3064.

Web ancestry.com Born 1/1/1985 died 1980.

WA Karrakatta Cemetery Search: late of Darlington WA, died on the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 1980 aged 85 years, ashes scattered to the winds Karrakatta Cemetery.

Death Notices: died suddenly November 13<sup>th</sup>, husband of Myra (deceased), father of Gwen, Edith, John and George, grandfather of 17 and great grandfather of 8.

Funeral Notice: "Wills: A private funeral for Mr Egbert Athelstone Wills, late of Lot 11 Gladys Street Darlington, took place yesterday at the Karrakatta Crematorium Chapel."

**67. 3407 Cpl WILLIAMSON Henry Andrew  
Died aged 79 years**

Born York WA. NOK mother of Yarloop, WA, later Smith Street Summerhill NSW. At Aug 15 aged 20 7/12. Born 4 February 1895 – entry on Service Record Statutory Declaration.

Completed 3 months chemistry course England 1919. Discharged Feb 1920.

Service Record: letter re lost 'Soldiers Badge' dated 18 June 1947, address was H A Williamson of 1 View Street, East Maitland, NSW.

Service Record: Repat. Letter Sydney 9 March 1939 Ref. R9097.

Death Notice: "Sydney Morning Herald" 12 April 1974, Andrew Williamson, late of Picnic Point and Newcastle (*near East Maitland*), died 6 April 1974 - if correct person approx. 79 yrs.

No wife or children cited in Notice, 2 brothers and a sister, privately cremated.

68. 3408 L/Cpl WILLIAMS George  
KIA ~ 24 years.

Name: WILLIAMS  
Initials: G  
Nationality: Australian  
Rank: Lance Corporal  
Regiment/Service: Australian Infantry, A.I.F.  
Unit Text: 52nd Bn.  
Date of Death: 24/04/1918  
Service No: 3408  
Casualty Type: Commonwealth War Dead  
Grave/Memorial: XII. D. 2.  
Reference: Cemetery: [VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MILITARY CEMETERY](#)

69. 3409 L/Cpl WILLIAMS Richard James  
Died aged 75 years

Brother of above. Born Kadina South Aust. NOK father Thomas Henry Williams of PO Trafalger (near Kalgoorlie). At Aug 15 aged 25 1/12. Born ~ 1890. Discharged June 1919.

WA BDM: married Louisa S WRIGHT Perth registration 531/1922.

Service Record: No Repat information.

WA Cemeteries Search: Richard James Williams, died 3 September 1965 aged 75 years, WA suburb of Fimiston, buried Church of Christ area Karrakatta Cemetery.

Death Notices: died September 3<sup>rd</sup> at Subiaco, husband of Louise, late of Post Office Filmiston, father of Athol, Garfield and George (deceased), 5 grand-children.

Funeral Notice: of post office Filmiston, formerly Postmaster of Kalgoorlie, and of 1<sup>st</sup> AIF, Church of Christ Service, Karrakatta Cemetery.

Is this the correct man? Answer, YES.

1. WA Cemetery search shows a RJW of the right age, dying 13/01/1953, but The West Aust death notice states he was formerly of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF. Not our man.

2. WW1 Archives search shows 3 soldiers of this name. Only the 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> soldier above is the right age. Of the others, one was 34 years on enlistment in February 1916 (born ~ 1882) and the other was 44 years 10/12 months at February 1916 so born ~ 1872.

**70. 3410 Sapper WRIGHT Walter Reginald  
Aged 61 years**

Born Geraldton WA, NOK mother Mrs Henrietta Lewis of Sandune Road Geraldton. At Aug 15 aged 20 7/12. Born 25 November 1894 see WW2 below.

Discharged June 1919.

WA BDM: no marriage record, probably did not marry.

WW2: service number W67839, enlisted at East Fremantle on 24 March 1942, NOK C Norris, discharged as corporal date not stated, posting on discharge 1 Battalion Volunteer Defence Corps.

Service Record: Repat. letter 12 May 1955, Ref. R15167.

WA BDM: death of Walter Reginald WRIGHT Perth rego 1956 aged 61 yrs (born ~1895), father Joseph, mother Henrietta (from service record this is the correct mother).

Death Notices: The West Australian 14 February 1956, at Royal Perth Hospital 10 February 1956 (mentions brothers Charlie and Frank and sister Amy but no wife or children). No funeral notice.

The following officer was not one of the 70 soldiers we are following, but would appear to have been their commanding officer during their training.

He was also their 'escorting' officer during their embarkation from Fremantle to Egypt.

**Lt BAILEY Francis William Samuel  
KIA aged 21 years**

Joined 1914, not part of 11<sup>th</sup>12th Reinforcements but was the Western Australian officer posted to this particular unit on embarking overseas.

Born Melbourne, son of Joseph Henry and Stella Bailey of 6 Robinson Street, Subiaco WA. Father a teacher in the country. Not married.

Date of Death 3 September 1916, during attack on Mouquet Farm, officer of 51st Battalion.

Memorial: Villers-Bretonneux (\*), France.

**\* The Villers-Bretonneux War Memorial, France**

On its walls this Australian War Memorial records the names of some 11,000 Australian soldiers listed as missing in action (that is, their bodies were not recovered and identified). As well as Lt Bailey the following of our soldiers' final resting places are known only to God: Corporals Hay, Allan, Kneale and Lance Corporal McLeod, and Privates Bickersteth, Eagleton and Sanders. Five of these seven KIA soldiers died in the Mouquet Farm attack. For the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion I counted 204 names on the Memorial's wall.

## Endnotes

1. Les Carlyon, “*The Great War*”, Pan Macmillan Australia, Sydney, 2006 p 752.
2. George Johnston, “*My Brother Jack*”, first published 1964, Collins, 5<sup>th</sup> Impression 1973.
3. “aged 23 9/12” means 23 years and 9 months at the date of joining the army.
4. ‘flimsy’ refers to a thin paper file copy of a document generally found with a 1920s date and no address or signature. The ones referred here look like lists of service record documents provided to some unnamed requesting agency, and would appear to be answers to ‘Repat’ requests. Later Repat requests are on identifying letterhead. There is no indication on the service files whether an ex-soldier was successful in obtaining some form of disability pension or other assistance.
5. Refers to the Western Australian Attorney-General’s Department, on line Births Deaths and Marriages Family History facility – provides limited detail of Western Australian deaths to 1978.
6. “The West Australian” – major Perth daily newspaper.
7. A very useful Perth Metropolitan Cemeteries Board website providing cemetery by name details:  
<http://www.mcb.wa.gov.au/nameSearch.html>
8. The National Australian Archives index (on-line source of each soldier’s WW1 service record) also includes some limited reference to post-WW1 enlistment or dealings with Australian Defence Forces.  
  
It would appear that recruitment of ‘our’ WW2 soldiers was in a ‘home service’ capacity, and that their enlistment was an emergency/patriotic response to a possible Japanese invasion. Most were discharged before the war ended and none served overseas.

There is a better WW2 source at <http://www.ww2roll.gov.au/>.

9. “Garden Family” family research webpage (Email [thegardens@westnet.com.au](mailto:thegardens@westnet.com.au)). An index of memorials erected to Australian service men and women in Perth, Western Australia under heading of “The Last Post”.
10. Official Victorian birth deaths and marriages site. I was able to buy two death certificates on-line once I had identified my men.
11. The Listening Post is the periodic newsletter of the West Australian RSL (Returned Soldiers’ League). The Last Post is a section in the Listening Post notifying member’s deaths and giving some details of that death and their military service. I was able to access an incomplete collection at the Australian National Library.
12. Commonwealth Department of Veterans’ Affairs. Officers of this Department gave most useful advice on a number of queries I put to them.
13. NSW State Government births deaths and marriages website.
14. Ryerson Index Death Notices Aust Newspapers, a publicly assessable ‘on-line’ data base of deaths reported in Newspapers, the index being compiled by family historians. Strength at time of writing was Australian Eastern States newspapers.
15. Garden Family family research webpage (Email [thegardens@westnet.com.au](mailto:thegardens@westnet.com.au)).

## Appendix 5: The Grim Reaper Abroad and at Home For The 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF 1915 Western Australian Enlistments

### PART 2: The Trove Australian Newspaper Searches

The National Library of Australia (NLA) has a Website which allows users to search for information held in books, journals and other written sources and in my case, newspapers. In the words of the NLA (from Trove Website):

#### About digitised newspapers

*In 2007 the National Library of Australia, in collaboration with Australian State and Territory libraries, began a program to digitise Australian newspapers for access and preservation purposes.*

*In 2008 a beta service was released to the public and in 2010 the digitised newspapers were integrated into Trove. Trove is a free online service that enables full-text searching of newspaper articles. The service includes newspapers published in each state and territory from the 1800s to the mid-1950s, when copyright applies, and a limited number of newspapers post 1955, where the publisher's agreement has been given. The first Australian newspaper, published in Sydney in 1803, The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser is included in Trove. Newly digitised articles are added daily.”*

What I have done here is enter the name of each of the 70 soldiers and search for the appearance of their name in Western Australian newspapers or other State newspapers where I know the particular soldier lived in another State after their discharge. There are the usual problems of different people with the same name and/or initials and, consequently, of identifying our particular man.

Most of the newspaper references I found merely report on events that I have already documented, but some add a humanising touch to the story. And there are a few gems. So read on.

The most important find was a group photograph of most of the 11<sup>th</sup>12th recruits.

## Group Photograph

*West Aust Sunday Times* 30 Jan 1916: Included amongst a full front page of various soldier photos is a 'grainy' group photo of 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, 12th Battalion, who were winners of a Platoon Drill contest (8 hours-day sports day, 1915).

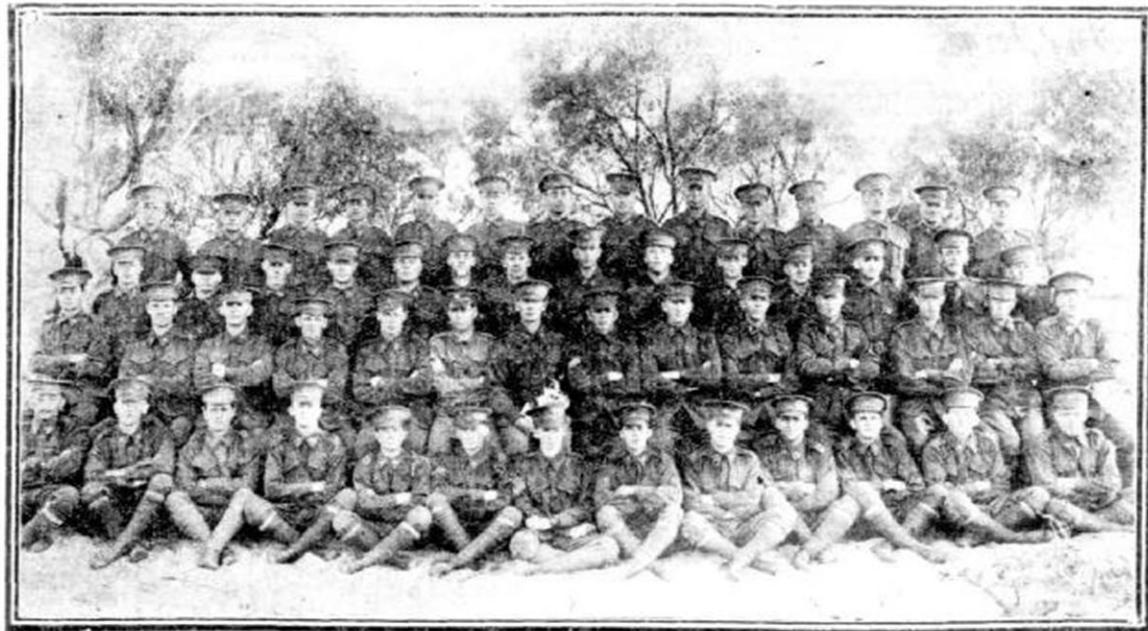
In 1915, Perth's annual Royal Show Day (held at the Claremont Showground) and the 8-hour day were combined and fell on Monday 25 October, *West Australian* 23 Oct 1915.

Unfortunately the photo is not supported by text, but is captioned with the names of those in the drill squad. It is not clear who the 'winners' were competing against, but they beat them anyway.

At the time the photograph was published in January 1916 the men were undergoing infantry training in Egypt. In October 1915 when the photo was taken they would have been completing their basic training (August to October 1915) at Blackboy Army Camp, West Australia.

The newspaper advertisement for the '8-hour day' event describes it as 'a grand military gymkhana' with 'members of the expeditionary forces competing in all events'.

The advertisement went on: 'This is the first opportunity the public have been given to see the members of the Forces display their prowess.' (No doubt there were many proud family members watching on that day.)



11TH REINFORCEMENTS, 12TH BATTALION—Winners of Platoon Drill (8-Hours' Day Sports)

Front Row (sitting): From left to right: Privates R. V. Sanders, R. J. Williams, W. H. Coutts, J. A. Allan, B. B. Knott, H. G. Thompson, J. Cappie, G. Williams, J. H. Gordon, J. Hopkins, W. F. H. French, H. B. Allen, T. W. J. Telfer, J. F. Graham. Third Row (standing): From left to right: Privates A. S. Mc'Kinlay, J. W. Aitken, A. J. Denton, R. Gilbert, J. B. Judge, W. J. Cornish, R. C. Bonham, J. Jack, J. Haydon, D. G. Michael, M. M. Mc'Nair, H. A. Williamson, H. Hale, M. N. Hamell. Second Row (sitting): From left to right: Privates F. Smith, H. H. Cornish, M. D. McLeod, H. Bridgen, E. H. West, Sgt-Major Francis Denslow, Lieutenant F. W. Bailey, Sgt. J. McCally, E. A. Willis, H. W. Bauchler, W. V. Hall, R. (Bickerstaffe), Cpl. T. E. Hay, J. Rose. Front Row (sitting): From left to right: Privates M. O'Keeffe, G. V. Masterson, E. J. Stephens, H. Rose, A. G. Bailey, Cpl. W. F. Bower, Cpl. G. S. Bradley, P. H. Powell, J. Calder, **A. J. Wells**, J. B. Kidd, J. D. Marshall, G. S. Fairweather.

Source: WA Sunday Times 30 Jan 1916.

Note: Only 51 of our 70 11<sup>th</sup>12th soldiers are listed in the photo; where the other 19 soldiers are is not clear. They may have been hopeless at drill? As listed below, there were 4 other soldiers who were not members of the 'WA 70'. First are Privates **Eric John Stephens** and **Arthur Ernest Bailey**. Why they were part of the drill squad is a mystery. A summary of their war service record follows – great times ahead for Eric and bad times for Arthur. Also included in the photograph are Sgt-Major **Francis George Denslow**, who was an ex-UK Grenadier Guards' instructor (his record also follows) and Lieutenant **F W Bailey**, who was in charge of the squad. His service record was summarised earlier in this Appendix. Look closely. Lt Bailey is nursing a small dog, no doubt the squad's mascot (see page 77 for a better view). Guess where we have seen this dog before?

(Answer at the end of this Appendix – see **The Great Small-Dog Mystery.**)

Pte Eric John STEPHENS, service number 3560, born Bendigo, Victoria, enlisted Perth, NOK John Thomas Stephens, 19 year old university student. His unit at the time of the 8-hour day competition was 20th Depot, Blackboy Hill.

He was then posted to 11th Reinforcements 16th Battalion. He transferred to the 4th Machine Gun Company. He was discharged from the Australian Army in England in April 1917 and immediately joined the Australian Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps with a commission (as a Lieutenant, then Capt & DFC). According to Wikipedia he became a 'war ace' with 13 kills and later a Qantas pilot. Given civilian bravery award PNG WW2 report - rescued civilians in old aircraft *Townsville Daily* 15 June 1943. Died in Lae, PNG, January 1967.

Pte Arthur Ernest BAILEY, No 3455. Born St Helens Tasmania where he enlisted, NOK Frederick Bailey. Posted to 11th/12th Reinforcements, then 12th Battalion and finally 52nd Battalion. Went to France with Battalion. Wounded 3 or 4 Sept 1916 (Mouquet Farm). KIA France 7 June 1917 (attack on Messines Ridge).

Sgt Francis George DENSLOW, No 4282, born Membury England, enlisted Blackboy Army Camp. NOK wife Elsie May Denslow. Joined 1 May 1917 aged 31 yrs 4 months. Had considerable prior British Army experience with Welsh Volunteers and Grenadier Guards. Bankrupt soldier/farmer report *Daily News* 14 July 1915. Posted to 12/2nd Pioneers, 16 June 1917. WIA severe gunshot wound to left knee, France, 5 October 1918. Returned to Australia January 1919 and discharged March 1919. WA BDM: died Northam District, 1933 (aged approximately 47 years). Was foreman of works Roads Board *Western Mail*

9 Feb 1933. Elsie's death in Merredin *West Australian* 3 Mar 1953, 4 chldn,

## Results of the Trove Search

For the following list of our 70 soldiers I have used the same 1 to 70 numbering system as in Appendix 6, with the addition of a 'T' denoting the ANL Trove newspaper reporting source.

### (T 1) James McCully

Wounded, Sgt JM of Subiaco, *West Australian* 9 Oct 1916.

Engagement to Thelma Cummins, *Sunday Times* 6 April 1930.  
Parking fine for Thelma McCully, *West Australian* 16 October 1936.

#### (T 2) **Percy Norman**

Arbour Day school prize, Albany WA, *Western Mail* 23 Dec 1905 and 14 July 1906

Promoted in field to Lieutenant, *Daily News* 1 March 1917.

KIA *Albany Advertiser* 11 April 1917 and 28 April 1917. Also *Western Mail* 21 Sept 1917 – includes a photo of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. Percy Norman.

#### (T 3) **George Broadly**

Probate report – estate valued at 200 pounds 10 shillings left to mother Ada Ellen Broadly, *Daily News* 29 Aug 1918 and *West Australian* 30 Aug 1918.

#### (T 4) **Thomas Hay**

Enlistment as part of Geraldton's third contingent, *Geraldton Guardian* 29 Sept 1914.

#### (T 5) **Walter Bower**

Wounded and amputation, *West Australian* 19 Sept 1917, 7 Nov 1917 and 3 Dec 1917. Also *Daily News* 19 Sept 1917, 6 Nov 1917 and 1 Dec 1917. Also *Western Argus* (Kalgoorlie) 6 Nov 1917.

In Memoriam notices inserted by Walter Bower:

*West Australian* 4 Sept 1918: "Allan – A tribute to the memory of Lance Corporal H Allan, Private R V Sanders, Lance Corporal K Randall, Sergeant Redrop(?), Sergeant Talbent 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, killed in action at Mouquet Farm September 4, 1915. Inserted by Walter Bower (returned)."

*West Australian*, 9 Sept 1918: "Cornish – To the beloved memory of my dear friend Lance Corporal Reginald H Cornish, 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, who died from wounds on September 9, 1916, at 26<sup>th</sup> General Hospital, Etaples, France.

One of the best God could send,  
Beloved by all, a faithful friend.

Called home from those who deeply love,  
To a glorious life above.

Inserted by Walter P Bower (returned)."

See also *West Australian* 23 Sept 1918 – Memoriam to 'dear chum'  
Sgt Joseph Hodgson, KIA Gallipoli.

See also 'war pensions' article in *Sunday Times* 22 April 1917 re a  
Private Walter Bowers, railway employee, who was discharged 'permanently'  
unfit, but was refused a 'war pension'.

#### (T 6) **Fred W Ainley**

Engagement to Ethel Margaret McCahon, both of the Telephone Exchange,  
*Sunday Times*

10 October 1915 and *Daily News* 11 Oct 1915.

#### (T 7) **John Alexander Allan**

(nothing specifically found clearly relating to our JAA, common name/initials).

#### (T 8) **Horace B Allen**

Death, *Daily News* 19 May 1917 and 26 May 1917.

Grant of Probate Horace Beresford Allan, late of Subiaco, to Alfred Tombs  
Allan 214 pounds 9 shillings, *West Australian* 1 Oct 1917.

In Memoriam – Anzac Heroes, *West Australian* 4 Sept 1919. Also *West Australian* 5 Sept 1921.

#### (T 9) **Robert Bickersteth**

KIA, *Western Mail* 4 Oct 1918. See also *West Australian* 12 Aug 1920.

#### (T 10) **Maurice Bolland**

Violin entertainment Perth Hospital, *Daily News* 16 June 1913 (may be a different person).

Wounded, *West Australian* 2 May 1918, *Daily News* 20 May 1918 and *Kalgoorlie Miner* 21 May 1918.

**(T 11) Herbert Boucher**

No entries West Aust newspapers.

**(T 12) Hugh Bridger**

Memorial Notice for his brother Pte A E Bridger \*, accidentally killed on-board troopship 'Geelong', *West Australian*, 6 Dec 1915. Other entries from wife and children, parents, brothers and sisters.

Seriously ill France, *Daily News* 5 Sept 1916.

Birth of daughter Joan, *West Australian* 13 Aug 1919 and *Western Mail* 14 Aug 1919.

Birth of son Ernest Gerald, *West Australian* 18 Oct 1921. Also in *Western Mail*. Bereavement Notice re loss of little son, *West Australian* 30 Dec 1922 (Note: WA BDM entry, Ernest Gerald Bridger died 1922).

Birth of son, Edwin, *Western Mail* 18 Sept 1924.

Death of infant daughter, *West Australian* 1932.

\* Extract from Service Record of Alfred Ernest Bridger, service number 893, 32<sup>nd</sup> Battalion.

Joined 14 July 1915, 26 yrs 2 months old, C of E. Born Hillstone NSW, butcher, married, NOK wife Anne Mary Bridger of Beaufort Street Perth, later Griver Street, Cottesloe, WA. Allocated 4/5 of pay to wife and children. Appointed to 32<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 21 Sept 1915.

Died 7 Dec 1915 at sea aboard HMAT A2 "Geelong" during a friendly boxing match between 32nd Bn and Australian Light Horse. Court of Inquiry said fair fight. Post Mortem conclusion: death followed shock caused by exhaustion from strenuous exercise and undiagnosed valve disease of the heart.

Widow and daughter granted war pensions. Much correspondence between various military personnel regarding missing personal effects. Effects never recovered by family.

Later ruled family not entitled to any AEB service medals as Private Bridger had not entered a field of war (was 1 day out from reaching Egypt).

It is not clear from the Service Record whether the family was ever told of the circumstances of Private Bridger's death.

#### **(T 13) Claude Brown**

A number of people share this name.

Disclaimer: The Claude Brown of 15 Dwyer Street, West Perth is not the same person as the Claude Brown of the same age recently convicted of theft, *West Australian* 21 June 1913.

CB missing France, *Daily News*, 22 May 1917.

#### **(T 14) Robert Charles Buchanan**

Funeral notice for mother, Ada Harriett Buchanan, died at RCB's house, Edwards St, Nedlands, *West Australian* 16 June 1941.

Resumption of land, RCB as Registrar of Titles, *West Australian* 30 June 1951. There are other law cases of a similar nature mentioning RCB as Registrar of Titles.

Law list, estate dispute *West Australian* 29 Oct 1954.

#### **(T 15) Felix Buck**

Class school prize, *Southern Times* 21 Dec 1901.

Football match *Bunbury Herald* 21 July 1910.

Attended birthday party, *Southern Times* (Bunbury WA) 13 July 1912.

Private Buck says goodbye to parents before going overseas, *Southern Times* 19 Oct 1915.

War injuries, making steady progress on recovery, *South Western News* (Busselton)

23 Feb 1917. See also *Southern Times* 14 Dec 1916.

Returned soldiers attack military police, Pte Buck found guilty and fined 1 pound, or in default, 7 days jail, *Daily News* 20 June 1917 and *West Australian* 21 June 1917.

Article on fatal gun accident *Kalgoorlie Miner* 26 May 1920. Similar reports in other newspapers. This from the *Border Morning Mail and Riverina Times* (Albury NSW):

“Perth Wednesday: Dog Guards Master’s Body. Felix George Buck, a returned soldier, who was missing from Busselton since last Sunday, was found dead 400 yards distant from his camp. His rifle, containing an empty cartridge shell, was found 30 yards away. It is surmised that Buck tripped over a fallen tree, and was shot by his rifle, and that he subsequently crawled towards the road, where he fell and died. Deceased’s dog guarded the body until hunger forced it to return to camp.”

Coroners Inquiry findings, accidental death, *South Western News* 4 June 1920.

Sad Death of a Digger, report on the death of Felix’s brother, Alexander Percy Buck, *Bunbury Herald and Blackwood Express* 18 Sept 1923. APB died from war related injuries (fractured skull).

#### (T 16) Leonard Burgess

In Memoriam notice for Cpl Ike Burgess, nephew of LB, *West Australian* 7 May 1918.

Brewery lorry driven by LB v motor cycle accident, *West Australian* 13 Feb 1928.

Funeral Notice: Death of wife, Clara Gertrude Burgess, wife of Leonard of the Swan Brewery, mother of Betty and Ronald, aged 26 years, passed peacefully away at Perth Hospital, *West Australian* 16 April 1935.

Traffic offence, failure to give way, *West Australian* 23 July 1937.

1954 ‘street betting’ arrests, many arrests of many people with heavy fines, LB described as a pensioner – see for example *West Australian* 21 April 1954. (I believe ‘street betting’ refers to illegal betting arrangements designed to cut out official betting organisations’ rake-off of a share of the money bet. In 1954 WA passed legislation to ban ‘non-sanctioned’ betting.)

#### (T 17) James Calder

Possible funeral notice for father, James Calder, Herbert Street, North Fremantle, *West Australian* 6 Jan 1928.

### (T 18) Frank Caple

Death of father, Mr William Caple srn, of Scott Street, South Fremantle – described as an old colonist who came to WA in 1850 and was an ex-mounted policeman in the Geraldton district, leaves 7 sons, 2 daughters, 31 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren – 2 sons Cpl Walter Caple and Driver Frank Caple serving at the front, *West Australian* 9 July 1917.

War casualty, wife of Hubert St, South Fremantle informed that her husband, Driver Frank H Caple was at Devonport Military Hospital, England, and that his right arm had been amputated, *West Australian* 1 August 1917.

Magistrate Court, disorderly conduct, South Fremantle, *West Australian* 11 May 1929.

Possible stillborn birth *West Australian* 4 June 1930.

‘Family party’ accident in which a person from Hubert Street, South Fremantle killed, *West Australian* 7 Sept 1937.

### (T 19) William Coombe

Common name, no obvious entries

### (T 20) James Coppin

Common name

Of 11<sup>th</sup> reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion, wrote long letter to home on ‘life in Egypt’ quoted in its entirety, *West Australian* 14 Mar 1916.

### (T 21) Frederick Cornish

Passes for first aid certificate, Joseph C Cornish, Reginald H Cornish, Frederick W Cornish and Wilfred J Cornish, *West Australian* 18 Jan 1915.

### (T 22) Reginald Henry Cornish

Death, war casualty, died of wounds on Sunday 10 Sept 1916, *West Australian* 21 Sept 1916 and 10 Oct 1916, KIA, died 26<sup>th</sup> General Hospital, Etaples, France aged 25 years 10 months. See also *West Australian* 20 Sept 1916, 8 Sept 1917 and 9 Sept 1918 (latter mentions brother Leslie Ronald Cornish

KIA 26 Jan 1918).

Probate report, estate to father Charles, *Daily News* 30 Nov 1916.

**(T 23) Wilfred John Cornish**

School exam results 30 Dec 1908, 12 Jan 1909, 10 Dec 1914.

Wounded second occasion, *Daily News* 4 May 1918.

Inherited under Will of Charles Cornish, *Sunday Times* 16 Dec 1923.

Car accident, *Daily News* 11 Oct 1937.

**(T 24) William Creech**

Silver wedding anniversary, Creech-Russell, *West Australian* 30 Oct 1940.

Daughter's marriage, Howard-Creech, *West Australian* 11 Aug 1942.

Sister's death, Laura, *West Australian* 22 Dec 1945.

**(T 25) Arthur Jacob Denton**

Wills and Probate reports, 4 papers, March 1917.

**(T 26) Albert Henry Eagleton**

War casualty, KIA, Old James Street Schoolboy, *West Australian* 8 and 12 Sept 1916 and *Western Mail* 15 Sept 1915, eldest son of Mrs Fred Watts, formerly Eagleton.

**(T 27) Samuel Groves Fairweather**

“Returned soldier’s death aftermath of quarrel with wife”: SGF’s wife had left him because of drinking and abuse (they were legally separated). He went to wife’s mother’s house and asked her to come back, she refused. (He had previously threatened to take his life if she would not come back.)

Drank from cup he had taken to the house and threw empty cup at front door. Collapsed in street and later died from poison.

Reports in *Kalgoorlie Miner* 11 July 1927 and *Western Argus* 12 July 1927.

Coroner's report *West Australian* 28 July 1927. Left behind widow and 2 children.

**(T 28) Richard Gilbert**

Common name many entries

**(T 29) James Alexander Gordon**

KIA *Western Mail* 19 Oct 1918 and 25 Oct 1918, latter inserted by sorrowing friend Alberta Brown.

**(T 30) John Frederick Graham**

Possible same person who gave evidence in butchers' working hours case *Daily News* 9 March 1911 and butcher prices *West Australian* and *Daily News* 16 July 1925.

**(T 31) William Grenfell**

Report on Coroner's inquiry into death of Anna Grenfell: death followed 5 days after giving birth due to blood poisoning from want of cleanliness due to poor nursing practice, *West Australian* 29 July 1903.

Note: WG widower at time of 1915 enlistment, NOK was 12 year old daughter Lillian (i.e. born about 1903). Search of WA BDM records Lillian Anna Grenfell, born Boulder WA 1903, father William and mother (nee Louden) Anna Elizabeth Grenfell.

In Memoriam – of Anna Louden, inserted by her parents, *Kalgoorlie Miner* 25 July 1904. And in the same issue this from William Grenfell “in sad but loving memory of my dear wife, Anna Elizabeth, who departed this life on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1903, at Boulder:

Through all pain at times she'd smile  
A smile of Heavenly birth  
And when the angles called her home  
She smiled farewell to earth.”

Possible drunk driving (horse and cart) charge *Daily News* 12 June 1930.

Notice: Miss Lillian Grenfell to marry Mr Horace Jones in Kew, Melbourne on June 20. They intend to settle in Kalgoorlie on their return, *Kalgoorlie Miner* 19 June 1931.

WG's Death Notice: husband of Minnie (??), father of Mrs H Jones, grandfather of Chrystal and Audrey, *West Australian* 4 Nov 1938.

#### (T 32) **Rupert Hale**

Coming home: *Daily News* 2 Apr 1919, Sgt Rupert Hale returning home aboard *SS Anchises*, mentions 2 serving brothers Willie (returned) and Norman (still on service abroad).

#### (T 33) **Walter Vernon Hall**

Lost certificate of title: for land at Echunga *The Advertiser* (Adelaide) 30 June 1948.

#### (T 34) **John Harvey**

JH of Roseberry Street, Jolimont, badly hurt when his cart was smashed by a tramcar, *Daily News* 5 Jan 1931.

Anzac Day article on JH

"69, Misses his First Parade. World War 1 mule driver John Harvey, of 12<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalions, for the first time missed marching in the Anzac Day parade. He sat in bed in Ward 13 in Hollywood Hospital, taking oxygen and listening to a broadcast of the parade. His service medals hang on a bar on his bedside table alongside a 1919 demobilisation picture of himself in digger uniform with his young son in sailor uniform. He is now 69."

During the second battle of Ypres he got a 'Blighty'. He returned to service but caught trench fever. "It was really bronchitis," he said, "and that is why I am here today."

*Daily News* 25 April 1947.

He died in Hollywood Hospital on 16 May of that year (see Appendix 5).

**(T 35) Lewis Hayden**

Wool sales report, Lewis Hayden of Popanyinning got 18 1/4 pence per pound, *West Australian* 16 Mar 1944.

Similar reports *Western Mail* 21 Nov 1940 and 19 Dec 1940.

**(T 36) Francis Heerey**

Notice of application for gold mining lease, *Kalgoorlie Miner* 7 May 1913.

Plus 20 + articles in Tasmanian papers on family, political life and activities as a publican/hotel licensee in that State.

**(T 37) John Hopkins**

Wounded (gassed) 2<sup>nd</sup> occasion, *Western Argus* (Kalgoorlie) 26 Nov 1918.

Father's funeral, *Daily News* 15 May 1928.

Probate father's estate, *Sunday Times* 24 June 1928.

**(T 38) James Jones, later James Jones Collins**

Too many entries WA, common name.

Divorce Court, wife Henrietta (married Feb 1922) was given a divorce from JCC on grounds of desertion, *SMH* 19 Sept 1946.

**(T 39) John B Judge**

Witness at inquest: death of Samuel Sarah, Midlands Junction workshops employee (JBJ a fellow lodger), *West Australian* 14 Oct 1921.

Fined 2 pounds for using expired railway's employee monthly ticket, *Daily News* 4 July 1924.

### (T 40) Joseph Sowden Kidd

Passed first year St Johns Ambulance Association first aid examination. Listed with 4 surname Cornish men (see above), *West Australian* 19 Jan 1915.

Award of MM: "Mr and Mrs H Kidd of Connolly Street, West Leederville, have received word that their son, Corporal Joseph S Kidd, motor dispatch rider, 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Division, AIF, has been awarded the Military Medal." *Daily News* 5 Feb 1918.

Engagement: to Ethel Alma Richards of Bakers Road, Subiaco, *Daily News* 6 Aug 1919. Also *Sunday Times* 17 Aug 1919.

### (T 41) Bertram H Kneale

KIA Mouquet Farm: Roll of Honour etc. *West Australian* 3 Oct 1916, *Daily News* 7 Oct 1916, *Western Mail* 13 Oct 1916. *West Australian* 1 Sept 1917. In Memoriam notices, various family members, *West Australian* 1 Sept 1924 and 1 Sept 1928.



Private B. Kneale.

THE LATE PRIVATE B. KNEALE  
Mrs. Rosman, of Rundle-street, Kent  
Town, has been notified that her nephew,  
Private B. Kneale, of Perth, has been  
killed in France.

Source: *South Australian Chronicle* 21 October 1916.

### (T 42) Oscar Lundgren

Article in *Albany Advertiser* 10 Dec 1919: Cpl J D Renner of the 4<sup>th</sup> Division Signal Company, third son of Mrs R Renner of Cottesloe Beach is in Albany from Perth for a few days, with his mate, Driver Oscar Lundgren of the 57<sup>th</sup> (?) Battalion.

Note: Cpl Renner also one of our 70 soldiers.

Horse Driver's Narrow Escape – 2 horses attached to OL's lorry bolted in High Street, Fremantle, one fell on him and he sustained minor injuries, *West Australian* 17 June 1920.

Engagement to Emily Ellen (Nellie) Gardiner, *Sunday Times* 8 March 1925. Father-in-law's death (Andrew Gardiner), *West Australian* 4 Feb 1937.

Evidence given by Sgt OL before a suicide inquiry for a Captain George Wilson Robinson who shot himself in the head, and died in Kalgoorlie District Hospital, *Kalgoorlie Miner* 11 Aug 1943.

### (T 43) John E Maclean

School exam results *West Australian* 17 Oct 1908 and 10 Jan 1911. Marriage to W M Burton, Kununoppin, *West Australian* 22 April 1933.

Deaths of his father and mother *West Australian* 22 June 1937 and 27 May 1942.

(There are some surviving photographs that JEM took in Egypt – some of which have been included elsewhere. Some more appear on page 325.)

### (T 44) Ernest E Malmgreen

Married to Edith M Johns *Western Mail* 24 May 1928. Income Tax law, Accounting Birth of daughter, *West Australian* 27 Dec 1932.

Successful action for damages of 404 pounds in run down accident *Daily News* 28 Apr 1941.

### (T 45) John D Marshall

Many entries for swimming star of same name

Awarded MM: Pte J D Marshall of Claremont awarded Military Medal and promoted to Corporal, of 13<sup>th</sup> Machine Gun Company and before enlisting was in Audit Department of the WAGR, *Daily News* 10 Aug 1918.

### (T 46) George F Masterson

Gone to Albany with National Bank, 12 Feb 1912, *Sunday Times* 12 Feb 1912. Wounded in action, *West Australian* 20 Sept 1916.

Lt GFM returning from overseas service aboard SS Miltiades, *Kalgoorlie Miner* 24 July 1919.

Transfer Western Farmers Geraldton to Perth, *Geraldton Guardian* 1 Oct 1921. Appointed to Committee Northampton Disabled Soldiers Fund, *Geraldton Guardian* 19 Nov 1921.

Sailed to Eastern States, *West Australian* 20 Mar 1934.

Passed Accounting Institute exam income tax law, *West Australian* 8 May 1946.

### (T 47) David G Michael

“Another Hospital Ship”: list of sick and wounded, left Suez 29 Jan 1916 for Australia, *West Australian* 23 Feb 1916.

Sale of ‘assigned estate’ goods of DGM. Public auction of shop fit-out and sale goods from grocery and confectionary shop, *West Australian* 22 and 23 April 1931 (presumably because DGM’s business went bankrupt).

Contested Divorce granted on grounds of wife’s adultery, *West Australian* 11 Oct 1939. DGM living in South Africa.

Doris Michael of St Georges Terrance, Perth fined for having unlicensed 0.32 calibre revolver, *West Australian* 2 Mar 1950 and traffic offence, *West Australian* 29 Jul 1950.



Filling water bottles  
at Serapeum.



Myself at Aerodrome  
camp.



Tel-el-Kebir camp.

(T 48) **Frank O Monck**

Victim of robbery, possessions stolen, *West Australian* 11 June 1912.  
Jewellery retail partnership dissolved by mutual consent, *Daily News* 16 June 1915.

Wounded in action, father received telegram, FO suffered gunshot wound to face, evacuated to hospital in England, *Daily News* 16 May 1918.  
Birth of son to Frank O Monck, *West Australian* 27 Mar 1920.  
Engagement of daughter Rene to Fred Metcalfe, *West Australian* 14 June 1938.

Deaths of son-in-law Fred Metcalfe (33 yrs ex POW) and son Ronald Osmond Monck (26 yrs) as a result of an accident in South Perth, 14 separate death notices *West Australian* 1 April 1946.

Death of father-in-law, 8 Sept 1952.

(T 49) **Alan S ("Dick") McKinlay**

Hired as Junior Porter WAGR, Bayswater, *Daily News* 27 Nov 1909.  
Wounded, later ill with concussion, *Sunday Times* 17 Sept 1916 (shows grainy photo of 'Dick' and brother Pte W McKinlay) and *Western Argus* 19 Dec 1916.  
In Memoriam notice to M D (Mal) McLeod (see T 50 below), KIA 3 Sept 1916.  
Inserted by his friends ASM and J A Allan (see T 7 above), *West Australian* 3 Sept 1917.

October 8 1925, birth of son Gordon Robert to Irene nee Noble.  
Funeral Notice, death of infant son, *West Australian* 26 Dec 1925.  
Daughter's birth, Margaret Jean, born at home, *Western Mail* 10 Feb 1927.  
Advertisement by John Wills & Co, Grocers: free orders of groceries have been supplied to Mrs A S McKinlay (and others named with addresses), 4 Salisbury Street, Swanbourne, *West Australian* 4 April 1930.

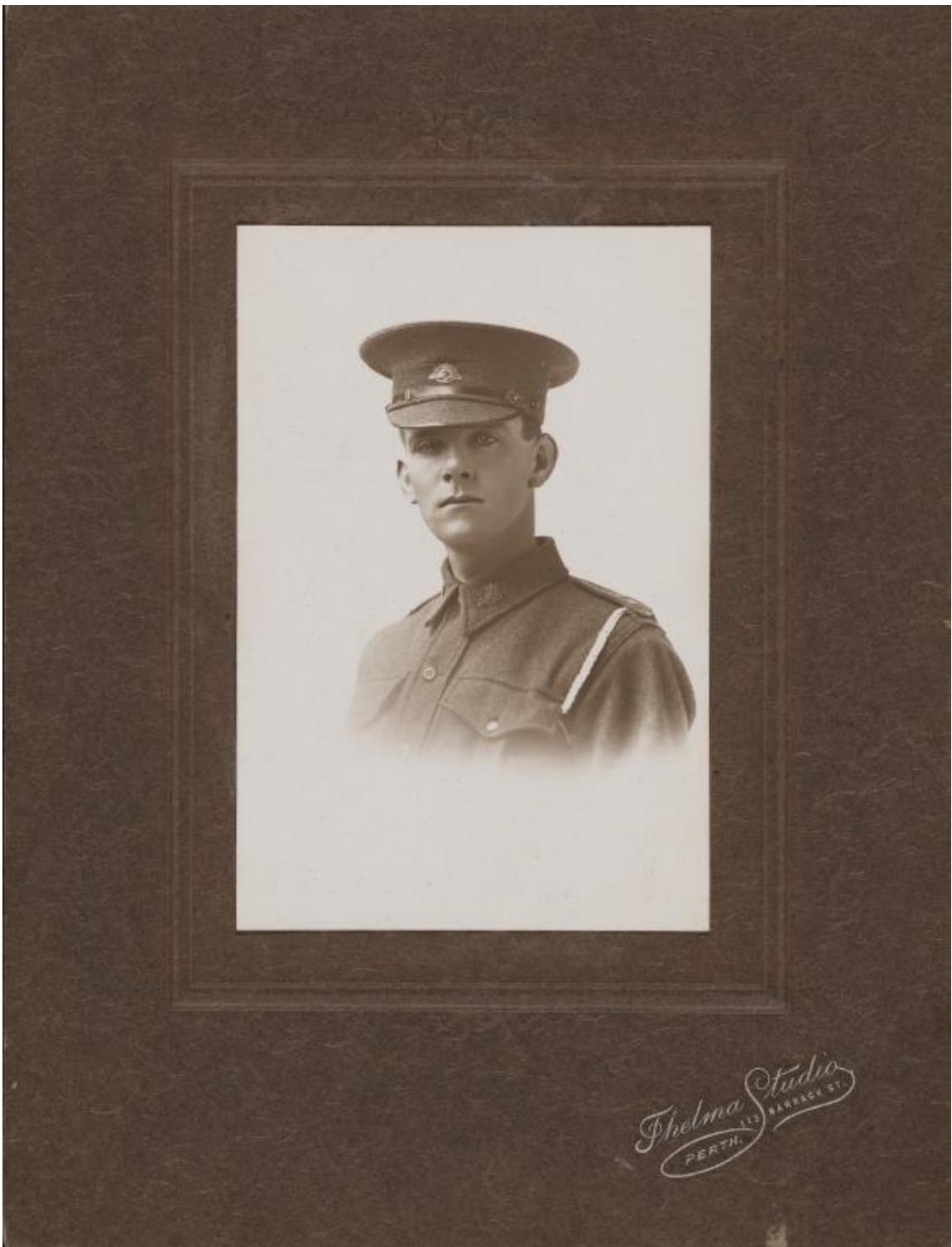


PTE. A. S. (DICK) MCKINLAY,  
Wounded in France.

(T 50) **M D McLeod**

KIA, Lance Corporal of Claremont, previously reported wounded, *Western Mail*  
6 Oct 1916 and 20 Oct 1916.

See also 3 Sept 1917 In Memoriam notice for (T 49) above and 'The McLeod  
Photographs' in the section on Photographs at the end of this part of  
Appendix 5.



*Phielma Studio*  
112 BARRACK ST.  
PERTH.

### (T 51) Michael O'Keefe

Common name, many entries

Died of wounds, Sgt M O'Keefe MM, of Ireland, *Daily News* 8 July 1918.  
Possible: Probate, MO, late of Yillminning to Mollie McDermott 154 pounds,  
*West Argus* 11 Feb 1919.

### (T 52) Percy B Powell

Kalgoorlie enlistment, *Kalgoorlie Argus* 10 Aug 1915.

Long published letter covering a number of topics: slow mail, French country, industry and people, and negative memories of Egypt – letter finished with “But how glad we were to leave that Pagan land of sin and dirt, Egypt, for this glorious country. I am now within sound of guns.” *Sunday Times* 17 Sept 1916.

Wounded, after 2 years of service, son of Mr and Mrs Edwin A Powell of Railway Road, Subiaco, Sapper PBP, 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Divisional Signally Company, *Daily News* 23 Nov 1917.

Photo of PBP with caption “suffering from shell shock” (no other text), *Sunday Times* 17 March 1918.

Comment: following is an outstanding bit of snobbery; I wonder what parents who had lost sons thought of it: arriving home “Sapper P B Powell, 4<sup>th</sup> A. D. Sig Company, great grandson of the late Squire Adams, of England, cousin of Judge Adams of Tasmania and uncle of Master L. C. Powell-Clerk of Hytesbury Road, Subiaco WA, arrived home last week, after four years active service at the front,” *Daily News* 24 July 1919.

KIA Michael J Adams, cousin of PBP, *Daily News* 20 Sept 1918.  
Engagement of Sapper PBP to Caroline Evelyn Troon, parents of Medina, Woolston, Southampton, England, *West Australian* 28 Aug 1919 and *Sunday Times* 7 Sept 1919.

Recovering from influenza after returning home, *Daily News* 12 Nov 1919.  
Engagement of Freda Ethel Dunkling, only daughter of Mrs P B Powell, of Princess Road Claremont, and the late Mr F A Dunkling of Hunts England, *West Australian* 29 Apr 1933 and *Mirror* 6 May 1933.

Judge in ex-soldiers' gardening contest, 14 Oct 1937.

Engagement of Stanley Eric Dunkling, only son of Mrs P B Powell, *West Australian* 14 Dec 1951.

**(T 53) Raymond K Randell**

KIA: Lance-Corporal R K Randall, Perth, previously reported missing, *Daily News* 26 May 1917 and *West Australian* 28 May 1917.

Note: Information taken from the 303<sup>rd</sup> Casualty List and includes similar words for Private R V Sanders, Cpl T E Hay and Cpl H B Allen, all KIA.

In Memoriam (3 'Mouquet Farm' notices), *West Australian* 4 Sept 1918.

**(T 54) Edmond C Reck**

Irate letter from naturalised Australian ECR:

"To the Editor...you describe Geo. Nichols, the plaintiff in the case..., as an Italian. I beg to contradict this statement, as Nichols is Greek, and not Italian as reported. I trust you will find space in your column for this contradiction as both here and on the Murchison if either a Greek or an Australian gets into trouble, he is almost always reported as an Italian, and I consider this unfair to myself and countrymen. I am etc. E RECK.", *Geraldton Guardian* 6 Feb 1908.

Report – to cope with heat ECR has fitted a punkah (Indian fan) to his dining and supper rooms, *Geraldton Guardian* 22 Feb 1907.

Children WA BDM Clement 1906, Edmond J 1909, Louis 1908, Rose 1911, Stella 1911 and John 1914: John in notices *West Australian* 4 March 1914.

Reported sick, returning home, ECR 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion, *Kalgoorlie Miner* 11 July 1916. Cook at Carnarvon Hotel, *Northern Times* 22 Oct 1927.

**(T 55) James D Renner**

Return from war: Cpl JDR, *Kalgoorlie Miner* 4 July 1919.

Notice of motor cycle – Harley-Davidson and sidecar – registration, *West Australian* 5 Sept 1919.

Supreme Court case, suing someone for breach of warranty, *West Australian* 2 Dec 1929 and *Daily News* 1 Mar 1930.

Birth of daughter, *West Australian* 13 Jan 1931.  
Attend funeral of Mrs B Lindgren, *West Australian* 28 June 1932.  
Won 2 pounds prize, *Sunday Times* 7 Aug 1932.  
Engagement of daughter, of 31 Yeovil Cres, Bicton, *West Australian* 22 March 1951.

#### (T 56) **A Rigney**

Funeral, *Daily News* 19 Oct 1925. Probate grant to E Moseley and William Grenfell, both of Fremantle, *West Australian* 22 Nov 1925.  
In Memoriam: AR dearly remembered, late of 112<sup>th</sup> Howitzer Brigade, inserted by old comrade W Grenfell (see T 31 above), *West Australian* 14 Oct 1926.

#### (T 57) **Horace Rose**

‘WA Heroes’ Photo with caption “Pte HR of the 11<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade AIEF (no text), *Daily News* 21 June 1916.  
Negligent driving, 2 pound fine, *West Australian* 29 April 1937.  
Death of sister(?) Myrtle Finlay, *West Australian* 11 July 1946.

#### (T 58) **John Rowe or John S Rowe**

Too many of this name/initials to trace

Possible Kalgoorlie School of Mines examination result, preparatory chemistry, *Western Argus* 27 December 1921.

#### (T 59) **Ralph V Saunders**

Death of father, *West Australian* 27 July 1909.  
War Casualty: “Mrs Agnes J Sanders, 250 Fitzgerald Street, Perth, has been officially informed that her son Pts RVS, previously stated to have been KIA, has been missing since Sept 4”, *West Australian* 18 Dec 1916. KIA confirmed, *Daily News* 26 May 1917.  
In Memoriam: 2 family notices, *West Australian* 4 Sept 1918.

#### (T 60) **John A Spence**

Confusion of same or similar names

Stolen bike 1908 by 15 yo (our JAS would have been about 15), found guilty and sent to Industrial School for 1 year, *West Australian* 8 July 1908.

Wounded Lance-Corporal JAS of Fremantle, *West Australian* 13 Oct 1916.

War casualty – Mrs James Spence has received word that her son, acting Sgt Major, JAS DCM has been wounded in France, 2<sup>nd</sup> occasion, *West Australian* 12 July 1918.

Returning soldier, J Spence, *West Australian* 18 Jun 1919.

#### (T 61) Thomas W J Telfer

Public Service exam results, passed, *Daily News* 30 Jan 1915.

YMCA Busy Bee, mentions JH Harvey, Ralph Sanders, Horrie Allen, TJ Telfer, L Cornish, F Cornish, H Thomson and a Harvey and Wells, *West Australian* 21 June 1915.

**Photo: A FINE EXAMPLE OF PATRIOTISM – THE MEMBERS OF THE WEST LEEDERVILLE METHODIST CRICKET CLUB ... ALL OF WHOM HAVE ANSWERED THEIR COUNTRY'S CALL.** Back Row Pte A Allen (returned), H Evans, J Farrell (rejected), J Page (Lt Home Defence). Third Row: Sgt J Hodgeon (killed), Sgt W Bower (returned), W Henville?, Lt B Jones, Pte V Kinsman, Sig F Cornish (MM). Second Row: Cp J Kidd (MM), H Gill (rejected), Sgt C Minn (vice capt), L/Cp R Cornish (capt killed), Pte F Selkirk (wounded 3 times), Pte W Cornish (wounded twice). Front Row: Sgt R Henderson, Sgt V?? Telfer. *Western Mail* 31 May 1918. See also *Western Mail* 22 Oct 1915.

Son James A Telfer born to nee Ruth Dixon, *West Australian* 8 Aug 1928.

Public service wages appeal, Lands and Surveys Department, *West Australian* 25 April 1933.

Golf event, 23 Aug 1935.

Car registration, 'Overland', of 54 Connally St, Wembley Park, *Daily News* 7 Jan 1936.

Thanks for tributes on death of TWF Telfer, *West Australian* 14 June 1947.

Mother in law's death, Ruth, *West Australian* 1948.

Daughter Ann engaged, *West Australian* 29 Oct 1952. Son James engaged, 9 Jan 1953.

(T 62) **William J Thornton**

Too many entries for this name and initials combinations.

(T 63) **Harold Eastwood Thomson**

Listed in 8-hour sports day photograph, *Sunday Times* 30 Jan 1916.

Listed in 'soldiers returning home with wives' list, *Kalgoorlie Miner* 5 Dec 1919.



A FINE EXAMPLE IN PATRIOTISM—THE MEMBERS OF THE WEST LEEDERVILLE METHODIST CRICKET CLUB (AS CONSTITUTED BEFORE THE WAR), ALL OF WHOM HAVE ANSWERED THEIR COUNTRY'S CALL.



THE OPENING MEET OF THE WEST AUSTRALIAN HUNT CLUB—OWING TO THE HEAVY RAIN IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO OBTAIN OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE PARTY.

E. L. Mitchell

See (T 61) Thomas W J Telfer above for names of the team members in the cricket club photograph (forget the top photograph, snotty lot).

#### (T 64) Alfred James Wells

Another common name, set of initials.

Witness at motor accident resulting in a death, AJW, sign-writer of Economic Lane, William Street, *Daily News* 1 Sept 1924.

Diamond Wedding Anniversary, at Bayswater Town Hall, for Mr and Mrs Alfred Joseph Wells (84 and 78 years respectively).

Four generations of "Alfred Wells" attended: Alfred Joseph Wells, Alfred Henry Wells, Alfred James Wells and Alfred Frederick Wells, *Sunday Times* 5 July 1925.

Witness before State Arbitration Court, part proprietor of Rich Sign Co, *West Australian* 13 July 1932.

Notice of dissolution of partnership for Rich Sign Co, AJW to continue as sole proprietor, *West Australian* 1 March 1937.

Death of father, Alfred Henry Wells, father-in-law of Daisy, grandfather of Betty and Alf, *Sunday Times* 8 Aug 1943.

### (T 65) Ernest H West

Large number of confusing entries.

WIA: "Mr R West of 64 Monmouth Street, North Perth, has received word that his brother, Pte EHW, has been wounded (2<sup>nd</sup> occasion) and is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Military Hospital, Oxford, England. He has received wounds in the chest and is progressing favourably",  
*West Australian* 18 May 1918.

### (T 66) Egbert Atholstone Wills

E A Wills, common name.

WA Baptist Union examinations, Junior level, EW 87/100,  
*West Australian* 10 Sep 1907.

WIA, 2<sup>nd</sup> occasion, *West Australian* 11 July 1917.

WIA, 3<sup>rd</sup> occasion, Cpl EAW, Leederville, *Western Argus* 18 Dec 1917.

### (T 67) Henry Andrew Williamson

Common name/initials, can identify no certain reports, mentions etc.

### (T 68) George Williams

Common name/initials.

KIA: "Son of Mr and Mrs T H (Thomas Henry) Williams, Trafalgar, Lance Corporal GW, KIA France on Anzac Day, deceased away 2 years 6 months with 11<sup>th</sup> and later 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalions. Prior to enlisting he was employed as a moulder on the Lake View mine, and was a member of the Trafalgar Fire Brigade," *Kalgoorlie Miner* 14 May 1918.

Brother, R J Williams ( have not been able to identify this person), on active service, *Kalgoorlie Miner* 21 May 1918.

Death of father, THW, late of residence at Lake View Lease, Trafalgar, *Kalgoorlie Miner* 26 Aug 1921. Death of mother (1 Sept 1922)  
*West Australian* 1 Sept 1926. Neither notice names children.

### (T 69) Richard James Williams

Common name/initials, can identify no certain reports, mentions etc.

### (T 70) Reginald Walter Wright

Common name/initials, can identify no certain reports, mentions etc.

## Photographs

As a final comment, readers will note that were possible I have drawn attention to photographs occasionally published in the newspapers. These of course are not very clear, so we generally don't have a face to bring life to our men. No doubt there are old family photographs still about, but these generally are not readily assessable to a casual researcher.

As I stated in Chapter 5 when discussing the information collected on enlistment:

*And perhaps even more surprising, there was no official photographic record made for each recruit (although professional photographers appear to have operated in at least Queensland and Tasmania to photograph soldiers on finishing basic training or on embarkation).*

*The Australian War Memorial currently has a project to obtain a photograph of each of the 102,000 Australians on the Honour Role (those who died), but so far, according to their Website, has only 14,000 photographs.*

There are a number of individual photographs of in Browning's book (*The 52nd Battalion*, Advance Press 2005), but only 2 of our men.

These are of WFB Creech and JA Spence.

There are also photographs and short biographies in a book called "Australia's Fighting Sons of the EMPIRE" Palmer and Ashworth Publishers, Colortype Press, St George's Court, Perth, WA. Published 1920 (NLA call number Nq 940.481940922.A938). It looks as if doting relatives paid to have their boys listed in the book.

The following of our '70' are included:

**Hugh Bridger** (and brother)  
**George Stanley Broadley** (and brother)  
**William Henry Coombe**  
**John Hopkins**  
**(John) Dunn Marshall** (and brother)  
**Ernest Edward Malmgreen** (and brother).

## **The McLeod Photographs**

Now for one of those magical research experiences. When searching Trove for **Malcolm Donald McLeod** a reference appeared for a 1920 Book entitled **McLeod Collection of Photographs** (State Library of Western Australia call number .b18212797).

It was not a book in the traditional sense, but a photograph book containing just 8 photographic prints. It would appear the photographs were found abandoned in a vacant house and donated by the finder to the WA Library as an archival record.

Four of the photographs are now available in digital form (p 338 – 341):

1. 11th Reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion winners of the 8-hour day drill competition
2. Close up of Memorial names of the fallen, including Private Malcolm D McLeod.
3. Unveiling of the Subiaco War Memorial in 1926.
4. An October 1915 studio portrait of Malcolm McLeod as a recruit.

As could be expected, the scanned group photograph is far clearer than the Newspaper version, and can be enlarged to give a relatively clear image of each of the 51 11<sup>th</sup>12th recruits, and of the 4 addition soldiers referred to earlier' and the **mystery mascot dog**.

### 11th Reinforcements—12th Battalion.

**WINNERS OF PLATOON DRILL (8-Hours Day Sports)**



Fourth Row (standing) from left to right: - Privates E. V. Sanders, R. J. Williams, W. H. Coombes, H. R. Kneale, H. R. Thomson, J. Copping, G. Williams, J. H. Gordon, J. Hopkins, W. F. B. Creech, H. B. Allen, T. W. J. Teifer, J. P. Graham, Third Row (kneeling) from left to right: - Privates A. S. McKinlay, P. W. Ainsley, A. J. Denton, R. Gilbert, J. R. Judge, W. J. Cornish, C. Bunting, J. C. Bunting, H. M. C. Bunting, M. M. C. Bunting, Second Row (sitting) from left to right: - Privates F. Buck, H. W. Cornish, M. D. McLeod, H. Bridger, E. H. West, Sgt-Major Denaslow, Lieut F. W. Bailey, Sgt J. McCullay, E. A. Willis, H. J. Boucher, H. W. E. Bickersteth, Capt T. R. Hay, J. Eows, Front Row (sitting) from left to right: - Officers G. S. Broadley, P. F. Bovell, J. Calder, A. J. Wells, J. S. Kidd, D. J. Marshall, G. S. Fairweather, Cpl G. S. Broadley, Cpl P. F. Bovell, Cpl J. Calder, A. J. Wells, J. S. Kidd, D. J. Marshall, G. S. Fairweather.







## The Great Small-Dog Mystery

Earlier it was noted that Lieutenant F W BAILEY, in the 8-hour day - platoon drill photograph, is holding a small black and white dog with big ears, said dog presumably being the drill squad's lucky mascot (also see p350).

This dog is clearly the same black and white 'bat eared' canine in the group photograph of the aftermath of a meal, in Egypt in early 1916 – see Chapter 4 – whom I christened 'FRITZY' (also see p 351). Now that it is revealed that he came in fact from Blackboy Camp I concede his/her name might have been something else.

How Fritzy got to Egypt is the mystery. I doubt if his sea trip was officially sanctioned. So the question is: was he also smuggled into France? Maybe in some old letter there is an answer. It certainly does not seem to have received contemporary press coverage. Clearly an opportunity missed.

Of course, as soon as one ventures fanciful opinions as I have in the paragraphs above one is invariably shot down by actual information. A Trove search of terms such as Dog Mascots or Army Mascots or Regimental Pets indicates that in fact the practice of having unit pets was common and officially sanctioned, as was the practice of taking them overseas.

For example, the *West Australian* (18 June 1915 and 22 June 1915) carries advertisements for the return of lost Fox Terriers who were Blackboy Hill soldiers' mascots (no rewards offered). A well known Captain Leane, who sailed with the first WA contingent, took with him a 'fine bulldog' christened 'Mulga' (*West Australian* 26 Aug 1914).

There are other newspaper entries, including one witty offering on the general mania and benefits for keeping regimental pets, to the extent that one small isolated detachment was driven to adopting a box of sardines as its mascot, as there was nothing live on offer (*Daily News* 14 March 1918).



**The SS Anchises - passenger ship built 1911, sunk 1941 in  
enemy air raids off the UK by the usual suspects**

As we saw in Chapter 8, after war-end the men returned home in dribs and drabs in the order they were allocated to a Quota for each returning ship. This allowed an equitable spread of returnees across units. My father's Quota embarked on the above ship, **HMAT 68 Anchises**, on the 28th of February 1919. He was finally discharged on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 1919. Sometimes the scheduled return of a soldier received advanced newspaper coverage, as we have seen from the Trove searches. For many it must have seemed a very long wait between the Armistice and their eventual discharge.

## Appendix 6:

### Part A. Index of Service Numbers and Names for 11th Reinforcements 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion Australian Imperial Force - Western Australian Contingent.

(Rank as at Embarkation From Fremantle Western Australia November 1915.)

See also Early Infantry Casualties in France – p 131

#### A. NCOs

1. 3341 Acting Sgt McCULLY James – p 78, 84, 195, 255, 311
2. 3342 Acting Sgt NORMAN Percy – p 79, 84, 195, 256, 312
3. 3343 Acting Cpl BROADLEY George Stanley – p 79, 195, 234, 256, 312, 336
4. 3344 Acting Cpl BOWER Walter Thomas – p 81, 84, 196, 257, 312
5. 3345 Acting Cpl HAY Thomas Egbert – p 82, 84, 174, 196, 257, 312

#### B. Privates

6. 3346 Pte AINLEY Fred Wilfred – p 196, 228, 258, 313
7. 3347 Pte ALLAN John Alexander – p 59, 197, 242, 258, 313
8. 3348 Pte ALLEN Horace Bersford p 85, 197, 260, 313
9. 3349 Pte BICKERSTETH Robert – p 72, 85, 198, 260, 313
10. 3350 Pte BOLLARD Maurice Montgomery – p 198, 239, 260, 313
11. 3351 Pte BOUCHER Herbert William – p 55, 65, 82, 87, 199, 261, 314
12. 3352 Pte BRIDGER Hugh – p 199, 240, 262, 314, 336
13. 3353 Pte BROWN Claude John Holmes – p 71, 174, 200, 239, 263, 315
14. 3354 Pte BUCHANAN Robert Charles – p 200, 229, 264, 315
15. 3355 Pte BUCK Felix George – p 201, 239, 264, 315

16. 3356 Pte BURGESS Leonard – p 201, 230, 266, 316
17. 3357 Pte CALDER James – p 87, 202, 266, 316
18. 3358 later 8807A Pte CAPLE Frank Horace – p 71, 174, 202, 241, 267, 316
19. 3359 Pte COOMBE William Henry – p 202, 237, 267, 317, 325, 337
20. 3360 Pte COPPIN James p 88, 175, 203, 268, 317
21. 3361 Pte CORNISH Frederick William – p 68, 203, 230, 269, 317
22. 3362 Pte CORNISH Reginald Henry – p 89, 204, 270, 317
23. 3363 Pte CORNISH Wilfred John – p 90, 204, 270, 317
24. 3364 Pte CREECH William Frank Bernard – p 83, 174, 205, 241, 271, 318, 336
25. 3365 Pte DENTON Arthur Jacob – p 206, 231, 272, 318
26. 3366 Pte EAGLETON Albert Henry – p 55, 65, 90, 137-138, 206, 273, 318
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## Blackboy Hill Fritz



## Egyptian Fritzy

