

## Herbert Leslie Parkes



**Private Herbet Parkes**  
**17th Battalion, AIF**  
**Service Number: 5706**

**Born:** 28 February 1898, Hurstville, NSW

**Died:** 3 October 1918, Joncourt, France

Herbert Lewis (Leslie) Parkes was born at Hurstville on 28 February 1898 and baptised a month later in St Peters Anglican Church, Cooks River. His parents were Charles and Emma (nee Olson) Parkes. When Parkes was five years old his mother Emma died, leaving her husband Charles with three small children to raise. In 1905, Charles, a railway ganger married Ivy Ellison at Stockton. Ivy had family connections at Emu Plains, which may explain why the family had moved to York Street Emu Plains by 1907. After his schooling, young Parkes worked for a time as a porter at Emu Plains Railway Station. At the time of his enlistment, he was working as an engineer's assistant for Johnson Bros in Sydney. His aunt and guardian, Eva Smith, Emma's sister gave her consent. She had also adopted his brother Arthur. This form also stated his parents were both deceased, which was not the case. His sister Amy (incorrectly recorded as Amelia), living at the same address as Eva Smith was recorded as his next of kin.

Parkes enlisted on 22 March 1916 and allocated to the 17<sup>th</sup> Battalion. He embarked on 9 September from Sydney on *HMAT Euripides*. On the voyage over, Parkes was charged with being late for parade and given extra fatigue duty. Upon arrival in England, he was transferred to Rollestone. However, on 30 December he was court martialled for being AWOL from 6 to 18 December with a forged pass. Brigadier General Sir Newton Moore, in charge of AIF camps and depots in England, remitted 50 days from his 120-day detention sentence. Additionally, Parkes forfeited 93 days' pay.

By May 1917 Parkes was in France. In June, suffering from appendicitis, Parkes was admitted to hospital. He returned to England, and on 10 June admitted to Reading War Hospital. While in England, he was again AWOL in August 1917. On his return, he was placed in custody and was then sent to isolation camp when he was found to have contracted scabies. In November, he proceeded overseas to France. He was again in hospital with a fever in May 1918 and marched out to his unit on 19 August. On 21 August, Parkes was again AWOL and was sentenced to 14 days field punishment. He rejoined his unit on 25 August. On 3 October, Parkes was killed in action during the Battle of the St Quentin Canal. He was among 22 Australian soldiers who were buried in Joncourt Railway Cemetery. In 1920, these soldiers were re-interred in Bellicourt British Cemetery.

### Memorial Details:

- Bellicourt British Cemetery, France
- Honour Roll, Emu Plains Public School

**Sources:**

- Honour Roll, Hurstville War Memorial
- [National Archives of Australia: B2455, PARKES H L](#)
- [Australian War Memorial First World War Nominal Roll](#)
- [Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour](#)
- Penrith City Library biography files