

PENRITH

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1916

OUR FALLEN

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“

These are the men who cover
Australia with undying glory’

”

Nepean Times 9 September 1916, p.2

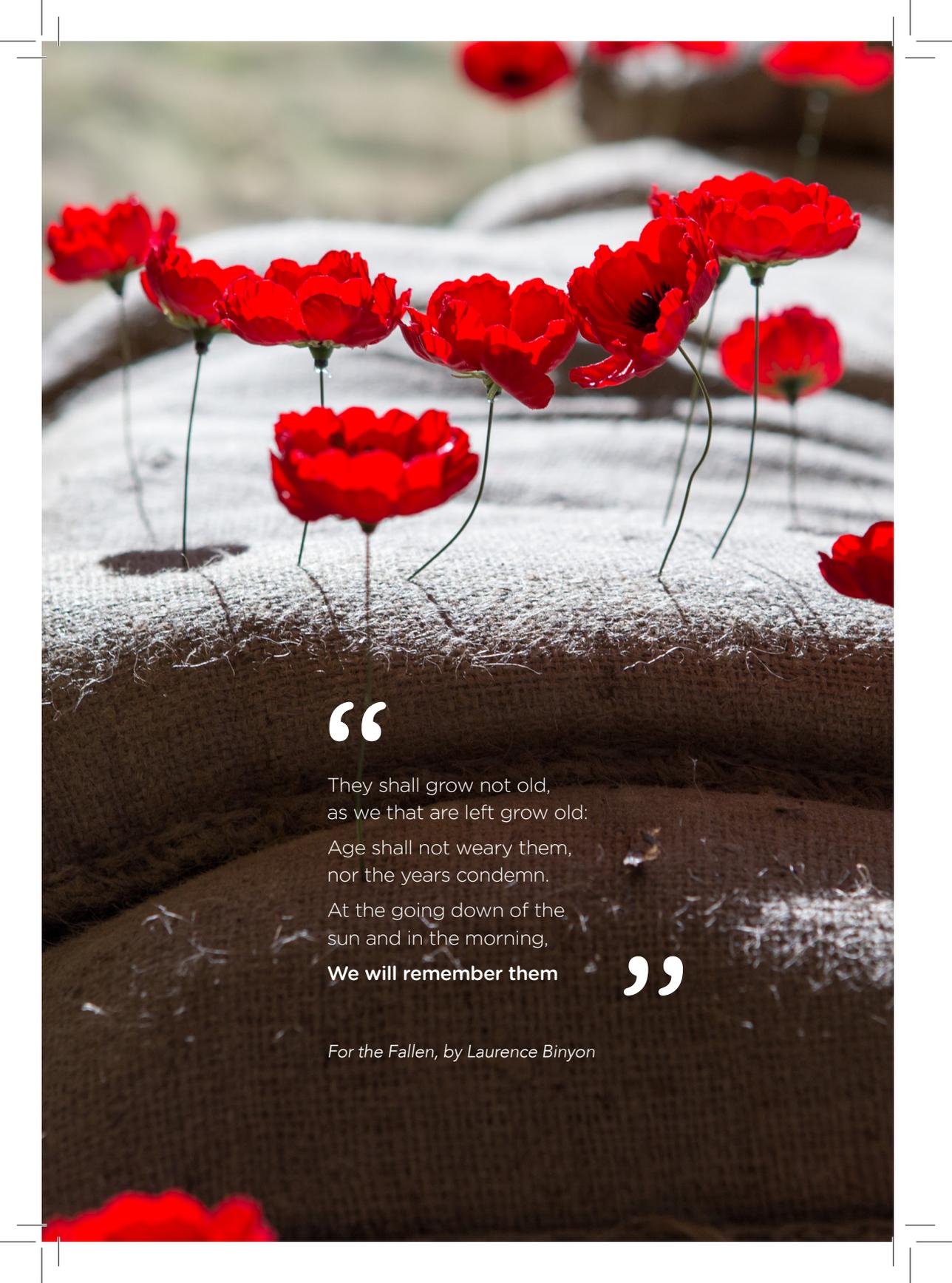


1916

OUR FALLEN

These men have been remembered across our City in various memorials, on honor rolls in parks, churches, halls and schools. This is our tribute to their lives and sacrifice for their country.





“

They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the
sun and in the morning,

We will remember them

”

For the Fallen, by Laurence Binyon

INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been compiled by Research Services staff at Penrith City Library for the 15th Annual Makings of a City History Conference held on Saturday 12 March 2016 in the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre Penrith.

This is the second installment of a project to document the fallen servicemen memorialised in the Penrith area. The men listed here fell in 1916 - either in battle or as a result of wounds or illness - during Australia's involvement in the First World War.

In coming years further installments will be produced, uncovering the lives of the servicemen of the local area who lost their lives in the various battlefields and campaigns of World War I.

The men are listed in order of the day they died.



**DEVLIN,
PRIVATE ERROL CAPPIE NEPEAN**

**30 MAY 1916,
AT FLEURBAIX, FRANCE**

18th Battalion AIF, D Company
Service number: 1166/91

Errol Cappie Nepean Devlin was born in Penrith in 1891 to Sidney and Mary Devlin. At the time of his enlistment, his parents were living at Kia Ora, Darley Road Manly. Devlin had been a clerk before his enlistment on 12 August 1914. He was serving with the Naval and Military Expeditionary Force, Tropical Unit, 1st Battalion when it was sent to Rabaul. When Britain declared war on Germany, Australia was asked to destroy the radio stations and to occupy German New Guinea. The ANMEF forces raised the British flag in Rabaul on 13 September and commenced military occupation of German New Guinea. Devlin was discharged on 4 March 1915 and re-enlisted in the AIF at Liverpool on 29 March joining the 18th Battalion.

He embarked for Egypt on the HMAT Ceramic on 25 June 1915. The Battalion trained in Egypt before landing at ANZAC Cove on 22 August. It had not been ashore a day when the battalion was committed to the last operation of the August Offensive, the attack on Hill 60. It lasted until 29 August, costing the battalion half of its men. From letters deposited at the Australian War Memorial Devlin wrote to his family on 30 August stating 'We landed at the Dardanelles 10 days ago and we now have only 82 men left out of 270 D Coy...our dead are still out there unburied...'

On 9 January 1916 Devlin arrived back in Egypt. After some further training he was sent to France, disembarking at Marseilles on 25 March 1916. Devlin's last letter to his family was dated 3 May – somewhere in France. He assured them that he was having a better time of it in France than at Gallipoli. He had plenty of food, beer and champagne, and was living in a house. Devlin observed 'The country looks lovely over here now, with all of the flowers in bloom'. He collected some of those flowers from a battlefield near Ypres and enclosed them in his letter home. Devlin was killed in action on 30 May 1916 and was buried in Brewery Orchard Cemetery.

Memorial Details:

- Brewery Orchard Cemetery Bois-Grenier, France
- Honor Roll, Manly War Memorial



**CAMPLING,
LIEUTENANT ALBERT EDWARD**

**14 JUNE 1916,
AT BOIS GRENIER, FRANCE**

20th Battalion, AIF

Service number: Commissioned officer

Albert Campling was born in Penrith in 1873, the son of George and Eliza Campling. His father George had been a long serving railway employee. After attending Penrith Superior Public School, Campling studied dentistry. In 1897 he married Mary Flint in Sydney and by the time of his enlistment, they had 4 children. After the outbreak of the Boer War, Campling enlisted with the NSW Imperial Bushmen and served for 12 months before being invalided home in March 1901. Prior to World War 1, he served as a Lieutenant and then Captain with the senior cadets and as a Private with the 2nd Infantry Battalion. He had served as a 2nd Lieutenant with the 38th Infantry Regiment and in December 1914 passed the examination for 1st Lieutenant.

Campling enlisted for overseas service on 18 August 1915 when he was living with his family in Regent Street Kogarah. His detachment left Australia aboard HMAS Argylshire on 30 September 1915 bound for Egypt and by April he had disembarked in France. The 20th Battalion were holding a section of the Western Front on 14 June 1916 when Campling was wounded. According to a statement by Private Leigh to the Australian Red Cross, Campling and some officers were having a smoke together after lunch in the dining dugout at Bois Grenier. As the group was moving from one dugout to another, a shell exploded near the group. Captain Ferguson was killed and Campling was badly wounded. He died 30 minutes later. Leigh was present when Campling and Ferguson were buried together in the cemetery at Bois Grenier. Leigh finished his report by stating: 'The men were very keen on Lieutenant Campling, they put a lot of work into his grave'. After his death, Mary Campling named her home 'Bois Grenier'. Campling's son George enlisted in February 1916 and returned to Australia after he was wounded in 1918.

Memorial Details:

- Brewery Orchard Cemetery Bois-Grenier, France
- Honor Roll, Methodist Church, Kogarah



**NICOLE,
PRIVATE JAMES OTHO HENRY**

**3 JULY 1916,
AT ARMENTIERES, FRANCE**

2nd Battalion, AIF
Service number: 4256

James (Jim) Otho Henry Nicole was born in St Marys on 24 March 1899 to Otho and Mary Nicole. His father was a bookkeeper with Neale Bros in High Street and auditor for St Marys Municipal Council. Soon after his birth, the family moved to Penrith. His mother Mary Jane, the youngest daughter of James and Jane Bennett of St Marys, died in Penrith in 1902, aged 28 years. Nicole attended Penrith Superior Public School and received his Qualifying Certificate in January 1914. After his schooling Nicole worked as a clerk.

When Nicole enlisted on 9 September 1915 he stated his age was 18, however he was just 16 years and 5 months. His unit embarked from Sydney on the HMAT Aeneas on 20 December 1915. After a short time in Egypt he was sent to France, disembarking at Marseilles on 28 March 1916. The Nepean Times reported that he spent his 17th birthday at sea enroute to France.

Nicole was killed in action on 3 July at Armentieres aged 17 years and 3 months. His father received his possessions which included identity disc, watch, match box, purse, coins, wallet, photos, ring engraved "Jim", fountain pen, box of letters. Otho Nicole died in 1953.

Memorial Details:

- Erquinghem-Lys Churchyard Extension, France
- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith
- Honor Roll, St Stephens Church of England
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School
- Commemoration plaque, St Mary Magdalene Churchyard



BAYNES, LIEUTENANT RICHARD HENRY BEINDGE

**14 JULY 1916,
AT BAZENTIN-LE PETIT, FRANCE**
1st Battalion, Royal Welsh (Welch) Fusiliers
British Imperial Army

Richard Henry Beindge Baynes was born in 1889, the son of Richard Beindge Baynes and Annie Augusta Baynes (nee Bell) of Fernhill, Mulgoa. His father had served on Mulgoa Council since 1902, serving as mayor until 1912 and after its amalgamation with Nepean Shire served on its Council until the family left the district in 1925.

Baynes graduated from Sydney University in 1914, obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Diploma of Military Science. He was among the first Australian university graduates to receive a commission in the British Imperial Regular Army. Baynes was gazetted a second lieutenant in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers on 17 September 1914 and was promoted to temporary lieutenant on 24 October 1914. He left Australia aboard P&O's ocean liner SS Mooltan for London on 23 January 1915 where he would join the Royal Welsh Fusiliers at Wrexham. After 7 months he was sent in command of a guard of 100 men to a fort on the Mersey, near Liverpool.

On 20 October 1915, Baynes was sent to France. He was killed on 14 July 1916, leading his men at the taking of the village of Bazentin-le-Petit, during the Battle of the Somme in France. Baynes' was described as having 'led his men most heroically all day with great valor, and was leading a fierce charge when he received his fatal call'. News of his death was announced in newspapers across Australia.

A brother, 20 year old George Nepean Beindge Baynes died in Kent, England in 1917 in the service of the British Army. Another brother Reginald Frank Beindge Baynes trained as an aviator for the British during the war.

Memorial Details:

- Honor Roll, Thiepval Memorial, France
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School



**FORLAND,
PRIVATE ROBERT CARRINGTON**

**19 JULY 1916,
FROMELLES, FRANCE**

1st & 53rd Battalion, AIF
Service number: 4779

Robert Carrington Forland was born in 1896 at Condobolin NSW, the son of Joseph and Jane Forland. Prior to enlisting, Forland had served with the 16th Platoon, B Company 42nd Infantry Battalion for 14 months at Condobolin. He had attempted to join the Light Horse but after one month's service failed the riding test.

Forland enlisted on 20 August 1915 and was allocated to the 15th Reinforcements, 1st Battalion. He embarked aboard HMAT Star of England on 8 March 1916 and upon arrival transferred to the 53rd Battalion. Forland left for France aboard Royal George on 19 June 1916 and disembarked at Marseilles on 28 June 1916.

He was wounded in action on 19 July 1916 during the Battle of Fromelles. Forland was seen badly wounded by another soldier later in the raid, sitting in a shell hole between the German first and second lines of defence. His fellow soldier said that he would come back and get him later on but owing to heavy shell fire and the enemy pressing, he had to return to his own line.

Forland was not seen again and a Court of Inquiry held on 2 September 1916 ruled that Forland had been killed in action on 19 July 1916.

Shortly after receiving the news of his death, Forland's family received a letter from Max Gavel, a fellow soldier from Condobolin, stating that only a fortnight before (mid September 1916), Bob Forland had written to his brother Syd from one of the base hospitals. This led to a flurry of letters between the family and the military authorities who notified the family that their son had been killed in action at Fromelles. He laid buried in a mass grave until 2008 when DNA testing identified his remains. He was laid to rest in 2012.

Memorial Details:

- Pheasant Wood Military Cemetery, Fromelles, France
- Honor Roll, Memorial Park, Condobolin
- Honor Roll, Condobolin Public School



**HOPE,
PRIVATE EDWARD JAMES**

**20 JULY 1916,
AT FROMELLES, FRANCE**

54th Battalion, AIF
Service number: 4188

Edward James Hope was born at Kingswood NSW in about 1895, the son of William and Amy Hope. After the deaths of his parents and infant sister within a few months of each other in 1898, it is presumed that Hope and his surviving sister Florence were raised by relatives. He attended Penrith Superior Public School and was later employed by the NSW Railways as a fettler at Springwood. Hope enlisted on 23 September 1915, and was allocated to the 13th Reinforcements 2nd Battalion. He left Australia aboard HMAT Aeneas on 20 December 1915. After his arrival in Egypt, Hope was allocated to the 54th Battalion on 16 February 1916.

After training in Egypt, Hope was sent to France on the Caledonian in June 1916. His battalion was involved in their first major battle on 19 July at Fromelles. On 21 July, Hope was reported missing. On 24 November 1916, Hope's status was changed to 'killed in action' after German authorities handed over paybooks of dead Australian soldiers to the Geneva Red Cross. Subsequent investigation revealed that a number of soldiers including Private J Feehan, had seen Hope killed in the field. It was further determined that as Hope's name had appeared with mention of personal effects on the German death lists, he had died in the front trenches and that his body was found and probably interred by the Germans. Hope's date of death was determined to be 20 July 1916. Hope's sister Florence, who was living at Kingswood, received his medals as his next of kin.

In 2009, a project commenced using DNA testing to determine the identity of 400 soldiers found buried in a mass grave at Fromelles. Hope was believed to be one of these soldiers. The search for a DNA match continues for Edward James Hope.

Memorial Details:

- Honor Roll, VC Corner Australian Cemetery, Fromelles, France
- Honor Roll, Victoria Park, St Marys
- Honor Roll, Blue Mountains District War Memorial Hospital, Katoomba
- Honor Roll, St Stephens Church of England, Penrith



AUSBURN, PRIVATE EDWARD HAROLD

21 JULY 1916,
AT FROMELLES, FRANCE

54th Battalion AIF

Service number: 4128

Edward (Ted) Ausburn was born in Kingswood in 1893, the son of James and Hannah Ausburn. As a 16 year old, his mother gave permission for him to join the Royal Navy in 1909 for 5 years. Before the war, he worked as a cook at the officer's mess in Canberra. His father was a saddle and harness maker and the family lived in Henry Street, and later Woodriff Street, Penrith.

Ausburn enlisted in September 1915 and was posted to the 13th Reinforcements, 2nd Battalion. He left Australia aboard the HMAT Aeneas on 20 December 1915 and arrived at Alexandria in January 1916. On 16 February 1916, the reorganization of the AIF saw the 2nd Battalion divided into two units. Ausburn was allocated to 54th Battalion.

On 19 June 1916, he was sent to the Western Front and disembarked at Marseilles on 29 June. The 54th Battalion fought its first major battle on the Western Front as part of the initial assault at Fromelles on 19 July. It suffered a casualty rate of almost 65 percent. Ausburn was killed in action between 19-21 July 1916. He was buried at Eaton Hall Cemetery by Reverend James Green and later re-interred in Rue-Petillion Military Cemetery.

On 3 September 1916 a memorial service was held in the open-air picture theatre in High Street where Ausburn was described 'as a fine young man of the very highest character'. Hunt stated 'It was very clear to anyone that he was held in very high esteem and we thank God for his life and example'. By 1920, his parents were living in Archibald Street Granville. Ted's brother Albert Charles served in Carmichael's 36th Battalion, was twice wounded and gassed, and returned to Australia in 1918.

Memorial Details:

- Rue-Petillion Military Cemetery, Fleurbaix, France
- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School

**MULLEN,
PRIVATE WILLIAM HIRAM**

**22-25 JULY 1916,
AT POZIERES, FRANCE**

1st Battalion AIF

Service number: 5312

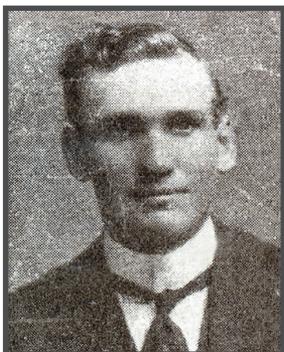
William Hiram Mullen was born in 1890 at Emu Plains, the son of Samuel and Isabella (nee Campbell) Mullen. After leaving school, Mullen worked for the NSW Government Railways for 4 years and at the time of enlistment was working at Morts Graving Dock as a marine engineer. Under duress from his father, Mullen married a pregnant Matilda Graham in 1913 and a son Roy was born soon afterwards. He was not prepared to live with her and soon left Penrith for Hobart. While there he met and married Ivy Leary in May 1914. A son Max was born to them. While he was in Tasmania Mullen attempted to join the AIF but was rejected. Meanwhile in Penrith, he was charged with desertion and returned to Penrith where he was convicted of wife desertion and bigamy and served some time in Parramatta Gaol.

Mullen enlisted on 4 December 1915 and was allocated to E Company, 1st Battalion. He left Australia with Gordon Martin aboard the HMAT Makarini on 1 April 1916. On 9 May 1916, he was bound for the Western Front.

The 1st Battalion took part in the Battle of the Somme which commenced on 1 July 1916 and were involved in the Battle of Pozieres in late July. It was during this battle that Mullen was killed. According to Private John Field, when going over the top of the parapet, Mullen was hit on the forehead by a piece of shell and killed instantly. He was buried in the vicinity of Pozieres. Matilda, Ivy and his parents all applied for his medals. However, they were awarded to Matilda for her son Roy. During the war she was living in Glencoe, High Street Penrith, and later Lemongrove.

Memorial Details:

- Villers-Bretonneux, France
- Honor Roll, War Memorial, Emu Plains
- Honor Roll, Emu Plains Public School



**LE SUEUR, LANCE
CORPORAL WILLIAM JAMES**

**24 JULY 1916,
AT POZIERES, FRANCE**

2nd Battalion, AIF
Service number: 2435

William (Bill) Le Sueur was born in Gundagai in 1890, the son of William and Caroline (nee King) Le Sueur. After leaving school, Le Sueur worked for the NSW Railways and at the time of enlistment, was a fireman based at the Penrith Locomotive Depot.

Le Sueur enlisted on 3 May 1915 and was allocated to the 7th Reinforcements, 2nd Battalion. He left for the Gallipoli campaign aboard HMAT Orsova on 14 July 1915. After a brief period of training in Egypt, Le Sueur joined his unit at Gallipoli on 31 October 1915. His unit was one of the last to leave Gallipoli during the evacuation and on 28 December 1915, Le Sueur disembarked from the troopship Huntsgreen at Alexandria. On 23 March 1916, Le Sueur embarked on the Invernia bound for the Western Front, disembarking at Marseilles on 28 March 1916.

Le Sueur was killed in action on 24 July 1916, during the Battle for Pozieres. He has no known grave. On 31 August, Le Sueur's fiancée Elsie White who was living in Victoria House, Castlereagh Street Penrith, enquired about the validity of his death notice.

On 3 September 1916 at a memorial service held in the open-air picture theatre in High Street Le Sueur was described as having a 'hale and hearty nature which won the affection of everyone'.

Memorial Details:

- Honor Roll, Villers-Bretonneux, France
- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith
- Honor Roll, St Stephens Anglican Church, Penrith
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School



**LEE,
PRIVATE THOMAS JOHN**

**28 JULY 1916,
AT POZIERES, FRANCE**

18th Battalion, AIF
Service number: 1716

Thomas Lee was born in Gerringong NSW, the third son of George and Ann Lee. In 1894 the family moved to Tomago where George managed Sir William Windeyer's Estate. In 1900 they moved to Penrith where George took up 2 farm leases on the corner of Mulgoa and Jamison Roads. After the death of her husband in 1904, Ann and her younger children moved to the Lismore district. Prior to his enlistment Lee was on the staff of the Dairy Farmers, Sydney.

Lee enlisted in May 1915 and sailed for the seat of war aboard HMAT Kanowna in June 1915. He saw much active service in Gallipoli and Egypt, being slightly wounded at Gallipoli, and was in a Malta hospital ill with jaundice for several weeks in October 1915. After his recovery Lee was sent to France, disembarking at Marseilles on 25 March 1916. In a letter published in the Nepean Times in September 1916, Lee wrote about the tough times in France and the local men he had met. Lee was a messenger with Harold Hahn whose parents were from Mulgoa. Hahn was killed on 23 June 1916.

Lee was killed in action on 28 July 1916. His burial site was confused for a time until his body was found with its identity tag in 1928 during exhumation works in the vicinity of Pozieres. Lee was re-buried in Serre Road Cemetery No. 2, Beaumont Hamel. Following the death of his mother, Lee's brother Henry received his medals and identity tag.

The Nepean Times reported in September 1916 that Lee was 'a splendid, stalwart type of the country-bred Australian, most kindly and genial of temperament, and keenly interested in local and general matters of import. He had been a prominent member of the Penrith School of Arts committee during his residence in the district'.

Memorial Details:

- Serre Road Cemetery No 2, Beaumont Hamel, France
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School



**TINGCOMBE,
PRIVATE HENRY LETHBRIDGE**

**29 JULY 1916,
AT BOULOGNE, FRANCE**

18th Battalion, AIF
Service number: 3678

Henry (Tinks) Lethbridge Tingcombe was born in Tamworth in 1893, the son of John and Ada Tingcombe. He was the grandson of the late Reverend Henry Tingcombe, first Church of England Minister of Armidale. Tingcombe was educated at the Burwood Superior Public School.

After leaving school, he joined the Adelaide Steamship Company and, at the outbreak of war, was a purser on the *Grantala*, which was later converted to a hospital ship. Tingcombe sailed to Rabaul on the *Grantala* with three nursing staff from the Penrith region: Sisters Stella Colless, Rachel Clouston and Constance Neale.

After being rejected in Sydney and Brisbane on medical grounds owing to the strict rules regarding teeth, Tingcombe finally enlisted with his younger brother Noel on 1 November 1915. Their mother, who was living at Studley Park, Werrington at the time of their enlistment later stated the older brother was allowed to be Noel's guarantor. The brothers both joined the 18th Battalion on the same day and fought side by side. They left Australia on 20 December 1915 on board *HMAT Aeneas* and spent time in Egypt before being sent to the Western Front.

On 25 July 1916, Tingcombe, who was in a communication sap, was wounded in the chest during the Battle of Pozieres. Private James Frost Priestley, a schoolmate of Tingcombe's, saw him walking away aided by two other men. Tingcombe was admitted to the 13th General Hospital at Boulogne on 28 July and died the following day. His brother Noel, was killed a few days later on 4 August 1916.

Memorial Details:

- Boulogne Eastern Cemetery, France
- Honor Roll, Victoria Park, St Marys



**HOLT,
PRIVATE HENRY JOHN JOSEPH**

**2 AUGUST 1916,
AT POZIERES, FRANCE**

25TH Battalion, AIF
Service number: 2246

Henry Holt was born in 1886 in Grafton, the only child of Alfred and Catherine Holt. After school, he was apprenticed to his father as a painter. In 1910 he married Phoebe Wogaman in Sydney and they had three children. Their last child Margaret, he would never see as she was born in Penrith on 26 January 1916. Alice was living in Lethbridge Street Penrith at the time. Holt served in the Lismore Scots Rifles before his enlistment in July 1915 in Brisbane, where the family were living at the time.

Holt embarked from Brisbane on the HMAT Armadale on 18 September 1915. He was sent immediately to Gallipoli, remaining there until December 1915. He was sent to France in March 1916. The following month he was ill and admitted to hospital at Havre and discharged for duty on 17 June. Holt died on 2 August 1916 at No. 3 Casualty Clearing Station three days after receiving gunshot wounds to the face and abdomen on 29 July 1916.

By October 1916 Holt's wife and family were living in Henry Street, and later High Street Penrith. Phoebe wrote to the government in May 1917 expressing her disappointment that his diary and photos were not among his belongings sent to her. In 1919, Phoebe again wrote to the government seeking clarification as to her husband's burial place. She thought confusion had arisen because two of his cousins were in his battalion, one with the same initials and one wounded on the same day. She wanted confirmation of her husband's burial place.

By 1920 Phoebe had moved to Artarmon where she states in a letter to the government, 'I have a cottage built by volunteer workers. It is a dear little home'. Phoebe Holt died aged 82 years at Manly.

Memorial Details:

- Puchevillers British Cemetery, France
- Honor Roll, Lismore War Memorial

BYRNS, PRIVATE WILLIAM HENRY LOFTUS

**4 AUGUST 1916,
AT POZIERES, FRANCE**

18th Battalion, AIF

Service number: 1777

William Byrns was born at Bingara in 1880, the son of William and Ellen Jane Byrns. After leaving school, Byrns worked for a time as a fettler for NSW Railways. On enlistment, he was employed as a labourer with J J McCarthy at Jamberoo. His widowed mother had moved to Penrith around 1909 and later married William Best. At the time of her son's enlistment she was living in Castlereagh Street Penrith.

Byrns enlisted on 31 May 1915 and was allocated to the 2nd Reinforcements, 18th Battalion. He left from Sydney on board HMAT Kanowna on 19 June 1915. On 22 August 1915 he landed on the Gallipoli peninsula. His battalion was immediately assigned to the defence of Hill 60. Byrns received a gunshot wound to the shoulder and was evacuated to Mudros on board HS Gloucester Castle on 25 August 1915. He was admitted to No 2 Australian General Hospital, Ghezireh and was later at the Mena House Convalescent Hospital in Cairo. Byrns was stationed in Egypt until his transfer aboard HT Scotian on 10 May 1916 to France.

His battalion's first major action came at Pozieres in mid-1916 as part of the wider Battle of the Somme, being committed twice in July and August. Byrns was killed in action on 4 August 1916 during the first major battle at Pozieres. He has no known grave. In a letter home a few months earlier Byrns remarked 'I am sending you these photos, as you may not see me again'.

His mother's husband, William Best died just a few months after her son. She died in June 1921. Four months later, Byrns' sister, Mrs J H Purcell wrote to the government stating that she had received her brother's scroll as she was his only living relative. Mrs Purcell was living in Derby Street Penrith at the time. In August 1917, his mother's poignant memorial in the Nepean Times read in part: 'Far away, on the field of battle, There 'midst the shot and shell, In defence of those he loved dearly, My darling son fell'.

Memorial Details:

- Honor Roll, Villers-Bretonneux, France
- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith



**TINGCOMBE,
PRIVATE NOEL LETHBRIDGE**

**4 AUGUST 1916,
AT POZIERES, FRANCE**

18th Battalion, AIF
Service number: 3679

Noel Lethbridge Tingcombe was born in Sydney in 1897, the son of John and Ada Tingcombe. He was the grandson of the late Reverend Henry Tingcombe, first Church of England Minister of Armidale. He was educated at the Burwood Superior Public School.

After leaving school, he joined the business belonging to Edwin Faris Ings a chemist in Burwood. Tingcombe later joined the Melbourne Steamship Company and worked on Midgee Station at Pilliga and later Coolabah station just prior to enlisting.

Tingcombe enlisted on 1 November 1915 for service just after his 18th birthday with his brother Henry. The brothers both joined the 18th Battalion. They left Australia on 20 December 1915 on board HMAT Aeneas and spent time in Egypt before being sent to the Western Front.

He was killed in action on 4 August 1916 during the Battle of Pozieres and has no known grave. A memorial service was held for him at St Mary Magdalene Church, St Marys.

Memorial Details:

- Villers-Bretonneux, France
- Honor Roll, Victoria Park, St Marys



STARLING, PRIVATE WILLIAM JOSEPH JAMES

**7 AUGUST 1916,
AT POZIERES, FRANCE**

19th & 4th Battalion, AIF
Service number: 3247

William Starling was born in 1897, the eldest son of William and Mary Elizabeth Starling. He was educated at the Penrith Superior Public School. After leaving school, Starling was employed at the Penrith Post Office as telephonist in charge. Prior to enlisting, Starling was a member of the Penrith Rifle Club. Despite being under age, Starling was keen to enlist and obtained permission from his parents and the Postal Department (who agreed to give him leave of absence) to enlist.

William Starling enlisted on 16 August 1915. He was allocated to the 7th Reinforcements, 19th Battalion. He sailed for the war zone on 23 December 1915 aboard HMAT Suevic, landing in Egypt on 21 January 1916. Shortly after arrival, Starling transferred to the 4th Battalion as a signaller. After several weeks training in Egypt, his battalion was sent to France. He went into action on the Western Front in early May 1916. Starling was wounded in the back on 24 July 1916 at Pozieres. He was admitted to No 10 General Hospital Rouen, and on 27 July was listed as being dangerously ill. Starling died on 7 August 1916.

On 1 August 1916, his family were informed that William had been wounded and was dangerously ill. On 15 August, the Starling family received word that his condition had apparently improved, only to be informed shortly after that their son had died at 7.25 am at No 10 General Hospital Rouen.

Memorial Details:

- St Sever Cemetery Rouen, France
- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith
- Honor Roll, Methodist Church, Penrith
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School



**DOOLAN,
PRIVATE WILLIAM JOSEPH**

**13 AUGUST 1916,
AT POZIERES, FRANCE**

49th Battalion, AIF

Service number: 3738

William Doolan (known as Billy) was born in 1885 in Sydney to John and Emily Doolan. By the 1890s the family were living at St Marys and their father was working for Andrew Thompson on his Lenore farm at Erskine Park. The family lived in John Street, St Marys and were active community members. At the time of his enlistment, Doolan was a labourer living at Bangalow, near Lismore.

He enlisted in Lismore on 21 September 1915 and embarked from Brisbane on the HMAT Itonus on 30 December 1915 with the 12th Reinforcements of the 9th Battalion. He was transferred to the 49th Battalion on 29 February 1916 and disembarked with his battalion at Marseilles in June.

Doolan was killed in action during the Battle of Mouquet Farm on 13 August 1916. He has no known grave. His Nepean Times obituary in September 1916 stated 'He rests with the Immortal Dead whose sacrificial patriotism will be the cherished heritage of tradition of the peace-enfranchised Australia of the future ages'.

Doolan's father John died in November 1922 and his mother Emily in December 1944. They are buried with their daughter Ivy in St Marys General Cemetery.

Memorial Details:

- Honor Roll, Villers-Bretonneux, France
- Honor Roll, Victoria Park, St Marys



**MILLER,
PRIVATE CHARLES ALLEN**

**18 AUGUST 1916,
AT POZIERES, FRANCE**

1st Infantry Battalion
Service number: 4455

Charles Miller, known as Paddy, was born in 1889, the only son born to John and Laura Miller. His parents had lived at Orange until the death of his mother in 1894. His father then relocated to Penrith with his two small children (Charles and Lucy) to live with his mother, Eliza Miller in Derby Street.

Miller attended Penrith Superior Public School and afterwards worked for several years for Penrith cordial manufacturers, Bronger Bros. His father had also worked there. Miller went into partnership with Charles Werner in a smallgoods business in High Street. Werner enlisted in 1914 and saw action at Gallipoli and France before returning to Australia in 1919.

Miller enlisted on 23 September 1915, a few months after the death of his father. He left Sydney on the RMS Osterley in January 1916, bound for Egypt. After some training he was sent to France, disembarking at Marseilles in March 1916. It is believed he was killed in action at Pozieres and he has no known grave.

Miller's death, reported in the Nepean Times (23 September 1916) stated that 'he was fated to die a hero's death in vindication of the cause of liberty'. His sister Lucy received his war medals as his next of kin. In 1918 Lucy wrote to the Defence Department asking for any personal items belonging to Miller to be sent to her. All they could find was a small souvenir of Egypt.

Memorial Details:

- Villers-Bretonneux, France
- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School
- Honor Roll, St Stephens Church of England, Penrith



**PEARCE,
PRIVATE EDDIE**

**19 AUGUST 1916,
AT POZIERES, FRANCE**

1st Battalion, AIF
Service Number: 4107

Eddie Pearce was born in 1891 at Yarramundi to Edward and Alvina Pearce. He grew up on a farm at Agnes Banks. The local community were nearly all related being the Pearce, Williams and Freeman families.

Pearce enlisted on 26 September 1915. His Unit embarked from Sydney on 30 December on board HMAT Medic. By the end of March 1916 Pearce had arrived in France. He was killed by an exploding shell on 19 August 1916. According to Private Robinson, Pearce was buried where he fell. On 10 December his mother wrote to the authorities stating that 'the Parson brough (sic) us word that he was killed in action'. She wanted to know what had 'become of him' and of his belongings. She also inquired about his pay.

Two other brothers from this family also joined up. Frank enlisted in January 1915 and returned to Australia in 1919. James (Jim) enlisted in January 1917 and fought in Belgium and France before returning to Australia in 1919.

Memorial Details:

- Sunken Road Cemetery, Contalmaison, France
- Honor Roll, Smith Park, Castlereagh



**GARDINER,
PRIVATE JOHN WILLIAM**

**22 AUGUST 1916,
AT ALBERT, FRANCE**

3rd Battalion

Service number: 4028

John William Gardiner was born at Penrith in July 1894, the third child of John and Martha Gardiner. He was educated at the Penrith Superior Public School. In 1913, Gardiner married Alice Constance Harvey and they had three children before his enlistment. At the time of his marriage, Gardiner was employed as a carter and on enlistment in 1915, he was employed as a sawmill sawyer. They were living in Worth Street Penrith.

Gardiner enlisted on 26 September 1915 and was assigned to the 12th Reinforcements, 3rd Battalion. His battalion sailed for the war zone on 30 December 1915 aboard HMAT Medic bound for Alexandria. Also on board was another Penrith man, Edward Lance (see page 29). By February 1916 Gardiner was ill and hospitalised. Both Gardiner and Lance, were sent to France aboard the troopship Transylvania, arriving in Marseilles on 4 April 1916.

Gardiner spent some time in hospital in Havre and rejoined his unit on 3 August. His time at the front was short-lived. He was wounded on 18 August and admitted to the 3rd Casualty Clearing Station at Puchevillers with gunshot wounds and compound fractures. He died on 22 August 1916.

In 1920 John's widow Alice, married Kenneth Byrnes and they lived in Victoria Street Werrington. John's younger brother, Albert George Gardiner, died of wounds in France on 10 April 1917.

Memorial Details:

- Puchevillers British Cemetery, France
- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith
- Honor Roll, Victoria Park, St Marys
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School



**BOURKE,
PRIVATE AUSTIN JOSEPH**

**8 SEPTEMBER 1916,
AT CAMIERS, FRANCE**

18th Battalion, AIF
Service number: 3788

Austin Joseph Bourke was born in 1885 at Mount Victoria, the son of Richard and Mary Jane Bourke. After the death of his mother when he was two, Bourke was raised by his grandmother. He was educated at Penrith Public School and afterwards worked for NSW Railways for a time. Before his enlistment at Narrabri on 3 October 1915 he had been working on farms in the district. His father, also employed with NSW Railways died suddenly at Goulburn on 6 October while on duty as guard on the Temora mail train. Austin's Uncle James Bourke of Boxgrove, Kingswood was then noted as his next of kin. After several weeks training Bourke was allocated to the 9th Reinforcements, 18th Battalion. On 21 January 1916, he left Sydney aboard HMAT Runic arriving in Alexandria on 4 March. A few weeks later, he was on his way to France.

The 18th Battalion took part in its first major battle at Pozieres between 25 July and 5 August 1916. Bourke was wounded in action on 29 July 1916, but remained on duty. On 3 August he wrote his will giving half his property and assets to Louisa Bailey of High Street, daughter of bootmaker William Bailey, and, his cousin Myrea Bourke of Erskineville.

On 4 August 1916, Bourke sustained further gunshot wounds to his left shoulder and leg and after being treated at the 4th Australian Field Ambulance was transferred to the 22nd General Hospital at Camiers. He died from his wounds at 5.40 pm on 8 September 1916. Myrea Bourke's father Michael received his belongings, photos of his grave and his medals after his death. Bourke's obituary in the Nepean Times on 28 October 1916 read 'He was of robust, stalwart physique, and of a genial temperament' and that in his death he had 'gained the patent of immortal nobility'.

Memorial Details:

- Etaples Military Cemetery, France
- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith
- Honor Roll, St Nicholas of Myra Catholic Church, Penrith
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School



**MITCHELL,
PRIVATE ARTHUR JAMES**

**23 SEPTEMBER 1916,
AT BATHURST, NSW**

Bathurst Depot Battalion
Service number: 33747

Arthur James Mitchell was born in 1890 at Penrith, the son of William and Sarah Mitchell. After attending Penrith Superior Public School, Mitchell worked as a labourer before enlisting in the AIF. His older brother William also enlisted during World War 1.

Mitchell enlisted on 24 May 1916 and underwent training with the Depot Company at Dubbo from 16 June 1916 until 10 July 1916. He was then transferred to B Company of the Bathurst Depot Battalion.

While serving with this unit, Mitchell was found guilty of being absent without leave (AWOL) between the 7th and 9th August and was fined £1. In September 1916, Mitchell contracted pneumonia and died in Bathurst Hospital on 23 September 1916. He was buried by the Reverend James McKee in the Presbyterian Portion of Penrith General Cemetery on 25 September 1916.

Memorial Details:

- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School



**MARTIN,
SAPPER GORDON**

**7 OCTOBER 1916,
AT POPERINGE, BELGIUM**

1st Field Company Engineers, AIF
Service number: 6978

Gordon Martin was one of five children born to Robert Thompson and Elizabeth Martin in 1895 in Redfern. By about 1910 his family had moved onto 30 acres on the Lakes of Killarney estate at Londonderry. His father also leased other land where he cut the timber for income. The family however feuded for many years with the Brown family who owned a nearby farm on Richmond Road. Young Gordon was charged along with his mother with stealing property from the farm of John Brown on Richmond Road in 1911. After searching their home at Londonderry Gordon's father was also charged with being in possession of stolen goods. Again in 1913 the family were back in court suing the Brown family for shooting their dogs.

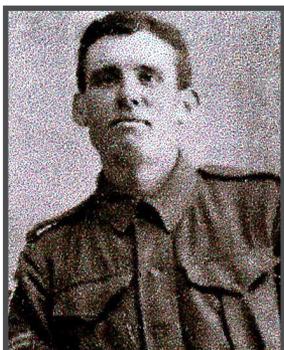
After completing school Martin was apprenticed as a blacksmith at Richmond where he worked for five years. He enlisted at Victoria Barracks on 21 December 1915. His neighbour Samuel Protest Brown had joined the Light Horse in 1914, fought at Gallipoli, worked as a shoeing smith and returned to Australia in 1918.

Martin embarked on the HMAT Makarini with Emu Plains local William Mullen on 1 April 1916 and arrived in Egypt on 3 May. On 28 May he was sent to England for engineers training and then by August he was in France.

On 5 September 1916 Martin joined the 7th Field Company Australian Engineers in Belgium. He died of gunshot wounds and a fractured skull at 17th Casualty Clearing Station on 7 October 1916. John Brown's son also served in the war, returning to Australia. Martin's family lived on in Londonderry where his father died in 1955 at the age of 91 years.

Memorial Details:

- Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium
- Honor Roll, Smith Park, Castlereagh



**LEITCH,
SERGEANT SINCLAIR**

**2 NOVEMBER 1916,
AT ALBERT, FRANCE**

5th Australian Pioneers, AIF
Service number: 2440

Sinclair Leitch was born in 1896 at Wick, Scotland, the son of Donald and Johan Leitch. The Leitch family migrated to Australia around 1913, and lived in the Richmond area before moving to Penrith. At the time of his enlistment, Leitch was a farm labourer in the Orange district and stated that he had two years' service with the Territorial Army in Great Britain. Leitch's elder brother, Lieutenant Donald Leitch served with the 4th Battalion.

Leitch enlisted on 26 May 1915 and was allocated to the 7th Reinforcements, 2nd Battalion. He left Australia aboard HMAT Orsova on 15 July 1915 bound for Egypt. After a period of training in Egypt, Leitch was sent to Gallipoli. On 17 October 1915, Leitch was admitted to the 3rd Light Horse Field Ambulance with pyrexia. He was discharged on 21 October and rejoined his unit on 31 October 1915. According to family folklore, Leitch was one of the last five men to leave Gallipoli when it was evacuated in December 1915.

Leitch was transferred to the 54th Battalion, then stationed at Tel-el-Kebir in Egypt. In February 1916, he was hospitalised with influenza. In March, Leitch transferred to the 5th Pioneers. He was promoted to Corporal on 13 May 1916. In June, Leitch sailed for France, arriving at Marseilles on 25 June 1916.

On 11 July 1916, Leitch was promoted to Lance Sergeant at Rue-de-Bruges before being promoted to Sergeant in the field on 19 August 1916. On 30 October 1916, he suffered gunshot wounds to the neck, lungs and back near Albert, France. He was admitted to the 36th Casualty Clearing Station and on 2 November 1916, Leitch died from his wounds. On 6 December 1916, the 5th Division Routine Orders contained the following entry re Leitch 'Gallantry and meritorious service when in command of a platoon digging in the firing line he showed great courage in keeping his men at their work and completing his allotted task under a heavy fire'.

Memorial Details:

- Heilly Station Cemetery Mericourt-L'Abbe France
- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith



STEEL, SECOND LIEUTENANT ARTHUR VALENTINE

**5 NOVEMBER 1916,
AT GUEUDECOURT, FRANCE**

1st Battalion, AIF
Service number: 606

Arthur Valentine Steel was born in 1896 at Wangaratta, Victoria to George and Maria Steel. Prior to his enlistment he was working as an assistant at St Marys Post Office and was an active member of the St Marys Presbyterian Church and Fellowship. Steel enlisted on 17 August 1914 and was sent to Egypt. He joined the Dardanelles Campaign as a signaller but was wounded and sent to Malta to recover. Afterwards Steel was sent back to Egypt for further training.

After recovering from an accident in Egypt, he was sent to France, and was there given a commission. From all accounts Steel was a daring soldier with leadership qualities. During his service overseas Steel wrote many his letters to friends in St Marys, full of enthusiasm for the cause of 'truth and honor for which he was fighting'.

The village of Flers, in the Somme valley in France, gave its name to a series of attacks launched by 1 ANZAC in November 1916. By this time the Somme battlefield had been deluged with rain and the attacks were made in atrocious conditions. The first Flers attack was launched on 5 November. Both attacks managed to capture some of their objectives, but were eventually forced to withdraw.

Steel went missing during the charge on Gueudecourt on 5 November. The men went over the top at Flers on 5 November and it was believed that Steel was killed and left in 'no man's land'. By April 1917 the search for Steel continued. On 18 April, a report from the Red Cross stated Steel's body was among 27 soldiers found. They were identified by their paybooks and discs. All had been killed by machine gun fire. The men were re-buried at the place where they were found, a wooden cross on each grave.

Memorial Details:

- Grevillers British Cemetery, France
- Honor Roll, Victoria Park, St Marys

PAXTON, PRIVATE ROBERT

**14 NOVEMBER 1916,
AT FLERS, FRANCE**

19th Battalion, AIF

Service number: 4202

Robert Paxton was born in Glasgow, Scotland in about 1894. In 1901 he was living with his mother and siblings and his stepfather John Morrison in Market Street Glasgow. In 1913, Robert arrived in Sydney with his mother Harriet and his siblings. He is listed as a 19 year old farm labourer. When Paxton enlisted on 6 December 1915, he gave his occupation as engine cleaner. He worked for the NSW Railways in the Loco Department at Penrith Station. His next of kin, his mother, was living in Darling Street Glebe at the time. He was allocated to the 10th Reinforcements, 19th Battalion and embarked on HMT Orsova on 11 March 1916. After a short stay in Egypt, he left Alexandria aboard the HMT Scotian on 5 May 1916, arriving in Marseilles a week later. He was hospitalised briefly for tonsillitis in June 1916, before rejoining his battalion on 1 August 1916. In October 1916, Paxton was sent to Pigeon School.

Paxton was killed in action on 14 November 1916. A number of soldiers, including Ernest Butcher who had enlisted with his friend Paxton, stated that they were about to go over the top when a shell fell into the trench killing Paxton. They were obliged to leave him and doubted that he would be buried. No trace could be found of his remains and he has no known grave.

When Butcher returned to Australia he visited Paxton's mother to pay his respects. In May 1917 the Nepean Times reported Paxton's portrait was unveiled among a number of deceased soldiers who had been in the railway service. Their portraits were to be later hung in the School of Arts.

He was described as 'a ruddy fair haired Scot, who had not been very long in Australia, but long enough to endear himself to those who had been acquainted with him. He responded to the Empire's call to arms at the earliest moment, and as they knew, made the great sacrifice, as one who stood by his nation and humanity to the death. (Hear, hear)'.

Memorial Details:

- Villers-Bretonneux, France
- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith

**PIGGOTT,
PRIVATE HORACE LINDSAY**

**14 NOVEMBER 1916,
AT FLERS, FRANCE**

25th Battalion, AIF

Service number: 4750

Horace Piggott was born at Bowral in 1891, the son of William and Eliza Piggott. The Piggott family lived on the York Estate when Horace was growing up. He attended Penrith Superior Public School and was a schoolmate of William Starling. Before enlisting Piggott worked as a dairyman.

Piggott enlisted on 8 October 1915 in Brisbane. At this time his parents were living at Eden Creek, Kyogle in northern NSW. His Unit embarked from Sydney on board RMS Mooltan on 2 April 1916.

After a bout of tonsillitis in August 1916 he was sent to France in September. On 14 November Piggott was reported missing. According to a fellow soldier he was killed in the attack on Gird Trench near Flers. Any man not accounted for was assumed killed and lying in 'no man's land'. By January 1917, he was officially reported killed in action. Piggott has no known grave.

In May 1917, the Nepean Times reported on his death stating 'Australia mourns the loss of another valiant soldier of her nationhood, whose name and heroism will be ever inscribed on the tablets of her martial fame'.

Memorial Details:

- Honor Roll, Villers-Bretonneux, France
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School
- Honor Roll, Glenquarry Public School

CLISSOLD, CORPORAL GEORGE ALBERT

**19 NOVEMBER 1916,
AT POZIERES, FRANCE**

18th Battalion, AIF

Service number: 4392

George Clissold was born at Luddenham in 1873, the eldest son of Thomas Daniel and Rebecca Clissold. His father was not only a well-known builder in the Penrith area, but also an alderman on Penrith Municipal Council. George Clissold was a pupil at Penrith Superior Public school and after leaving school was apprenticed to his father for five years as a carpenter and builder. In 1895 he married Mary Innes from Emu Plains.

Clissold enlisted in September 1915, leaving Mary and their children living on their farm at Emu Plains. He left Australia aboard the HMAT Nestor on 9 April 1915. After training in England Clissold arrived at Etaples, France in September 1916 with the rank of acting Sergeant. He was briefly hospitalised for pleurisy on 11 November and returned to his battalion on 18 November. Clissold was killed in action on 19 November 1916 and has no known grave.

He was known as 'Dad' because of his age and was well liked by his fellow battalion members. Throughout his short army career, Clissold was given the acting rank of sergeant on a number of occasions. His only son Charles, who had enlisted in March 1916, arrived in England shortly after his father's death.

George's widow Mary was awarded a fortnightly pension along with her daughters, Mary and Elizabeth (Bessie). On 11 December 1916, Bessie Clissold helped turn the first sods for the foundations of the new Penrith Public School in High Street. A week later the Nepean Times reported on her father's death in France. Ironically, Clissold's son Charles would die within days of the official opening of the school.

Memorial Details:

- Honor Roll, Villers-Bretonneux, France
- Honor Roll, War Memorial, Emu Plains
- Honor Roll, Penrith Superior Public School



**LANCE,
PRIVATE EDWARD KENNEDY**

**29 DECEMBER 1916,
AT GUEUDECOURT, FRANCE**

2nd Battalion, AIF

Service number: 3848

Edward Kennedy Lance was born in 1894 at Bourke NSW, the son of Lancelot and Lillian Lance. In 1902 Lance's parents moved to Castlereagh. He attended the Castlereagh Public School and then attended the Sydney Technical College where he completed courses in typewriting, book-keeping and office skills. At the time of his enlistment, Lance resided in North Sydney and was employed by the Assurance and Thrift Association, Sydney, as an insurance clerk. He was a member of the Sydney Militia and, prior to enlistment, had been gazetted as a sergeant.

Lance enlisted on 10 August 1915 and was allocated to the 12th Reinforcements, 2nd Battalion. He sailed for Egypt along with John Gardiner (see page 20) on 30 December 1915 aboard HMAT Medic and completed his training there. On 29 March 1916, Lance and Gardiner embarked aboard the Transylvania arriving at Marseilles on 4 April 1916.

On 2 October 1916, Lance was sent to the Pigeon School of Instruction somewhere 'in the field Belgium' and subsequently was used as a battalion runner. On 28 December 1916, Lance was wounded by a pineapple bomb near Guedecourt, suffering wounds to the skull. He was taken to the 3rd Australian Field Ambulance, located in the vicinity of Bernafay Wood and died from his wounds the following day.

Memorial Details:

- Bernafay Wood British Cemetery Montauban, France
- Honor Roll, Smith Park, Castlereagh
- Honor Roll, Memory Park, Penrith

STATEMENT OF RECOGNITION OF PENRITH CITY'S ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURAL HERITAGE

Council values the unique status of Aboriginal people as the original owners and custodians of lands and waters, including the land and waters of Penrith City.

Council values the unique status of Torres Strait Islander people as the original owners and custodians of the Torres Strait Islands and surrounding waters.

We work together for a united Australia and City that respects this land of ours that values the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage, and provides justice and equity for all.

Compiled by Lorraine Stacker and the staff and volunteers at Penrith City Library

Sources:

National Archives of Australia
Australian War Memorial
Commonwealth War Graves Commission
Penrith City Library
Nepean Family History Society
St Marys and District Historical Society
Family members of these fallen soldiers
Peter Welsh

Cover image: Private John William Gardiner

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