

Background Before Departing For War

Alfred Ernest Hastwell was born on the 20th of January 1881 at Penfield, Gawler South Australia. He was the youngest child of John and Anne Hastwell. He lost his mother at the age of two and was brought up by his father, older brother and sister. His father managed a store keeping business in Mitcham until 1889 when the family moved to Yorktown. Due to the economic depression of the 1890's they also lived in Jeparit 1891, in Port Pirie 1893, before moving back to Yorktown in 1898. Alfred Ernest was educated at Yorktown, Jeparit and Port Pirie junior schools and then in 1895 to 1897 at Kings School, St Peters Adelaide. His occupation is listed as a labourer however he also worked in the Sun Insurance Office, a pharmacy in King William Street and the Broken Hill Mines. He also had a love of sport and played football. (Appendix 1)



Alfred Ernest Hastwell 1909 Football Team
Kangaroo Island. Extreme right, second to front row.

Source: Primary



THE TROOPS ON THE MARCH WITH THEIR BAYONETS FIXED AT MITCHAM CAMP.

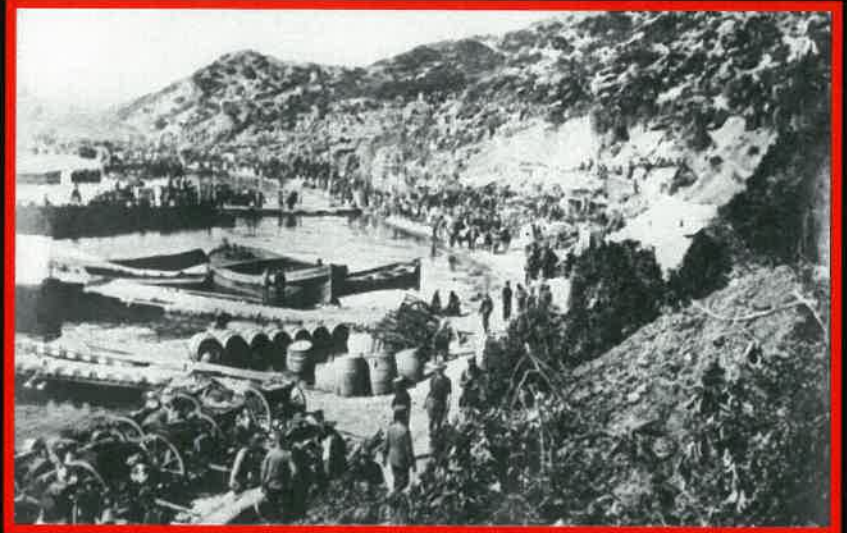
Source: RSL Virtual War Memorial

He enlisted on the 17th of February at Keswick aged 34. He was then known to his family and mates as 'Private Alfred Ernest Hastwell, Number 99'. He completed his training at Ascot Park and the now historic Mitcham camp which was the main training area for the AIF in South Australia. He embarked at Adelaide on the HMAS Geelong on the 31st of May 1915, for service overseas. (Appendix 2)

The Gallipoli Campaign and Australia's Involvement

25th of April 1915 – 20th of December 1915

A century ago Australia experienced one of its most disastrous military campaigns - The Gallipoli Campaign. Despite being described as failure it was significant because it was the first military engagement in which substantial numbers of Australians fought and died for Australia as a new nation. [1] The Anzac legend was also created (ANZAC - Australian and New Zealand Army Corps). There were 8,709 Australian deaths and 2,431 New Zealander deaths, in addition to 26,111 wounded Australians and 7,571 New Zealanders. [2]



Gallipoli Campaign

Source: RSL Virtual War Memorial

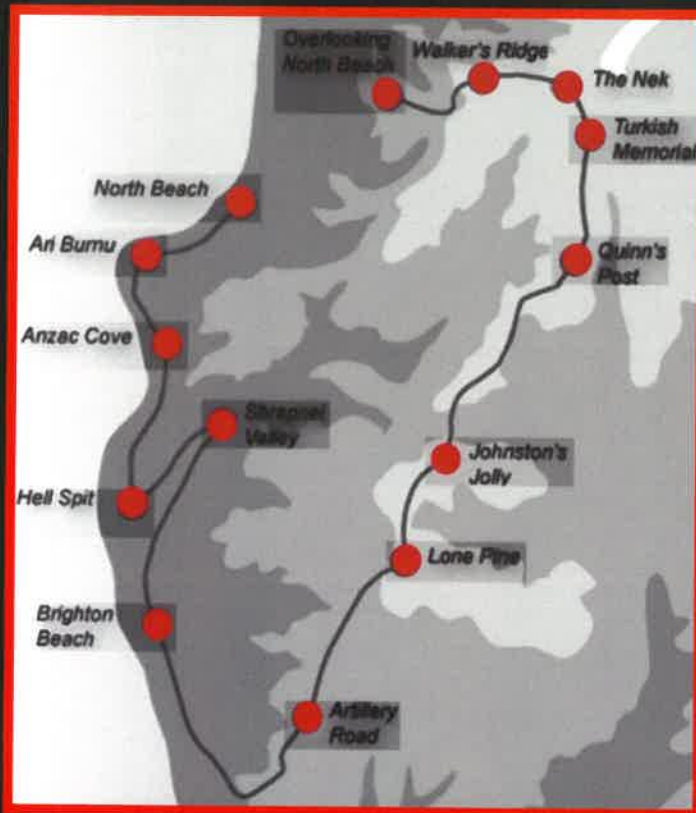


Recruitment Poster

Source: Australian War Memorial

In 1914, Australia's Prime Minister Andrew Fisher promised support for British interests against the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) in 1915. The objective was to control the Dardanelles which would then open the way to Constantinople and Eastern Europe. [3]

There were several major battles endured by the ANZAC's, including the landing at ANZAC Cove on 25th of April, the battle at Lone Pine, 6th of August 1915 and the Nek, 7th August 1915 [4]



Major Battle Map of Gallipoli, Turkey

Source: Australian Government of Veteran Affairs

The evacuation was considered one of the most successful parts of the campaign as it was prepared by the Australians. No lives were lost and it became known as one of the greatest military deceptions in history. [8]



Australian Invention of the 'Self Firing Rifle'.

Source: Australian War Memorial

Communication and judgment errors by British Officers, compromised the lives of many men.

[5] The first Australians to land and face battle were the 3rd Australian Brigade which was made up of the 9th (Queensland), 10th (South Australia), 11th (Western Australia) and the 12th (Tasmania) Battalions and the 3rd Field Ambulance. [6]

The battle of Lone Pine was significant as it was one of the rare allied victories of the campaign. Men fought in narrow and dark trenches. They had to discard their rifles, use grenades and hand to hand combat. Due to the bravery of the men, seven Victoria Crosses were awarded to Australians during the first three days of this battle. Many historians have reported that survivors refused to talk about the events of that day. [7]

Private Alfred Ernest Hastwell's Experiences at Gallipoli



Photograph taken in Cairo, Egypt.

A.E Hastwell No. 99 - Centre, Middle Row

Source: Primary

After landing in small barges they moved along the beach in the dark until they arrived at a place called Taylors Hollow. From here they took up a defensive position on Cheshire Ridge. It was reported that the trenches were poorly constructed. It ran along the top of a ridge which was about 80 to 400 'yards' from the enemy. The ridge overlooked Sulva Bay. [11]

Private Alfred Ernest Hastwell was sent to Gallipoli from Egypt on the night of the 12th of September 1915. They combined with the 25th, 26th and 28th Battalions to defend and relieve fellow battle worn New Zealand and Australian divisions. [9] Private Alfred Ernest's commanding Officer Lieut. Dollman wrote about their landing on Gallipoli's beach.

'We watched the daylight fade away, with mixed feelings, because we knew that before the sun rose again we would be on the shores of that peninsula where so many of our brave compatriots had fought and fallen'. 'As we drew nearer to the shore the sound of rifle bullets striking the water about us added to the realism, and the sound of shellfire grew louder' [10]



Lower Cheshire Ridge

Source: <http://mp.natlib.govt.nz/detail/?id=33294&l=en>

At the time of his arrival the harsh summer weather conditions were in force and there was a shortage of water, unburied dead, an abundance of flies and sickness. [12]



Several corpses, lying amongst debris and coils of barbed wire. Source: Australian War Memorial

In November there was a harsh snow blizzard which resulted in a lot more sickness. They undertook further defensive operations at Wellington plateau, Mule Gully and Happy Valley. Private Alfred Ernest Hastwell became sick on the 3rd of December and was evacuated to the Manoel Hospital on Malta. This was only seven days before the start of the evacuation of the ANZAC's. Overall the battalion helped hold the narrow spit of land against the Turks and took part in the successful evacuation. Private Alfred Ernest Hastwell re-joined his Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir on the 23rd of January, 1916. [13]



November Blizzards. Source: Australian Government Department of Veteran Affairs.

Over 15 500 men were evacuated due to illness from the weather

His Reflection of the ANZAC Spirit

Private Alfred Ernest Hastwell's Battalion was also known as the 'Blue and Brown Diamond', 'Unley's Own' or the 'Dinkums'. The definition of dinkum is 'genuine, honest and true'. At the 27th farewell gathering, Lieut. - Colonel Dollman, made some comparisons between the men of the first contingent and those preparing for the embarkation. *'The memorable landing on Gallipoli has been made, the first casualty lists have been published and the men of the 27th fully recognized that the task before them is a 'dinkum soldier's job'.* My Great Great grandfather along with his mates were dinkum in their willingness to help out and unite despite facing the possibility of hardship or death. This photo taken describes his spirit well. [14]

'A Free Will Offering of a Free People'



27th Battalion, A Company. Source: RSL Virtual War Memorial



Bathing in the sea after returning from the trenches
Source: Australian War memorial G00269

Despite the conditions of Gallipoli they made the most of a bad situation and sought some fun and comradery. *'Occasionally it was found possible to allow a platoon at a time as far as the beach for a bathe, where the diggers sported in the waves, in spite of the shrapnel Johnny Turk sent after them'* [15]

Following the Gallipoli campaign Private Alfred Ernest Hastwell was sent to France on the 26th of March 1916 and was wounded in action on the 1st August 1916. It was reported that the 27th Battalion was registered in German intelligence diaries as one of Australia's invincible battalions. He re-joined the Battalion on the 26th of December 1917. Due to further illness related to the effect of mustard gas he was sent to return to Australia. The transport ship he was on, the 'Barunga' was torpedoed by a German submarine in the Bay of Biscay on the 15th of July 1918. Fortunately three destroyers including the 'Midge' picked them up and they were taken back to England. [16]



Sinking of Transport Burunga
Source: Australian War Memorial A01043

AUSTRALIANS SANG AS SHIP WENT DOWN

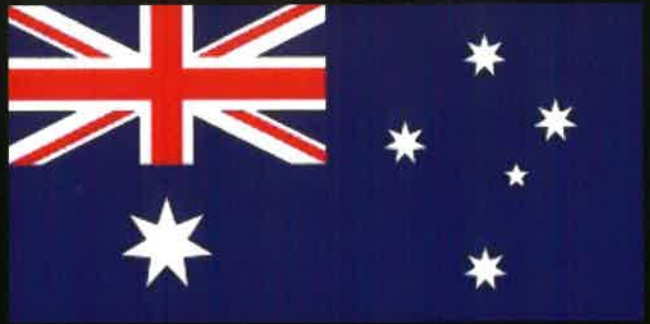
**No Panic Aboard Barunga, Whose
Survivors Were Rescued by
Warships—U-Boat Fired At.**

Source: New York Times
Published 21st of July, 1918

Despite being knocked down again and again my Great Great Grandfather kept on coming back. I believe he had his father's courageous nature. It was reported by the South Australia Advertiser, Tuesday 10th of December 1878 that Alfred Ernest's father, John had saved two men from drowning. I believe these traits influenced Alfred Ernest in his survival of World War I. [17]

What ANZAC Spirit Means To Me

I find it heart-warming that there were men and women who volunteered to protect our country and family. Selflessness is a virtue to be nurtured today. Without the qualities of bravery, mateship, determination and being dinkum we would not have had the society or nation we have today.



'IN THEIR SACRIFICE WAS OUR SHELTER' (Unley Remembrance Arch).

In honour of their spirit, I present my poem

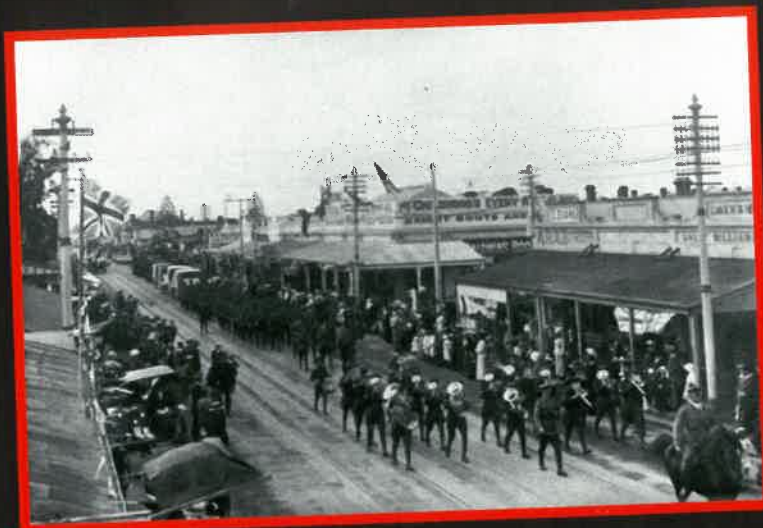
ANZAC Spirit

A mass stood upright, waving,
strong and tall,
Clouds loomed in a dark hell,
Dropping and drooping,
A red carpet formed where
their petals fell,
The stems clumped together
towards the light,
The seeds were sown, and the
new dawn is bright.
'Lest We Forget'



Impact of their Service on Families and Communities in South Australia

Families and the community of South Australia were initially very proud of the men going to fight for 'the preservation of the nationality of 'Australia' and the 'sanctity of their homes'. [18] They marched to the city via Unley through 'gaily decorated streets lined with cheering and enthusiastic crowds' [19]



Unley Road March

Source: RSL Virtual War Memorial

TOTAL CASUALTES.

The following is a summary of the Australian casualties in connection with the Dardanelles fighting, as officially reported up to date:—

| | Killed. | Wounded. | Missing. |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Officers . . . | 140 | 308 | 11 |
| Other ranks. | 2,188 | 8,058 | 735 |
| Total . . . | 2,328 | 8,418 | 746 |

July 19th 1915, 85 days after the landing.

Source: South Australian Newspaper

However the absence of fathers, brothers and other relatives serving in the war had an effect on everyday life. This became more profound as the news of the dead and wounded filtered home. Women were left with many responsibilities and a shortage of resources. Children had to endure the long wait for news of the fate of family members.

[20]

Private Alfred Ernest Hastwell finally returned home to South Australia on the 11th October 1918. He married Ivy Rachel Latty of Grange Road Mitcham. They lived in Broken Hill for a few years before returning to Goodwood, Adelaide where they ran a general store. Without the contribution of ordinary South Australian's like my Great Great Grandfather we would not have the country we have today. [21]



Alfred and Ivy Hastwell's Gravestone

Source: The AIF Project

I hope everyone will remember this important message:

'When you go home tell them of us and say for your tomorrow we gave our today'
(Will Clough, Riverton 2005). [22]

Website Sources

[1]

<http://www.army.gov.au/Our-history/History-in-Focus/WWI-Gallipoli>

[2]

<http://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/gallipoli/fatalities/?query=gallipoli+statistics>

[3]

http://www.skwirk.com/p-c_s-14_u-42_t-46_c-134/the-gallipoli-campaign/nsw/the-gallipoli-campaign/australia-and-world-war-i/gallipoli-and-the-anzacs

[4]

http://www.anzacsite.gov.au/2visiting/walk_03anzaccove.html

http://www.anzacsite.gov.au/2visiting/walk_04hellspit.html

http://www.anzacsite.gov.au/2visiting/walk_08lonepine.html

http://www.anzacsite.gov.au/2visiting/walk_12nek.html

[5]

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[6]

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<http://www.gallipoli.net.au/landing.html>

[7]

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[8]

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Scurry

[18]

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[20]

http://guides.slsa.sa.gov.au/children_WW1

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[22]

http://www.tributesofhonour.info/php/wm_mon_introduction.php

Book/Newspaper Sources

[1]

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[1, 2, 3, 4, 7]

The Official History of Australian in the war of 1914-1918 Volume 1 – The Story of Anzac, C.E.W. Bean, University of Queensland Press, 1981 in association with the Australian War Memorial.

The Official History of Australian in the war of 1914-1918 Volume II – The Story of Anzac, C.E.W. Bean, University of Queensland Press, 1981 in association with the Australian War Memorial

[7]

Gallipoli, Les Carlyon, Macmillian Australia, 2001

[9]

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/27th_Battalion_\(Australia\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/27th_Battalion_(Australia))

[10 - Quote]

The Blue and Brown Diamond, Page 20 – A history of the 27th Battalion Australian Imperial Force 1915-1919, Lieut.Col W. Dollman and SGT H.M. Skinner, Lonnen & Cope Printers & Publishers, 1921

[11]

The Blue and Brown Diamond, Page 20 & 21 – A history of the 27th Battalion Australian Imperial Force 1915-1919, Lieut.Col W. Dollman and SGT H.M. Skinner, Lonnen & Cope Printers & Publishers, 1921

Appendix 1

[12, 13]

The Blue and Brown Diamond, Pages 21 & 23 – A history of the 27th Battalion Australian Imperial Force 1915-1919, Lieut.Col W. Dollman and SGT H.M. Skinner, Lonnen & Cope Printers & Publishers, 1921

Appendix 1 and 2

[14]

The Blue and Brown Diamond, Page 15 – A history of the 27th Battalion Australian Imperial Force 1915-1919, Lieut.Col W. Dollman and SGT H.M. Skinner, Lonnen & Cope Printers & Publishers, 1921

[15]

The Blue and Brown Diamond, Page 20 – A history of the 27th Battalion Australian Imperial Force 1915-1919, Lieut.Col W. Dollman and SGT H.M. Skinner, Lonnen & Cope Printers & Publishers, 1921

[16]

The Blue and Brown Diamond, Foreword– A history of the 27th Battalion Australian Imperial Force 1915-1919, Lieut.Col W. Dollman and SGT H.M. Skinner, Lonnen & Cope Printers & Publishers, 1921

Appendix 1 & 2

[17, 21]

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[18]

The Blue and Brown Diamond, Foreword– A history of the 27th Battalion Australian Imperial Force 1915-1919, Lieut.Col W. Dollman and SGT H.M. Skinner, Lonnen & Cope Printers & Publishers, 1921

[19]

The Blue and Brown Diamond, Page 14– A history of the 27th Battalion Australian Imperial Force 1915-1919, Lieut.Col W. Dollman and SGT H.M. Skinner, Lonnen & Cope Printers & Publishers, 1921

Image Sources

Image 1

Private Alfred Ernest Hastwell No 99

'A' Company of the 27th Battalion

Source: Primary

Image 2

27th Battalion Badge

<http://www.rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/units/2>

Image 3

Alfred Ernest Hastwell 1909 Football Team. Kangaroo Island.

Source: Primary

Image 4

The troops on the march with their bayonets fixed at Mitcham Camp

<http://www.rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/units/2>

Image 5

Gallipoli Campaign

<http://www.rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/units/2>

Image 6

Recruitment Poster

<http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/ARTV05167/>

Image 7

Major Battle Map of Gallipoli, Turkey

http://www.anzacsite.gov.au/2visiting/walk_intro.html

Image 8

Australian Invention of the 'Self Firing Rifle'.

http://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/gallipoli/drip_rifle/

Image 9

Photograph taken in Cairo, Egypt.

A.E Hastwell No. 99 - Centre, Middle Row

Source: Primary

Image 10

Lower Cheshire Ridge

<http://mp.natlib.govt.nz/detail/?id=33294&l=en>

Image 11

Several corpses, lying amongst debris and coils of barbed wire.

<http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C01727/>

Image 12

November Blizzards.

http://www.anzacsite.gov.au/2visiting/walk_07artillery.html

Image 13

27th Battalion, A Company

<http://www.rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/units/2>

Image 14

Bathing in the sea after returning from the trenches

<http://www.awm.gov.au/search/all/?query=G00269&op=Search§ion%5B%5D=people§ion%5B%5D=articles§ion%5B%5D=books§ion%5B%5D=collections&submit=>

Image 15

Sinking of Transport Burunga

<http://www.awm.gov.au/search/all/?query=A01043&op=Search&format=list§ion%5B%5D=people§ion%5B%5D=articles§ion%5B%5D=books§ion%5B%5D=collections>

Image 16

Australians sand as the ship went down. New York Times, Published 21st of July, 1918

Image 17

Unley Road March

<http://www.rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/units/2>

Image 18

July 19th 1915, 85 days after the landing.
South Australian Newspaper.

Image 19

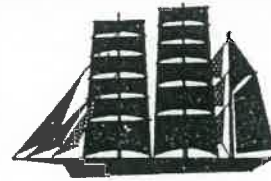
Alfred and Ivy Hastwell's Gravestone

<https://www.aif.adfa.edu.au/showPerson?pid=130631>

Appendix 1

The Hastwell Family History in South Australia

Hastwell

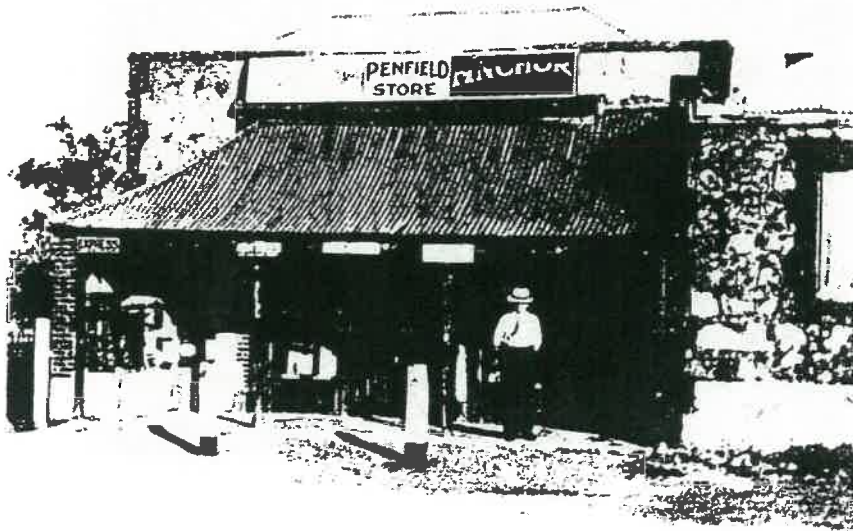


Barque

THE HASTWELL FAMILY HISTORY

I N

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Penfield Store c 1936.

Appendix 2

Letter from the Australian Army



AUSTRALIAN ARMY

Telephone 600261
Extension 289
~~FAX~~

Correspondence GPO Box 1932R
Melbourne, Vic. 3001

CENTRAL ARMY RECORDS OFFICE
366 St Kilda Road
Melbourne, Vic

In reply quote

Info Svc/ex 99 Alfred Ernest Hastwell 15 June 1981
(World War I)

Mr S.J. Hastwell
28 Caulfield Avenue
CUMBERLAND PARK SA 5041

Dear Sir,

1. I refer to your letter of 26 May 1981.
2. According to records held at this Office the information you have requested is as follows:

99 Alfred Ernest Hastwell

Stated on enlistment that he was born at Penfield Via Gawler, South Australia and that he was 34 and 1/12 years of age.

Enlisted at Keswick on 17 February 1915.

Allotted Army number 99 and the rank of private.

Embarked at Adelaide with 'A' Company, 27th Infantry Battalion per HMAT "Geelong" for service overseas on 31 May 1915.

Disembarked in the Middle East, date not recorded.

Embarked at Alexandria on 4 September 1915, to join the Middle East Force, Gallipoli.

Evacuated to the Manoel Hospital, Malta sick on 3 December 1915.

Proceeded to Egypt on 18 January 1916 and disembarked at Alexandria on 22 January 1916.

Rejoined the 27th Infantry Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir on 23 January 1916.

Posted to the 2nd Pioneer Battalion at Moascar on 13 March 1916.

Proceeded overseas to France from Alexandria on 19 March 1916.

/Disembarked

Disembarked Marseilles, France on 26 March 1916.

Wounded in action on 1 August 1916.

Evacuated to England via Boulogne on 6 August 1916.

Admitted to the 3rd London General Hospital, England on 6 August 1916.

Discharged from Hospital and taken on strength of the Number 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs on 22 August 1916.

Detached for duty with the Headquarters, Australian Imperial Forces Depots, England from 11 September 1916 to 16 November 1917.

Proceeded to the Overseas Training Brigade at Sutton Veny on 26 November 1917.

Proceeded overseas to France from Southampton on 19 December 1917.

Rejoined the 2nd Pioneer Battalion on 26 December 1917.

Taken on strength of the Australian Employment Company on 29 March 1918.

Proceeded to England for return to Australia on 20 May 1918.

Taken on strength of the Number 2 Command Depot at Weymouth on 31 May 1918.

✕

Embarked England per HT "Medic" for return to Australia on 24 August 1918.

Disembarked Melbourne on 11 October 1918.

Discharged in Adelaide (4th Military District), medically unfit on 26 October 1918.

Medals issued: 1914/15 Star

British War Medal

Victory Medal

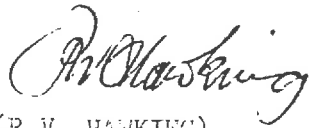
3. This information is released pursuant to Australian Military Regulation 770.

Yours faithfully,

✕ Embarked on Transport "Barunga" (ex German ship "Sumatra") with 700 wounded on board and torpedoed by a German submarine in the Bay of Biscay on 15.7.1918. Three destroyers including "Midge" picked them up and they were taken back to England where they were feted by the Mayoress of Exeter. Records were lost at sea.

S.J.H.

36


(R.V. HAWKINS)
Major
Authorising Officer
for Commanding Officer