

David Gibson Jude Badger, 2012 ATZAO Spirit School Prize

David Gibson Jude Badger was born in Petersburg, South Australia. He attended school in Petersburg and was a member of the Baptist Church. He was the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert J. Badger, who lived in Victoria Street, Petersburg, (now known as Peterborough.) David's father, Herbert James Badger opened a registry office at his premises in 1890, which offered positions for farm hands, domestic servants and every description of help required. He was to become a familiar name in the community.

Badger was a Bank Clerk before war broke out on 28th July 1914 and he enlisted at age 19, on 24th May 1915, but was not called upon until some months later. He served with the rank of Acting Sergeant, then Acting Corporal, before embarking from Adelaide on 'RMS Morea' on 26th August 1915 with the 3rd reinforcements. He was a Lieutenant in the cadets and took a keen interest in military matters. He sailed from Australia in August 1915. He was a bright intelligent lad, very popular at school.

In February 1916 he was transferred to the 10th Battalion. On the 10th of August 1916 he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. After the big battle of Somme on August 21st, he was reported missing. It wasn't until then that his parents were officially notified that he was killed in action by a shell at Mouquet Farm, Pozieres, France. One million men fought in that first battle at the Somme, a section on The Western Front.

Perched on the highest ridge of the battlefield was a small village called Pozieres. After five attempts to seize it, the British called in the Anzac's to complete this impossible task. At midnight on the 23rd July 1916 thousands of Australians stormed and took Pozieres. But it wasn't until forty five days later that the enemy was cleared out and they were free. Some were luckier than others to get out alive, but many lives were lost during this battle. David Gibson Jude Badger was only 20 years old when he lost his life.

In a letter written by Gunner Ivor Thompson to David Badgers parents it states *"I had longed to see a bayonet charge, but I never wish to see another. It was at 5:30pm. B. Company led by Sergeant David badger, made the charge. The sergeant was the first man to hop the trenches, (the bravest of lads) he was just marvellous. When the roll was called the next day Sergeant Badger..... (Censored).... I was the only one of the Gunner's Australian section left. It was hell on earth"*.

Badger was within a group of soldiers who were hit by a shell that fell right on them. Many of the group were killed and others were taken prisoner. He served 18 months in World War One and was living in the trenches of France for 5 months. In a letter written by David Badger marked *'To be opened when I'm dead'*. He gave directions for his personal and private matters, and asked his parents not to mourn for him. He had done his duty, and would do the same again.



David Gibson Jude Badger in uniform.

'My dear mother, father, brothers and sisters, when you see this I'll be dead, don't you worry. I did my best to fight our foes. Try to think I did the only possible thing, as I could do and I would do it all again if I had the chance.' Concluding with the message, 'all I ask is that you send another in my place'. Your loving son and brother on active service, Dave G. Badger

As a direct result of this letter, eight men joined the AIF.

Meanwhile back home in Petersburg at an evening service, on Sunday 10th December 1916 by Misses' Jean Badger and Nellie Noblett, a Roll of Honour was placed in the Baptist Church. Photographs of the two local soldiers killed in action, Lieutenant E.H Chinner and Sergeant D.G.J Badger were placed either side of the Honour Roll.

The township also renamed Herman Street to Badger Street, in honour of Sergeant Dave Badger, whose deeds will always be remembered and never forgotten. His family were among the oldest people living in the district. A memorial booklet on the life of the late Sergeant Badger, entitled "An Australian Hero" was printed in honour of all the brave lads who laid down their lives for their country.



Streets named in his honour.

The extent of his service on the Western Front

David Badgers service reflected the ANZAC spirit by not being afraid to give up his own life for his beloved country and town, Petersburg (Peterborough). Just as he stated 'I would do it all again if given the chance'. He was very determined and eager to get out onto the battlefield and with that comes a lot of courage. Bravery was just one of the many qualities this young man certainly had. He was just marvellous.

Badger wanted to get across to his family that he did the only thing he could and he didn't want them drowning their sorrows for his loss, instead they should be very proud and honoured. The role of Sergeant came with many responsibilities that suited David. The leadership skill he showed were outstanding. Would you be able to hop the trenches trying to save as many lives as you could, knowing that you were risking your own to save others, with the chance of never seeing loved ones again?

Having the leadership and courage he had, Badger was ready to fight for his country. He believed in what he was fighting for, therefore he tried as hard as possible to keep his men safe and alive. When the time came he put his men's lives before his own. The behaviour and attitude he followed by during his life, complying by the law and others even if they weren't the enemy. Doing his best when it was difficult and dangerous, even when he was scared for his life, he never showed it, nor did he let it bother him. David Gibson Jude Badger had much of the ANZAC spirit and fight in him during his service on The Western Front. He served his country until his last breath. He was a true ANZAC indeed.

The ANZAC Spirit

The Spirit of the ANZAC is not something we can see, but a powerful driving force that can only be felt. It's a feeling that burns in the heart of every Australian, the drive that brings us all together as a nation in times of disasters and hardship.

The ANZAC Spirit or ANZAC Legend is a concept all Australian soldiers have. The qualities these soldiers shown on the battlefield in World War One, include endurance, courage, ingenuity, humour and mateship. With determination and drive sweeping from the beaches of Gallipoli, with our Anzac's fighting for their freedom.

The mateship and friendship is what kept these men from falling into insanity, they were still able to joke, even after their best friends or relatives had been killed. Volunteering to go on the journey to fight, these young men were innocent and keen. Being put in a war zone at such a young age, they had to grow up very quickly. They could and did fight like machines when they had to. They showed up all the other soldiers, especially the British who were lacking in initiative and drive. Definitely not afraid of hard work, they became highly skilful and feared killers. They stuck to their mates through thick and thin. Being soldiers they didn't let death dampen their sense of humour and joy of practical jokes. Respect was what they had for each other including their enemies.

The Australians rose to the occasion. Not waiting for orders or the boats to reach the beach. They sprang into the sea determined, running at the enemy trenches. The courage displayed by wounded Australians will also never be forgotten.

Many Anzac's gave up the fight of their lives that day, and many died. But their goal for freedom and their love of their land will never be forgotten, showing us values such as courage, initiative and mateship. These qualities have helped unite and strengthen the communities we live in today. But the Spirit of the ANZAC is not just in battle. It lives in the schools, on the sports fields, in times of hardships such as cyclones, earthquakes and bushfires, in fact all over the great countries of Australia and New Zealand. During these times Australians come together to rescue one another, ease their suffering, provide shelter with food and look after one another to let them know they're not alone.



David's name on the Honour Bell.

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Bruce Topperwien helped with providing me with some websites and information.

By Kaitlen Gosling