



*Sutherland Shire
Historical Society Inc*
Bulletin



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A World War 1 AIF Officer

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SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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Meetings of the Society are held monthly on the third Saturday at 7.45 pm at the Stapleton Centre, Stapleton Street, Sutherland.

VISITORS ARE WELCOME

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Disclaimer

The individual comment, articles and Office Bearers reports that appear in this Bulletin are the responsibility of the writer/s and in no way reflect the opinions or beliefs of the members or Executive of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society.

President's Report

Annual General Meeting: Former Sutherland Shire Mayor and councillor, Ken Mc Donell presided over our AGM in September, and once again I was elected as your President. Ken has since retired from council and we thank Ken for his support of our Museum, urging Council's assistance and trying to get a Federal Museum established at Kurnell. Very few of the councillors have ever visited our Museum, and our plight is not understood.

Unfortunately it fell mostly on deaf ears and it remains to be seen if the Sutherland Shire council will rally to his call and give us more space for our Museum at the Sutherland Memorial School of Arts. I thank you all for your support for my leadership, particularly during this last vexing issue which threatens our very existence. I think I am now the longest serving president in our organisation's history. Whilst I enjoy putting our Society "on the map" wherever possible, proudly representing you, it is a fact that an organisation stagnates if one officer stays too long at the helm. New ideas and new blood are needed to make an organisation thrive, and I give notice that I intend to stand down at the next AGM, perhaps doing a term as Deputy President if this is useful and then gradually stepping down from executive positions. I know a few of you are currently coasting, and we have a lot of untapped resources amongst our members! We need **you** to get involved and carry the banner, as a few of us have been guiding the Society for a while, and want to step aside but no one is stepping forward to take our load.



Oakey Military Air Museum, Qld. When visiting my brother at Toowoomba in August, he took us to the above museum. I was delighted to see amongst the assembled aircraft in the huge hangar, a DH Gipsy Major with a one piston engine, a Milingimbee Boomerang (flown by a Ron McDonell—any relation, Ken?), and an Auster Mark III. Some of you may remember that a plane of this latter type featured in an exciting incident over Sydney in August, 1955: *"A pilot was conducting circuit training in an Auster at Bankstown airport, NSW. As the pilot prepared to land, the engine abruptly stopped and he was forced to land without power. Now, starting an Auster requires two people, one in the cockpit to operate the switches and one in the front to swing the propeller. As the pilot was alone, he set the switches and forgetting the throttle was open, exited the aircraft to spin the propeller. The engine fired immediately causing the aircraft to become airborne. The stunned pilot was left to watch in fear as his unmanned aircraft proceeded to climb to 7,000 ft over Sydney. When Air Traffic Control realized the aircraft was unmanned, they called in the RAAF to shoot it down over Botany Bay. The RAAF jumped at the chance at live firing practice. They sent up a WWII Wirraway with an observer armed with a Bren gun. Despite expending all available ammunition he failed to hit the aircraft! Eventually two Meteor Jets were armed and launched. One broke down on the runway, while the other got airborne, flew to Sydney and found the target. He managed to fire three rounds at the Auster without success before his guns jammed! This was all too much for the RAAF and the Navy was finally called in. They launched two fully armed Sea Fury fighters and successfully shot down the Auster which crashed into the sea some 5 miles off the coast after a three hour flight."* Thank goodness it wasn't a bomb-laden enemy aircraft.

University of Sydney: For the last two years I have been the president of the Sydney University Women's Group and a member for over 25 years, so frequently visit this institution for lunches, talks etc. However last month Cliff and I were the guests of FOHLIS (Friends of Hurstville Library & Information Service) on a bus trip to the Univ. Syd. (We joined FOHLIS, after repeated attempts to commence a "Friends of Sutherland Shire Information and Library Service" [FOSSILS!] failed.) FOHLIS is very active having interesting guest speakers on the fourth Thursday at Hurstville Library also arranging excursions (and new members are always welcome to attend!) The Syd. Univ. excursion was arranged to visit: the Rare Books library, the Nicholson Museum and the Macleay Museum. At the Rare Books Library they had a special exhibition on the role of books in western religion. There were books of individual prayer from the early 12th century, richly illuminated in brilliant colours edged in gold, called Books of Hours, as well as guides such as the Biblia Pauperum and the Ars Moriendi. The Librarian noted that sometimes the chemicals used

in mediaeval illustrations were poisonous and people who licked their fingers, as they turned the pages, came to a sad end. (Librarians have been advocating this for years!) Then we looked with horror, hastily advising one elderly gentleman in our midst that was doing just this, to desist forthwith! We saw one book worth over a \$1m and another worth \$3-4m. We marvelled that we were allowed to peruse the books without cotton gloves, and found that the clock had turned full circle, as when I was a library assistant we were encouraged to handle these books of vellum and parchment, as the oil on the human hands actually helped to preserve them! I asked if they had a copy of Gutenberg's Bible, the first one printed on a press. I was told they had a facsimile, and the unique fact about this book is that Gutenberg spent 15 months ensuring that EVERY word was spelt correctly, and that the grammar was perfect. It is the ONLY book that is 100% perfect. All proofreaders should try and emulate this feat! The library holds a copy of Principia Mathematica which has been annotated by Newton himself, and a Virginia Woolfe 1st edition in which she has re-typed some of the pages, as she felt she could have expressed herself better! We then visited the Nicholson Museum which had an interesting Egyptology display, and then the Macleay Museum which had an exhibition of moths and butterflies. During my years working at the university I contributed to their moth collection—caught on Blaxland Drive Tennis Courts, Illawong when we played tennis at night, and taking them to Woody Horning, entomologist, next day! Apparently everyone collects butterflies in daylight—but very few bother to collect moths at night, so he was grateful for my input. It is well worth a trip to the University on the weekends: on Sundays at 2pm the carillon is played in the quadrangle, and the Museums are open from 12 noon till 4pm and all are free!

3rd Saturday Day Meetings: At the AGM, members voted that due to our ageing membership, which is unwilling to come out in the evenings, that all meetings be held on a 3rd Saturday afternoon at 1.30pm. So if you are one of those who voted for this please make sure you attend. Unfortunately I have some clashes occasionally, such as our Members' Meeting in January, and cannot attend, but I can see it could be a sensible solution to failing attendances, especially during the winter months, and this was a democratic decision by the members. I look forward to seeing you at **our last evening meeting** which is our Christmas Show and Tell at the Suth. Mem. School of Arts and having a glass of cheer. Do bring along an historical item to display with a little note to put beside it telling us why it is interesting (and a plate for supper!). Merry Christmas everyone!

Dawn Emerson,
President

Dates of meetings:

Fri. 19th Dec. 2008: 8pm. Christmas Party :Show & Tell: at Suth Mem Sch. Of Arts
 Sat. 17th Jan. 2009: 1.30pm Mem. Mtg: Stapleton Cent.: David, Cliff, Terry, Angela
 Sat. 16th Feb. 2009: 1.30pm Gordon Shall:Underwater archaeology: Stapleton .Centre (TBA?)
 Sat. 15th Mar. 2009:1.30pm Les Bursill Dharrawal Stapleton .Centre
 Sat. April Mary Small:Lenny & Sydney Harbour. Bridge: Stapleton Centre

Dawn Emerson,

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year



From The Editor's Desk

Just a

reminder that our web address is www.suthshirehistsoc.org.au

I'm very pleased with the final edition of the Bulletin for 2008. It contains many interesting articles. Two stories dealing with First World War diaries of soldiers provide a general theme for this edition. This year marks the 90th anniversary of the conclusion of the Great War or World War 1. There are now no longer any original soldiers left alive but this hasn't dampened enthusiasm for the celebration of the event. Justly so after so many years, Australians are coming to recognise the greater importance of the Western Front in the conduct of the war.



All High Schools hold Remembrance Day ceremonies. At Port Hacking High School, History teacher Ms Marie Hlavac conducted a full school assembly to mark the occasion with a reminder of its importance to our national identity. Circumstances of the military service of three of the students' relatives who had served in World War 1 were related. As is customary, buglers played The Last Post and Reveille and a minute's silence observed. All students were spell bound by the solemnity of the occasion. Where traditions and customs are presented in a meaningful way, young people respond appropriately. In my experience, younger generations are embracing our cultural traditions and taking them to heart.

We continue the 'Meet the Executive' feature. Terry McCosker is a valued member of the Society and the Executive. He does a great job organising excursions and assisting with the Museum. He has also had a life time of interesting experiences.

We are lucky to have two local histories or reminisces featuring Caringbah and Miranda. Oral histories are so important. If you have a story to tell, do make the effort to contact us.

Cliff Emerson has also kindly reviewed a book from the Museum collection. Cliff notes that 'If you haven't yet had a look over the books which have been donated or purchased for the SSHS Museum, then you have a pleasant surprise in store. These are available to members for loan by arrangement with Mr. Jim Cutbush, Museum Curator, at the SSHS Museum in the Sutherland Memorial School of Arts, East Parade, Sutherland.' The Museum is grateful for donations that would extend peoples understanding of the earlier life of the Shire.

Finally, a new section has been added in this addition. Hopefully, 'Is there an old car in your life?' is the start of many more. What other cars or stories are out there that should be told?

I enjoy researching and writing these stories. However, I am always pleased to see other articles mailed or preferably emailed to me. If you are unable to personally write the, ideas or leads are much appreciated.

A special thanks to Merle Kavanagh whose professional skill at the final editing and proof-reading stage is greatly appreciated. Our bulletin is of a high standard.

Bruce Watt

Meet the Executive - Terry McCosker



My name is Stanley Terence McCosker and all my life I have been called Terry because my father was also Stanley and I suppose they thought it would be confusing. Why I was not christened Terence Stanley I will never know. I was born in N.S.W. in a small border town called Mungindi, 120 km north west of Moree. My brother was also born in Mungindi, but across the river, so he is a Queenslander.

I went to primary school at Mungindi, but we moved to Merryweather, a Newcastle seaside suburb, at the end of my primary schooling and I commenced high school there at Marist Brothers College, Hamilton. My father joined the Permanent Army and when the war broke out he went straight into the AIF and then to the Middle East. When the Japanese submarines attacked Sydney we moved back to the country and I completed my High Schooling at Narrabri. When Dad came back from New Guinea at the end of the war we moved again, this time to the Shire, a water frontage on Gympie Bay,

During our time at Narrabri, I returned to Mungindi for about 3 months to help my Grandmother who ran a general store and bakery. My uncle delivered bread for her and I helped him every day. Once we crossed the river into Queensland he would let me drive the bread van as no driving license was required so I learned to drive at about 13 and I have loved it ever since. This uncle also owned the local picture theatre and I learned enough about film projection to get me a part time job at Cronulla theatre later in life.

So I am really a “bushie”, dragged back to the city by his parents after enjoying growing up happily in the country, due, no doubt, to the lack of councillors to tell me I was depressed or unhappy.

There was one very big plus in moving to Gympie in that there was a lovely 13 year old girl living next door. It took me a while to convince her but we eventually started keeping company and when she was 18, not being able to decide what to give her for her birthday, I offered her some money to buy her own present and she bought an engagement ring. Naturally, being the gentleman I was and not wanting to disappoint her, we got married. Fifty five years, three children and six grandchildren later we are still happily married. (she's happy and I'm married.)

Although I had commenced fourth year high school at Narrabri, when we came to Gympie I decided to work and did not continue my schooling. I had a pretty varied and interesting working life which included the P.M.G. Department at Cronulla, some labouring, sign writing, the printing industry and driving on the Snowy Mountains Scheme. Eventually I joined the Police Force where I served for 33 years. At some stage during my working life I purchased a motor cycle and when I joined the Police Department I was an experienced rider. After less than twelve months service I was recruited to that section of the force which handled the purchase, service and distribution of the 600 motor cycles which were in use at the time. I was also involved in the training and testing of police motorcyclists. In the early 1960's the Police Driver Training School was established at St. Ives and I was transferred there as driving and riding instructor, having first completed a TAFE Driving Instructors Course. After about ten years the Police Department realised that I was having too much fun and as I was getting on in rank, they transferred me to general duties, firstly at Maroubra and then at Sutherland and finally Hurstville where I remained until I retired in 1988 having reached the rank of Inspector.

In the early 1980s I started taking flying lessons. Taking lessons two or three times a week it only took me about three months to acquire my unrestricted Private Pilot License. I joined the Police Aero Club and flew regularly from Hoxton Park and the Oaks where I flew for a parachute club. I still cannot understand why anyone would jump out of a perfectly good aeroplane. I had one glider flight but it worked out about as dear as powered flight so I did not pursue it. After the making of the Mad Max films I flew the plane which was used in “Beyond Thunderdome”, the last of the three films, for about 3 years to keep it airworthy while Kennedy Miller was trying to sell it. In all I flew for about ten years before allowing my license to lapse.

After retiring from the police service I drove tourist coaches in the Shire for twelve years and enjoyed it very much, meeting hundreds of great people. One of my regular groups was the Sutherland Shire Historical Society, which I joined, becoming a member of the executive some years ago. At present I am a volunteer driver with Sutherland Shire Community Transport and still enjoying the work and the company.

Earlier this year, 2008, I moved from Bangor after living there for 24 years and am now enjoying the convenience of life in Sutherland, six minutes from the rail and the museum and two minutes from church and the library. I am walking much more and I have almost forgotten what colour my car is.

Reminder

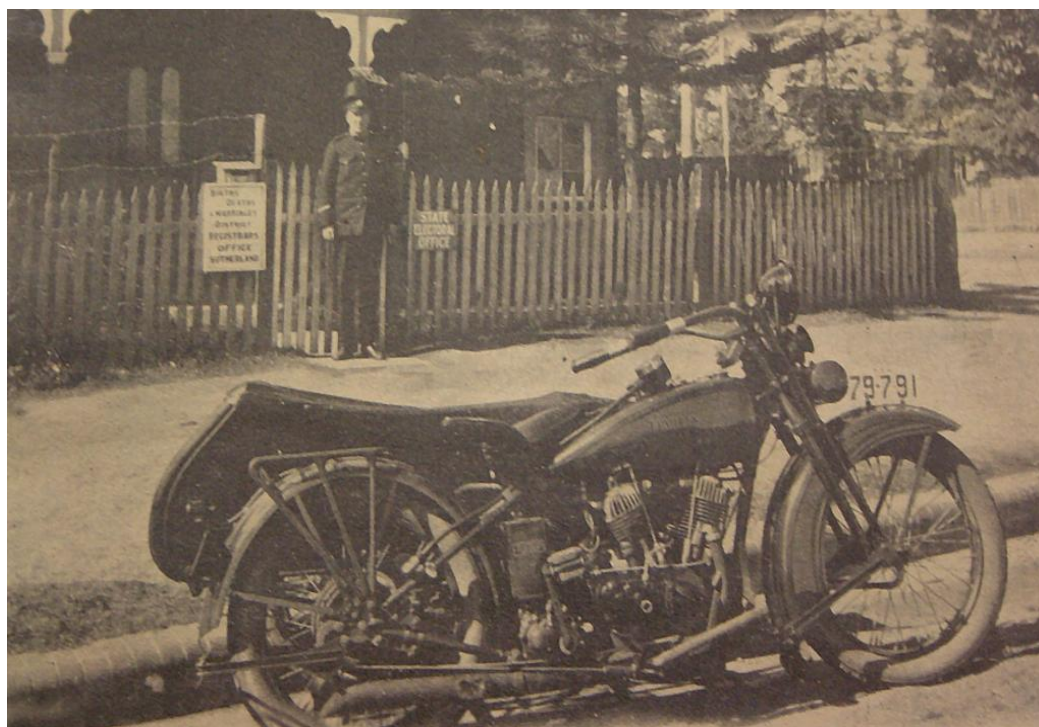
Christmas lunch Thursday 27th November, Loftus Tafe 12 noon \$25 payment to Pat Hannon

Excursion Saturday 14th March: bus trip to Mount Kembla \$25 BYO morning tea and lunch, tickets available next meeting

THE SHIRE'S FIRST POLICE MOTOR VEHICLE

Mr B Studwick of 56 Evelyn Street, Sylvania, has submitted these old photos taken in 1927, when, while stationed of Sutherland, he took delivery of the first police vehicle in the shire.

BELOW, with passenger Mr. Charlie Murphy taken just below Como Railway Station looking south. Mr. Strudwick points out that in those days, the police stationed in the Shire totaled eight men, two at Cronulla, one at Miranda, one at Como and four at Sutherland.



A Digger's Diary

Bruce Watt

There's nothing more poignant than a message from the past where the ending is known by the reader but was not foreseen by the author. Such is this story. Doubtless it has been repeated many thousands of times but it is startling when the realisation first dawns.

This is a tale with a local connection but one played out over 90 years ago in a legendary place. This is a story of a simple war diary, written in pencil and ink in a small booklet kept in a black, well worn leather pocket. It covers the period of the soldier's enlistment on the 10th March 1915 until Saturday the 22nd July 1916. Little did I know when I began reading his small handwriting that Lance Corporal W Buchan, No. 508, B Company 20th Battalion, 5th Brigade of the AIF would be dead by Wednesday 26th July 1916. This I learned from a search of Australian War Memorial records. The battle was at Pozieres, one of the bloodiest battlefields of the Western front in France.

The idea for this story began when I was handed a small parcel by a friend who was unsure what to do about it. Clearly it was of special value and the friend no doubt had hoped that I would look into it. Beyond that, it was implicitly believed that such a relic deserved to be preserved for posterity, possibly in the Australian War Museum.

The parcel consisted of a diary and another booklet with the original pencil called 'The Zealandia Soldier's Writing Companion' which 'Fits the Pocket'. This consisted of hand-made notes and sketches on grenades, fuses and detonators, clearly one of the soldier's duties. Another notepad contained details of ammunition rounds dispatched. The final item was a small box containing service medals and an aluminium dog tag bearing the inscription: W. Buchan 508 CE B. 20 A.I.F.

Walter David Buchan was 33 when he enlisted on the 3rd of March 1915. Before his death he was to attain the rank of Lance Corporal. He was married and lived at 133 Glenmore Road, Paddington in Sydney. (another address listed was 99 Crown Street, East Sydney). He had been married on the 2nd May 1914 so had been married for only 10 months when he enlisted. His wife's name was Catherine but he refers to her as Kate. A contemporary description was that he was short (about 5'2"), thin, fair, partly bald, with several gold teeth. He is described as well liked. At the time he had no children but a son was born when he was overseas. His occupation was listed as laundryman though there is one reference to having worked at Tooths Brewery.

Walter was part of a second wave of recruitment to replace the initial troops who had enlisted in a wave of enthusiasm and patriotism at the beginning of the war. By mid 1915 there was a frenzy of recruiting following the set-backs in the Gallipoli campaign and the sinking of the '*Lusitania*'. After initial training at Liverpool, he boarded the *Runik* which departed Sydney on the 9th August and travelled to Egypt where he undertook further military training. In August he was dispatched to Gallipoli as part of the second offensive where he first saw active service at Russell's Top and The Nek. In Charles Bean's definitive account of the Gallipoli campaign (Vol. 11 p 739) he describes the arrival of fresh reinforcements on the 21st August. 'These troops came to the tired and somewhat haggard garrison of Anzac like a fresh breeze from the Australian bush. Great big cheery fellows, whom it did your heart good to see' wrote an Australian. 'Quite the biggest lot that I have ever seen'. As these men with well-rounded cheeks and strong limbs filed past the heights of which they had heard so much, they quietly but eagerly questioned other wayfarers as to the situation. In the quiet valley below Walker's Ridge some of their officers had spoken gravely to them of their high duty in the tests they were about to face. They had not yet acquired the cynicism of old soldiers. These fine troops had made a deep impression upon all who had seen them, and brigadiers, anxious to relieve or support their tired troops, looked eagerly towards 'the new Australians'.

By January 1916, Walter was on a troop ship after the evacuation at Gallipoli. From there he is moved Cairo for further training and then to France and much of the events of the diary take place here. It is said that the army is '99% boredom and 1% fear'. The reader will be taken by the relatively mundane nature of the diary entries. Indeed, given the historic nature of his engagements, his diary is relatively free of the grand theatre of the events that he was witnessing. The diary entries do show the practical daily routine of

a soldier. Whilst one often concentrates on the on-battlefield conditions of a soldier, it is revealing to witness the daily routine experienced between military engagements.

Walter never knew his son who was also called Walter or Wally. The first mention of the birth of a son is in the diary entry on the 6th February 1916. Strangely, this was the one and only reference to his son though mention is made of sending his diary to his wife. This would have been a second and possibly a more personal one. Given the time for mail to reach him, his son must have been conceived just prior to enlisting in March 1915. The soldier's son, Wally, was no doubt shaped by the events of the war and the lack of a father. In his latter years, Wally lived in Cronulla. A good drinker, Wally was at times in need of the assistance offered to him by the family of the friend who brought Walter's diaries to me. As it wanted to happen under these circumstances where there are no living relatives, Wally's possessions were dispersed by the family that looked after his interests after his death. The diaries were items that posed a quandary. The first part of the diary is Spartan in its comments. And so to the diary.

The Diary

*Enlisted 10th March 1915. Left for Liverpool camp 15th March. Sworn in 16th March.
Received last shore payment 29th June on board ship. Received first abroad payment at sea 17th July.
Arrived Suez 25th July. Disembarked 26th. Arrived Aerodrome Camp Heliopolis 26th July. Visited Cairo and Heliopolis 31st July and 1st August. Receive second abroad payment 2nd August.
Masrel nil Barracks and Babel Hadid 2nd August
Received letter from Blackie 27th June on 30th July
Left Babel Hadid for Heliopolis 5th August. Left Heliopolis for Babel Hadid 11th August
Left Babel Hadid for Heliopolis 12th August.
Orders to proceed to the front 13th August.*

August

Musketry at rifle range 13th August. Left Heliopolis for Alexandria and arrived the 16th August. Left Alexandria 16th August. Arrived Lemnos Island 19th August. Left Lemnos Island for Gallipoli 21st August. Arrived same night. Landed at Anzac Cove Gallipoli Peninsula 22nd inst, Rested in two gullies for two days. Went in supporting trenches 26th August for 24 hours. Went into firing line same day and had my first shot at Turks. Our Company took over firing line and communication trenches 29th August.

The first part of the diary finishes here but takes up on the 1st January 1916. The Gallipoli campaign had been a military disaster for the allied forces although a face saving tactical withdrawal or evacuation of all troops from Gallipoli over the two nights of the 19th and 20th of December 1915, was somewhat of a face saving exercise. A special aside is that amongst the very last men to leave their trenches on the last night of the evacuation at Gallipoli were those from the 20th Battalion at Russell's Top. (3.14 am) At 3.30 am the evacuation was completed. The Turkish army was totally unaware that a major evacuation was taking place and the evacuation was completed without casualties. Delayed mine explosions and self firing rifles gave the impression that the allied trenches were still occupied and offering the usual resistance. At this stage it's worth describing the military record of the battalion that Walter belonged to.

20th Battalion

The 20th Battalion was raised at Liverpool in New South Wales in March 1915 as part of the 5th Brigade. It consisted of recruits drawn mainly from Parramatta to the Blue Mountains. A sprinkling of the 20th's original recruits had already served with the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force (AN&MEF) in the operations to capture German New Guinea in 1914. The 20th left Australia in late June 1915, trained in Egypt from late July until mid-August, and on 22 August landed at ANZAC Cove.

Arriving at Gallipoli just as the August offensive petered out, the 20th's role there was purely defensive. From 26 August, until its withdrawal from the peninsula on 20 December, the 20th Battalion was responsible for the defence of Russell's Top.

After further training in Egypt, the 20th Battalion proceeded to France. It entered the trenches of the Western Front for the first time in April 1916 and in the following month had the dubious honour of being the first Australian battalion to be raided by the Germans. The 20th took part in its first major offensive around Pozières between late July and the end of August 1916. After a spell in a quieter sector of the front in Belgium, the 2nd Division, which included the 5th Brigade, came south again in October. The 20th Battalion provided reinforcements for the attack near Flers between 14 and 16 November, launched in conditions that Charles Bean described as the worst ever encountered by the AIF.

In 1917, the 20th was involved in the follow-up of German forces after their retreat to the Hindenburg Line, and was one of four battalions to defeat a counter-stroke by a German force, almost five times as strong, at Lagincourt. The Battalion took part in three major battles before the year was out, second Bullecourt (3–4 May) in France, and Menin Road (20–22 September) and Poelcappelle (9–10 October) in Belgium.

The spring of 1918 brought a major German offensive. The 20th Battalion was one of many Australian battalions rushed to repel it, and it encountered particularly severe fighting when ordered to attack at Hangard Wood on 7 April. With the German Army's last desperate offensive defeated, the 20th participated in the battles that pushed it ever closer to defeat: Amiens on 8 August, the legendary attack on Mont St Quentin on 31 August, and the forcing of the Beaurevoir Line around Montbrehain on 3 October. Montbrehain was the battalion's last battle of the war. It was disbanded on 20 April 1919.

The diary for 1916 is much more detailed. In summary it covers these events. Two dried poppies are pressed in the pages for May.

The diary resumes. Whilst a daily diary record was kept, only some of these entries have been included in this account.

January 1916

The troops are in camps after leaving Gallipoli. Walter has training as a grenadier. It was in his role as Bomber that he was ultimately killed.

Saturday 1st At Mudross Lemnos Island. New year brought in with a blast of the bugle, steamer sirens, rocket flares, bonfires and plenty of singing Auld Lang Syne etc. Agreed to go to sleep at 1 am. Rose 6.45 am. Orderly for the day. Heavy showers, windy and cold. Played cards during morning. Watched football match during afternoon. Bed 9.20 pm.

Monday 3rd Reveille 5.30 am. Breakfast 6.15 am. Clean up lines and tent. Fall in 7.30 am. Marched off 8am., embarked on lighter 10pm., on to transport, noon. Transport's name SS Manitoa ATL. No rations served out on board. Guard put on over 20 male and 4 female prisoners, Turkish and Bulgarians. On fatigue 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm loading chaff. Bed 10.30 pm.

Tuesday 4th Rose 4.30 am. Washed. Mess orderly for our table for the day. Mess inspection. Captain's inspection. Ship's routine read out. Taking on a few hundred horses and mules. Wrote a letter to Blackie after tea. Bed 10pm.

Thursday 6th Steamed out to sea 3.30 am. Rose 6 am. Drew bread ration and breakfast. Shaved and had a hot water bath, a luxury first for months. Passed 2 transports, sighted Destroyers. Inspection of troop deck by Ships Officers. Lifebelt rifle parade. Pickles and jam issued. Wrote letters. All lights out 6 pm. Bed 8 pm.

Saturday 15th Rose 6.15 am. Washed, shaved, done fatigue work. Inspection by Brigadier Holmes in the morning. During the afternoon the whole of the Australian troops in this camp, were received by the Army

Corp Commander General Murray assisted by a large staff. Had a few drinks of whiskey in the night. Bed 9 pm. Paid off Niagara 12 months to day.

Sunday 16th *Rose 6.15 am. Roll call 7 am fatigue duty till breakfast. Received a parcel from the War Chest Fund, also a Xmas pudding. Church Parade. Football match between 19 and 20th Batt at 3 pm. Wrote letter to Kate. Bed 10 pm.*

Friday 21st *Rose 5.30 am. Tent orderly for the day. A Grenadier section formed under Lieut. Lane (Paddy). I was picked to join. Had first parade this morning. , practiced grenade throwing. Nothing doing during afternoon so wrote a letter. Bed 9 pm.*

Saturday 22nd *Rose 6 am. Physical drill. Breakfast. Fell in with Grenadiers and were disbanded for time being owing to troops moving. Afternoon got orders to move, packed up with ammunition. Ready to move off with a minute notice. Had a bath, put new clothes on. Bed 9 pm.*

Thursday 27th *Rose 6.30 am. Erected tents, found pack and gear. Haven't had a wash for 4 days. Parade afternoon, heavy showers, rations very short. Had a parade before C. O. to complain about food shortage. Got no satisfaction. Bed 7 pm.*

Friday 28th *Rose 6.30 am. Early breakfast, one little piece of bacon. Duty Company put on headquarters fatigue. Water issued, 2 quarts a man. First water we have had in 3 days. Had a wash and cleaned teeth. Rations again very short. Paraded to Colonel about shortage of food, no satisfaction. Bed 8 pm.*

Monday 31st *Rose 6.30 am. Duty company for the day. I was on Pioneers fatigue digging cess pits and gathering grass. Fresh meat stew issued twice today. Got beat in another euchre tournament. Bed 9.15 pm.*

February

There is news of the birth of his son. Work on building railway. (part of the supply line for the Light Horse who were defending Suez) A leap year.

Saturday 5th. Rose 6.10 am. Bayonet exercise. Inspections of rifles and equipment. More reinforcements 5th and 6th and details arrived. Battalion went out to meet them. Fire discipline and judging distances. Heavy winds and slight sandstorm all day. Night time rain set in. Bed 9.30 pm.

Sunday 6th. Wife confined of a son and heir. Rose 6.10 am. Church parade. Duty company for the day. After dinner put on railhead fatigue unloading trains. Received orders to pack up ready to move off early in the morning. Bed 9.40 pm.

Wednesday 9th. Rose 6.15 am. Drill with rifle before breakfast. After, putting up barbed wire entanglements. Heavy showers during afternoon. Bed 9 pm.

Monday 14th. Rose 6.10 am. Told off for railhead fatigue loading camels. Our battalion started laying railroad. Paper mail issued. I got none. Had a good read of sick men's papers. Read about R Jones getting killed, 68 Wm St Paddington. Bed 10.15 pm.

Monday 21st. Rose 6 am. Railway party for the day. Issued with a new set of colours and comforts from War Chest Fund. 2 tins pineapple, 3 tins of milk, tobacco and cigarettes, had a great blow out. Bed 9.45.

Tuesday 29th. Rose 6 am. Extra day of the year. Resumed work on railway. Another mail today. I got a letter from Blackie. Read papers of German attack on Verdun and Russia's attack on Turks, also of the loss of the Maloja. Comforts staff served out our tent. Got among other things a cake and chocolate. Had a drop of whiskey and played nap for one of the boys. Won a couple of bob.

March

Work on railway, severe sand storms. News of going to England. (erroneous) Toothache. Ship to Alexandria, Marseille, train trip through France to Versailles. Gas masks issued.

Friday 10th. Rose 5.45 am. Rifle inspection. Captain read out orders and sentences of Court Marshal. Battalion on divisional duties. I was on ordinance fatigue, had to come back with tooth ache. Visited dentist and had one of my gold teeth extracted. Very painful extraction., a big abscess on tooth. Australian mail delivered. I got two letters from Billy Morris and Bernie, who's contained news of Kate's confinement. Bed 9.30 pm.

Saturday 18th. Arrived Alexandria 5.30 am. Embarked on troopship Ingoma 7.30 am. Took on Mess Orderly for the voyage at 1/- per head. Issued out with life belts, hammocks and blankets. Laid alongside dock all night. Bed 9pm.

Monday 20th. Rose 4.45 am. Heavy sea running. Moderated about midday. Plenty of officers and men sick. No parades today. Done Orderly job for the day. Had a read. Bed 7 pm.

Saturday 25th. Rose 5 am. Weather fine and calm. Picked up French coast early morning. Had a bath. Arrived alongside Marseilles Wharf 11 am. Disembarked 12.45 pm. Foot on French soil for first time, things very quiet around docks. Entrained at Marseille Railway station. 3 pm steamed away. 3.30 pm had a royal reception all along the line on to a siding at midnight and served out with tea and rum. Went to sleep after tea.

Sunday 26th. Woke up 5 am. Heavy frost and fog on. Passed town of Vienne at 8 am. Arrived city of Lyon 9.15 am. Stayed half hour. Had a royal reception at a very pretty city built on a river called the River Rhone. Arrived Dijon 6 pm. Stayed half hour. Had a talk and shake hands with some French ladies. Had our lamps lit before leaving Dijon. Arrived Avallon 11.30 pm. Served out with tea and rum. During the day we passed numberless villages where we got a great reception, also passed a train with wounded French soldiers and about 20 trains of French soldiers on leave, also passengers who gave us a great reception. Great exchange of souvenirs all along the line. While at Lyon people threw oranges and cakes at us. Band played Marseillaise at different stations and got well cheered. Left Avallon midnight. Went to sleep.

Monday 27th. Woke up 5.30 am. at St Florentin, run into a siding to let an express pass. Left SWt Florentin 7.30 am. Arrived Juisviny 1.15 am. 8 miles from Paris, much to our disappointment we shunted off on to another line. Arrived Versailles 3 pm. Issued with hot milk by French Red Cross Nurses. Went right on and sighted Eiffel tower and Paris in the distance. Another night on the train.

Tuesday 28th. Rose 5.30 am. Still steaming ahead. Arrived Thiennes 6.20 am. our destination. Had breakfast and disembarked 7.30 am. Marched off to our camp 3 miles away. Billeted in a barn at a French farmer, 100 men in our barn. Visited French wine bar during morning. Afternoon visited church and several coffee café. Had a great talk with French people, we are well treated everywhere. Spent night at a wine bar, had a sing song. Home at 8.30 pm., everybody merry. Bed 9 pm.

Wednesday 29th. Rose 5.30 am. Heavy winds blowing, very cold. Took on permanent orderly during our stay here. Marched down to Q.M. stores and issued with our black bags. Heard a few big guns fired, firing line 15 miles off. Went around village during night. Bed 9 pm.

Friday 31st. Rose 6 am. Heavy fog falling. Company lectured on last night behaviour, leave stopped for 24 hours. Lecture and exhibition on using gas helmets. Afternoon marched 6 miles to be inspected by L. Kitchener. Home 7 pm. Late tea. Had a couple of beers. Bed 9 pm.

April

Heavy bombardment in distance. Officers visit firing line. Sees aeroplanes being fired on. Cold, muddy. German shelling. soldiers killed by German mortar shells. Visited Armentiers. In trenches. Given rank as Lance Corporal. Bomb throwing school.

Friday 7th. Rose 5am packed up blankets rolled carried on transport. Moved off 5am left village 9.45pm. Past a lot of heavy artillery. Inspected by General Joffre on the march. Past through Hazebrock midday, a very old fashionable town. Passed through many villages. Camp for night at Ballinel. bed 8pm

Sunday 9th. Rose 6 am. No parades today. Feel tired and sore. Told off to join Grenadiers unit, left B Coy after 13 months. Moved into a new camp. Made some dummy bombs. Holy Communion 11 am. Borrowed a blanket from our officers. Bed 8 pm.

Tuesday 11th. Rose 6 am. Raining hard, showery all day, very muddy around camp. No parade today. Visited village, had a good look at ruined houses and church, also graveyard. Germans shelled farmhouse near us, during afternoon and set it on fire, burnt out. Had a shave by lady barber.

Friday 14th Rose 5am. Pay day. I never drew any pay. Had hair cut and shave at Lady Barber. Packed up and moved off to firing line at 7pm. Had a hard job to find sleeping accommodation. Got a bed at 10.30pm. Trenches very muddy.

Saturday 15th Rose 6.30am. Had a look at German trenches. Bombers disband and joined company again. Took up post on gas alarm. Visited by Gen Birdwood and Holmes. Orders to join up bomb throwers again and take post. Took post 6.30pm, drew 8 cases of bombs. Placed in charge of D company section.

Thursday 20th Rose 7.45am. D Company sent on fatigue at 4am. Lecture by Sgt Fisk on grenades and bombs at 11am. Unit went to Armentieres for hot bath and clean clothes. Night, done some letter writing. Mail issued out, I got none.

Sunday 23rd – Day broke fine. Rose 3.45am. Stand to arms after stand down looked for dry dug out. Asked by O.C. to take a stripe and rank as Lance Corporal. Searched for Dixie to do our cooking, ration arrangements bad, no cook. Lively artillery bombardment both sides. Heavy firing at one of our aeroplanes flying low. Took up post 6.30pm

Monday 24th – Easter Monday. Stand to arms am, after turn in for a few hours. Picked out site for a new post day and night. Cleaned riffles. Cooking done for us by C Company Cooks. Took up a new post 7.30pm. Had two casualties during night one of D Company shot through the mouth, jaw broken a machine gunner shot in his own dug out by one of his own mates accidental. Patrol of the 21st Battalion fired on by Germans, lost – 1 killed, 2 wounded, Lieut., and Corporal.

May Armentieres

Heavy trench bombardment and trench reinforcement near Armentieres. Germans referred to as Fritz. Close encounter with death. Much grenade making/throwing practice.

The following is an extract from ‘Australians on the Somme Pozieres 1916’ by Peter Charlton pp 19, 20.

‘For the Australians newly arrived from the desert, the experience of war on the Western Front in this relatively placid sector was almost pleasant. Food was plentiful, and brought up to the troops in the trenches each night by work parties. Water, which at Gallipoli had to be laboriously carted ashore across shingled beaches and then up into the forward positions, here was piped and on tap. There were farms and civilians close to the lines; there were villages and shops and the inevitable *estaminet*.’

‘These particularly French establishments, a cross between a café and a pub, sold thin beer and cheap wine. One was less than a kilometre from the Australian lines and the soldiers were quick to cross the fields to slake their thirsts. But although this was a quiet sector, the rumble of the guns was ever present.’

‘On 6th May, troops of the 20th Battalion, a 2nd Division unit drawn mainly from New South Wales, were occupying the Bridoux salient, a prominent bend in the line. During the day the Australians had been shelled, but in a desultory, almost haphazard fashion. They responded with their own medium trench mortars and the new, still secret Stokes mortar. By midday, the firing had stopped and the afternoon passed in a quiet peace’.

At dusk a firestorm of German mortars and artillery commenced. ‘It was frightful, quite unlike anything within the experience of the Gallipoli veterans.’ The area covered by the bombardment extended across the 20th Battalion’s front, more than 200 metres. The bombardment lasted from 7.40 pm until 9.30 pm. ‘...although casualties had been heavy in the forward company and damage to the breastworks severe, the line was being held by the survivors.’

German soldiers had entered the Australian trenches in the peak of the battle. The matter sparked a major military incident. The British army had developed a secret new weapon in 1914. The Stokes mortar allowed bombs to be dropped vertically down the barrel of the mortar which meant that it could be fired very rapidly. This had a major tactical advantage over German mortars. Two of the Stokes mortars or mine throwers were captured in the German raid. Had they realized their significance, it could have had a major impact on the war.

The diary details on the 5th May relate to this incident. As a bomber, Walter Buchan would have been using these new mortars. In his unassuming way he states that he was very lucky to have survived this incident.

Monday 1st – Rose 6.30am. More mail in I got 8 papers, letter from G Matthieson. Parade bomb school my squad was too short. Davis and Hannay both men sent to Company. Read of General Townsend force surrendering. Move off to trenches 7pm. Packed up ready to move off. Arrived in trenches 8pm. Told off with party to draw grenade and rations. Trenches bombarded during day by Germans, a few casualties. Bed 11.45pm.

Tuesday 2nd – Anniversary of my marriage. Rose at stand to arms 5.15am. After breakfast took stock of grenades in reserves and lines. Germans again bombarded our lines slightly wounding 3 men. Had a letter today from G Mathieson took over post 1.15pm very quiet night.

Wednesday 3rd stand to usual time. Done some letter writing during day some of our sick and wounded rejoined us last night, also a few reinforcements. Germans sent over a number of bombs and grenades, one of which never went off. I dug out and gave to our Sergeant who took detonator out. We had one killed, 3 wounded including one of our party. Built out sand bag wall outside dug out. Bed 9pm.

Thursday 4th – stand to usual time. Fritz sent over some more bombs, we got another which did not go off. We replied with a bombardment of heavy bombs. Fritz again bombarded our lines with high explosives wounding 3 men. Took up post 7.15pm.

Friday 5th stand to usual time. Done some letter writing. Got some letters, one from Blackie, Kate and Fanny. Aeroplane flew over and dropped a red balloon giving artillery range. Fritz gave us some bombs and grenades to which we replied. At 7.40pm the Germans opened up a severe artillery bombardment of our trenches, our artillery replied we lost 26, they must have lost a great number. Sent over a bombing party to our lines, they were driven out. Bombardment lasted 2hrs 10minutes. I lived through it by the Grace of God took up post with what was left of B and C squads. My party had lost 3 men wounded.

Saturday 6th – 12 months since my final leave expired. Stand to usual time. We picked up lots of German bombs and grenades that had not gone off also a lot of large shells. Dead were buried. Fatigue parties built up parapets and repaired trenches. I picked up a belt with 4/2 in it. Issued with rum. Relieved by another battalion. Back to the billets and bed 11pm.

Sunday 7th Rose 8am a quiet day, went to church and communion at night. Had a long talk about Friday bombardment. Bed 9pm.

Wednesday 24th Empire Day rose 5.45am parade 7.30am – 8.15am. Throwing 9.15 – 10.15am, trench cleaning 10.30am – 11.30am, making jam tin bombs 12-1pm, lecture on British grenade 2-4pm. Throwing behind screens and instructed on grenade fuse and lighters. Roll call 9pm. Bed 9.15pm.

Friday 26th Rose 6am Grenade exams – throwing live grenades and seeing the working of grenade riffles and batteries, also spring gun. Very interesting day. Bed 9pm.

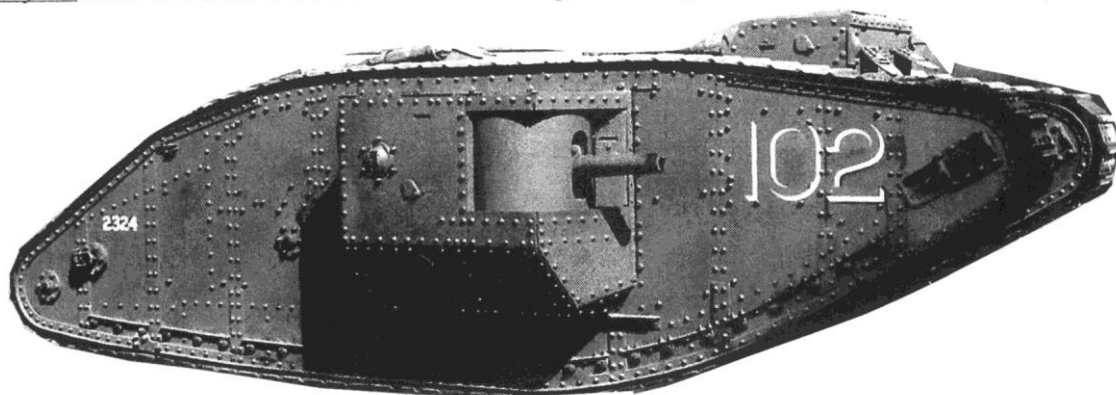
Monday 29th Rose 7.30am artillery bombarded enemy trenches 2am, enemy replied killing 4 of our men 19th Batt. Went to Brigade school to act as instructor to Company Bombers. Australian mail arrived, I got 2 letters. Bed 11pm.

June

German shelling of trenches. Aerial fighting. Heavy artillery fire. New Zealanders use gas.

Thursday 1st – Rose 5.45am. Had a good read before breakfast. Went to school and instructed company bombers gave Colonel Lamrock a display after squads finished. Display given by Battalion squad. Germans bought one of our planes down in their lines right opposite us. Had a hair cut and shave. One of our observation balloons broke away from the mooring and sailed away, men came down in parachutes.

Friday 9th Rose 8am, started on a T Head trench got a letter from Mrs Black. Our artillery bombarded



German trenches on our right, heard Germans blowing horn for SB's, a squad of 8 of our aeroplanes flew across our lines over the Germans and dropped bombs. A couple of German planes flew up and showed fight but were driven off. A party of bombers told off to go out with scouts but the moon was too bright and failed. Bed 10.45pm.

Wednesday 14th Rose 7.45am. Miserable day. Started out to bombard Fritz's trenches with riffle grenades. Worked 3 riffles. I had charge of one. Fritz replied, dropping one a yard off my firing position. At lunch time Fritz shelled our lines and officers dug out, killing Capt Fergusson and Lieut Campling wounding Lieut Barlow (4th time), one stretcher barer and Private Norman. Things quiet afterwards. Bed 11.20pm.

Saturday 17th Rose 7.15am – Beautiful day. Resumed work on our block. Plenty of aircraft up seen a great jewel between three of our planes and 3 Fokkers. Our planes drove them off giving them a good hiding. Our aircraft guns brought a Fokker down this morning. Got news that we are to be relieved in a few days and then go for a Divisional rest. Things quiet during the night. Bed 11.45pm.

Friday 30th Rose 8am no school. Went up to firing line with party to bring West Spring guns and bombs down. Got orders to pack up and move off. Left our billets 9.30pm for moat farm. Our artillery opened up, Fritz replied while we were waiting to move off. A party of nine men of our unit went to into salient to work gas bombs on spring guns. 21 of our planes crossed Fritz's line and bombed Lille. Moved off 11.30pm, arrived at our rest billet, Jesu's Farm 1am.

July

News of a big Allied offensive. March to the Somme front. St Amiens. Battle of Pozieres. Diary ends 22nd July. Killed 26th July.

Saturday 1st. Rose 9 am. Went for stroll around companies. Got some mail from Kate, Bernie and Gertie. Our raiding party told off to report at Fort Romper at 5 pm. on an inquiry about gear. Had a little game of cricket, heard our artillery in action again. Wrote a letter to Kate. Slept in pyjamas first time for about 6 weeks. Bed 10 pm.

Sunday 2nd. Rose 6.30 am. Had half hour physical exercise before breakfast. Our Colonel had all NCO'S up on parade. Lectured us about drunkenness in the ranks, told us we were about to take in a big offensive and that the British had advanced and captured 1700 prisoners. Went for a walk to visit Fred Luttrell, seen him and had a good talk. Our officer returned from Lerdeghem. Bed 10 pm.

Sunday 9th Rose 5 am. Packed up ready to move. Moved off 11 am., after a long hard march, arrived at our night rest Croix Raix 7.15 pm. Heels blistered. Washed feet and face. Had tea and went to bed 9.15 pm.

Tuesday 11th Rose 4.15 am. Blankets packed up by 5 am. sent by transport. Packed up ready to move off again. Moved off 9.45 am., marched Arques where we entrained for Amiens, arriving midnight and then set out on a long march towards the Somme front. On the way down we passed St Omez, Calais, Vimalay Boulone and Etaples

Wednesday 12th Orangeman's Day. After marching from midnight we arrived on the outskirts of St Amiens and bivouacked and breakfasted for a couple of hours at 6.30 am., set off again 8.30. Arrived at our present billet in Picquaney about midday after a long hard march, both my heels blistered. Our present billet is in a huge shed, which takes the whole battalion. Three decks wire beds. Bed 9 pm.

At this stage it is appropriate to review the details of the battle that Lance Corporal Buchan is about to enter.

The battle of Pozieres

Fromelles was the first Australian battle on the Western Front and it commenced on the 19th July 1916. The following engagements became known as the battle of the Somme (after the Somme river)

The village of Pozières, on the Albert-Bapaume road, lies atop a ridge approximately in the centre of what was the British sector of the Somme battlefield. Close by the village is the highest point on the battlefield and, while the Somme terrain is only gently undulating, any slight elevation aided observation for artillery. Pozières was critical to the German defences.

While British divisions were in action during most phases of the fighting, Pozières is primarily remembered as an Australian battle. The battle of Pozieres covered the period from the 23rd July 1916 to the 5th August. It involved the 1st Anzac Corp under command of Sir William Birdwood. The first Division started for the battlefield on the 16th July where they donned steel helmets and took over the trenches on the 20th. This was their first introduction to gas warfare, including phosphene and tear gas.

The preparation for the attack involved a thorough bombardment of the village and the Old German Lines lasting several days. Bombardment started on the 19th. During the night of the 22nd, the British bombardment of German lines was extremely heavy. At 12.30 am the artillery fire was lifted and three whistle blasts signalled the Allied infantry attack. During this engagement, Lieutenant Arthur Blackburn and Private John Leak were awarded the Victoria Cross.

The infantry were scheduled to go in at 12.30 am on 23 July. The infantry had crept into no man's land, close behind the bombardment and when it lifted, the German trenches were rushed. The first stage took the Pozières trench that ringed the village to the south. The second stage saw the Australians advance to the edge of the village, amongst what remained of the back gardens of the houses lining the Albert-Bapaume road. The third stage brought the line to the Albert-Bapaume road.

It was also intended that the Old German Lines would be captured as far as the road but here the Australians failed, partly due to strong resistance from the German defenders occupying deep dugouts and machine gun nests, and partly due to the confusion of a night attack on featureless terrain — the weeks of bombardment had reduced the ridge to a field of craters and it was virtually impossible to distinguish where a trench line had run. At first there were major advances however a strong German counter offensive and extremely heavy bombardment led to very heavy Battalion casualties. These included 848 killed and 3143 wounded (including gassed). In all, there were 5,285 Allied casualties. More Australians were killed at Pozieres than at any other battlefield of the war.

Success on the Somme came at a cost which at times seemed to surpass the cost of failure, and for the Australians, Pozières was such a case. As a consequence of being the sole British gain on 23 July, Pozières became a focus of attention for the Germans. Forming as it did a critical element of their defensive system, the German command ordered that it be retaken at all costs.

Unlike the miserly allocation at Gallipoli, the amount of ammunition available was immense. Nothing prepared the veterans of Gallipoli for the relentless German bombardment and counter offensive of Allied trenches on the 24th July. Artillery shelling inspired considerable fear.



The shells could be seen in the last 40 feet of their descent which left no time to get out of the way. They sounded like in-coming locomotives. The smaller shells shrieked. In these conditions it is little wonder that many soldiers developed a condition known as 'shell shock'. Some even shot themselves to relieve the anxiety.

On the 25th July there was again extremely heavy German shelling and counter offensive which was driven back. The shelling continued all day. Men were falling everywhere. Men were buried and re-buried. Those unlucky enough – or 'lucky' depending on your viewpoint – to be at the point of explosion were all too often marked 'missing, believed killed' at the next roll call. Few traces remained except perhaps a

piece of charred boot with its grisly remains or some scorched, shattered rags. The bombardment was so heavy that shells were falling like rain. One wrote, 'Men were trembling like leaves'. That day, for its awful terror and shelling, will never be forgotten.

The Gibraltar bunker



The blast of some explosives could also kill slowly, rupturing the soft organs, leaving a man apparently unwounded but bleeding from every orifice. With no anti-biotics, wounds turned septic and gangrene set in and limbs had to be amputated.

In Bean's letters home he described the carnage on the 25th. July. 'Pozières was pounded more furiously than before, until by four in the afternoon it seemed to onlookers scarcely possible that humanity could have endured such an ordeal. The place could be

picked out for miles by pillars of red and black dust towering above it like a Broken Hill dust storm.' One digger wrote, 'men were driven stark staring mad and more than one of them rushed out of the trench towards the Germans, any amount of them could be seen crying and sobbing like children, their nerves completely gone.'



The bombardment reached a crescendo on 26 July. By 5 pm, the Australians, believing an attack was imminent, appealed for a counter-barrage. In addition to the batteries of Anzac and British Corps, the guns of the two neighbouring British corps also joined in. This in turn led the Germans to believe the Australians were preparing to attack and so they increased their fire yet again. It was not until midnight that the shelling subsided.

Lance Corporal Walter Buchan was killed at Pozieres on this day at about 11 pm and is buried in France, at 1890 Serre Road Cemetery No 2.



At its peak, the German bombardment of Pozières was the equal of anything yet experienced on the Western Front and far surpassed the worst shelling endured by an Australian division thus far. The men were so dazed they were incapable of working or fighting.

Descriptions of men of the 1st Division coming out of the battlefield conveyed the horror that they had faced. 'Those who watched them will never forget it as long as they live. They looked like men who had been in hell. Almost without exception, each man looked drawn and haggard and so dazed that they appeared to be walking in a dream and their eyes looked glassy and starey. Quite a few were silly

and these were the only noisy ones in the crowd. In the words of Australian official historian Charles Bean, the Pozières ridge is "more densely sown with Australian sacrifice than any other place on earth."

The diary continues

Friday 14th Rose 6.30 am. Went to the Doctor with my sore heels, he treated and dressed them. Seen a Division of English soldiers coming from the trenches. One had an Iron Cross others had German helmets and various souvenirs. One of our GS wagons with two horses attached run away through the vallet pulled up without doing any damage. Got a letter from Bernie, wrote 3 letters and mailed them Bed 10 .50 pm.

Thursday 20th Rose 7 am. Packed up and moved off again 10.40 pm. Whole Brigade on the move. Billeted at Warloy Baillion which we reached 1 pm. Walked as far as hospital and watched the wounded and gassed patients being brought in. Bed 9.40 pm.

Friday 21st Rose 6.45 am. Physical exercises and two route marches comprised the day's work. Went to church service during evening. Received a letter from Mother. Bed 10 pm.

Saturday 22nd Rose 6.50 am. Physical exercises after breakfast, instructed officers batmen on Mill's Grenades, putting detonators in and precautions.

The diary ends here.

Lance Corporal Walter Buchan was killed at Pozieres on Wednesday 26th July.

The Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing Files have several accounts of his death. Some of them contain inaccuracies regarding the date of his death. He appears to have been killed instantly by a bomb during a raid on German defenses late in the night of 26th July and his body was not recovered immediately. He is reported as 'missing'. Excerpts of these accounts include:

'Known as 'Wally' Buchan, a young married man I knew him well, a very nice chap well liked by everybody. A mate of mine in the same platoon told me on 28/8/16 (sic) that Buchan was killed by a bomb at Pozieres the day before, he saw him dead'

'Buchan was in B Co. 8th Platoon. He was killed in a bombing raid between Pozieres and Bazentin le Petit, the first night we went in. He was left in a trench dying'.

'Missing: On the 26th or 27th July we were sent up to assist the Welch Fusiliers at Pozieres. Buchan was L/Cpl of Bombers. His head was blown off – he was Laundry man on the steamer 'Easleru' before he joined up. He was in my Company and I was there when he was killed'.

'I knew Buchan well – we called him 'Wally'. He was killed by a bomb which struck him in the head and killed him instantly. At Pozieres right in the village. I saw it happen and was quite sure it was Buchan. I was only 9 – 10 yards away. This was in a bombing raid. We could not stop'.

'I knew Buchan - we were in the same section. He was known as 'Wallie'. He came from Sydney, and, I believe had worked in a laundry'.

'I believe he was killed on the 25th at Pozieres, the first night we went in. A party of three bombers were over – Budgeon, King and Buchan. Budgeon and King came back and I asked what became of Wallie. They said he was hit by a shell and killed instantly. We withdrew that night and his body was left. He was a very popular chap. I saw him and shook hands with him, just before he went over'.

'At Pozieres in the trench a shell came and killed him instantly. He was buried on the spot'.

'I knew Buchan well, we called him 'Wallie' ...He was about 5'2", thin, fair, partly bald, with several gold teeth and was a married man and had worked in a laundry. He had worked for Tooth's Brewery and was a great Unionist. I saw him after he was wounded on the ridge at Pozieres .. it was about 11pm. in an attack on the German trenches from which we were driven out during the early hours of the morning. He was not able to get up. I saw him shortly before we were driven out but could not see exactly how he was wounded. Sergt. Fisk and Pte 'Darkie' Willhelm and others were missing with Buchan when we got back. On the 4th August we retook this position and found Willhelm's body but no trace of Fisk or Buchan. The opinion amongst us Bombers was that Fisk and Buchan had been wounded and taken prisoners'.

'Buchan was killed about 11 pm. in an attack on the German trenches from which we were driven out in the early hours of the morning. His body was left.'

Lance Corporal Walter Buchan's last few days would have been spent in indescribable horror. That his death was quick was a blessing. That his story is being told 90 odd years later is due to his diligence in keeping a diary, his family's wish to hang on to the words of a deceased husband and father and the detailed military records of the Australian War Memorial. Through this account it is hoped that future generations of Australians gain a greater appreciation of our social and military history and learn to appreciate the horrors of war and the sacrifices of those who fought in them.

Peter Charlton's final paragraph in his detailed book on Pozieres says, 'The battle of Pozieres and Mouquet Farm did not detract from the Australian soldiers huge self respect, but they damaged forever, the regard in which he held the British. If Australians were to trace their modern suspicion and resentment of the British to a date and place, then July – August 1916 and the ruined village of Pozieres are useful points of departure. Australia was never the same again.'

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Bruce,

I am not sure what stage you are at with the next Bulletin. You may wish to include the following (since I have also alerted the Leader and they are going to do a story):

In 2005 my wife Susan and I donated a Kriesler Hi Fiette 25 (black and white valve television) Australian designed and built in the early 1960s by Kriesler whose factory was in Paraweena Road, Caringbah to the Sutherland Shire Historical Society Museum.

We have just been advised that the television is now missing from the society's museum (Sutherland School of Arts, East Parade, Sutherland). A Kriesler radiogram donated by Jim Cutbush is also missing. These items in the collection appear to have been taken sometime between 6 September and 4 October this year.

The items are probably not worth a great deal in dollar terms, but they are important examples of the past industrial and technological heritage of the Sutherland Shire and hard to replace. Whether they were stolen by a collector of old radios and televisions or 'borrowed' by someone who has need of a period item for a film or stage set, is anyone's guess. If any member of the public can help police with their enquiries, the incident number is E 3546826 and they can contact Constable Cobby at Sutherland Police, phone 9542 0899.

There is, of course, a broader story here. The Sutherland Shire Historical Society is in dispute with Sutherland Shire Council over the terms of the use of the 'School of Arts' building. It was given over to the

'care and control of the council' for the 'purposes of a museum' on 23 December 1989. The society asserts that, as its land title states, this should be the principal use of the building. Sutherland Shire Council has failed to honour the terms of the original bequest and has consigned the society's museum to only two cramped rooms of the building and hires out the rest of the building to other community groups.

The society desperately needs more space for the museum collection which is overflowing and poorly secured as these thefts demonstrate. The members of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society do not dispute the needs of the other cultural organisations, but the safe storage and display of artifacts from the shire's rich heritage is an important local issue. Sutherland Council needs to direct more funding towards venues for cultural organisations, so that all of the School of Arts building can be fully utilised as a museum as was intended nearly 20 years ago.

Ed. Duyker



Note: There is a satisfying conclusion to this account. Whilst the items have not been recovered, since the publication of this account in The Leader, similar items have been donated to the museum as replacements. We wish to thank Mr Richard Morley for the donation of a 1962 Kriesler T.V. and Mr Colin MacDonald of Caringbah for a Kriesler stereogram.

Caringbah 'In the good old days of the early 20th Century

Don Davis

In 1908, Mr and Mrs Frederick Colee' and their family of two sons and two daughters migrated to Australia from Wales.

After arriving, they stopped in Waverley for a short period before they decided where to settle and make a home. They were shown the Sutherland Shire and decided to settle at Caringbah. (It was known as Highfield in the early days) They bought a property on the corner of Port Hacking Road and Mansfield Avenue and down to Jacarandah Road, which at the time was just a paddock of bush and trees. They developed the property into a large market garden and orchard and would transport their produce to markets in Sydney by horse and cart, as in those days that was the only transport. It would take a full day to make the trip.

A few years later, Vivian Davis of Lilli Pilli, met Kathleen Colee' and struck up a relationship and were married in 1911. They soon opened the first Post Office and store at Port Hacking close to Mr Donald MacKay's home. He was a well known Northern Territory explorer and I was honoured to be given his Christian name. At a later date Mr MacKay was responsible for the building of the Returned Soldiers Leagues Club at Caringbah, which was named after him.

I was born at the shop in 1912 and as mentioned was given Donald MacKay's name. Mrs MacKay was a charming woman and very well liked in the area. She would often come up and help mother look after me. In the same area, Mr Alf Simpson lived. He had some horse drawn coaches and had the contract to take local children to Miranda School. I believe that on the way, the horses would go that slow up some of the hills that the kids would jump out and run along with the coaches. Fishing was very popular in the Port Hacking River close to a place known as 'Ship Rock' and hundreds of fish would be caught each weekend.

A few years later, (in 1917) my father, Vivian Davis bought a property in Port Hacking Road Caringbah to develop a vegetable farm. At that time, Port Hacking Road was a mass of colour with wattle trees blooming and with colourful birds wherever you looked. Of the special finches to be seen around here in those days were diamond sparrows, red brown finches, golden finches and a beautiful bird called the crested shrike tit. My mother loved to admire them when walking along Port Hacking Road. My father was well known for his bird calls, especially the Kookaburra.

In 1918 my grandparents moved to a new property in Caringbah Road between Willarong and Port Hacking Road which was named 'The Oaks'. Their eldest son, Falcon was home from the war and soon got a job as caretaker and gardener at Mr Wunderlichs (who was a roof tile manufacturer in Sydney) at his holiday home in Yowie Bay opposite the wharf. He would row across the river to get his groceries and a bottle of beer from a little general store which happens to still be there and is a well known landmark of the Shire. At a later date he worked at Piper's produce store in Miranda delivering poultry food to the many poultry farmers which had started in the Miranda area. Later still, he delivered timber by horse and cart for the Burns who had opened a timber yard at Caringbah. By this time Caringbah was slowly changing and developing.

I was attending Miranda School by now and played cricket at school and became very keen on it. Caringbah had a team and played in the Sutherland Shire competition. Their home ground in 1921 was on a cleared ground in Ultimo Street Caringbah. The oval at Gannons Road and Kingsway became the new playing field a few years later. By now, cricket in the Shire had developed to a pretty high standard and was the main sport in the Shire. When I was old enough I joined up with the club and later became captain. Mr Steve Mansfield, who had previously bought the property on the corner of Port Hacking Road and Kingsway from my grandparents, built a shop and opened the first Post Office. In later years, Mansfield Avenue was named after him. The first general store in the town was named Highfield Stores and was run by the Nelson family, where Caringbah Hardware once stood. Miss Nelson and her sister also ran Sunday school classes every Sunday afternoon, which I attended.

After the war in 1945, Caringbah started to alter with a fast growing population, shop building and houses and you could say the most popular district in the Shire but a vast difference from the early good old days.

Interview with Iris Dymond.

Iris is a long time Shire resident. She was born in 1927 and at the time of this interview she is a very sprightly 81 years old. Her maiden name was Atkins and she had 2 brothers and a sister. Iris was the eldest. Growing up, the Shire was the most beautiful place to live. Iris went to school at Miranda Public School and then on to Kogarah Girls School. She lived about a block from the school and would walk home for lunch. Her father had bought the house on the corner of Kingsway and Wandella Road.(where KFC is today) The name of the house was 'Cairnsmore' and it was bought from the Education Department. It had been the home of the Headmaster Mr Chiplin. It was all weatherboard inside and out and it was a grand old home. In 1957 this house was relocated somewhere else. Later the site became a Shell petrol station. Iris's father came to the Shire about 1920 when he was discharged from the Army where he had been a gunner. He was decorated after seeing action at Ypres. He had 3 brothers who also settled here. They had poultry farms and orchards which was a main land use in the area at the time.

He was originally a miner. When he came here he started as a carrier, picking up the eggs and fruit from the many farms and taking them to the markets. He would take the truck down and sleep at the punt to be first across in the morning. He later used his mining skill to develop a quarry in Robin Place, Caringbah and supplied brickworks with clay. After he died in 1949, Iris's Mum carried on and bought a loader which made work easier. She eventually sold to the Gas Company and it was later subdivided into a residential area.

Another pit they owned was in Willarong Road near Caringbah High School. This was later bought by the Education Department.

Growing up in the Shire was different in the 1930s. There weren't many people but the families were quite large. There was never a need to lock up your house. There were hard times. At one time it rained for 8 weeks and no one could work the clay pits. 'We lived on turnips and sweet corn that we'd grown. We always had shoes to wear to school though many kids didn't.'

At Miranda was the Co-op on the corner of Jackson and Kingsway. It was a meeting place for farmers. On the opposite corner was St Lukes Church of England. The Congregational Church was down in Urunga Parade. Miranda. was referred to at the time as 'the village'. Most people went to school at Sutherland Intermediate High School or they would go to Hurstville.

Iris remembers Father Dunlea of Boys Town fame. He would come riding down Kingsway on a white horse with his black cape flying behind him. He was a character.

The Shire was very bushy and bushfires were prevalent. The area where Miranda Primary School is now right through to GyMEA Bay was all bush. There was no water but every house had tank water. The tram used to cause a lot of fires. It would throw off embers into the bush. There were very few cars and people still had horse and carts in the 1930s. We used to hear Dad coming in his truck from Bellingarra Road. You wouldn't be able to hear a single motor now as it's all so busy.

Iris left school at 14 and her first job was in a milk bar near the original Miranda Public School up on the corner of Kingsway and Kiora Road. She was only there for a short while. Her Mum found her a job as a hairdresser at Rockdale and she was able to go to work on the train. She continued to work as a hairdresser till she was about 50.

Lots of Shire boys enlisted in the war.

The Ly's were a family of market gardeners. They owned a garden where the current Port Hacking High School is.

Iris was married at 17 to an airman. When he was discharged we opened a hairdressing business in 1947 next to where the RSL is in Miranda. Her husband was also a barber so they worked a shop as a team.

Westfield (Miranda Fair) started about 1957. People just poured into the Shire once there was a shopping centre like that. Industries like Parke Davis, Kriesler and Caltex also provided a lot of employment.

An interesting early characters was Mr Fraser who was a local grocer who always gave broken biscuits to the children. Penprase store was the local store. Lots of people intermarried, many from the Congregational church. Billy Mac was the local butcher. There wasn't a pub until about 1957.

Iris has 3 children. One of Iris's interests is the Cronulla RSL memorabilia group, an interest she developed from her second husband who was in the airforce in the Battle of Britain. She also belongs to Probuss. Iris has lived in a quaint home on Port Hacking Road south for the past 60 years.

A Letter from the Somme by Alexander Donald Arthur

This is the story of one of our brave Australians, Alexander Donald Arthur who was only 26 when he was killed in France. Now even his daughter, Valerie Carter, nee Arthur, from Bangor, N.S.W. will tell you he was just an ordinary person, nothing special, except to his family who loved him dearly, but he was typical of the Australians who answered the call to battle, to stoutly defend his family and the families of fellow Australians from the enemy in the days of World War I. In civilian life he had been a traveller, as well as a painter-decorator, and wall-paperer. Val recently came across a letter her father had written home just before he was killed. The letter has been appended below and is accompanied by a short account of her journey to her father's last resting place, a pilgrimage in which we all now share.

Val Carter writes:

“When I heard that there was going to be a 90th Anniversary Service at Villiers Bretonneux in France, I decided I would like to go over there, to where my father, Alexander Donald Arthur, had fought in WWI. I arrived in Paris on 21st April, 2008 and stayed 2 days visiting the Eiffel Tower, Grand Place, Arc de Triomphe, and Notre Dame Cathedral just learning about Paris, and France and its people.

The tour to Villiers Bretonneux in France was very enlightening and emotional. It was conducted by a Belgian woman, Annette. The train went from Paris to Lille, about a 55 minutes trip. We commenced the tour on Wednesday 23rd April, 2008 picking up Annette our tour leader. We visited Tyne Cot Cemetery, the largest Commonwealth cemetery in the world, where two Australian Victoria Cross winners, Captain Jeffries and Sergeant McGee are buried.”

[Note:Originally Tyne Cot was a bunker on the German Flanders 1 line. On the 4th October, 1917, Australian soldiers captured the position and used it as an advanced dressing station. Soldiers who died of their injuries were buried on site. Before long a small cemetery had come into being with some three hundred graves. Between 1919 and 1921 specialist units called Exhumation Companies brought almost 12,000 dead to Tyne Cot from the surrounding battlefields. Most of their names are unknown. The 80,000 men of the 1st ANZAC Corps landed at Marseille in March, 1916 on their way to the Somme. After the arrival of the 2nd Anzac Corps in June, the two corps fought in France and Belgium until the end of the war. The Australians distinguished themselves in the battles of Menin Road, Polygon Wood, and Broodseinde, where they gained the reputation of being brave and competent soldiers in terrible weather conditions (rain, cold, mud etc). They lost over 38,000 men in these battles. The number of recruits in Australia reached a total of 417,000 out of a population of 4,875,000 in 1914, and of these 331,000 served overseas. The final total of casualties reached 215,000 including 59,000 dead, which was 64.8% of the combatants, and was the heaviest of all the dominions.]

“We went to various battlefields, starting at Frommels, where some remains of bodies of Australian diggers had just been found. We then continued to various cemeteries: Amiens, the Windmill site, Thiepval, Peronne and many others in the Somme area.” [It is said that in the Somme today there are still some older residents who recall with great emotion those tall, friendly and warm-hearted young men wearing the famous hat with the turned-back brim.]

“On Thursday, 24th April, 2008, we went to Villers Bretonneux Primary School and gave our Australian souvenirs to the school children. The school is a ‘gift of the children in Victoria, to the children of Villers-Bretonneux’. They responded by singing, in English, ‘Waltzing Matilda’. This was a truly delightful surprise, and brought tears to our eyes. The school contains the Franco-Australian museum which illustrates the role of the Australian troops during the First World War (photographs, models, uniforms, weapons etc.) It also has a documentation centre and a video room. In November, 1993 a twinning with Robinvale and the exhumation in France and reinterment in Canberra of the Australian Unknown Soldier, have sealed this close relationship.

The next morning was the Dawn Service for the 90 years’ Anniversary at Villers Bretonneux where approximately 7,000 Australians attended. Possibly you may have seen portion of it on television as it was recorded, and shown in Australia. It was a cold, chilly, misty morning but a very moving ceremony. I was

seated about half-way along in the crowd attending. I felt very proud that I attended with my Father's photo and wearing his medals."

[N.B. Photo shows Val Carter wearing her father's medals to the right, with her father's photo, and her own 2001 Community Service Medal, which records her service with her husband, Roy Carter, to Menai District Progress Association and the community. Roy was the president of MDPA for many years, and passed away in 1994 and was the son of Roy Lachlan Carter and Dorothy May nee Ross. Val is a long-term Shire resident, living in Menai since 1953 and she and Roy have two daughters and one son.



"Our tour then continued on to Ypres where my Father had spent his time, on the guns as a member of the 14th Light Trench Mortar Brigade. He was also gassed at Ypres. Enclosed is a letter he wrote, in diary form, to his sister in Australia. On the Friday night, I was proud to be asked by the tour leader, to lay a red wreath on the Menin Gate. There is a sign at the Menin Gate, noting that the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate memorial was inaugurated in 1928. It reminds visitors that the Last Post is sounded every evening at the Memorial at 8pm, and invites everyone to this Ceremony. After lunch in Polygon Wood, the tour group visited Hill 60.

When I returned I was showing the photos to Dawn Emerson, president of the SSHS, and she asked if she may borrow the letter and the photos and booklet for an article in the SSHS Bulletin. My family and I are so proud, and pleased that you are interested in Alexander Arthur's story. My grateful thanks to the members of the SSHS for wanting to include my father's memories in your journal."

Alex's Diary

Belgium
19/3/18

Dear Dorrie

Just a few lines again to let you know how things are going. Today is the worst day that we have had for some weeks and it rained all day. Previously though for the past fortnight we have had perfect weather and I have been able to enjoy it on my little excursions each day to the French town of Bailleul for supplies for the Canteen. I had to do my turn in the line, but after I was relieved I carried on with this instead of going up each night with rations and supplies. Old Fritz gets mad lately and sends over some large shells onto the towns and villages occupied by civilians. I suppose his guns which do this work are anything up to 20 miles away, so you can see what range they have. Certainly we have the same but they are not used in the same way. We hear these big shells screaming over head at any old time day or night.

I am feeling bosker and the boys tell me I'm getting fat. Since last writing I have received your parcel no. 12 with the biscuits and sweets. Thanks very much for it. You see I am getting them a bit quicker now. Well I'm expecting to go on my 14 days leave on 22nd inst. So I will not be posting this through the

Military, but will keep it till I get across the Channel. Of course many things happen that I may not get away, but I'm hoping for the best. If I do you will hear of my travels later, for I intend to go to Scotland.

Heard from Harry last night and he is at Hurdcott. He expects to be back with us in about a month. Evidently he has had a good time there and of course you can bet your life that I will endeavor to have a good time also if I get over.

As this will not go through the Censor, I will just give you a rough idea of my travels since I came over. We went to the Base at LeHavre and were there for a week. Reinforcements were then needed for different units as they had all been depleted at Ypres – where the casualties had been heavy all round. Our little lot had lost 21 out of 28 in the line. So 10 of us went to the prison lot. We spent all night in the train and then reached Rouen, but only stayed one day and were not allowed into the town itself. From there we had another 21hrs on the train at a snails pace to Poperinghe and the unit was close to there, but it took us 4hrs in the rain to find it. Needless to say we were not sorry to reach the shelters. On the 13th of Oct. we went into the line at Ypres and I received my baptism of heavy shell fire. We had shells at Pop. of course but only one at a time, but as we went up at Ypres as the advance party – well things hummed a bit. We went right through Ypres – now nothing but heaps of broken brick work and masonry – and it looked truly awful to see the ruins. It had evidently been a very fine place indeed, judging by the immense buildings which we could see had been there and the Cathedral especially must have been wonderful.

Well to carry on – we were 8 days in the line. During that time I was not on the guns, but had the job of ration guide. These rations were bought from the rear already cooked in tins and boxes to the rear lines and the pill box two of us occupied and I then had to take them to the next line – advanced Headquarters, and I can tell you the job was up to putty, for there would be shells in every direction. The duck boards and corduroy roads too were as slippery as could be and mud in galore. One night would take more out of me then a week's hard graft (never mind the grease spot – my candle just fell over).

After coming away from Ypres, we had numerous billets in barns and houses etc at Dickerbusch, Abeele, Vieux Berguin, Lochre and Kemmel, from where we again went into the line on the 13th of November, but this time on the Messines Front. It was far different from the other front though and we could almost count the shells as they went over. It was here that I first fired my shells over to him. I was in charge of one of the guns. We were only there at night and had to walk back about 2miles each morning before daybreak to the dug out where we slept. But the mud was awful. Up over your knees – of course we had rubber boots or waders up to the hips.

We came out of there on 30th November back to Kemmel for about 14 days and then began our good rest at Etaples, which is about 15 miles from Boulogne. Going down there we had about 8 hrs in the train – some peace too I don't think – and slept one night in a large cement factory at Devies, and then in about 6 other billets till we reached the old Chateaux just about a mile out of Etaples. Of our sojourn there you know all about. I had 2 or 3 visits to Boulogne, but it is like most of the French towns – not much.

We left there on the 29th of January and came back to Kemmel, and into the line once more, and have been at it ever since. Needless to say the villages I have been through in my travels have been very numerous. Up to the present I have got through alright except that I got gassed at Ypres, but not bad enough to have to leave the line. It took away my voice though, but the old Doc gave me some tablets and stuff to take which relieved me but the voice was husky for some time. It was not the poisonous gas though so there is nothing to worry about. They don't allow you to put that sort of news in your letters so that's why you didn't know before. Well I'll leave it now and see what happens in a day or so.

21st March

The passes have come through and after a visit to the Doctor to get the certificates signed, I started off. We had to go to Bailleue for the train, about 8 miles. Part of the day I walked and then got a lift in a motor lorry. We left there at 4 o'clock and had a 3 hours run to Calais. We were then marched to the rest camp, given tea and blankets etc. and portioned off to the tents. By that time it was dark but we dug out a candle and prepared to lay down our beds. Before we had finished though, the warning signal went and whistles

and sirens in all directions and we knew Fritz was up. Out went all lights, but we could see nothing for some time. Then the anti-aircraft guns boomed in all directions and we knew by the bursting shells that he was right over us. It is a big camp and he would have a big target to lay his eggs, but the guns kept him off a bit. This occurred several times and you can bet we cursed him, for we could not get to sleep with the racket, but he only let one bomb go and that a good distance from us. But the pieces of shrapnel were dropping in all directions and it seems marvelous that no one was hit. The previous night he had been over the town and dropped several large bombs right in the centre of town and made some mess too. A lot of Chinese were killed (about 60) and others as well. The concussion breaks every window for hundreds of yards round so you can just imagine how the civilians must feel. They say they have no sleep at all. Of course we don't take much notice of it because we get it nearly every day.

22nd March

They dug us out of bed at 6 am and breakfast at 6.30 and we thought that we would get across the Channel early, but they kept putting it off till 4.30 when we all had to fall in. After waiting for a while we were then told that no boats would go today and we would have to be content with another night here. They won't let us go out of the camp but there is a picture show and Y.M.C.A. huts etc., so I am whiling away the time writing. The picture show occupied one and a half hours and then in one of the huts one of the boys started on the piano and played a lot of the old songs, which made me think of you all at home and set me wondering just how you all were on that side of the world.
I will leave this now and add more later on when I see how things are going.

23rd March

Roused out early and had breakfast. Then we had to fall in and march down to the boat. After our papers etc. had been stamped etc we were allowed on the boat. The next procedure was to get on life belts. The boat was due to leave at 1.15pm so we had about 2hrs to wait. At 12 o'clock we were served with a couple of buns each which kept the works going for a while. Along side us was a hospital ship being loaded and the wounded were pouring down in the ambulance cars so we judged that something big was doing. It was just about before this that Fritz's big push had started so that accounted for the number of wounded. At one o'clock word came that all leave was stopped so we just had to get ashore again and were marched backed to the rest camp for a few hours and after that of course it meant the train. After about seven and a half hours on the train we reached Bailleue at quarter to four in the morning and four of us set off to walk to Kemmel – about 8 miles which we reached at 6 o'clock on Sunday morning. Our boys were relieved from the line the same day and on the Monday we had orders to pack up ready for the move.

Stayed that night at Rhingilst and off early the next and train to Doullens which we reached about 9 o'clock that night. We had to wait there till about 4 o'clock in the morning then we had to march to Louven Court – about 10 or 12 miles and it was a solid pull too. Most of us were pretty tired when we reached there and just tumbled into our blankets and off to sleep.

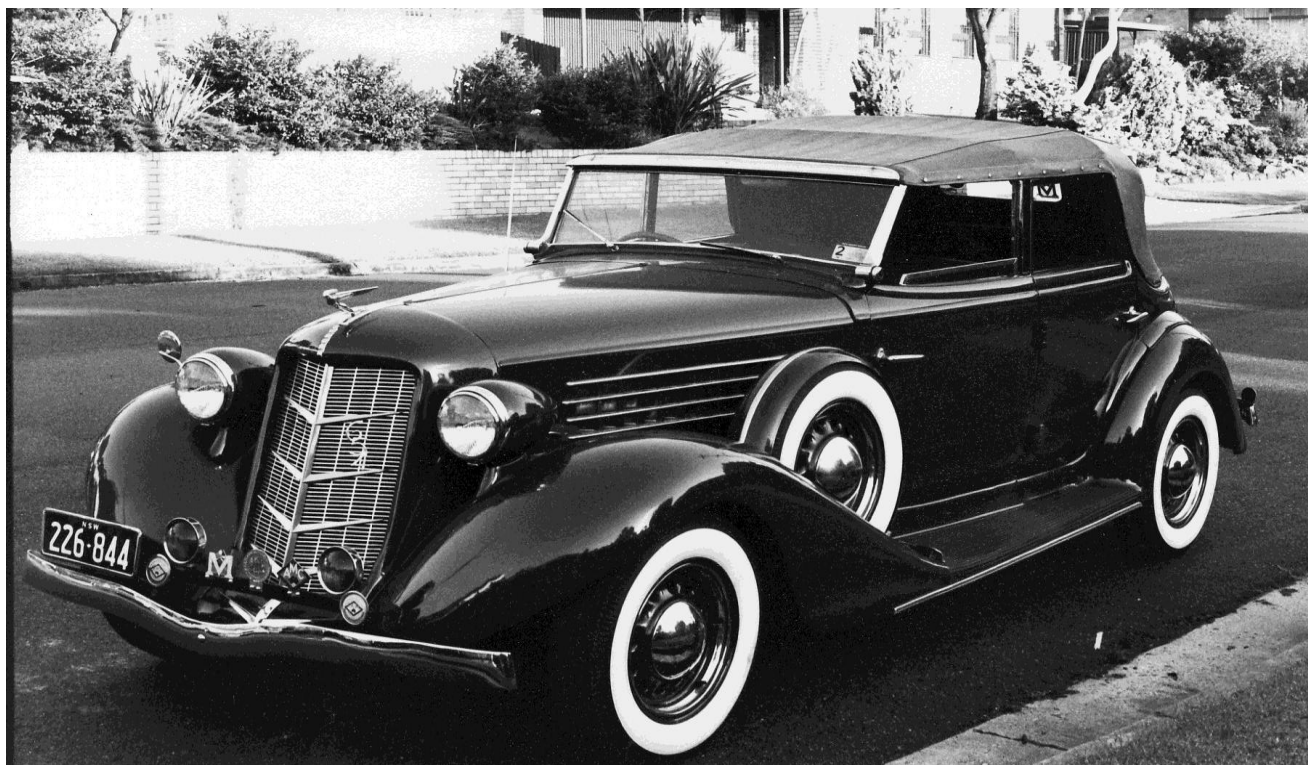
At this village we stayed for about 3 days but ready to move at almost a minute's notice. This village is under the shell fire and he planted some of them very close. Two went into the next yard at about 9 o'clock one night. One went through a house and nearly smothered two old people who were in bed, with mud and plaster etc. The other landed right under a fowl house and blew chooks in every direction. The one in the house must of smouldered for some time then broke out in flames. At about 1 o'clock the sentry outside our door woke us up and we had to fly for water etc to put out the fire. We only had boots and coats off so it didn't take long to get out. The next move was we were told to be ready to move some time in the night and we were called at 3 am, breakfast 3.30 and be ready to move off. This time I was told off to one of the bikes to go with the transport section. It was raining like fun too and it was choice I can tell you. However it cleared off later in the day and I enjoyed the ride, although I had my pack strapped onto the bike. We reached our present place of abode, Aubynge about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Some of the boys went up the line the next day but so far I am still at the village awaiting orders (8/4/18)
This is a rough synopsis of the happenings of the last few days.
The Australians have a fine name as fighting troops and our present job is covering Amiens.

Alex.

IS THERE AN OLD CAR IN YOUR LIFE?

Few can boast that their family has maintained a car continuously in the same family for the past 54 years. Such is the claim of a local family who will continue the .

The car is a legendary marque, the Auburn, favoured by film stars, gangsters and Indian Maharajas for their luxurious elegance.

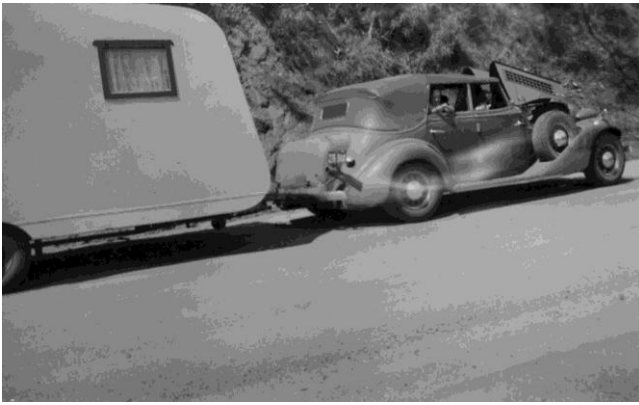


The local 1936 Auburn tourer – the last of the marque

Athan Pangas was a mechanic and lived originally in Chippendale and then Earlwood. In 1967 he moved to the Shire where he lived at Sylvania until his death in 2007. He bought the 1936 Auburn tourer or phaeton as the Americans call them in 1954 for £5. It was in a dilapidated state with its upholstery and canvas hood in tatters. His daughter, who is the current owner described how ‘Mum cried’ when Dad first brought it home. Despite owning many cars over the years as a mechanic and motor dealer, this was his favourite. He maintained a fondness for the car and drove it constantly, including on many car rallies and he towed a caravan and trailer with it on many family holidays and picnics. When this was still possible, he drove the whole family to the summit of Mount Kosciusko in it. During the 1955 Maitland floods it was used as tow truck. It was the family car and he was very protective of it and wouldn’t let any one else drive it. The Auburn is a large car and a family of five could easily sit on its large bench seats.



Athen owned many other cars including Jaguars, Fords, Lloyd Hartnet’s and Borgward Isabella’s but the Auburn always held special appeal for him.



Towing a caravan with the Auburn

During the 1960s he joined and later became President of the Antique and Classic Motor Club. He was also a member of the and the Auburn – Cord – Duesenberg Car Club. The current owners are also members of the Willys – Whippet – Overland – Knight Register

His daughter, and current owner, Marina has fond memories of the role that the car played at Christmas at Kangaroo Point. Athan would drive the car around

and a friend, standing in the back, dressed as Santa Claus would distribute sweets to the local children.

The Auburn was always a work vehicle

An Auburn was featured in the classic movie 'Springtime' with Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire.

Many people find the definitions of old cars difficult. So what is a veteran or vintage car? Motor cars built up to 1918 are classified as 'veteran'. Between 1919 and 1930, they are classified as 'vintage' and after that as 'classic'.



History of Auburn

The Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg stable of cars began in 1874 as a horse drawn buggy enterprise. In 1902 the first 2 cylinder chain drive Auburn was produced with a price of \$800. By 1908 they were producing over 1,000 cars a year in a variety of body shapes. This was nearly 1% of the 124,000 annual American car production. In 1909 they began producing 4 cylinder engines. Annual nationwide sales grew to 354,000 in 1912. Auburn introduced a self starter as an option. Most vehicles still used a crank handle to start them. In 1912 two Duesenberg brothers set up production facilities in part of the Mason car factory, concentrating on making racing cars. Their particular forte was in producing powerful engines which in time they sold to other car manufacturers. In the next decade, Duesenberg motors powered many of the racing cars of this era. Wartime demands also increased their output.

In 1913 Auburn introduced their first closed body Auburn and a 6 cylinder motor was introduced. Though annual vehicle production had grown to 548,000 in 1914, the outbreak of the European war led to a downward slide in production. By 1916 it had accelerated though to 1,525,000. In 1917, the United States entered the war and passenger car production fell as wartime needs took over. Auburn's output fell 40% in 1918. In that year they were offering a range of 6 cylinder cars priced up to \$2,450. T model Ford's were selling at the time for around \$500.

In 1920, the start of a general economic recession saw Auburn car sales slump. This trend continued in 1921 with a slump in sales of 34%. Many car makers were similarly affected. Though prosperity returned in 1922, Auburn sales continued to slump, hindered by a lack of car dealerships.

As a result, Auburn was reincorporated, new investors sought and measures taken to market the car nationally. Despite this it floundered until 1923.

In 1920 the Duesenberg brothers exhibited a car in New York which caused a sensation. Finished in polished aluminium, the car featured for the first time a straight 8 power plant and 4 wheel hydraulic brakes. These innovations were to eventually spread throughout the industry. In 1921, one of their racers won the prestigious French Grand Prix at Le Mans. In 1923, the Duesenberg brothers left the Duesenberg Motor Corporation which became a subsidiary of the Willys Corporation. This built Willys, Knight and Overland cars.

By 1923, boom times were returning and nationwide car sales reached 3, 624,000. Auburn sales jumped 64%.

At this time E.L. (Errit Loban) Cord, a young, energetic and shrewd salesman with much business acumen was rising to prominence as General Manager of the Quinlan Motors Corporation which distributed Moon

cars. Auburn was ailing and what was required was fresh leadership. Cord was appointed General Manager in 1924. In lieu of a salary he negotiated 20% of the profits, an option to buy all common stock and absolute authority to run the company without interference.

At the time it was estimated that of the 122 operating car manufacturers, 85% of the total gross business was achieved by only 6 manufacturers. Ford's share was 55%, General Motors, Dodge Brothers, Studebaker, Willys-Overland and Hudson held 30% and the other 116 shared just 15%. On Cord's assessment, Auburn's prospects looked grim.

In 1924, the Duesenberg Company was placed in receivership.

Following his appointment to Auburn, Cord improved quality, increased production and strengthened the sales organization. He became President of Auburn in 1926 and purchased Duesenberg Motor Corporation. Profits increased and in 1927 he purchased control of the engine supplier, Lycoming. By 1929, Cord had increased business activity by 1,300%. Cord's strength lay in marketing and organization. Auburn's also came to represent value for money. 1929 was Cord's greatest single year.



The last of the marque – the 1937 Cord 812 Westchester sedan. This car is featured in the Art Deco 1910 – 1939 exhibition being held at the National Gallery of Victoria. Photo Predrag Cancar

By this time, Cord was selling three makes; the Auburn, Duesenberg and the Cord. Duesenbergs especially were favoured by film stars and the very wealthy because of their styling. In 1932, Auburn added a V12 to its lineup. One of the most attractive cars ever made was a 1932 Auburn boat tailed speedster. Despite innovative design and very competitive pricing, the Depression years proved difficult and sales volumes were falling. 1932 was the worst year. By 1936, Auburn sold only 4,830 units and production ceased at the end of the year. By the end of 1937, Cord and Duesenberg production also ceased. The last Cord, the famous coffin nosed Cord was highly innovative in design. The 812 (see photo) was front wheel drive, supercharged straight eight and had headlights concealed in the front guards and no running boards.

Reference: Auburn-Cord-Duesenberg Don Butler, Motorbooks 1992

John Bell Thomson: Shackleton's captain: a biography of Frank Worsley. Bibl., illus (b&w), index, photos. London, Allen & Unwin, 1999.

In this, the first ever biography of Frank Worsley, the author has endeavoured to bring to public attention Worsley's hitherto largely unrecognized role in the epic 1200kms/900 miles open boat journey from Elephant Island to South Georgia in 1916. It is from Worsley's own notes and diaries that we learn most of the details of that journey, yet the fame of the expedition leader, Shackleton, has, until now, overshadowed the role played by Worsley, in bringing the James Caird and its crew to safety. It should ensure Worsley's proper place in the history of Antarctic exploration.

This biography gives the reader an unsanitised account, not only of that remarkable journey, but also of his other achievements throughout his lifetime. The book contains many direct quotations from Worsley's diaries, none more eloquent than his account of the inexorable destruction of "Endurance" by the ice. To quote but one of many:-

"October 26th-1915: Very heavy pressure with twisting strains racking ship fore and aft and opening butts of planking four and five inches on starboard side---the stout little ship bending like a bow---against titanic pressure. Lowered boats, gear, provisions and sledges on floe.... A strange occurrence was the sudden appearance of eight Emperor penguins----they walked ...towards the ship then halted, and after a few ordinary cries proceeded to sing what sounded like a dirge for the ship."

Even the sparse wildlife seemed to appreciate that something was dying that day on the ice.

Shackleton, Worsley, Wild, Macklin and McIlroy, all survivors of the "James Caird" epic, were returning to South Georgia in 1921 for another Antarctic survey. Shackleton, whose health had been of concern to others in the party, took ill on the voyage. He died in his cabin on 5th January, 1922, aged 48.

Arrangements were made for the return of the body to England, and in fact it was on its way, when a message was received from Lady Shackleton requesting that her husband be returned to South Georgia. A week later a funeral service was held attended by his comrades and the coffin was buried in the little cemetery overlooking Grytviken.

Frank Worsley was to go on seeking adventure at sea. In 1917, only a matter of months after the privations of the "James Caird" journey, he had, when in command of PQ61, rammed and sunk a German submarine, an action which won him his first Distinguished Service Order. His second DSO came as a result of his part in a military operation involving British units supporting anti-Bolshevik Russian forces in August, 1919.

The years between the two world wars saw Worsley either at sea, in command of several merchant ships, or on an Arctic survey; in addition he married for the second time, and was writing books on his adventures and doing lecture tours in England. While he was brilliantly successful as a navigator, adventurer, and public speaker, Worsley was a spectacular failure when it came to money matters. He and his wife, Jean, frequently had to rely upon good friends, even for their accommodation, when they were back in England. With the outbreak of World War II in 1939, Worsley at age 67 sought to revive a life of useful action. Needless to say there was no recall to active service. Worsley was to have one last "tilt at windmills". He was so desperate to get into action that he lied about his true age, so as a Merchant Navy Officer, he was given command of a home trade vessel, the 'Dalriada', in August, 1941. This deception, when discovered, terminated his last command of a ship at sea. As he passed his 70th birthday Frank Worsley was given a posting at H.M.S. King Alfred, a Royal Naval training establishment in Sussex. Within two months he was appointed "President additional for instructional duties" at Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

Worsley was diagnosed as suffering from lung cancer (a smoker all of his adult life) and died on 1st February, 1943, just three weeks short of his 71st birthday. His wife, Jean, survived her husband by another 35 years, ironically having finally achieved financial security via one of Frank's wiser investments: he had purchased shares in Venezuela Oil, later to become Shell!

This book is totally engrossing from beginning to end, the narrative supported by many of Frank Hurley's astonishing photographs. The life and achievements of Frank Worsley, an unassuming New Zealander, have now been recorded fittingly in the history of polar exploration.