



AMBLER, Jack Lawrence



Service No 1590

Private

32nd Battalion

Born 22nd February 1890 at Murray Bridge, SA

Son of Alfred AMBLER & Mary Ann nee AMOR

Of Alexander Street, Prospect, SA

Occupation prior to enlistment Shop Assistant

Enlisted 5th July 1915 at Adelaide, SA

Embarked Adelaide, HMAT Geelong on 18th November 1915

Served in France

Killed in action 19th July 1916, Fromelles, France

Commemorated VC Corner Australian Cemetery Memorial, Fromelles,
France



Chronicle Newspaper

Certified True Copy.

AUSTRALIAN  MILITARY FORCES.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 1590

Name AMBLER Jack Lawrence

Unit L Group Base Infantry

Joined on July 5th 1915

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

1. What is your Name? ... Jack Lawrence Ambler
2. In the Parish of ... in or near the Town of Murray Bridge in the County of South Aus
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) ... Yes
4. What is your age? ... 23 1/2 yrs
5. What is your trade or calling? ... Salesman
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period? ... No
7. Are you married? ... No
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) ... Widowed Mother Mrs Mary Ann Ambler
Albert St. Prospect.
ALBERT ST. South Aus
9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? ... No
10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Incurable and Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been dismissed with Disgrace from the Navy? ... No
11. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge ... No
12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? ... Yes
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? ... No
14. (For married men, widowers with children, and soldiers who are the sole support of widowed mother)—
Do you understand that no Separation Allowance will be issued to you after embarkation during your term of service? ... Yes
15. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small pox and enteric fever? ... Yes

I, Jack Lawrence Ambler, do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

And I further agree to allot not less than two-fifths of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children.

Date 2-4-15

JA Ambler

Signature of person enlisted.

Description of Jack Lawrence Ambler on Enlistment.

Age 23 years 8 months
 Height 5 feet 8½ inches
 Weight 140 lbs.
 Chest Measurement 33-35 inches
 Complexion Medium
 Eyes Blue
 Hair Brown
 Religious Denomination Chap Eng

DISTINCTIVE MARKS.

Vis. R ¼ L ¼
Wcc 3/1 Infancy

CERTIFICATE OF MEDICAL EXAMINATION.

I HAVE examined the above-named person, and find that he does not present any of the following conditions, viz. :—

Scrofula; phthisis; syphilis; impaired constitution; defective intelligence; defects of vision, voice, or hearing; hernia; hæmorrhoids; varicose veins, beyond a limited extent; marked varicocele with unusually pendent testicle; inveterate cutaneous disease; chronic ulcers; traces of corporal punishment, or evidence of having been marked with the letters D. or B.C.; contracted or deformed chest; abnormal curvature of spine; or any other disease or physical defect calculated to unfit him for the duties of a soldier.

He can see the required distance with either eye; his heart and lungs are healthy; he has the free use of his joints and limbs; and he declares he is not subject to fits of any description.

I consider him fit for active service.

Date 2-7-15
 Place KESWICK

Corbin } CAPTAIN
in Brown } J.A.M.L.
 Signature of Examining Medical Officer

CERTIFICATE OF COMMANDING OFFICER.

I CERTIFY that this Attestation of the above-named person is correct, and that the required forms have been complied with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to 1st Rf 32nd BATT A.I.F.

Date 16.5.15
 Place Cheltenham

Dr R Coghill } LIEUT.-COL.,
C.O. 32nd BATTN., A.I.F. }
 Commanding

D

29637

AUSTRALIAN



MILITARY FORCES.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 1590Name AMBLER Jack LawrenceUnit 4 Group Base Inf 1/32 Inf.Joined on 5 July 1915.
 1st Reinft's
92nd, Battalion.

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

1. What is your Name? ... Jack Lawrence Ambler
2. In or near what Parish or Town were you born? ...
 In the Parish of ... in or
 near the Town of Murray Bridge
 in the County of South Aus
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) ... NB
4. What is your age? ... 23 1/2 yrs
5. What is your trade or calling? ... Salesman
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period? ... No
7. Are you married? ... No
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) ...
Mother) Mrs Mary Ann Ambler
Alexander St Prospect
South Aus
9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? ... No
10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Incurable and Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been dismissed with Disgrace from the Navy? ... No
11. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge ... No
12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? ... No
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? ... No
14. (For married men, widowers with children, and soldiers who are the sole support of widowed mother)—
 Do you understand that a Supervision Allowance will be issued to you after embarkation during your term of service? ... Yes
15. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small pox and enteric fever? ... Yes

Jack Lawrence Ambler do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

And I further agree to allot not less than two-fifths of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children.

Date 2-7-15
J L Ambler
 Signature of person enlisted.

Regiment or Corps 1st Air Inf 32nd Batt A.F.

Regimental No. 1590 Rank Private Name HUMBLER, John Lawrence

enlisted (a) 5/4/15 Terms of Service (a) and 4 months after Service reckons from (a) 5/4/15

Date of promotion to present rank	Date of appointment to lance rank	Numerical position on roll of N.C.Os.
--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	--

Extended _____ Re-engaged _____ Qualification (b) _____

Report		Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, casualties, etc., during active service, as reported on Army Form B, 23, Army Form A, 36, or in other official documents. The authority to be quoted in each case.	Place	Date	Remarks taken from Army Form B, 23, Army Form A, 36, or other official documents.
Date	From whom received				
	C. C. ^{abij}	Disembarked in M. L. A. T. Guelone	Russ	15/12/15	
18/1/16	CO Batches BO 141	Lakun straight of BO B' Coy	Libel Kahir	16/2/16	PP 4064 PT J NO 10 PP 4736
		EMRk to join R. E. F. Ale anuria		17/1/16	PP 4054
		OC, Trps Disemb. ex Transylvania Marseilles 23.6.16 L65973			
		21.7.16 CO Bn B213 Wounded France 13.7.16 AQ1297 0144			C VL 11/1/16 3890
13/6/16	202 2463 Kings 116	Saw Duler on 20/7/16 in ambulance proceeding in direction of the Schain.			MR 5/5/16/2
27/6/16	Common no	No hospital reports received, whatever No report received other than HQ on 17/10			MR 5/5/16/2
21/7/16	202 2463 Kings 116	Still believe I saw Duler on 20/7/16 & that it is not a case of mistaken identity			MR 5/5/16/2
25/7/16	202 2463 Kings 116	Last paid in 2/10 in the "Held"			MR 5/5/16/3
		Labeled Wounded & Missing		19/1/16	VL-298-21/3/16 D.O.

(a) In the case of a man who has re-engaged for, or enlisted into Section D, Army Reserve, particulars of re-engagement or enlistment to be entered.
(b) e.g.: Signaller, Blowing Smith, etc., etc., also special qualifications in technical Corps duties.

(P.T.O.)

(g) In the case of a man who has re-engaged for, or enlisted into Section D, Army Reserve, particulars of further engagement or enlistment will be entered.

(b) e.g., Signaller, Shooting Smith, etc., etc., also special qualifications in technical Corps duties

Date 2-7-13

Place KESWICK

Person Enlisted.

Signature of Examining Medical Officer.

CERTIFICATE OF COMMANDING OFFICER.

I CERTIFY that this Attestation of the above-named person is correct, and that the required forms have been complied with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to 32nd Batta

Date 16.8.15 Am K Coghill Lieut. Col.
C.O. 32nd BATTN., A.I.F.

Place Nitcham ~~Commanding~~ Commandant

CAPTAIN
Attesting Officer.

rd Schedule of the Act, and
Testing Officer.

Form B. 103.

Casualty Form - Active Service.

Regimental Number 1590

Regiment or Corps ~~1st~~ **Reliefs, 32nd BATTALION, A.I.F.**

Private Surname **AMBLER**

Christian Name **JOHN LAWRENCE**

Age on Enlistment _____ years _____ months.

(a) **5/7/15** Terms of Service (a) **War & 4 mth** Service reckons from (a) **5/7/15**

Promotion to present rank _____ Date of appointment to lance rank _____

Re-engaged {

Qualification (b)

or Corps Trade and Rate _____

Signature of Officer.

Report	Record of promotion, reduction, transfers, casualties, etc., during active service, as reported on Army Form B. 103, Army Form A. 26, or in other official documents. The authority to be quoted in each case.	Place of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks Taken from Army Form B. 21A, Army Form A. 26, or other official documents
From whom received				
O.C. Troops	Embarked ex "GOSLONG"	Disembarked	Suez	14/12/15
CO Bn H.O. 141	Taken on strength "B" Coy	Tel-el-Kebir	16/2/16	AD4004-AP47: DO/10/505
O.C. Troops	Embarked to join B.E.F.	Alexandria	17/5/16	AP 9054
do	Disembarked ex H.M.T. "Pennsylvania"	Marseilles	23/5/16	DR 5903
32nd Bn B213	WOUNDED IN ACTION	Field	19/7/16	AM1207 DO/14/3890 VI-1/8/16.
Verified List 298	Cabled WOUNDED AND MISSING	do	do	DO/15/2104 55/562/E-39.

In the case of a man who has re-engaged for, or enlisted into Section D, Army Reserve, particulars of such re-engagement or enlistment will be entered.

AM/MSA 100m 1016 131 GRS

Form B. 103A E. 254.

(P.T.O.)

Date **2-7-15**

Place **KESWICK**

Person Enlisted.

John Brown
Co Corbin CAPTAIN
Signature of Examining Medical Officer.

CERTIFICATE OF COMMANDING OFFICER.

I CERTIFY that this Attestation of the above-named person is correct, and that the required forms have been complied with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to **32nd Bn**

Date **16.8.15**

Place **Mitcham**

Attesting Officer.

Schedule of the Act, and Attesting Officer.

Im R Coghill **1st Lt, COL.**
C.O. 32nd BATTN., A.I.F.
Commandant

FIELD SERVICE.

Army Form B. 2090A

REPORT of Death of a Soldier to be forwarded to the War Office with the least possible delay after receipt of notification of death on Army Form B. 213 or Army Form A. 36, or from other official documentary sources.

REGIMENT
OR CORPS

32nd BATTALION, A.I.F.

Squadron, Troop,
Battery or Company

Regimental No. 1590 Rank Private

Surname AMBLER Christian Names JOHN LAWRENCE

Date 19th July, 1916. Place In the field, France.

Died Cause of Death Killed in Action

Nature and Date of Report Court of Inquiry convened by CO 32nd Battalion, AIF

By whom made held in the field, 12/8/17.

* Specially state if killed in action, or died from wounds received in action, or from illness due to field operations or to fatigue, privation or exposure while on military duty, or from injury while on military duty.

State whether he leaves (a) in Pay Book (Army Book 63) Will not received (b) in Small Book (if at Base) 12--
a Will or not (c) as a separate document

All private documents and effects received from the front or hospital, as well as the Pay Book, should be examined, and if any will is found it should be at once forwarded to the War Office.

Any information received as to verbal expressions by a deceased soldier of his wishes as to the disposal of his estate should be reported to the War Office as soon as possible.

A duplicate of this Report is to be sent to the Fixed Centre Paymaster at Home, or to the D.E.A.S., Indian Expeditionary Force, or Field Disbursing Officer, as the case may require, together with the Deceased's Pay Book (after withdrawal of any will from the latter). If the deceased's Small Book is at the Base, it should be forwarded to the War Office with this Report.

Station and Signature of Officer in charge of Section
Date British Expeditionary Force, Adjutant-General's Office at the Base

Captain

12/9/17

G. I/c Records.

He can see the required distance with either eye; his heart and lungs are healthy; he has the free use of his joints and limbs; and he declares he is not subject to fits of any description.

I consider him fit for active service.

Date 2-7-15

Place KESWICK

J. B. Brown } CAPTAIN
 C. Corbin } N.A.M.
 Signature of Examining Medical Officer.

CERTIFICATE OF COMMANDING OFFICER.

I CERTIFY that this Attestation of the above-named person is correct, and that the required forms have been complied with. I accordingly approve, and appoint him to 32nd Battn

Date 16.8.15 Wm R Coghill 1st Lt. Col.
Place Mitcham C.O. 32nd BATTN., A.I.F.
Commanding Commandant

1390

100

Name _____

Amber J. J.

Subject: Missing

2.

32nd Dec

Ref 2 ~~DIED OF WOUNDS~~

Found. #4/3690. Rev. 90

Wounded and Missing

now here

KILLED IN ACTION.

Prüfungsausschuss

and missing. None reported.

KILLED IN ACTION.

Auth: Board of Inquiry
"In the Field" 1/1/1917

OK the field on 12/8/11.

Wounded

France.

France.

19.7.16.

10

1997

[illegible]

94¹² 2104 3.4.14

CIBL-1233

01131 1303

1793

Pt 40 37/

4476

4911

100

SEE COPY A.F. B103 ENCLOSED

I have examined the above details, and find them correct in every respect.

LIEUT.-COL.,

C.O. 32nd BATTN., A.I.F.

A M B L E R Surname.	Jack Lawrence Other Names.	1590 Regimental No.	1/32 Batt. Unit.
PURPORT. 18			AUTHORITY.
Embarked at Adelaide per H.M.A.T. "Geelong" 28/11/15.			
16-2-16. Taken on strength "B" Coy.			MEFO. 10/1-16
19-7-16. Wounded in Action, France.			BEFO. 44/3-16
19-7-16 Ref. D.O. 44/3890. prev. rep. Wounded. now WOUNDED & MISSING. 19-7-16.			BEFO 15/3-17
Prev. rept. WOUNDED & MISSING. Now. rept. KILLED IN ACTION. 19.6.17.			BEFO. 37/4-17

D 825/2.16.—C. 2024.

FIELD SERVICE.

Army Form B. 2090A.

REPORT of Death of a Soldier to be forwarded to the War Office with the least possible delay after receipt of notification of death on Army Form B. 213 or Army Form A. 36, or from other official documentary sources.

REGIMENT OR CORPS } **32nd BATTALION, A.I.F.** Squadron, Troop, Battery or Company } ---

Regimental No. **1590** Rank **Private**

Surname **AMBLER** Christian Names **JOHN LAWRENCE**

Died { Date **19th July, 1916.** Place **In the Field, France.**

Cause of Death* **Killed in Action**

Nature and Date of Report) **Court of Inquiry convened by CO 32nd Battalion, AIF**

By whom made) **held In the Field, 12/8/17.**

* Specially state if killed in action, or died from wounds received in action, or from illness due to field operations or to fatigue, privation or exposure while on military duty, or from injury while on military duty.

State whether he leaves a Will or not { (a) in Pay Book (Army Book 64) --- (b) in Small Book (if at Base) ---

(c) as a separate document. ---

All private documents and effects received from the front or hospital, as well as the Pay Book, should be examined, and if any will is found it should be at once forwarded to the War Office.

Any information received as to verbal expressions by a deceased soldier of his wishes as to the disposal of his estate should be reported to the War Office as soon as possible.

A duplicate of this Report is to be sent to the Fixed Centre Paymaster at Home, or to the D.F.A.C., Indian Expeditionary Force, or Field Disbursing Officer, as the case may require, together with the Deceased's Pay Book (after withdrawal of any will from the latter). If the deceased's Small Book is at the Base, it should be forwarded to the War Office with this Report.

ANZAC SECTION, 3rd ECHELON, G.H.Q.

Station and Date } **British Expeditionary Force** Officer in charge of Section }
12/9/17. Adjutant-General's Office at the Base }

O. i/c Records.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Base Records Office,

Melbourne, *Sept 5th* 1921.

Mrs M. A. Ambler
Albert Street
Prospect. S.A.

Dear *Madam.*

I regret very much that, notwithstanding the efforts of our Graves Services Unit, we have so far been unable to obtain any trace of the last resting place of

Your Son the late No 1590
Private J. L. Ambler
32nd Battalion

and, so that no possible source of information shall be overlooked, I shall be much obliged if you will let me have on loan any letters or communications that contain any reference to the circumstances surrounding his death, particularly the exact locality at which it occurred, or where he was last seen alive. Of course any information you may have received as to his burial would be of the greatest assistance. The reason these steps are being taken is to identify, if at all possible, those bodies that are being recovered but which have nothing on them to definitely establish identification, and thus obviate the necessity of interring them in the new Military Cemeteries under the heading "An Unknown Australian Soldier."

Only those portions of any letters having a direct bearing or reference to the above need be forwarded. They will be carefully preserved and returned without delay.

If you have nothing that will help, would you kindly let us know, so that we can advise the overseas authorities.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours faithfully,

J. M. Lean
MAJOR

Officer in Charge Base Records.

To the Officer in Charge Base Records,
Victoria Barracks,
Melbourne.

(KINDLY SUBMIT YOUR REPLY HEREUNDER.)

(Place)

Fleur Bauc

(Date)

July 19th 1916

Extract for age
London.

Killed 19. 7. 1916
Vicinity of Fleurbaix

Seen 10/10/21
B. J.

B. J. 10/10/21.
1/2's



DECEASED SECTION
SEP 15 1921
RECEIVED

COPY KC/

THIS IS THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT of me
Jack Laurence Ambler of Prospect in the State of South
Australia Salesman but now on active military service with
the South Australian Expeditionary Force. I appoint as Exec
utrix of this my Will my mother Mary Ann Ambler of Prospect
in the said State Widow

I give devise and bequeath all the property of whatsoever
nature and wheresoever situate, of or to which I shall die
possessed or entitled to my said Mother.

Dated the fourth day of November one thousand nine hundred
and fifteen.

(Signed) J.L.Ambler

Signed by the said Testator as his last Will in the presence
of us, both being present at the same time, who at his request
and in his sight and presence and in the sight and presence
of each other, have hereunto subscribed our names as
witnesses.

(Signed) S. Talbot Smith

Solicitor Adelaide

(Signed) Ernest J. Mellows.

Adelaide

15790 Pl. Am. H. 24 1/32

79441

26th August, 1916.

Dear Sir,

In acknowledging receipt of your communication dated 22nd instant, I have to inform you the name of the hospital in which No. 1590 Private J. L. Ambler, 32nd Battalion, is located, and the nature of his wound are not at present known here, but as the advice received was from London, it would appear that the report emanated from France. He is not reported as seriously wounded however, and in the absence of further reports favorable progress may be assumed. Next-of-kin shown as mother residing at Prospect, South Australia, will be promptly notified upon receipt of any later reports.

Yours faithfully,

Major
Officer i/c Base Records.

The Honorary Secretary,
Australian Red Cross Society,
Veroo Buildings,
North Terrace,
Adelaide, S.A.

EW.

MRS. M.A.AMBLER

ALEXANDER STREET

PROSPECT S.A.

REGRET REPORTED SON PRIVATE JACK L. AMBLER WOUNDED

WILL PROMPTLY ADVISE IF ANYTHING FURTHER RECEIVED

BASE RECORDS

13/8/16

Transferred to

D 34601

W

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

No.

1590

Rank

Pl

Name

Ambler, F. L.

Unit

32 Bn

Casualty

Wounded to B.P. 25/6/40 P. London 8.8.16

Previously reported Wounded Now reported Wounded & Missing 19.7.16

C.I.B. 1793 8571 dated London 31.3.17

Previously reported and missing

339 now reported killed in action 19/7/16

C.I.B. 1793 7774 dated London 6/9/17

DATE.

A. F. B. 103 Received

PURPORT.

A. F. B. 2090A Received.

REF. NO.

13.8.16

Not advised Wounded

22.8.16

See Red Cross asking particulars

28.8.16

Reply sent letter 22/8/16

2.4.17

M. C. 4 ADVISED, WOUNDED & MISSING. 19/7/16

11.4.17

COPY MADE FOR WAR PENSIONS

9.9.17

M. C. 4 ADVISED, KILLED IN ACTION. 19.7.16

13.9.17

A.A.E. Enquiries advised re casualty vide statement N° 20

CONFIRMATION RECEIVED OF

Cable No. C.I.B. 1793 inde 8/248 9.10/9/17

Copy of Will in file

5.9.21

No personal effects in kit. B. R. M. No. 20/11/18

For B.R.M. 40/1308 & Booklet re C. avcs despatched

26.11.18 FINAL NOTICE 24.2.19



1914/1915 Star issued B.R.M. 43/1229

To Comdt. 4th B.R.M. 52/406

BRITISH WAR MEDAL

M.D.B.R.M. 53/1318



LIST.

D.F. 48.16—C.9442—104

"WHERE THE AUSTRALIANS REST."
Pamphlet sent to *Mrs M. A. Ambler* on *8-10-21*

10 53/13/6
4 L.D.

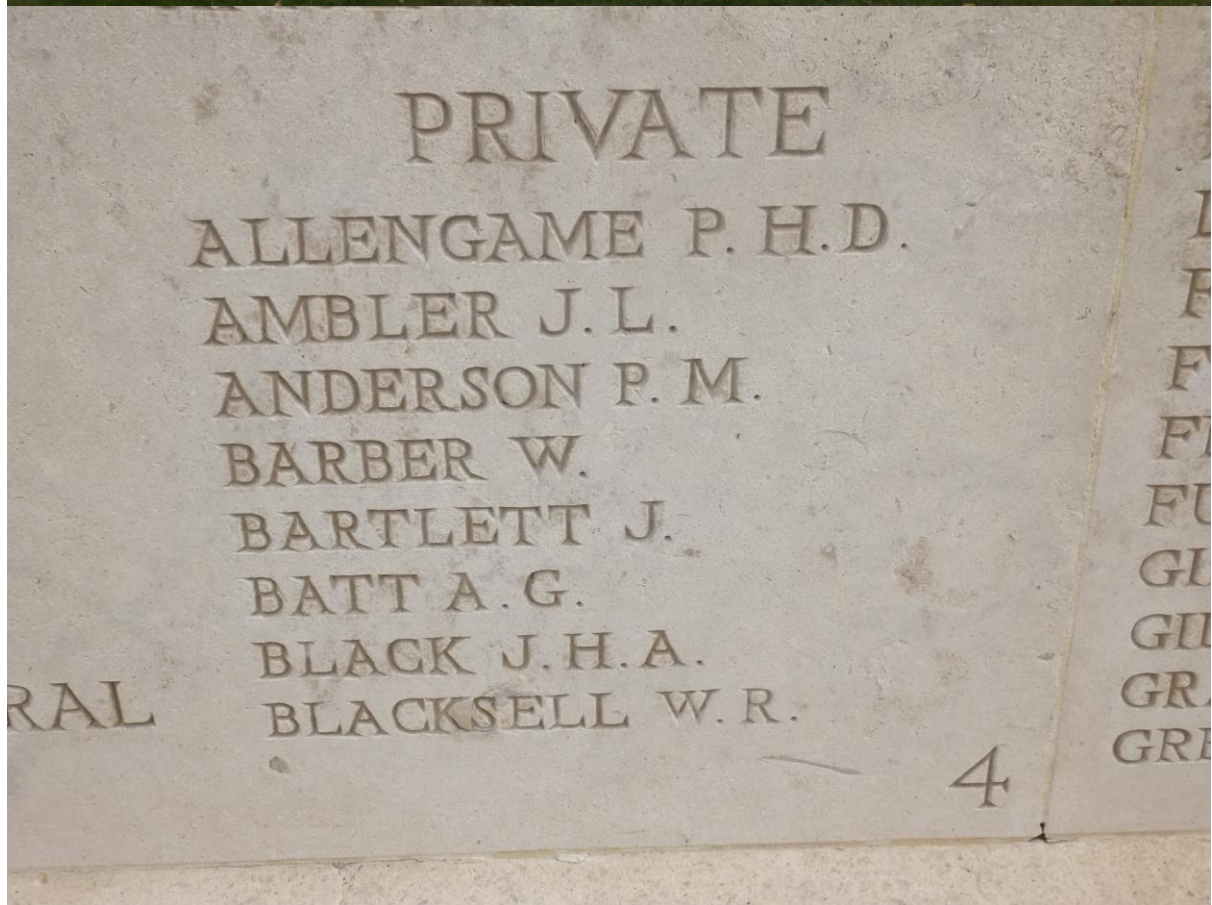
MEMORIAL
PLAQUE
Mother (per 4 L.D.)
Mrs M. A. Ambler
329603
8.9.22

MEMORIAL
SCROLL
To
Mother
Mrs M. A. Ambler
329603
8.4.22

3 FEB 1923 VICTORY MEDAL to *Father* B. R. F. F. 42.
Registered Post No. *8499* G. P. O. Melbourne

4526 REGISTER ORDER FORM despatched
to *Lone Pine* EK





ALLEN GAME P
 AMBLER J. L.
 ANDERSON P. M.
 BARBER W.
 BARTLETT J.
 BATT A G

V.C. Corner Australian Cemetery and Memorial



CWGC
 Commonwealth War Graves Commission

V.C. Corner Cemetery is the only uniquely Australian cemetery on the Western Front. It was formed after the Armistice and contains the graves of 418 Australian soldiers who were killed during the Battle of Fromelles in July 1918 and whose bodies were found on the battlefield. As none of the bodies could be identified, it was decided not to mark the individual graves, but to record on a memorial the names of all the Australian soldiers who were killed in the engagement and whose graves are not known. Over 100 of those listed on the memorial were subsequently identified and re-interred at Fromelles (Pheasant Wood) Cemetery in 2010.

The Battle of Fromelles

On 17 July 1918, the officers and men of the British 61st (2nd South Midland) and the 5th (Australian) Divisions, under the overall command of General Richard Haking, staged an assault on the German lines around the village of Fromelles. The attack was designed to prevent the Germans from sending units from this sector to reinforce their Divisions on the Somme front, which was then the scene of a major Allied offensive. As little heavy fighting had taken place in the area since the Battle of Aubers Ridge in May 1915, the Germans had been able to strengthen their lines with concrete blockhouses, machine gun emplacements and thick barbed wire entanglements. The Australian troops defending Fromelles also enjoyed a slightly elevated position on the Aubers Ridge from which they could



observe any preparations for an attack. The British and Australian troops who were selected for the attack had little or no experience of combat on the Western Front but would be facing a well-organised and determined enemy.

A key objective of the attacking troops was the capture of the Sugarloaf Trench, a small but heavily reinforced section of the German line north-west of Fromelles. The attack was originally planned for 17 July and the preliminary artillery bombardment

duly began on the 16th. Thick mist and rain the following morning prompted Haking to request a 24-hour delay and the attack was postponed until 6 pm on 19 July.

Advancing with three Brigades side by side the men of the 61st Division came under withering machine gun fire as soon as they left their positions and suffered heavy casualties. Only a small number of British troops on the extreme right of the assault managed to get near the German lines, but these were all either

killed or forced to retire. The Australians also attacked in three Brigades. The 15th Brigade, advancing alongside British units, was badly cut up by German machine gun and artillery fire and suffered numerous casualties. To begin with, the men of the 14th and 8th Brigades fared better, managing to cross no-man's land and overrun the German front-line and communication trenches just north of Fromelles. They separated into small units as they advanced into enemy territory; however, and as night fell the Germans counter-attacked the now surrounded Australians. At 3.30 am they were ordered to return to their own trenches and for the next six hours they fought their way back across no-man's land.

The attack made little impact on German troop movements toward the Somme and is now seen as a costly failure. In just over one night of fighting, over 5,300 Australian and more than 1,500 British soldiers were killed, wounded, or captured. The Battle of Fromelles was the first major deployment of an Australian Division on the Western Front and the only one in which none of the original objectives were achieved.

Australian troops in the trenches, Fromelles, June 1918

Troopers australiens dans les tranchées, Fromelles, juin 1918

Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commission is responsible for the commemoration of almost 1,700,000 members of the Commonwealth forces who gave their lives in the two world wars. The graves and memorials of these men and women, who came from all parts of the Commonwealth and who were of many faiths and of none, are found around the globe in some 150 countries. For more information about the Commission, our work and how to search our records online visit www.cwgc.org. Enquiries are also welcome at our offices: CWGC Head Office: Tel: +44 (0) 1628 507200 Email: casualtyenq@cwgc.org CWGC France Office: Tel: +33 (0) 3 21 21 77 00 E-mail: francearea@cwgc.org

For more information about this location and some of those commemorated here, scan the QR code (right).

