

D

29662

MISSING

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 465 Name CURTIN Frank Norman Unit B Coy. 32nd BATTALION, A.I.F. Enlisted on 5 July 1915

32nd BATTALION, A.I.F. B Coy. 32nd BATTALION, A.I.F.

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

- 1. What is your Name? ... Frank Norman Curtin
2. In the Parish of ... in or near the Town of Norwood in the County of S.A. Aust.
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? ... N.B.
4. What is your age? ... 27 9/2 yrs
5. What is your trade or calling? ... Clerk
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? ... No
7. Are you married? ... No
8. Who is your next of kin? ... (Father) Mr Frederick Faulding Curtin Glyde St Norwood S.A. Aust.
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? ... 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? ... No
14. 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, Frank Norman Curtin 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 23 June 15

F. N. Curtin Signature of person enlisted.

* This clause should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 18 years of age. † Two-fifths must be allotted to the wife, and if there are children three-fifths must be allotted.

ER - W496/111 - 120/000 - 1/1 - P. & Co. Ltd. - Paris B. 1073.
 CASUALTY FORM - Active Service. Army Form B. 103. 465
 REGIMENTAL NO. 465 RANK *Private* NAME *FRANK CURTIN* SERVICE RECKONS FROM (a) *5.7.15*
 ENLISTED (a) *5.7.15* TERMS OF SERVICE (a) *4 months after* SERVICE RECKONS FROM (a) *5.7.15*
 DATE OF PROMOTION TO PRESENT RANK *23.9.15* DATE OF APPOINTMENT TO LANCE RANK *23.9.15* NUMERICAL POSITION ON ROLL OF N.C.O.s *20*
 EXTENDED Re-engaged Qualification (b)

Date	Report From whom received	Reason of promotion, reduction, transfer, disability, etc. during active service, as reported on Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 26, or in other official documents. The authority to be quoted in each case.	Place	Date	Remarks taken from Army Form B. 213, Army Form A. 26, or other official documents.
		Disembarked ex H.M.S. "A" at Guelone	Russ	16/12/15	
16/2/16	2 A.G.H.	Admitted - P.W.O.	Ghezirish	1/2/16	R2159 R2159 Part D No 7/15 R2379
2/4/16	2 A.S.H.	Trans to Base by P.W. Train - Influenza	St. Et. Helin	1/2/16	R2347 R2347
1/4/16	3 P.A.M.B.	Admitted - Influenza Trans to R.H.S.H. 9/2/16	St. Et. Helin	8/2/16	C5-86 C5-87
2/4/16	2 P.G.H.	Trans off to 3rd A.G.H. - Influenza	Ghezirish	1/2/16	R2647 R2647
4/3/16	Moutaza 60	Admitted - Influenza	Moutaza	13/3/16	R3921
23/3/16	Moutaza 72	Disch to Reg. H.Q. Ghezirish (Influenza)	Moutaza	23/3/16	R4552
23/3/16	Zertoun 44	Marched with H. details from Giza	Zertoun	23/3/16	R24634

(a) 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.
 (b) e.g. Signaller, Driving School, etc., etc. also special qualifications in technical Corps duties.

Signature of Person Enlisted.
 Signature of Attesting Officer.
 The Third Schedule of the Act, and the Attesting Officer.

AUSTRALIAN ARMY
 No. 465 Frank Curtin
 Regimental Number and Name

Place	Date of Offence	Cases of Drunkenness
Cheltenham	29/10/15	
Do	15. 11. 15	

Report		Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, casualties, etc., during active service, as reported on Army Form B. 213, 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. 213, Army Form A. 36, or other official documents.
Date	From whom received				
6	14/3/16	3 F. G. H 77	Trans to Boulayah - infanterie	Sabassia	13/3/16 RH117.
10	1/4/16	B Trg Bn	Proceeded to join 32nd Bn	Zeitoun	1/4/16 AP 6889
12	4/4/16	CO Bn B 213	Rejoined Bn	Doutroon Plateau	24/4/16 AL 407 0/22/150
17	1/4/16	Outpost 93	Trans to Zeitoun	Ghezreh	20/3/16 AL 383
13	14/4/16	CO Bn B 2069	Neglect of duty in that he failed to have his tent under his charge cleaned.	Doutroon Plateau	14/4/16 AL 984
14	24/4/16	CO Bn B 2069	Allowing a man to leave the ranks without permission. Award. Reprimanded.	Ferry Post	24/4/16 AL 1273
9	25/3/16	0/5 Base 118	Adv. ex Alexandria	Ghezreh	23/3/16 AL 395
15	15/5/16	CO Bn B 2069	Neglect of duty as sent to march in that he failed to have his mess orderly on parade. Award - Revert to ranks	Ferry Post	15/5/16 AL 2117 B. 213 0/32/2030 AL 2180
16			IMPk to join R. E. F Alexandria		17/8/15 BR 9054
17			OC, Trps Disemb. ex Transylvania		
18			Marseilles		23. 6. 16 LR 9933
18	28. 7. 16	CO Bn B 13	MISSING		
	France 20-7-16	AQ1902	D. O. 46		

Army Form B. 213
 Rank ...
 Religion ...
 Enlisted ...
 Date of ...
 Extended ...
 Occupation ...
 Date ...
 26/8/17
 and ...
 In the case of ...
 (1) Signaller, ...

F. H. Curkin
 Signature of Person Enlisted.

Taken and subscribed at Keswick in
 the State of South Australia
 this _____ day _____ of _____
 5 JUL 1915 19, before me—

C. Woodman Capt
 Signature of Attesting Officer.

*A person enlisting who objects to taking an oath may make an affirmation in accordance with the Third Schedule of the Act, and the above form must be amended accordingly. All amendments must be initialed by the Attesting Officer.

Army Form B. 103. SHEET 2. Regimental Number... 465

Casualty Form - Active Service.

Regiment or Corps **32nd BATTALION, A.I.F.**
 Rank... **Private** Surname **CURTIN** Christian Name **FRANK NORMAN**
 Religion Age on Enlistment years months
 Enlisted (a) Terms of Service (a) Service reckons from (a)
 Date of promotion to present rank Date of appointment to lance rank
 Extended (.....) Re-engaged (.....) Qualification (b)
 or Corps Trade and Rate
 Occupation Signature of Officer.....

Report		Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, casualties, etc., during active service, as reported on Army Form B.103, Army Form A. 36, 66 in other official documents. The authority to be quoted in each case.	Place of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks Taken from Army Form B.103, Army Form A. 36, or other official documents.
Date	From whom received				
25/8/17	CO 32 Bn	Embarked Disembarked Rev. repta. Missing now pronounced KILLED IN ACTION by Court of Inquiry. <i>12/5/17</i>	Field	20/7/16	12/5/17 19/5/13 <i>19/5/13</i> <i>12/5/17</i>
Original. Copies forwarded to Defence, Melbourne, Chief Paymaster, and Headquarters, A.I.F. with A.F. B*2090A on 12/9/17.					
..... Captain G. i/c Records.					

(a) 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.
 (b) Signaller, Shipping-Smith, &c.
 W.1.002-3147 12000 (1/2) (2/24) S.P. & Co. Ltd. Forms B.103/4 B.104 P.T.O.

Regimental Number and Name	Place	Date of Offence	Cases of Drunkenness
AUSTRALIAN <i>Leamy</i> No 1165 Frank Norman	Cheltenham	29/10/15	1
	Do	15. 11. 15	

Officer. *Leamy*
 of the Aot, and for.

Army Form B. 103.

Casualty Form - Active Service.

Regimental Number 465

Rank Private Surname CHELTON Christian Name FRANK NORMAN
 Religion Anglican Age on Enlistment 21 years 7 months.
 Enlisted (a) 5/7/15 Terms of Service (a) War & 4 mths Service reckons from (a) 5/7/15.
 Date of promotion to present rank _____ Date of appointment to lance rank _____
 Extended { } Re-engaged { } Qualification (b) _____
 or Corps Trade and Rate _____

Report		Signature of Officer.		
Date	From whom received	Place of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks
12/15	O.C. Trps	Embarked		
2/15	3rd F. Amb.	Disembarked	Suez	18/12/16
		Admitted - Influenza	Tel-el-Kebir	3/2/16 C5686
		To 2nd Aust. Stationary Hospital		3/2/16 C5687
16	2nd A.S.H.	To base by 4 Hospital Train	do	11/2/16 R2347
		Influenza		11/2/16 AP5817
16	2nd A.G.H.	Admitted - P.U.O.	Ghezireh	11/2/16 R2159 AF6913
15	2nd A.G.H.	To 3rd Aust. General Hospital - Influenza	do	19/2/16 R2647 R2846
16	3rd A.G.H.	To Montazah - Influenza	Abbassia	13/3/16 R4117
16	B.R.C.C.H. 60	Admitted - Influenza	Montazah	13/3/16 R3921
16	do 72	Discharged to priv. Hall, Cairo. Influenza.	do	23/3/16 R4632

1. In the case of a man who has re-engaged for, or continued in, the service, the date of such re-engagement or continuance will be entered.

Officer. Leapt
 of the Act, and ser.

AUSTRAL Leapt
 No 465 Frank Norman
 Regimental Number and Name

Place	Date of Offence	Cases of Drunkenness
Cheltenham	29/10/15	
do	15. 11. 15	

Form A 29. and 17(15).
 1915
 Remarks
 of heat
 u of Col.
 AC.

CARD CHECKER

Statement of Service

32n

Date	Report		Place of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks Taken from Army Form B. 20, Army Form A. 26, or other official documents
	Date	From whom received			
25/3/16	Overseas Base	Admitted ex Alexandria	Chezireh	23/3/16	AL1395
1/4/16	do	Transferred to Zeitoun	do	23/3/16	AL 383
23/3/16	Zeitoun 80/411	Marched into "A" Details from Giza	Zeitoun	23/3/16	AP6634
1/4/16	8th Inf Bn	Proceeding to join 32nd	do	1/4/16	AP6869
8/4/16	32nd Bn B213	Rejoined Bn	Dunroon Plateau	2/4/16	AL 467 DO/
14/4/16	32 Bn B2089	Neglect of duty in that he failed to have tent under his charge cleaned Award- Admonished.	do	14/4/16	AL984
24/4/16	do	Allowing a man to leave the ranks without permission Award- Reprimanded.	Ferry Post	24/4/16	AL 1273
15/6/16	do	Neglect of duty as tent Com- mander in that he failed to have his mess orderly on parade Award- Reverts to ranks.	do	15/6/16	AL2117
17/6/16	O.C. Troops	Embarked to join S.A.F.	Alexandria	17/6/16	AP 9054
23/6/16	do	Disembarked ex H.M.F. "PENNSYLVANIA"	Marseilles	23/6/16	LR 5903
28/7/16	32nd Bn B213	MISSING	Field	20/7/16	AL1802 B CIBL-2054

F. H. Au
Signature of Person Enlisting

Taken and subscribed at Keswick in
the State of South Australia
this _____ day _____ of _____
5 JUL 1916 19____, before me—

SEE COPY

I have examined the above detail

C. Wood
Signature of Attesting Officer

Original

*A person enlisting who objects to taking an oath may make an affirmation in accordance with the Third Schedule. The above form must be amended accordingly. All amendments must be initialed by the Attesting Officer.

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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. 465 Rank Private

Surname CURTIN Christian Names FRANK NORMAN

Died { Date 20th 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 Will not received 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 I.C.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 BRIGADE, I.C.F.A.C. 12/8/17. 18/8/17. 18/8/17.

Signed by Officer in charge of Section [Signature] Captain

Signed by General's Office at the Base [Signature] O. i/c Records.

W2095 M1768-200/800-11. A. 82-2/17-(15483)-Form B2090A.

to MR

I consider him fit for active service.

Date 23 - 6 - 15

Place Kewick

[Signature] [Signature] } Capt

Signature of Examining Medical Officer. [Signature]

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 B Coy.

Date 16 Aug 1915.

30 OCT 1915

Place Mitcham

[Signature] [Signature] } Commanding Officer

[Signature] [Signature] } Commanding

3

Description of Frank Norman Curtin on Enlistment.

27 years 9 months
ht 5 feet 6 1/2 inches
wt 143 lbs.
Chest Measurement 33-35 inches
Complexion Fair
Hair Blue
Hair Fair
Religious Denomination Baptist

DISTINCTIVE MARKS.

Nil R 6 L 6
Tacc 2 L Inf

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; undescended testicle; varicocele with unusually pendent testicle; inveterate cutaneous disease; chronic disease of the eye; traces of corporal punishment, or evidence of having been marked with the letters D. or 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 kind.

I consider him fit for active service.

Date 23 - 6 - 15
Place Keewick

C. Corbin } Capt
J. B. Bone }
Signature of Examining Medical Officer. J. L. H. G.

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 "B" Coy.
32nd BATTALION, A.I.F.

Date 16 Aug 1915
30 OCT 1915
Place Mitcham

D. M. R. Cochrane Lieut.-Col
Commanding Battalion
Commanding

D.F.

EmD

No. 465,

Private Frank Norman Curtin,
32nd Battalion,
Australian Imperial Force.

~~RECORDED~~ was killed in action,

(No record available)

20th July, 16.

Cable No. C.I.B.L.

1793, from the Commandant, A.I.F. Headquarters, dated London
6th September, 1917, confirmed by Mail from the Commandant, A.I.F.
Headquarters, dated London, 10th September, 1917.

19th January, 18.

Major,

WAR GRATUITY SCHEDULE

Transferred to

D 3456

W

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

No. 465

Rank Lt/Col

Name

Curtin, F.N.

Unit

32nd Battalion

Casualty Observation No. 1016 Admitted 11/2/16 2nd A.S.H. Khazneh
C.S.B. 85/5222 A 17-2-16.
11/2/16 Admitted 2nd A.S.H. Observation No. 6/776/84 10th Cairo 24/2/16.
20/7/16 Missing. C.S.B.L. 306/6862 2nd London 21/9/16.
23/3/16 Discharged ex Montoya 0/5 Base Class A H.D. 14 10th Cairo 27/4/16.

339

Previously reported missing
was reported killed in action 20.7.16. C.S.B. 173 22nd dated London 6.9.17

DATE. A.F. B. 103 Received PURPORT. A.F. B. 2090A Received. REF. NO.

23.2.16. A.D.H. Advised in Hospital. Khazneh. Sick
28.8.16. M.C. 4 Advised Missing 20.7.16.
12.9.16. Copy made for War Pensions
8.9.17. M.C. 4 ADVISED, KILLED IN ACTION, 20.7.16.
13.9.17. A.A.C. Pensions advised re casualty vide Statement No. 90
12.12.17. Coy 10th Adelaide. Asking for 5 cent. 1123/635.

CONFIRMATION RECEIVED OF
Cable No. 62134 1793 vide 87.248 D-10/9/17

Circular B.R.M. 48/1908 & Booklet re Graves despatched 1.12.19. H.L. 17-7-20. 10h

WAR PENSIONS INDEX

To Comdt. 14th M.D. B.R.M. 52/895
1914/15 Star issued B.R.M. 43/1229 32/8 25671
BRITISH WAR MEDAL to Comdt 4th M.D.B.R.M. 54288 53/1316



LIST. D.F. 112-CMG-111

"WHERE THE AUSTRALIANS REST."
Pamphlet sent to *Mr E.C. Curtin* 10/5/22

MEMORIAL
SCROLL
To
Brother
Mr E.C. Curtin
329636
10/5/22

MEMORIAL
PLAQUE
To
Brother (Trust)
Mr E.C. Curtin
329636
19/22
2/19/22

VICTORY MEDAL to *Brother*
Mr E.C. Curtin R. P. F. 42
Registered Post No. *8656* G. P. O. Melbourne

FEB 1923

REGISTER ORDER FORM despatched
to *E.C. Curtin*



BATTALION

PRIVATE
ON J.D.G.
RT J.H.
A.
S C.A.
J.C.
E.

31ST INFANTRY BATTALION

PRIVATE
RAWLINGS F.
REDFERN S.I.
SADDLER H.
SMITH J.R.
STATHA G.E.
SUTHERLAND G.

PRIVATE
TANNER R.
TEDFORD T.H.
THOMSON R.
WALSH L.G.
WEAKLEY P.
WELSH A.

32ND INFANTRY BATTALION

PRIVATE
BONNEY G.E.
BOSWELL J.H.
BOTTRALL J.
BOURKE J.P.
BOYCE W.E.
BROOKS A.E.
BURCHELL C.H.
BURFORD A.R.E.
BURNBY E.N.
BYRNE J.
CAMERON I.A.
CAMERON D.P.
CANN S.I.
CARTWRIGHT T.G.
CHOATE R.H.
CLARKE T.J.
CLAXTON M.J.
COCHRANE W.J.L.
COPE W.V.
CORIGLIANO M.
COWLAND J.J.
CREEDON J.V.
CRISP W.G.
CROCKER J.E.
CROSER W.G.
CURTIN F.N.
DANIELS L.G.
DILLON M.N.H.
FELDT J.J.
FISHER C.C.
FRASER A.H.
FURZE R.A.
GIBNEY G.S.D.
GILLETT A.E.
GRAY E.G.
GREENFIELD B.

PRIVATE
GREENWOOD P.J.
GRIFFITHS G.A.
GULLY T.
HALL M.A.
HART L.W.
HENNESSY W.J.
HOFFMAN C.R.S.
HOLLINGS W.C.
HOLMES A.
HONEY G.
HUNT T.
HUTCHINSON J.W.
INGRAM V.R.
IRVING A.W.J.
JAMIESON R.W.
JERGENS E.W.
JOLLY D.C.
JOSE H.N.
JOYCE J.
JUDGE G.F.
KEATING W.
KNABLE A.T.
LACEY S.
LAWLOR D.M.
LEE J.T.
LOADER P.O.
LYDIATE F.W.
MC CULLOCH A.
MC KENZIE A.M.
MACKENZIE G.H.
MC KENZIE J.G.
MACKNESS H.
MC LEAN H.
MC PHEE W.J.O.
MAGOR R.H.
MAHONEY S.N.

BATTALION

PRIVATE
E W.A.
LTON R.
S.W.S.
AND T.
HREY F.W.
T.V.
MS S.J.W.
ERY W.G.
SON A.J.
S.T.W.
PH J.D DE P.
S.B.
H.A.D.
DONALD A.
ONALE C.G.
LEOD H.M.
TIN J.A.L.
LARD G.P.
GAN C.
BLEY J.
ILL J.H.
EN A.
ON A.A.
RIN H.E.
DFORD J.C.

32ND INFANTRY BATTALION

LIEUTENANT
CHINNER E.H.
HAGAN T.P.
HULKS F.

SECOND LIEUT.
BENSON J. D.C.M.
GRIFFEN R.T.

SERJEANT
BAUMANN O.E.
BEARE B.
BURBIDGE H.J.G.
TYMONS J.P.
WALKER J.
WILSON H.

CORPORAL
CROSSMAN G.L.
GREEN R.G.
HUMPHRIS B.
JARMAN E.H.
MILLER H.
ROBERTS A.W.

LANCE CORPORAL
BACKLER A.H.

LANCE CORPORAL

BENNETT A.
CRAWFORD J.A.
DEAN J.
DENNIS S.W.
DUBOIS B.
FISK L.T.
HARLAND C.G.
HOUNSLOW A.B.
JOHNSTONE F.D.
KORBER A.
LANYON C.J.
MCGREGOR P.
MORPHETT A.H.
OATES C.N.
SIMIGEAR A.G.

PRIVATE

ALLENGAME P.H.D.
AMBLER J.L.
ANDERSON P.M.
BARBER W.
BARTLETT J.
BATT A.G.
BLACK J.H.A.
BLACKSELL W.R.

3

4

5

CRIST W. G.
CROCKER J. E.
CROSER W. G.
CURTIN F. N.
DANIELS L. G.
DILLON M. N. H.
FELDT J. J.

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 419 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 19 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 Bavarian 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 Australians 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, July 1918

Troops assembling close to trenches, Fromelles, July 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. E-mail: casualtyenq@cwgc.org. CWGC France Office: Tel + 33 (0) 3 21 21 77 00. E-mail: france.ana@cwgc.org

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

