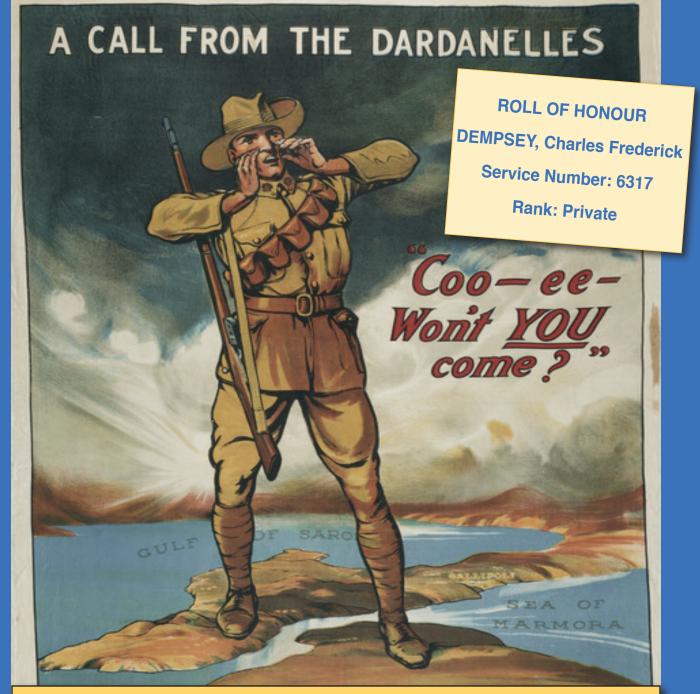
Commemoration for the Lives of the Braidwood and District ANZACS

"We will remember them well"



From 1914 - 1918, 465 volunteers from Braidwood and the District joined the Australian Imperial Force in World War I. 88 lost their lives, never to return home. This is their story.





THE SPIRIT LIVES 2014 - 2018

Introduction

This year, 2015, marks the centenary of the start of the Gallipoli campaign and Australia's involvement as a nation in the greatest and most terrible conflict ever seen to that time. Australians joined their Armed Forces in large numbers. Their motives were as varied as their upbringings, from a need to save the Empire, of which Australia was an integral part, to the desire to have a great adventure.

Braidwood and district were no exception. Over the four years from 1914 to 1918, from a population of about 5000, 465 men and women from what is now the 2622 postcode area – including Braidwood, Majors Creek, Araluen, Mongarlowe, Nerriga, Ballalaba and Jembaicumbene joined the Navy or Army. Of these 377 returned to Australia. Sadly, 88 lost their lives.

A varying amount of their history is recorded in the Australian War Memorial. Some of their names, but not all, are recorded on local memorials. More is recorded in limited local histories and newspapers, not readily available to the general public; and the people who lived with and knew these distant relatives are also passing on.

The Braidwood RSL Sub Branch has collected all the information available from the Australian War Memorial and local sources, including the Braidwood Museum. Families, still resident in the district, have added their family knowledge and their precious memorabilia.

This booklet is the available story of **Charles Frederick Dempsey**, one of the 88 Braidwood volunteers who did not return from World War I. It contains his details as recorded in the World War I Roll of Honour, his Enlistment Papers, Field Service records, any Casualty notification, correspondence relating to his death, details of decorations won, any available photos, and, in some instances, family correspondence or recollections.

Charles Frederick Dempsey died for his country, for you and for me. Please pause a moment to remember him.

WORLD WAR I

World War I lasted four years, from 4 August 1914 until 11 November 1918. It began after the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne. The axis powers were Germany and Austria. Russia and France were the initial allies. When Germany invaded Belgium, Britain entered the war on the side of Russia and France.

The war was in Europe, the Western Front was in France and Belgium. The Eastern Front was Russia and Austria-Hungary. Africa was another front because of colonial possessions on that continent, and after Turkey entered the war on 1 November 1914, the Middle East became another theatre of war.

Australians generally thought of themselves as an integral part of the British Empire and the Australian Army and Navy were part of the Imperial Forces. In 1914, Australia's Prime Minister, Andrew Fisher, immediately promised Australian support for Britain 'to the last man and the last shilling.' The Australian population was less than five million. 324,000 Australians served overseas. 61,720 lost their lives. 155,000 were wounded. 4,044 became prisoners of war (397 died while captive).

The first Australian troops were sent to Egypt in 1915. The ANZACS – Australian and New Zealand Army Corps – were engaged in battle on the Gallipoli Peninsula against the Turks to control the Dardanelles' and open the way to Eastern Europe with their fateful landing on 25 April 1915.

The ANZACS were evacuated on 19-20 December 1915. The Gallipoli campaign resulted in the deaths of 7,600 Australians and the wounding of 19,000. Despite the defeat, the legend attached to the heroism, comradeship and valour of the soldiers remain a source of Australian pride and national identity.



Lest We Forget.

ROLL OF HONOUR

CHARLES FREDERICK DEMPSEY

Service Number: 6317 **Bank:** Private **Unit:** 26th Australian Infantry Battalion **Service:** Australian Army Conflict: First World War, 1914-1918 Date of death: 22 September 1917 Place of death: France Cause of death: Died of wounds Age at death: 22 Place of association: Braidwood, Australia **Cemetery or memorial details:** Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport, Haute-Normandie, France Source: AWM145 Roll of Honour cards, 1914-1918 War, Army Location on the Roll of Honour: Charles Frederick Dempsey's name is located at panel 107 in the

Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial

26th Australian Infantry Battalion

The 26th Battalion was raised at Enoggera, Queensland, in April 1915 from recruits enlisted in Queensland and Tasmania, and formed part of the 7th Brigade. It left Australia in July, and, after training in Egypt, landed at Gallipoli on 12 September. At Gallipoli, the 26th played a purely defensive role and at various times was responsible for the defence of Courtney's and Steele's Posts, and Russell's Top. It withdrew from the peninsula on 12 December.

After another stint in Egypt, the 7th Brigade proceeded to France as part of the 2nd Australian Division in March 1916, in concert with the 28th Battalion, the 26th mounted the first trench raid undertaken by Australian troops on the Western Front on 6 June. The Battalion fought in its first major battle around Pozieres between 28 July and 7 August. After a short spell in Belgium, the 2nd Division came south in October to attack again in the Somme Valley. The 26th Battalion took part in two attacks to the east of Flers, both of which floundered in mud and slush.

In early 1917, the 26th Battalion joined the follow-up of the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line and attacked at Warlencourt (1-2 March) and Lagincourt (26 March). For his valorous actions at Lagincourt, Captain Percy Cherry was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross. On 3 May, the Battalion was also involved in the second attempt to breach the Hindenburg Line defences around Bullecourt. Later that year the focus of the AIF's operations switched to Belgium. *There, the 26th battalion fought in the battle of Menin Road on 20 September, and participated in the capture of Broodseinde Ridge on 4 October. Charles Frederick Dempsey died from wounds on 22 September, 1917.*

Like most AIF battalions, the 26th fought to turn back the German spring offensive in April 1918, and in the lull that followed mounted "peaceful penetration" operations to snatch portions of the German front line. In one such operation in Monument Wood on 14 July the 26th Battalion captured the first German tank to fall into Allied hands - No. 506 "Mephisto". In another, on 17 July, Lieutenant Albert Borrella was awarded the Victoria Cross. Later in the year the 26th participated in the great offensive that began on 8 August, its most notable engagement being an attack east of Mont St Quentin on 2 September. The Battalion's last action of the war was the capture of Lormisset, part of the operation to breach the Beaurevoir Line, on 3 October 1918. The 26th Battalion was disbanded in May 1919.



Mont Huon Cemetery, La Traport, France. Photo courtesy of Dennis Dempsey.

Charles Frederick Dempsey #6317 - 26th Battallion AIF

By Dennis Dempsey

Charles Frederick Dempsey was born Charles Frederick Garrard to parents unknown and left abandoned on the Snowball Goldfields in the late 1800's. Charles was left abandoned on the goldfields for unknown reasons, (common reasons were death of one or both parents, destitution, when a mother was left to fend for herself). Either way Charles Frederick was abandoned and was fed by anyone who would give him morsels of food or indeed some form of shelter. Denis Dempsey used to supply the goldfields with fresh meat, where he would drive stock from Emu Flat to Snowball for slaughter by the miners.

On one trip he was told of this child of the tender age of about one year old, alone on the goldfields. Denis took the boy home with him and he and his wife Alice raised the boy as their own despite having seven children already. Imagine the surprise of Alice as Dennis pulled his horse into the Emu Flat yard and on the front of the saddle he had sitting up large as life a baby boy. Charles Frederick was happy at Emu Flat, received an education, was well housed, loved and was by all accounts treated equally to all other Dempsey children and consequently changed his name to Dempsey.

Charles worked on Emu Flat as a boy doing chores as most boys did, and as he grew, did

piece work in the district around shearing sheds, fencing and with stock.

My Father James Wilfrid Dempsey told the story of one of his very first memories of being carried by Charles who had come back to Emu Flat after his basic training before he was posted overseas in December 1916, to say good bye. Charles left Australia for the war on 23 December 1916 and was not to know he would never come home as in the next September he would be wounded in action in Belgium and die in France on 22.9.1917.

Eileen and I visited the Cemetery in La Treport, France in mid 2010. Mt Huon Cemetery is located on the Normandy Coast. It is a well-kept military cemetery which had been attached to a Canadian Military Hospital. Eileen took one side and I took the other so that every grave was visited and our respects were paid to all buried therein, friend or foe. We found the grave of Charles Frederick Dempsey and I placed a small vial of Shoalhaven water and small vial of Emu Flat soil on it as well as a small slouch hat and some more small memorabilia.

The few minutes we spent with Charles, (the first Dempsey's to visit his grave in 90 years) were precious.

Lest We Forget.



Dennis Dempsey standing at the grave of Charles Frederick Dempsey, at the Mont Huon Cemetery, La Traport, France.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E00891

26 September 1917: Belgium: Western Front (Belgium), Menin Road Area, Menin Road: View of an ammunition dump on fire on the Menin Road, near Hooge, in the Ypres sector. Note the remains of a limber and wheels in the right foreground.



27 September 1917: Belgium: Western Front (Belgium), Menin Road Area, Menin Road: Wounded men and prisoners acting as stretcher bearers on the Menin Road, in the Ypres sector. The soldiers on the extreme left and right, foreground, are carrying their gas masks strapped to their chests.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

E00845

28 September 1917: Belgium: Western Front (Belgium), Menin Road Area, Menin Road: Australian artillery horses alongside an empty shell case dump near Menin Road, in the Ypres sector.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

J00212

September 1917: Belgium: Western Front (Belgium), Menin Road Area, Menin Road: A scene extracted from a Flanders film, on the Menin Road, showing wounded awaiting removal. A motor ambulance is in left background.

10213 MILITARY FORCES. AUSTRALIAN FORCE. AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL. Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad. EMPSEV No. 6314 Charles Trederick Name 26 BATTN Unit **ISRFTS** Joined on Questions to be put to the Person Eplisting before Attestation. Charles Trede 1. What is your Name ! * 22 125 2. In the Parish of auderood near the Town of. 2. In or near what Parish or Town were you born 1 ales in the County S. Are you a natural born British Subject or Nat Subject (N.B.-If the latter, papers to be shown.) 244 Ears 4. What is your Age! 164 abours 5. What is your Trade or Calling ? 144 144 ... 6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice to whom, and for what period t i elo If so, where,] 2.el Backers 7. Are you married 1 8. Who is your next of kins (Address to be stated) Fur auswer to This question shall not construct as in the nature of a will mu nmer 210. 9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power1 Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Incorrigible and Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been diamissed NSWALES 16/1 with Disgrace from the Navy1 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 10/10 medalo 45 50 adopted Forces 1 If so, state which, and if not now serving, brother state cause of discharge 12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? Officer Lie Leonda 13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? ... 14. (For married men, widowers with children, and soldiers who 14. which 15. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small pox and enterio fever 1 rea MULSEY do solemnly declare that the above answers made ß 3, 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 loss than these fifths of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children Charles Frederick Date 13.7-16 Signature of person enlisted. * This clouse should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 28 years of age. † Two-fifths must be allotted to the wife, and if there are children three-fifthe must be allotted. D.M77/11.15 .-- 0.15750.

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MINISTÈRE

DE LA GUERRE.

SERVICE GENERAL DES

PENSIONS.

2º SERVICE. (Renseignements aux familles, Etat-civil

et Successions militaires).

SECTION ans. RENSEIGNEMENTS

AUX FAMILLES.

Division des Alliés.

36H

ni lage de 23 ans i est décédé

mate: 6317

aux familles (Division des Alliés) que

soldar

Fudence

fils de _

a Hop. Anglais nº 3 an trepon 10 2 2 septembre 1917.

Toutes indications relatives à l'acte d'état-civil constatant le décès qui fait l'objet du présent avis seront altérieurement adressées par les soins du Bureau des Archives administratives et par la voie diplomatique.

AVIS DE DÉCÈS.

Il résulte de documents parvenas à la Section des Renseignements

et de

Pour le Ministre :

lanes

1)306

mpsey Charles

125- 6 194

863-665-1917. [21375]

Emu Flat Oranmeis 21 The Offices in Charge Base Records Victoria Barracko Helbourne Near Sor In reply to to yours of the 6 in inter Re 10 6314 Ptr. C. 7 Wempour & wish to State The Re 10 6314 late C. F. Wempory was my adopted brothes my Father o Mother reared him from when he was one year old I dont know anything of his mother or tather as they are unknown me. He always looked on me as his only to brother, I had my brothers belongings returned to me from France . if this war medal to be given I would be very pleased to have it as a memerit. ght add that my I ather & Mother are both ned als se to adopted brothers living dead Jours Faithfully war C. J. Demposey Officer ile Dase Records

In Memory of

Private

Charles Frederick Dempsey

6317, 26th Bn., Australian Infantry, A.I.F. who died on 22 September 1917 Age 22

Adopted son of Denis and Alice Dempsey. Native of Krawarre, New South Wales.

Remembered with Honour Mont Huon Military Cemetery, Le Treport





Commemorated in perpetuity by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission



Wallace Street Braidwood, early 1900s.

Acknowledgements

Everybody responded enthusiastically to the idea of capturing the information about Braidwood's 88 World War I veterans who lost their lives. The Braidwood RSL Sub Branch is most grateful for the support they received in carrying out this task and would like to acknowledge those of whom we are aware: Karen, Chris and Renee Nelson, Roslyn Maddrell, Karen Shea, Jill Clarke, Rod McClure, Ben and Meaghan Frohling, Diane McGrath, Us On Mondays Quilting Group, Len Mutton & Co and local shopkeepers for their World War I window displays.

Thank you to the students and teachers of Braidwood Central School and St. Bedes School who have embraced these soldiers and have honoured their memories on Anzac Day 2015.

The Braidwood RSL Sub Branch raised a good proportion of the funds for the cost of producing these booklets. The efforts of the members of the sub branch involved are very much appreciated. This money was augmented by welcome funding from the Federal Government through the ANZAC Centenary Local Grants Program and the Braidwood Community Bank.

To all those who helped in any way, many thanks. Your efforts have ensured we remember these Braidwood and District Veterans well.

Back Cover: Peace Day, 11th November 1918, Wallace Street, Braidwood.

"Wild day in Braidwood: When Braidwood woke up on Tuesday morning to find the 'glad tidings of great joy' awaiting it that Germany had signed the armistice and the frightful carnage of the past four years or so had come to an end it simply went mad with delight. No other words could adequately describe the excitement that followed." "Braidwood Letters from the Front" by Roslyn Maddrell.

ROLL OF HONOUR

Alley, Clair Underwood **Archer. Fred Backhouse, Victor John Barnett, Frederick George Barry, Charles Louis Beatty, Walter Cusack Bell, John Henry Edward Black, George Scott Bruce, Thomas Fraser** Byrne, Cecil John Callan, William Henry **Catlin, Robert Henry Clarke, Lester Thomas Cook. Thomas John Crandell, Christopher George Cregan, Clarence Theodore Augustus Cullen, Henry Thomas Davis, John Henry Davis, Oscar Raymond Stanley Dawson, Edric Athol Dayball, Arthur Joseph Dempsey, Charles Frederick Dempsey, Charles Dowell, Frederick Robert** Feeney, William **Fisher, Osborne** Flack, John Foster Garnett, Henry James Geelan, Robert Michael **Gosling, Fred** Gough, James AEROWN **Green, Francis Henry Healy, Myrtle James** Howard, John Alexander **Huggett**, William Hunt, Frederick William Hunt, John **Hush, Percy Alfred** Hush, Thomas Hush, Austin Septimus **Innes, Henry George Kelly, Herbert Albert** Kemp, Leslie Smith Keyte, Robert

Knight, Charles Oliver Lee. Thomas James Lennon, James Lupton, Spencer Lynch, James Joseph **Matthews**, Francis **McCool, Francis Leslie Neil McDonald, Alexander Joseph** McLean, Donald McRae, Finley Arnold Meade, Arthur Stuart **Merton**. Thomas David **Montgomery, Stanley** Moore, William Newberry, Alwyn (Alwin) Horace James **O'Brien, Thomas Daniel** O'Reilly, John Pooley, Edward **Rex, Horace Joseph Riley, Frank Roberts, Frederick Bede Robinson**, William James Rodgers, Albert Seidel, Alfred George Seidel, Henry Edward Sharpe, George Lyle Sharpe, Reginald Sherman, Edgar Robert Sherman, Percy Frederick Simmons, George Smith (Greenwood), George **Spicer, William Henry** Steele, Alexander Norman Stein, Daniel Godfrey **Stewart, David Walter** Styles, Reginald Lucian **Torpy, Patrick Edward Torpy, Thomas Patrick** Walker, William Albert Watt, James Watt, Oscar Harold McClure White, Alister Whitelaw, Thomas Philip Wilson, Samuel Charles

Lest We Forget