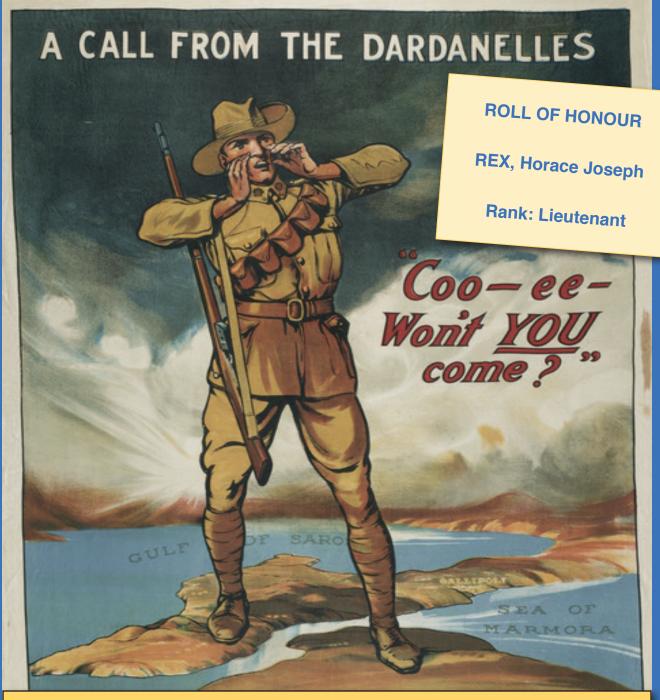
## Commemoration for the Lives of the Braidwood and District ANZACS

"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 Horace Joseph Rex, 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.

**Horace Joseph Rex** died for his country, for you and for me. Please pause a moment to remember him.

Lest We Forget.

#### **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.

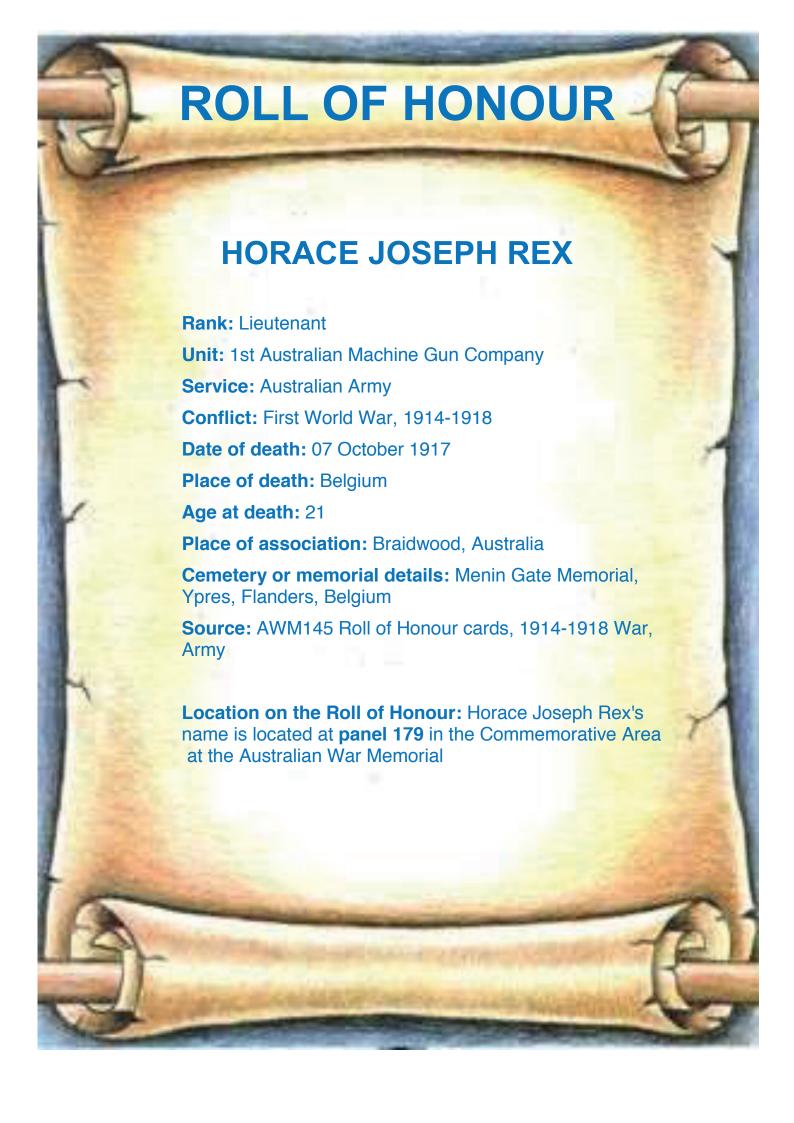
The war was in Europe, the Western Front was in France and Belgium. The Eastern Front was Russia and Austria-Hungary. Africa was another front because of colonial possessions on that continent, and after Turkey entered the war on 1 November 1914, the Middle East became another theatre of war.

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.





#### **HORACE JOSEPH REX**

Following the onset of the Great War, the young New South Welshman, Horrie Rex started training with the 43<sup>rd</sup> Infantry. His diligence to duty was rewarded in August, 1915 when he attained the rank of lieutenant.

Fearful of receiving the dreaded white feather through the post and itching to do his part, Horrie volunteered at Liverpool, NSW on July 25<sup>th</sup> 1916 to serve his King and Country. He was immediately appointed 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant. In August 1916, he was attached to the 56<sup>th</sup> Battalion at its Goulburn Depot Camp. Special duties saw him at Cootamundra and Duntroon. Horrie embarked at Sydney for England with the 17<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion per HMAT "Argyllshire" on October 31<sup>st</sup> 1916. He was the ship's adjutant. The troop ships sailed via Dakar and Durban, South Africa.

After disembarking at Devonport on January 10<sup>th</sup> 1917, Horrie completed further training at Larkhill and on Salisbury Plains. He was transferred to the Machine Gun Corps in late February 1917. France welcomed him upon her deadly shores on April 19<sup>th</sup>. He was then assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Company on May 11<sup>th</sup> 1917. In late May, he was billeted behind the trenches in a small French village where he related the experience in a letter home. Horrie's promotion to lieutenant was confirmed on August 18<sup>th</sup> 1917. Life expectancy in the machine gun corps at the Front Line in Flanders was around three weeks.

Relief behind the lines was spent at the Chateau Segard south west of leper. Horrie would always ride his horse "Worrigal" over to see his brother, Fred who was attached to the Australian 9<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance. He became engaged to one of the nurses there. Horrie wrote numerous letters home to his family. His last letter home told of the Battle of Polygon Wood in late September, 1917.

During the shelling of the Molenaarelsthoek front line trenches on October 7<sup>th</sup> 1917, Horrie tried to rescue his injured sergeant. Being a man of 6'4" in height and weighing about 16 stone, these machine gun post trenches were never high enough. Horrie was shot by a German sniper. Further shellfire was directed onto the post. His body was never recovered.

He is commemorated on Menin Gate Memorial, leper (Ypres), Belgium. After the war, this sergeant visited the Rex family in Braidwood and related the details of Horrie's dreadful death. Lieutenant Horace Joseph Rex was born on 12 December 1895 at Wattle Grove, Braidwood, New South Wales. He was the third of seven children born to James and Ann (nee Canvin) Rex. After his education at St Bede's Catholic School, Horrie became the local hospital's secretary. Ironically, Horrie's fighting pedigree was first class on two fronts:

#### **JOHN MERNAGH**

Horrie Rex was the second great grandson of John Mernagh who had fought the British throughout the Wicklow Hills of Ireland during the 1798 Irish Rebellion and its aftermath. Fearing John's continuing presence and possible mustering of around 25000 pikes, the British Government urgently despatched 30000 troops to Ireland. After two months, John was eventually captured in mid-February 1804. John was self-banished to New South Wales for Life rather than face trial for sedition and murder, at the hands of the Irish authorities, arriving in February 1806 on board the "Tellicherry".

#### PATRICK J. H. FARRELL

Horrie's great uncle was Brigadier General Dr. Patrick Joseph Hoshie Farrell. Patrick was born in Braidwood, New South Wales in mid-March, 1863. He was the eleventh of thirteen children born to Thomas and Ellen (nee Connell) Farrell. Unfortunately, Braidwood's Bush-ranging episodes of the 1860s had caused thirteen people to lose their lives. Due to the intimate connection with the bushrangers, his Irish parents chose Patrick to rid the family of this stigma. Money was raised and Patrick was sent overseas to be educated. He eventually obtained medical degrees from Edinburgh and Vienna.

Patrick saw considerable war service first in Mexico, then in the Boxer War in China. He commanded the first company of US troops that landed in the Philippine Islands on June 30<sup>th</sup> 1898. He received a citation for meritorious service under fire of the enemy. He was awarded the Silver Star medal and Medal of Valour for gallantry in action. He later became the Surgeon General of the United States Army of the Philippines.

Between 1910 -16, he was Professor of Military Medical Hygiene. When the USA entered the Great War, General Farrell went with his Division to France. He was in command of the Meusse-Argonne section of all hospitals and medical work of the American Army. At the end of the war, he was the Commanding Officer of the Advance Sector Hospitals in France.

How unusual for an Australian to be fighting in the American Expedition Force during WW1. His son, Brigadier Great Singer Farrell was on General Macarthur's staff during the Pacific campaigns of WW2. He visited Braidwood, while on leave, during the war.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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Goulburn, NSW. 1916. Group portrait of junior officers of the 56th Battalion. Back row, left to right: Lieutenant (Lt) W. J. Roseland, Lt Harold W. Otter, Second Lieutenant (2nd Lt) B. A. Cornwell, 2nd Lt A. H. Grimsley, 2nd Lt H. L. Cory and 2nd Lt G. W. Porteous. Front row: Lt C. McDowell, Lt A. A. Blackpool, Captain W. Gee, Lt Horace Joseph (Horrie) Rex, killed in action on 7 October 1917 and 2nd Lt A. Cotton. (Donor P. Mayberry)



1916: Egypt: Other Ranks.

#### Letter from Lt H J Rex To his sister, Connie At Sea 27-11-1916 Just left Durban

My Dear Connie,

I have just a few leisure moments so thought that I would try and describe Durban to you.

We arrived there early on Friday morning. Of course everybody was up early to greet the Land. It was such a pretty sight that met the eye as we came on deck. There was the beach, then beyond this, the town which ran right back into the side of the hill. The main port looked so quaint hiding amongst the trees on the side of the hill, and so different from the ordinary Australian town. The houses were all more or less hidden by the trees and undergrowth.

The harbour tho' only a small one is very pretty. On one side, a huge bluff runs out to sea and is covered with glorious thick jungle or bush which is full of wee monkeys and looked very pretty with the morning sun on it.

Hundreds of Zulu kids came to welcome us and dance for pennies, and scramble for anything that may be thrown down. They looked so quaint with their black curly hair & huge white teeth.

At 10.30 we went for a Route March, and got back for Dinner. After this we marched to the centre of the Town and Dismissed.

All hands set out to explore the city. The Rickshaw Boys took our eyes. They are a scream and dress themselves up like Covered Horses etc. The Ones like horses have pieces of scarf sticking out of their mouths, and shy and prance like a Gee Gee if they see anything unusual. It was nothing to see about 60 lads (soldiers) in Rickshaws going round the Town for their lives. They are drawn by huge Zulu Blacks.

The heat was frightful so we had a bath and sallied forth to explore, and spent two hours motoring in the Country. It was glorious. Some of the road was beyond description. Lined with gorgeous hedges and undergrowth, growing wild. We passed lovely little villages etc. and the fields are beyond description. Each turn of the Road brought us some gorgeous view. Of course, all hands were sorry to go back to Tea.

That night we went to see the Sign of the Cross. It was good. After this we had supper and went home very satisfied with ourselves.

Next day, we explored the residential part of the City. The Knots live on the side of a lovely Hill, overlooking the Town. I am not going to try to describe their homes, they are sights for the gods. Each one is hidden in gorgeous grounds and have gardens beyond description. Kept by Kaffir Boys. Of course, they do not destroy the lovely native shrubs etc like we do.

The Ocean Beach is also Fine. So also the Zoo and Gardens. God there are millions of things that I'll tell you about when I come Home.

Left Durban with many Regrets on Sunday.

Hope you are all well. Regards to Mr & Mrs Higgins

Yours ever Horrie

I may tell you more later. Suddenly got lazy & tired. Can't write tonight.

Remember me to Kate Bourke & Mrs Harvey

Yours Horrie



Letter written in England by Lt Horrie J Rex to his pregnant sister, Nell Mayberry.

17th Reinforcements24 th Battalion9 February 1917

Dear Nell,

A few lines to let you know that I have got used to the cold weather and all the rest of it. Wrote home last Sunday so there is little news to tell you.

The School still goes merrily on and each day we cram more and more rubbish into our now too full heads. I often wish that I was your loyal Husband then perchance I could understand these damn Machine Guns better. However, I still console myself that there are many worse than me. In fact I got 10th highest score yesterday on the range when we fired our first shots of the Machine Guns. 600 shots a minute rattle out. The first time I shot frightened me. I only touched the button and before I took my finger off or rather before I could let go, which was almost as quick as lightning about 18 shots were off. Sort of makes you feel that this war is a serious thing.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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#### **HORACE JOSEPH REX**

Studio portrait of Lieutenant (Lt) Horace Joseph (Horrie) Rex of Braidwood NSW, 1st Machine Gun Corps, wearing a militia uniform. He enlisted in Liverpool, NSW, on 25 July 1916 and was appointed Second Lieutenant and attached to the 56th Battalion. After training at Goulburn Depot, he travelled to Devonport, England, on board HMAT Argyllshire for further training, later being posted to the Machine Gun Corps and sent to France. During the shelling of the front line trenches at Molenaarelsthoek on 7 October 1917, Lt Rex was shot by a German sniper as he tried to rescue his injured sergeant. His body was never recovered, and he is commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial in Ypres, Belgium.

# Letter written in England by Lt Horrie J Rex to his pregnant sister, Nell Mayberry.

#### 17th Reinforcements 24 th Battalion 9 February 1917

The cold weather still sticks to us. It is the coldest ever experienced in England. Many of the Australian Boys are dying in Salisbury Plains. Poor wretches.

To give you an example of it. Every morning your tooth brush is frozen hard and your towel is always frozen stiff. Needless to say we don't like getting out of bed. The days are not so bad but it seems funny to line amongst the snow every day and never see the ground. We have got to the stage now that if we don't see snow it is quite unusual, we sort of expect it.

Had my Photo taken yesterday with my big French Boots that weigh about 50 lbs and big waterproof French coat. I look something like a man going to the South Pole, will send you one.

All the Australian officers are going very soon. We have not had letters for two weeks. Every day we look out for the post only to be disappointed. Have not heard from Fred (brother). Wrote to him last week but suppose it has not arrived yet.

I do sincerely hope that you and Bill are both well and happy. You don't know how I envy you the bonny sun of NSW. We never see it here. Hope Bill keeps his eye in with the gun. I shall have some more Mayberry-Rex wars with the rabbits next year, I hope.

You can't guess how I miss the bunnies, the tennis, the GIRLS and a thousand other things dear to Australians. You know camp life here is very different to Goulburn. Other People don't make a fuss of you and all the rest of it, like they do out there. And as for girls, well they are out of the question.

We live the Hermit life here alright. Too cold to go out anyway.

Tomorrow is Saturday. We are all going skating. Have to do something to break the monotony.

Well I have but a few minutes to go back to the School.

Please convey to all at home and "Maybrook" my kindest.

Very Kindest wishes Love Yours Horrie



# Letter written by Lt Horrie J Rex in France to his sister, Connie

C/- Bank of NSW 29 Threadneedle St, London

30 May 1917

My dear Connie,

It seems quite a long time since I last wrote to you. Also since you honoured me with the latest gossip of Braidwood. The last Australian mail has been in a week now but my letters have not arrived, expect them this week.

We are still out in billets resting, before going back to the trenches. All the AIF are having a spell. So we can expect something hot next time.

Poor Australians and Canadians seem to get all the hard Jobs!

The weather is a perfect treat, really had no idea that France could be so nice. Every place you go is a perfect picture. But as I said in my last letter, the houses are not half as good as the English. The French people all seem to have very dirty habits especially these villagers around here. Feel quite sure that you could not get a bath here for love nor money.

They all keep their cow & goat also a nice garden. I was very amused to see an old dame leading home yesterday afternoon 3 cows & 2 goats. They never let the cows or horses run about like we do & you practically never see a fence of any description. Don't think it would act in Australia.

Charlie Sharpe from Braidwood (not Mountain Ash) is camped here in this village. He is a corporal in the First Battalion. He gave me some "Braidwood District News" newspapers the other day. They were OK I tell you. Was sorry that I did not make arrangements to have them sent to France but when leaving home they told us that they could not .......

Went for a glorious ride after dinner last night. Cornwell called& we went to see Eric Birks &

some of the other old Officers. By Jove it was a treat. The twilight is beyond description. It did not get dark until 9.45 pm and while I am at it, I might tell you that my horse "Worrigal" won a half mile sprint very easily. Birks & Cornie could not sight him, the old beggar bolted but thank Heaven I pulled him up after a long struggle. Hadn't to get somebody to hold his head like old Laddie - but very nearly. He takes some holding. First chance I get I'll have his Photo taken & send it to you. He is "Some horse." Skiter would be able to watch his shoulder beautifully on him. He prances & bucks all over the road but my 15st 6lbs stops him after a while.

On the way back we were jogging thro' a village and a man struck his head out of a window & roared out to me. Pulled up& found it was my old orderly that I had in the 24th. He said, "I knowed yer voice, eard yer comin." He then came out and told me all his news in one breath - something like this -

went up to the line, got hit, sent to Camiers to hospital - stayed 2 weeks - came back - met all the boys - had a good laugh at then cos' they thought "Old Tib" wasn't in the trenches. (Pause for breath) an 'ow are you Mr Rex -Gord I'm glad ter see yer - Oh I'm in the Snipers now - Good job - Oh, an did yer see Mr Gee. - ow is he - (another Pause for breath) -Then his went on for about 10 minutes before I could get a word in sideways - gradually then He told me all his story. I was glad to see him. He is a great old chap. Used to bringing horses up to Braidwood for the races. He is a combined trainer & ex jockey - but a grand old chap. He has 3 kids older than me. Dad may know him, his name is Robinson. He used to stable his nags at Craigs. - But Fancy the old beggar knowing my voice. - He used to rouse on me like fun if I went on Parade with the very least little thing dirty or out of order. He would say, "Yer know Mr Rex, the boys will say -"Any way Old Tib is a rotten "Horderly" e don't look after is Hofficer ertall."" Poor Old Tib was worse than Fred. He wouldn't leave a speck of dirt come within miles of you. Anyway he is coming over tonight to see me " and 'ave a long yarn ter yer" as he says. You might think his language rough but He is a brick - wish I could get him to the 1st Machine Gun Company.

All the Goulburn Officers are going to meet in A.... a big town near here on Saturday. So suppose all hands will have to tell their various experiences over again.

Ken Higgins is close by but I cannot get his exact address. Wish you would ask Mr Higgins for it.

Steve Dowell is only half a mile away. Am going to see him this week. He is a corporal in the 3rd Battn.

Beary Boyd & Leo Sullivan are about 10 miles way.

The 1st Division are holding a big Sports meeting next week and one event is a 3 mile cross country race for officers and as our CO is most anxious to win it, or rather for one of the 1st MGC Officers to win, He gets us out a 6am every morning to train. Then He gets us playing football and acting the goat generally every afternoon. Consequently we are feeling very fit & well. In fact, I don't really think I ever felt half as well as I do now. Nothing like good wholesome exercise for Young & Growing Lads.

Wish that you would remember me very kindly to Mr & Mrs Higgins & the Children. Also to Mrs Burke & Mrs Harvey. Oh & don't forget Maude Bell. Feel sure she will be glad to hear I haven't forgotten her.

If you should be writing to Clarice or Inez remember me also.

Don't think I'll bore you any more.

Hope you are all well & Happy.

Love to all Horrie



## **Lieutenant Horrie Joseph Rex's last letter written to his Mother**

### Belgium during WW1

#### 24 September 1917

My Dear Mother,

I have half an hour to spare so will try to tell you of my first experiences in the Trenches. In my last letter I mentioned that I had been up during the night, this was to get ready so that when the actual Fight started we would know exactly where we were and all the rest of it. I might mention that the Artillery Pounding previous to the attack (5 days) was Terrific. Poor old Fritz must have expected us from this.

### Lieutenant Horrie Joseph Rex's last letter written to his Mother

#### **Belgium during WW1**

#### 24 September 1917

However, at last the hour came for us to taw our guns up & get them ready. Gee I was happy. I had looked forward to it for so long and there seemed so much ahead of us.

We got half way to our destination, darkness came, and with it the rain. So we trudged on and when we had to turn off to cross the shell holes to our trench, there should have been a track but of course, each day the ground is torn and split to pieces. In darkness and rain you will quite understand when I tell you that we got lost before we went 50 yards. Gee it was a bugger, all had very heavy loads on, nobody carrying less than 50 lbs & many with more.

So we pushed on through mud & slush and by some great good fortune struck an old tank which we knew to be near our destination. So we were home & dry as the Boys say and soon had our guns in position & ready for Action. Other Sections were not so lucky. Some were held up until daylight came, but were there in time for the Action.

No doubt you heard of the Australian Part in the Attack. They took all their objectives very easily, in fact, they complain that the Boche would not fight them. A Sgt in the 10<sup>th</sup> Bn with his men struck a strong Post and before they knew what was happening, the Huns were putting their hands up and crying for mercy. But he knocked the first one down himself and ordered his men to finish the rest - which they promptly did. Of course the action was crowded with hundreds of acts like this.

We took Glencorse Wood, Nonne Bosschen Wood & Polygon Wood. By gee it makes you smile when you call them woods. I cannot describe them to you, they are battered and torn & pounded until you would think that an earthquake had happened about every 10 yards. Only an occasional stump is left of what was formerly the Pride of some old French family and probably of the towns scattered about too.

It must make their hearts sore to see them now battered out of all recognition. On your map you will see a village & of course you go along thinking to yourself well I ought to soon come to this Place then suddenly you come to several heaps of broken brick and you at once get a brain wave and discover that you are actually at your destination. If this village happens to be close to the trenches or where the trenches were once, you can bet your life that you will not be able to find even one solid brick let alone Churches, Post Offices etc as shown on your map. They have long since had millions of shells hurled at them, consequently are scattered all over the shop.

You will also be given instructions, perhaps, to take your guns up a certain road which was once the main road from one City to another. You can get along quite well until about a mile or so from the trenches, then your fun starts. You get into this shelled area or barrage as it is called. If you are lucky you perhaps have the stumps of the beautiful trees that grow on either side of the French Roads to guide you or perhaps there are still traces here & there of the cobble stones of the old road. So in this way you stumble on through the shell holes & eventually get to the Line. So you see finding your way about the Front area is not all cream & peaches even by day - by night it is a cow -

Well to go back to our Guns - All was ready & in a few minutes the Attack would start. It was almost day break and the dim forms of our infantry could be seen creeping forward from shell hole to shell hole towards the Hun line. Gee they looked fine in the mist crawling & occasionally running along with their bayonets fixed, and a great big fat smile on their faces& a determined look.

At last the "Zero Time" came, that is the time for the attack to start and about a million of our guns opened up like one also Machine Guns. Gee they did make a noise, & of course the Hun very quickly got his guns going too. You would think Hell had been let loose, the earth absolutely quivered& shook.

At the same Time as the Guns opened up, our infantry charged with fixed bayonets. Gee they looked fine. Charging thro' the smoke & mist, - then they got to the Hun trenches & started operations. We could see them using their bombs & bayonets here and there and then rush forward to the next Point where old Fritz was. Really I cannot describe the scene. It was all so grand and wonderful. All this time old Fritz was shelling Hell out of us but we were like kids on our first Railway Ride or a Sunday School Picnic. We wanted to see & hear everything. By the way you could not hear your own ears for the air.

Very soon our lads were lost in the smoke of the shells so we waited for further word which very soon came in the shape of the slightly wounded men who were knocked out in the first few minutes. Then from this, on they kept coming back & so we got news of the Gallant Anzacs & their doings. After the long rest they made the attack very willing in fact were

waiting for everybody else as the Time came for them to go still further forward.

About half an hour after the attack started, the Hun prisoners started to troop back, sometimes escorted by our lads but more often by themselves, - they were quite happy to be with us. But of course we soon made use of them, and got them carrying our wounded lads down to the dressing station & doing other small jobs then they took them to the "Bird Cage." One lad was very funny, he said to one of our Anzacs, "I want to be in England where shells won't worry me by tonight, so get a move on." It is strange how many Huns can speak English.

A Hun officer was being walked down with some others of his breed, when an Anzac youth said, "Come on, Hook your frame onto this stretcher." The boche officer said, "We do not let your prisoners carry our wounded." The Anzac stood with feet apart and leant on his rifle and said, "Hook, onto it you b(astard) liar or I'll dot you." So his worship Lieut Von so & so grabbed the stretcher & carried on without further argument.

Hundreds of such things happened but what amused me was a Lance Corporal of our lot who was buried by a shell. He has a big mouth & a very cheerful youth, always smiling.

Anyway, we soon dug him out. As soon as his head was clear, a big grin came over his dial & instead of saying hurry up & get me out, he looked around & said, "Did they get my Primus Stove?" The poor lad was not worrying about himself and whether he was hurt or not.

Evidently as Mrs Gardner would say, "His eyes are bigger than his belly."

I am afraid that this will bore you so had better stop soon but if you remind me I'll tell you my part in the show when I see you . We were very busy people 'cos old Fritz would insist on trying to get back his lost ground, but failed horribly. Our Artillery absolutely sent over millions of shells, in fact, a German prisoner

said that they were absolutely impossible to stand up again.

Our Units have been praised by all hands for the wonderful work we did & the casualties we caused. They have a new way now of using us which is a great success.

For the 5 days & nights that we were up, we got very little peace so you can understand how we appreciated a bath& change of clothes. We had clean socks & were able to shave in the Trenches. So that was a big help, also had grand rations.

I enjoyed the Push very much, in fact I find war not so frightful. After all, I was prepared for much worse.

Going back tonight for a few days. Then we have a good rest for a few days until we return to give him more worry.

There are millions of things I would love to tell you but if they got to the Huns hands they would be valuable so you must be satisfied with what little I have told you.

One thing I really want to impress on you is how silly it is to worry. I don't think a Hun could hit me if he threw a dish of wheat from 10 yards.

The Goulburn Boys are in the Line now, but things are very quiet. Ginity did not take Part in the attack. He is up there now I think.

I like being a Real Soldier, it is grand, the glorious uncertainty of the battle and the excitement is grand. Of course ones hand does not shake when he puts his hand out on Pay day after being in the Line.

Hope to see Fred soon, also that you are all well & happy.

Bye bye Tons of Love

Your Very Happy Little Son

Horrie

PS Letters just in. One from you, Connie, Blanche & Anna

Thanks. Will answer later

Н



#### Extract from 1<sup>st</sup> Machine Gun Company Diary AIF

(Diary held in Australian War Memorial Canberra)

Molenaarelstoek, south of Zonnebeke near leper, Belgium

#### 5/10/1917

.... Enemy airmen flying low all along our lines. Our airmen declined to fight though they were about in large numbers. Our men were very disappointed at poor showing of our airmen and very apparent superiority of the enemy. ... Enemy counter attacked but did not pass barrage.

#### 6/10/1917

... Fine then showers on and off all day. Enemy airmen again had the sky to themselves over our forward positions firing down on troops. ... Casualties since Zero 1 Officer 34 Other Ranks.

#### 7/10/1917

Received orders to be ready to support a forthcoming attack by bringing machine gun fire to bear on targets in E19 A & B. ... From 0700 to 1100, enemy aeroplanes flew low, in one case, only 300 feet from the ground. A large number of our machines were in the air but there was no fighting. Shortly after 1100, enemy shelled rear area with heavy high explosives and did considerable damage to roads, pack trains etc. Winter time was taken into use and clocks were put back one hour. At 1600 enemy again shelled roads in rear heavily. Weather very cold and wet towards evening . S.O.S. shown all along the front at 1800 but there was no attack on our front. Lieutenant Rex was killed ......



Braidwood Review, October 30th 1917

Another local name has to be added to the lengthy roll of honour, Lieutenant Horace Rex, was 22 years of age, he passed his examination for commission while yet only 18 years old. A smart officer, he was appointed as one of the instructors in the camps which were called into existence in connection with Mr Hugh's conscription scheme. In this capacity he did excellent service in Goulburn, Cootamundra, the Military College, and in the Sydney camps.

Under military regulations he was not properly entitled to go the front with his commissions until he had reached 23 years of age, he was so keen on going, however, that he threatened to resign and go as a private if he were debarred as an officer.

Eventually the military authorities agreed to his insistent requests, and he left Australia at the beginning of the year for the front as a member of the 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Recently he transferred to the machine gun section, and it was in that capacity he lost his life.

Prior to enlisting Lieutenant Rex was secretary to the P.P. Board in Braidwood, and for some time Secretary to the Hospital. In both positions he did very fine service, he was also highly esteemed by those with whom he came into contact.

Only about ten days ago his parents received a cable from him to say that both he and his brother, who is also fighting in France, were well.

This was probably when he was leaving England to go into the firing line, the news of his death came as a severe shock to his parents.

It is the loss of young men that brings home to one the stern realities of war.

Braidwood Letters from the Front, by Roslyn Maddrell





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

ARTV00122

WHITE FEATHER: Depicts a women, accompanied by her maid and son, watching stoically as her husband marches off to war. She knows that he is fighting for her, their son and their country and she will not stand in his way. The text takes a strong stance, instructing British women to send their husbands off to war. Coinciding with poster campaigns such as this was the white feather campaign, in which women gave feathers to men in order to shame them into enlisting. The campaign was very effective and spread to other nations in the British Commonwealth. In the wake of the socially-divisive conscription campaigns in Australia, feelings were extremely bitter and strong against males not in uniform who gave the outward appearance of being within the 19-44 age group and physically able to serve. In those times, a white feather was considered the mark of a coward and the ultimate insult. These emblems of disgust were sent in the mail, or even handed out personally in the street to those males not in uniform who the instigator considered should be serving in the AIF. Some of the recipients of these odious emblems were, in fact, medically unfit, engaged in essential war work, or even discharged returned soldiers who had already served their country well.

To assist men in avoiding unwarranted indignity and scorn, or receiving a white feather, it was decided to issue every one who submitted his name to the voluntary enlistment ballot, whether or not his name was drawn, with an attractive badge to wear on his civilian clothing. This was to prove that the wearer was not shirking his responsibility to the nation in relation to service in the AIF.

AUSTRALIAN



### AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

Name REX	Horace	Joseph
Unit 24.B	DENE /	
Joined on 25: 7:1	6. 16-	4. Corps

Questions to be put to the F	Person Enlisting before Attestation,
1. What is your Name!	. 1 Dorace Joseph Ned
	2. In the Parish of Braidwood in or
2. In or near what Parish or Town were you born?	
	in the County of A Vincent
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or Naturalized British Subject (N.B.—If th latter, papers to be shown.)	e 3.2.1WAMACOUNTY
4. What is your age?	a 2044 10 months
5. What is your trade or calling !	
<ol> <li>Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice! If so where, to whom, and for what period!</li> </ol>	,
7. Are you married?	8 (Sather) JAMES REX
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) .	
9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power! .	
10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of H Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Inco- rigible and Worthless, or on account of Convi- tion of Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Serv tude, or have you been dismissed with Disgrace from the Navy?	10.26
11. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, H Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, th Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if no now serving, state cause of discharge	11 4 45 Volunter baset, & 45 Milita and senio local terrice (how head
12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service?	18 1 19 709
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty Service? If so, on what grounds?	
14. Do you understand that no Separation Allowance we be issued in respect of your service beyond a amount which together with Pay would reac eight shillings per day.	n 14.
15. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against smallpo and enteric fever?	x 15 /16
by me to the above questions are true, and I am will Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or	do solemnly declare that the above answers made ling and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.
	two-fifths of the pay payable to me from time to time during
my service for the support of my wife	three-fifths
Date 25 BOA 19: b	A. Nex

Transferred to IMPERIAL FORCE. REX.1 Casualty Willed in DATE B. 103 Received PURPORT. A. F. B. 2090A Received. M. G. A ADVISED, KILLED IN ACTION. 7/10/17 ade OPPY MADE FOR WAR PENSIONS Penalons advised Re. A. L. Vide Statement No. / Pensions advised No. A. M. Vide Statement No. 15 "Will" to D.P.M. 2 M.B. 1127/210 Location only Gircular B.R.M. 46/1368 & Booklet - C-nuns despatched 12 1/2 1/2 for ferinded cas BRITISH WAR MEDAL to Comdt ... Dud ... M.D.B.R.M. 53/808 329

Australian

Military Force

Ecrm A. 22

#### Application for a Commission in the flustrales Particulars 1. Surname ... Other names (in full) **Educational Qualifications** (Certificate to be attached for notation at District Military Qualifications (previous esta Voluntotte cades service 3. Military Service, if any, to be stated) (Amenion is directed to third sub-para, of C.M. Regulation 66. Present rank and comp to be stated.) pulsory service with Senior Cadelo Wha steep 25 41. H35 Date on which applicant qualified 4. at a competitive examination for first appointment as 2nd Lieutenant (U.T. Regulation 132) ... 5. Present Civil Employment Date of Birth and Age (Certificate of High or Statutory Declaration to be attached for notation at District Head-Months. If a British Subject or a Naturalized 7. British Subject (ha the case of the latter, date and place of Naturalization to be stated.) 8 Married or Single ... Battalion Area Postul Address Next of Kin 10. : Kese NOTE.—Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Forces are required to attach a attached or certificate of moral character, or, if they are serving in the Permanent or Citizen Forces, to be recommended by their Commanding Officer. They are also to state on the back of this form the subjects in which they desire to be examined in Part II., and where exemptions are claimed for educational subjects, the authority for same is to be stated, and where necessary to be supported by certificate 26thour MEDICAL CERTIFICATE In the cases of Candidates for Commissions in the Permanent Forces, Proceedings of Medical Board, in accordance with instructions contained im' Standing Orders for the Army Medical Services," will be substituted for this Certificate; such Board, however, will not be assembled until after the nomination of the Candidate to undergo examination has been approved by the Military Board of Administration. do hereby certify to the correctness of the following particulars respecting the above-named applicant. I further certify that the applicant is not ruptured, has not been operated on for Hernia, and is capable of bearing the fatigue incident to the performance of military duty. Height & H. Weight... Chest Measurement 40 i. . Eyesight Signature of the Examining | Medical Officer RECOMMENDATION AND CERTIFICATE OF COMMANDING OFFICER I recommend that the candidate above-named be appointed a in the Corps under my command, and I certify:— 1. That such appointment will be within the authorized establishment for the current year. 2. f(a) That the provisions of U.T. Reg. 33 have been fully complied with, or 1. That the provisions of U.T. Reg. 132 have been fully complied with, or 1. That all candidates higher in order of merit, by competitive examination, have been absorbed.

On appointment the candidate will be posted to

Commanding

Squadron, Battery, or Coy., &c.

Commandant 2nd Military District.

Regt. or Corps.

RECOMMENDATION OF DISTRICT COMMANDANT
Recommended, Candidate considered suitable

† Sub-paras, not applicable to be struck out.

### FIELD SERVICE.

REPORT of Death of an Officer 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 lst. Aust. Machine Gun Coy. Troop, Battery or Company or Company

Name REX. Horace Joseph

By whom reported Commanding Officer 1st.Aust.Machine Gun Coy.

Date of Death 7th. October 1917.

Place or Hospital Belgium

Cause of Death Killed in action

Place of Burial Particulars not yet received

State whether he leaves | Will not yet received

All private documents and effects received from the front or hospital, 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 Officer of his wishes as to the disposal of his estate should be reported to the War Office as soon as possible,

Signature of Officer in charge) of Section Adjutant-General's Office at the Base. Officer I/C. Records.

Station and Date ANZAC SECTION. 3RD. ECHELOM.G.H.Q. British Expeditionary Force.
4th. December 1917.

a will or not.

Army Form B. 103. Z 1680 1st.Aust. M.G.Cox.

Casualty Form Active Service.

LIEUT	ENANT. Regin	ment or Corps17/24th.Pattal	ion A. I.B			
Rank2/	LIEUT · Surname	REX	stian Name	orace Jo	seph	
Religion		Age on Enlist	ment	years	months	
		Terms of Service (a) War & 4 Mos				
Date of pro	motion to present	t rank Date of appoi	ntment to lance	rank		
Extended		Re-engaged or Corps Trade and rate				
Occupation	·		· emperodo de .	Signa	ature of Officer	
	Report	Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, casualities.  &c. during active service, in reported on Army Form  B 273. Army Form A 38, or in other official documents.	Place of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks Takus from Army Form B.200, Army Form A.36,	
Date	From whom received	The authority to be quoted in each case		Castanty	on other official documents	
		Embarked	Sydney	30-10-1	6	
	O.C. Troops.	#8."ARGYLLSHIRE" Disembarked	Devonport	10-1-17		
4-1-17	6th.Tng.Bn.	Marched in from Australia	Larkhill	11-1-17	ER. 7386.B213 DO.6/E.3-2-17	
0-3-17	AIF.List 155	Transd. to M.G.Corps	England	28-2-17	DO.27/E.27-4-	
8-3-17	A.M.G.T.Dep.	Marched in from Course	Grantham	16-3-17		
3-4-17	AIF.Depots UP	Proceeded O/Seas France	Tidworth	19-4-17	ER.4330/25/1 DO.27/E.27-4-1	
-5-17	M.G.B.Depot.	Proceeded to join Unit	Camiers	3-5-17	AX . 7502	
8-5-17	lst.MGC.B213.	Taken on strength from			A.4/20 Do.20/447	
		24th.Bn.Reinforcements	Field	11-5-17		
-7-17	Do. Do.	To M.G. School Camiers	u	1-7-17	A.4/27	
-8-17	Do. Do.	Rejoined Unit	n n	29-7-17	A.4/31	

List No.222

On. 35/688

On in the case of a man who has re-mapping for, or enland may Section by Army, Reserve, particulars of such te suggestion in reduction and the entered.

W. Mess-Mozes Annual Will C. P. w. S. List. Form R. 105 E. 100. P. 1. 9.

28-8-17 A.I.F. Order Pro\_oted LIEUTENANT " 18-8-17 AK.1607/4

Date	Report From whom received	Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, complities, for during series and series are reported on Army Form Heal Army death of the official documents. The authority to be quoted in each case.	Place of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks Taken from Army Form B-213, Army Form A-36, or other official documents.	
THE RESERVE OF THE PARTY OF THE	D.A.A.G.(2)	Killed in action	Belgium	7-10-17	AK.1727/63.	P.68
	lst.M.G.Coy. B.213.	Killed in action	n n	7-10-17	183/401/25 A.4/41 D0.40/824	
	7.01a			12.50		
Name of the last			(Sgd.) (	S. SPED	DING 2/LIEU	n
				Officer	I/C. Records	
	ANZAC SECTION BRITISH	SRD. ECHELON. G.H.Q.				
10000						

COPY. OF. "b". 16.

### Killed in Action. V-10-17.

Lieut Rex was killed on the evering of the 7th of October 1917.

We were standing together during a counter attack by the fritz. There was a considerable barrage on at the time. It was a small shell "whis bang" which killed him; one piece went through his chest just about the heart, another piece broke the wrist (left) and there were smaller pieces in various parts of his body. He was killed instantly; he never moved after being hit. He was buried at 2.1.80.15 Hazebrouck 541.100.000 a few yards from where he was killed, and a cross was creeted there. The Bosches occupied that less of country afterwards.

C.E.Cosier Sgt. 1st Aust M.G.Coy.

To open this letter cut along this edge.

B.McK.

O. H. M. S.

13 th November, 1919.

sir.

your son, the late Lieutenant H. J. Rex, 1st Australian Machine Gun Co., on the evening of the 7th October, 1917, by a "whiz-bang" shell, death being instantaneous. He was buried at Hazebrouck, France, a few yards from where he fell, a cross being erected over his grave.

In all cases where members of the Australian Imperial Force have been buried in isolated graves their remains will be exhumed and reinterred in the near to be the disking appropriately. This work is carried out with every measure of charge, Base Records on the presence of a Chaplain.

Victoria Barracks, Melbourne.

James Rex, Esq., BRAIDWOOD, New South Wales. Court House, Braidwood, N g Wales.

20th November 1917.

The Officer in charge.

District Headquarters.

2nd Wilitary District.

Victorda Barra ks. Sydney.

Sir.

With reference to the death of 2nd Lieutenant

H J Rex.Ist Machine Gun Co.late 24th Battalion, A I F.

H J Rex. 1st Machine Gun Co, late 24th Battalion. A I F. of which his Father was advised from the A A G's Office. No 1751, of 2nd Novr instant:

I have the honor to request that a copy or Military Certificate of Death be forwarded me.at the request of the Father, in Connection with Probate of the Will sought to be obtained.

NOV 88 1917

Yours obediently,

District Registrar of Probates.

Forwarded direct to

The Officer I/G Base Records.

(Cuptain J McLean)

Victoria Barracks, Melbourne. Vic.

PORMAL ACKINT.
SENT. 76.11.17

Out Met 27"

#### AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

# RECORD OF OFFICERS' SERVICES.

Rank and Name 2nd	tient REX	H.J.	
Staff or Unit	the Battalion	17th Reinf	1. Mo. 55%
Date of Appointment and Ga	azette 25th July	96 -6. gla	6
Promotion (date and Gazette			
Left Australia in Transport	98 ligyllshi	'ee" on 31 of.	Oct. 1916.
Record subsequent to embari			
28.2.17 Transel	to A. G. Com	6160314	1917 BA 102/35

8.

Australian Imperial Force.

KIT STORE.



110. GREYHOUND ROAD. HAMMERSMITH, LONDON. W. 6.

inventory of Effects of- The Late. Lieut. H.J. Rex. let M.G.Coy. A.IZ. TELEPHONES: HAMMERSMITH 1900, 1901. TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS: "AIFKITS."

Forwarded to-

The Secretary.
Defence Department.
MELBOURNE.

(Father).

Mr. James Rex. Braidwood.

N.B. Will in bank of New South Weles. Braidwood, New South Wales.

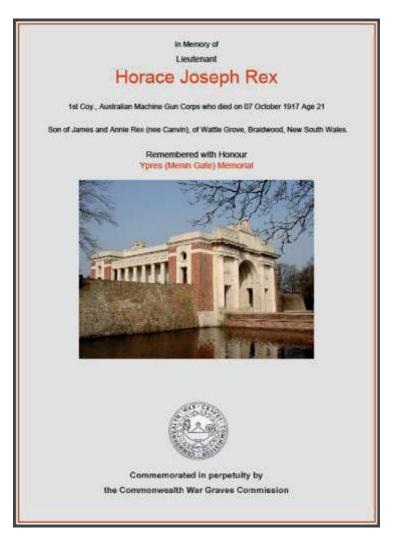
W. C.S.A. 2/11/17.

ONE VALUE (See Let ) EX. C.S.A. 2/11/17.
ONE VALUE (Sealed) Containing:

2 Wallets, Letters, Postcards, Socks, Handkerchiefs, Ties, Collars, 2 Books (Fragments of France), 2 Towels, 1 Pr.Gloves, 1 Muffler, 2 Suits Pyjamas, 2 Singlets, 1 Shirt, 1 Pr.Underpants, 1 "Sam Browne" Belt, 1 Pr.Boots, 1 Pr.Leggings, 1 Safety Razor, 2 Shaving Brushes, 1 Brush, 1 Knife, Keys and Chain, 1 Whistle & Lanyard, 2 Resor Strops, 1 Pr.Spurs, 1 Belt, 1 Cap. 1 Fleece Lining, 2 S.D.Tunic, 1 Pr.Slacks, Rosary Beads, 1 Kit Bag.

No. of Package \$15. 26975in case no sys.

Checked by





YPRES, Belgium 25 October, 1917: Australians on the way to take up a front line position in the Ypres Sector. The ruins of Ypres, including the Cloth Hall, can be seen in the background. During the First World War the charming town was reduced to a heap of rubble. Ypres was almost entirely destroyed by four years of war. The citizens of Ypres rebuilt their city with respect for the past. (Photographer: Frank Hurley).



Ypres, Belgium, 1914 and inset, as it is today. Ypres before, during and after the devastation of WWI. Every evening at 8 pm precisely, the 'Last Post' has been sounded since 1928 under the imposing arches of the Menin Gate, in memory of the hundreds of thousands soldiers of the then British Empire and Allied Forces who fell in the Ypres Salient during the First World War. The Gate, shaped like a Roman triumphal arch, displays the names of 54,896 soldiers of the then British Empire missing in action.

#### **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

**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

Torpy, Thomas Fattick

Walker, William Albert

**Watt, James** 

Watt, Oscar Harold McClure

White, Alister

Whitelaw, Thomas Philip

Wilson, Samuel Charles

AERROWN