

***Address Armistice Day Camden 2018; Lt. Len Carter AFSM.EFO, (Retd)
@ Camden, President, 7TH Light Horse Regiment AIF, Historical Troop.***

On the second Anniversary of the Armistice (Armistice Day) on 11th November 1920, the commemoration was given added significance when it became a funeral, with the return of the remains of an Unknown Soldier from the battlefields of the Western Front. Unknown Soldiers were interred with full military honours at Westminster Abbey London, and Arc De-Triumph Paris. The entombment in London attracted over one million people within a week to pay their respects at the Unknown Soldier's tomb. Most other allied nations adopted the tradition of entombing unknown Soldiers over the following decades. In Australia at the 75th anniversary of the armistice in 1993, (having been re-named Remembrance Day), Ceremonies became the focus of national attention. The remains of an unknown Australian Soldier, exhumed from a First World War military cemetery in France, were ceremonially entombed in the Australian War Memorial's Hall of Memory. Remembrance/Armistice Day ceremonies were conducted simultaneously in towns and cities all over Australia, culminating at the moment of burial at 11.00 am and coinciding with the traditional minute's silence. During that ceremony, the then Prime Minister Mr Paul Keating made a Remembrance Day address at the internment grave, sections of that address I now quote are as follows.

Quote; We do not know this Australian Soldier's name, and we never will. We do not know his rank or his battalion. We do not know where he was born, or precisely how or when he died. We do not know where in Australia he had made his home, or when he left it for the battlefields of Europe. We do not know his age or his circumstances, whether he was from the city or the bush, what occupation he left to become a Soldier; what religion, if he had a religion; if he was married or single. We do not know who loved him or whom he loved, if he had children. We do not know who they are; His family is lost to us as he was lost to them. We will never know who this Australian was. Yet he has always been among those whom we have honoured. We know that he was one of 45,000 Australians who died on the Western Front. One of 416,000 Australians who volunteered for service in the First World War 1914. One of the 324,000 Australians who served overseas in that War,

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One of the 60,000 Australians who died on foreign soil, and one of the 100,000 Australians who have died in wars this century. He may have been one of those who believed that The Great War was an adventure, too GRAND to miss! He may have felt that he would never live down, the shame of not going. But the chances are he went for no other reason than he believed it was his duty he owed his Country and his King.

Because the Great War was a Mad-Brutal, and *Awful Struggle*, the waste of human life was so terrible that some said victory was scarcely discernible from defeat. It was supposed to be the War to end all Wars we may think the Unknown Soldier Died in Vein? But in honouring our War Dead as we do annually & again here today, we declare that is not true. On all sides there are heroes of War. Not the generals and the Politician's but the Soldiers, Sailors, Airman, and Nurses, Male and Female. Those who taught us to endure hardship, to show courage, to be bold as well as resilient, to believe in ourselves and to stick together. The Unknown Soldier was one of those who by his deeds proved that real nobility and grandeur belong NOT to Empires or Nations, but to the people on whom, they in the last resort always depend.

The Unknown Australian Soldier is not interned to glorify War over Peace; or to assert a Soldier's character above a civilian's; or one nation; or one religion above another; or men above women; or the war in which he fought and died, to be above any other war, or one generation above another. The Unknown Soldier honours the memory of all those men and women who laid down their lives in two Great World Wars, and for those who continue to serve Australia, In peace keeping and in war, specially this 100th Centenary year 2018, of the Signing of the Armistice in 1918 ;

May the unknown Soldier, together with those Service Men and Women we honour today, who have made the ultimate sacrifice forever rest in peace;
LEST WE FORGET.

Lt. Len Carter. AFSM.EFO.(Retd)

(President.CO,7thAustralian Light Horse Regiment AIF. Menangle Historical Troop).