

## Historical Officers Report

Events of the Great War as reported in the Camden News  
Cables from the European War 1918

### 1st June

#### First use of RAN aircraft in combat launched from HMAS Sydney & Melbourne in Heligoland Bight



### 6<sup>th</sup> June

The French have held the western outskirts of Soissons.

"Farther south extremely violent fighting occurred in the region of the Soissons-Hartennes road. In the centre the intense struggle has not slackened. The enemy has captured Fore-en-Tardenois, and in multiplying his efforts towards Ville-en-Tardenois. On the right and also north-west of Reims French and British troops broke all assaults, and maintained their positions.

Sir Douglas Haig reports that much aerial and bombing work has been carried out. During May 1127 aeroplanes were downed on all fronts, and include 744 German machines. Bombs have again been dropped on hospitals and Paris, many casualties were inflicted.

The enemy's progress is being maintained, but is slower.

The original drive to the south has, for the time being resolved itself into a thrust westward. Tho strain in Paris has relaxed, although the public is still most anxious.

German submarines attacked shipping of the New Jersey (U.S.A.) coast during Sunday night, and early Monday morning. Remarkable success attended the

attack, 13 vessels being sunk. Only two U-boats were seen, but naval men believe that five were operating. All Eastern ports have been closed, and no vessels are being allowed to sail as a consequence of the raid.

Owing to lack of reinforcements three Australian battalions in France are to be withdrawn from the front.

### **13<sup>th</sup> June**

Australians launched a surprise attack on the German positions at Merris; two lines of enemy defences were taken on a three-quarter mile front. Heavy losses were inflicted, and over 250 prisoners, 34 machine-guns, 20 minenwerfers, and a field-gun captured.



Minenwerfer

An enemy attack against the Australian positions at Morlancourt proved a complete failure. The Australians inflicted losses, and took prisoners and machine-guns.

During last month British aircraft brought down 398 German Aeroplanes and drove down 100. Antiaircraft guns brought down 20, while 128 British machines were reported missing.

### **20<sup>th</sup> June**

A strong enemy attack on the new post south of Merris was completely repulsed; heavy enemy attacked on a mile and a half front from Belleau to Boeresches completely broke down.

Two Austrian Dreadnoughts were sunk by two Italian torpedo-boats at the Dalmatian Islands on June 10.

The torpedoing of two powerful Austrian warships is the most serious blow yet inflicted on the Austrian Navy. The Italian torpedo boats joined the escorting Austrian torpedo boats and steamed side by side with them in the darkness. A 22,000 ton battleship and an armoured cruiser were torpedoed before the enemy was aware of their presence.

Advices from Switzerland state that the German Admiralty is considering a great -naval offensive.

The Imperial Conference has been opened under the presidency of Mr. Walter Long, Colonial Secretary. Australian and Indian delegates have not yet reached England.

## **27<sup>th</sup> June**

It is officially announced that from Montello to the sea the Austrians have been defeated. Pursued by the Italians the enemy is now recrossing the Piave in disorder. Seventy-five thousand Austrians are involved in the flight.

The Paris press regards the Austrian defeat as being almost a complete rout.

An Italian official message states that Sunday gave them the crowning results of their victory. Unceasingly bombarded by the Italians, the Austrians on Saturday began their withdrawal to the left bank of the Piave.

The crossing of the river, under deadly fire from the Italian artillery continued on Monday. The Montelle and all the right bank of the Piave, excepting a portion of Musile, have been recaptured.

28<sup>th</sup> June CPL Phillip Davey VC at Merris, France



## **From The Home Front**

At the Picton municipal council meeting hold early in May, the town clerk in his report on straying stock reported "A count was also made of horses straying in Upper Picton on two nights, the numbers being 32 and 44. It is desired to know whether the council with impounding made from them.

Word has been received from the Defence Department, through Rev. C. J. King, that another Camden soldier has fallen in service to his country in France, Hilton J. Chesham, (Gilly), aged 27 years, son of Mr. J. Chesham, of Camden, killed in action on 14th May last.

This fine young lad was one of the "sports" of Camden, he was a general favourite, on local football fields, and his activities in all manly sport stamped him as a splendid type of Australian manhood, and his physical training made him a good soldier, for often have we heard of his work and service at the front, where he has fought for 2 years and 8 months.

## **BURRAGORANG NEWS.**

Early last month a Roll of Honour was unveiled at Bimlow, in the presence of a large and representative gathering of residents of the Cox's River and Bimlow districts. The ceremony was performed by Mr. John Grundy, Of "Happy Home." The following names are inscribed on the Honour Roll.

Pte. OSWALD PIPPEN, wounded, two occasions.  
Bombardier REG. McMAHON.  
Pte. OSWALD McMAHON gassed.  
Pte. W. STARLIN.  
Pte. JACK KERSWELL Killed in Action.  
Driver A. L. KERSWELL.  
Pte. M. MAXWELL.  
Driver HAROLD DUNN.  
Pte. P. J. O'REILLY Wounded.  
Pte. LES. GRUNDY, Died of wounds.  
Pte. WALTER PEARCE.  
Pte. B. PEARCE.  
Pte. PHILIP SMITH.  
Pte. TOM CLARKE. Wounded.  
Pte. CLIFF CLARKE. Killed in Action.  
Pte. HORACE CLARKE.

Photographs of the whole of the New South Wales troops proceeding to the front are to be deposited in the State archives.



### **Private Arthur Henry Ryder**



Killed in Action, 1st June 1918, Somme, France

Ray Herbert  
Historical Officer