



A Soldier of the Great War

Private Henry Martin

Battalion AIF



Private Henry Martin

Regimental number	2212
Place of birth	Maryborough Queensland
Religion	Church of England
Occupation	Shop assistant
Address	Howard, Queensland
Marital status	Single
Age at embarkation	27
Next of kin	Sister, Mrs Helena Jane Steley, Howard, Queensland
Enlistment date	29 March 1916
Rank on enlistment	Private
Unit name	52nd Battalion, 4th Reinforcement
AWM Embarkation Roll number	23/69/3
Embarkation details	Brisbane, Queensland, on board HMAT A42 <i>Boorara</i> on 16 August 1916
Rank from Nominal Roll	Private
Unit from Nominal Roll	52nd Battalion
Fate	Returned to Australia 19 October 1917

Henry Martin was a 27 year old Shop assistant from Howard near Maryborough .He enlisted in the AIF on the 29th March 1916. He was initially enlisted in the 52nd Battalion and after some training embarked Brisbane, Queensland, on board HMAS A42 *Boorara* on 16 August 1916 bound for the battlefields of the Western Front.



He would arrive in England in late 1916 having missed the first major actions by Australians after Gallipoli at Fromelles and Pozieres where thousands of Diggers lost their lives. After a bout of mumps, Henry would arrive at Etaples in France on the 19th December 1916 training and labouring behind the lines during the harsh winter in Belgium.

The 52nd Battalion was raised at Tel el Kebir in Egypt on 1 March 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Approximately half of its recruits were veterans from the 12th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 12th, the 52nd was originally a mix of men from South and Western Australia and Tasmania. From March 1916, the battalion's reinforcement groups mainly comprised men from Queensland. The 52nd became part of the 13th Brigade of the 4th Australian Division.

After arriving in France on 11 June 1916, the 52nd fought in its first major battle at Mouquet Farm on 3 September. It had been present during an earlier attack mounted by the 13th Brigade between 13 and 15 August, but had been allocated a support role and missed the fighting. In this second attack the 52nd had a key assaulting role and suffered heavy casualties- 50 per cent of its fighting strength. The battalion saw out the rest of the year alternating between front line duty, and training and labouring behind the line. This routine continued through the bleak winter of 1916-17.

Early in 1917, the battalion participated in the advance that followed the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line, and attacked at Noreuil on 2 April. Later that year, the focus of AIF operations moved to the Ypres sector in Belgium. There the battalion was involved in the battle of Messines between 7 and 12 June and the battle of Polygon Wood on 26 September. Another winter of trench routine followed.

Henry and the 52nd Battalion moved to Vignacourt in mid December .They were to remain here until early January, billeted and training for further deployment. It is extremely possible that Henry had his photo taken by the Thuilliers while there. He may even have visited Naours caves and left his name there. The Battalion spent time at Villers-Bocage, Fricourt and finally Flers.

As February came the Battalion was involved in and out of the lines around Flers. It snowed heavily and conditions would have been terrible for soldiers both in and out of the lines. Shelling continued during the entire time. In April at Buire and Lagnicourt the Battalion was in the front line and assisted in the capture of Noreuil. On the 29th April time was even granted for polling for the Federal election of 1917.

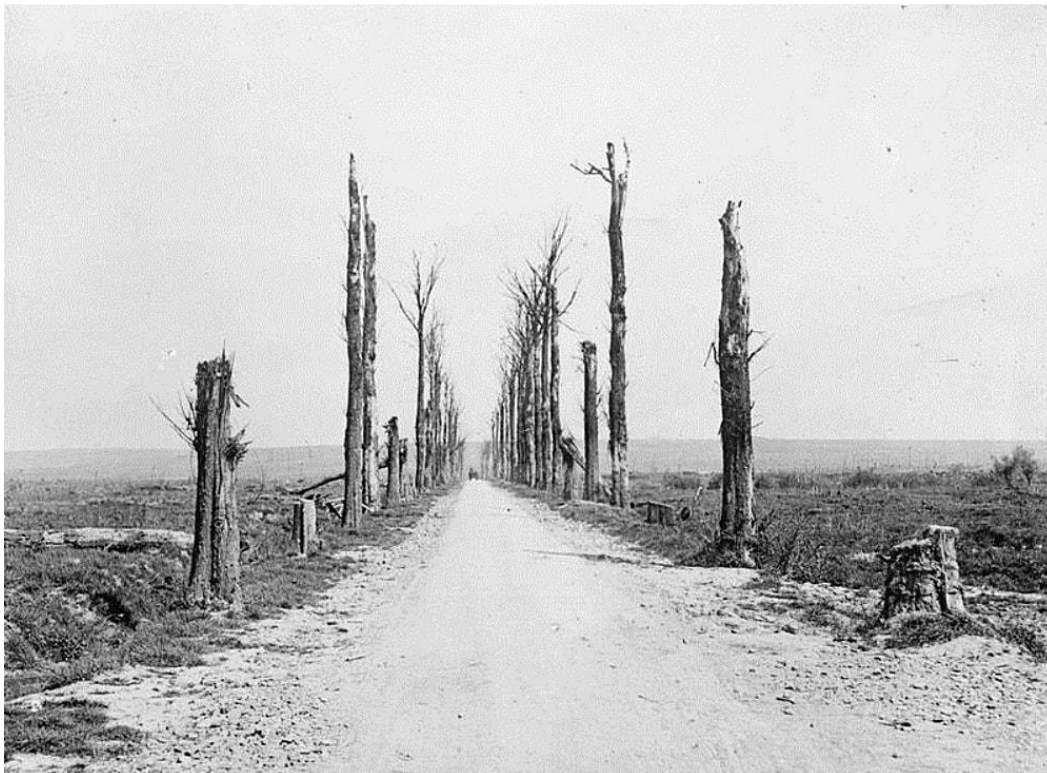
As the weather improved the Battalion was rested and moved back to Belgium via Abbeville, Boulogne, Calais and Hazebrouk. Billeted near Caestre in late May they were visited by General Plummer .By late May they finally were in the Ypres sector in Belgium.

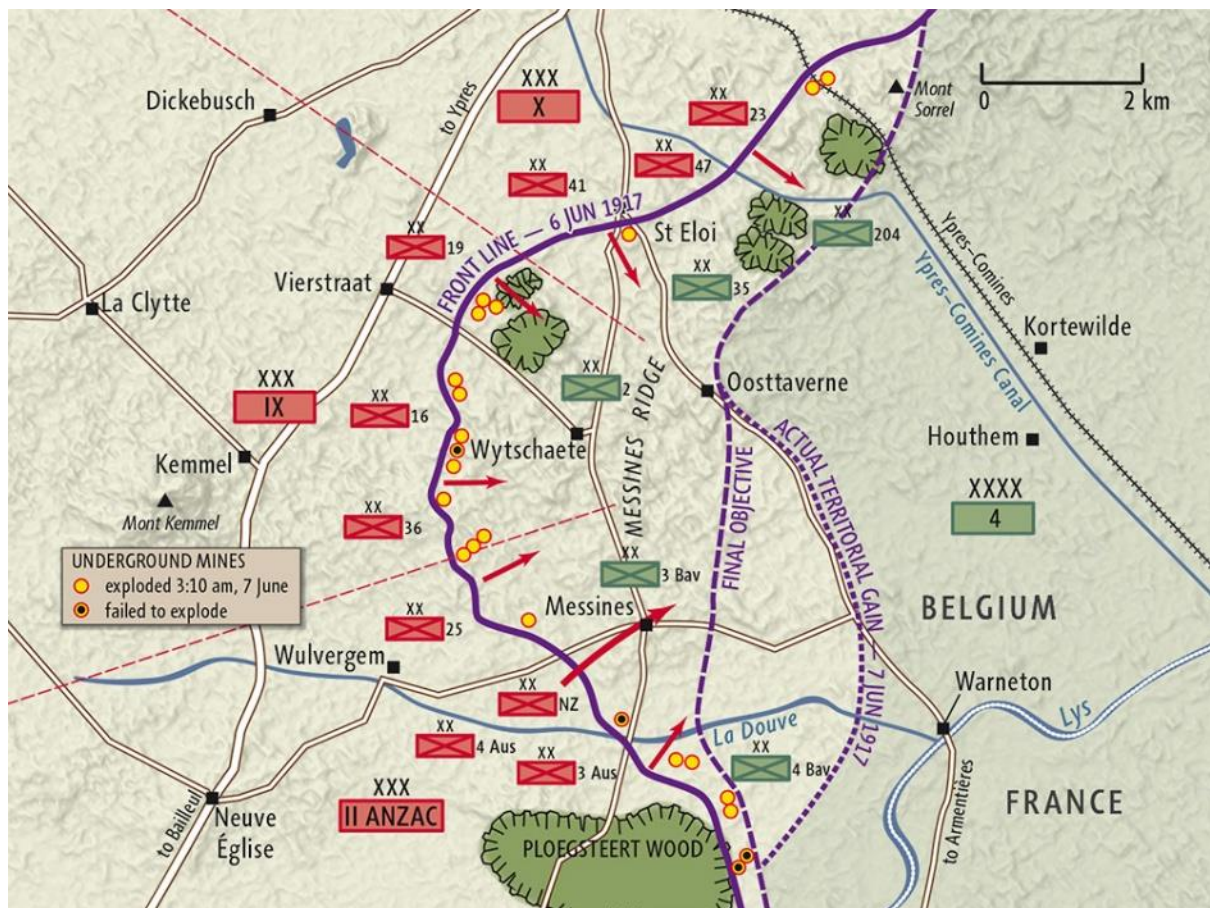
It was here that the Messines Ridge was a major objective. The Battalion was in and out of the front doing reconnaissance waiting for orders to be given.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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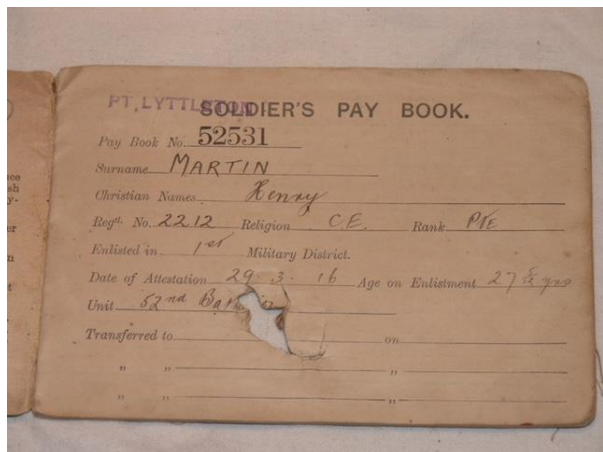




It was during events at Messines Ridge that Henry was to be severely wounded. This was to eventually lead to his return to Australia. The war for Henry on the Western Front was over.

“A bullet hit the left side pocket of his tunic, shattering his razor and passing through his paybook and hit his steel mirror. The bullet hit the mirror and missed his heart. The bullet stayed in his body after he was repatriated to England. The bullet remained there for over 10 years until it moved closer to his spine and was eventually removed at Maryborough Hospital in 1927.”

Being the only male in the family this event saved the Martin family !



The 52nd Battalion War Diary below gives the events of early June.

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REPORT ON OPERATIONS BY 52nd BATTALION ON 7th, 8th
JUNE 1917.

Appendix No 2

On 7/6/17 the Battalion moved forward on to the Brigade assembly line and was waiting in shell holes ready to proceed to the Jumping off Trench, when the order for New Zealanders came round. We were in touch with the 49th Battalion on our Right.

At 1-40 p.m. the Battalion moved forward, crossing the MESSINES - WYTSCHAETE ROAD at the two points we were supposed to and formed up on the tape from O.27. Central to O.27.d.O.O. (which had been laid out by the Intelligence Officer Lieut YORK.) in two waves of 4 lines each A. & B. the first wave, A on the Right, C. & D. the 2nd wave; C on the Right

The Battalion was in touch with the 49th Battalion on our Right, but the 5th Lincoln's failed to put in an appearance on the left and patrols could find no word or sign of them. At severe the-barrage was set. On account of the Left Flank being in the air, the attached Brigade Machine Gun Section had instructions to form a Strong Post protecting that flank at about O.27.b.8.3.. Ten minutes before Zero 16 Platoon was moved out to the left flank of D Company to mop up as the barrage crept forward and to prevent sniping on to that flank as the Battalion moved ahead.

At Zero the Battalion moved forward, the Right being in touch with the 49th. "D" Company after the start was swung to the left and came up on the left of "B" Company partly filling the gap caused by non appearance of the Lincoln's.

The 49th Battalion and "A" Company lost touch during the advance, but as soon as the objective was reached this gap was filled by "C" Company.

"A" & "C" Companies reached their first objective, "D" & "B" companies went through and put posts in the 2nd objective. The line as held by the Battalion as follows :- From O.28.a.9.2. to O.28.b.0.4. (3 Posts occupied the trench) from O.28.c.00.65. 3 posts ran to the road at O.22.d.30. thence along the rear of the road to O.22.d.05..55., and in a series of posts which bent back to ODOUR TRENCH at O.22.c.55.50., along ODOUR TRENCH to O.22.c.45.75. A patrol worked along to the left and found an English Battalion behind ODOURO TRENCH, but no one in it for 400-500 yards to our left arrangements were made with this English Regiment to form a defensive flank to their right, thus linking the front line up.

"A" & "C" Companies had supports dug in from O.28.95. to behind the enemy wire at O.28.a.8.3. to O.28.a.8.5. and forward through the wire to O.28.b.00.65..

Two Companies of Borders were found just behind our front line and these were put in one at O.28.a. Central along the 40 Contour Line, and the other behind the junction of the 52nd and 49th Battalions. A Platoon of English were collected near the Railway at O.22.a.24., and sent out to VAN HOVE FARM to occupy it, a tank co-operating with them, thus protecting our left flank from the enemy. Two tanks were sent down to O.22.a.8.3. to strengthen the valley there and support the posts in front.

Soon after 8-0 p.m. our artillery commenced firing short heavies on the left sector around JOYE FARM, and 18 pounders with some howitzers on the right sector.

At 9-0 p.m. the C.O. Left sector got in touch with the headquarters of the LINCOLNS and arranged that as soon as their companies came forward a Company would be sent on to occupy from O.28.b.00.65. to O.22.a.9.3., and relieve our men of this sector 2/Lt BILSON organising the posts for them and connecting their flank up.

The shelling of our artillery had become so severe that on the centre and left sector the posts were withdrawn to ODOURO and ODOUR trenches, about 9-15 p.m., on the right the posts were withdrawn to the Support Line, and all troops except sentries were kept absolutely down under cover, all work ceasing.

At 11-0 p.m. the enemy counterattacked along our Front but failed to reach our trenches or get within bombing distance owing to our machine gun and rifle fire. The rest of the night was spent in consolidating.

Tollard

Sheet No. 2.

On 8.6.17 the enemy were kept down by snipers and Lewis Gunners, and once or twice dispersed by our Artillery etc. At 9-30 a.m. it was found that a large party of enemy had crept forward by one's and two's and were massing in shell holes and old emplacements from O.22.a.85. to O.22.c.77., 20 bombers under 2nd Lt. BOASE were sent forward to dislodge them. These men bombed forward, got in touch with the enemy and outbombed him, standing on the surface and chasing him from cover with bombs, and when they broke and tried to retire our Lewis Gunners and snipers cut them down. This continued until none were left. In the afternoon a party went out and collected forty wounded German prisoners, and estimated there were from 60-80 dead; Three men of our were killed, and 4 wounded. The whole party showed remarkable dash and bravery, especially as the shell holes occupied by the Germans had quantities of bombs of every description in them. A prisoner who spoke English stated the whole Company was killed or taken prisoner. The attack finished any active opposition the enemy gave us until we were relieved.

At 8-10 p.m. a barrage was put down by both sides, the British troops in present and in the rear became very jumpy, an S.O.S. even being sent up by the supporting troops.

An order was received for the Battalion to move back at 9-0 p.m. to Supports of the 49th & 51st Battalions.

"A" & "C" Companies moved through the barrage to time, and wild rumours were very prevalent among the English Troops that the Australians were retiring, "B" & "D" Companies were kept until the fire had slackened, and an Officer preceded the relief to warn troops to warn troops at Headquarters of Battalions through whom they passed of the relief, because the troops in the rear were so jumpy that their steadiness was absolutely shaken.

No S.O.S. Signals were sent up by this Battalion during the afternoon or evening of the 11th 8/6/17.

The Tanks rendered very valuable aid, and were retiring in their efforts to help. They acted with the utmost promptitude in going to the assistance of troops or accomplishing any work asked of them. They dismounted their Lewis Guns and worked them from the trenches and refused to leave the front line until everything was consolidated.

F. Maypherson

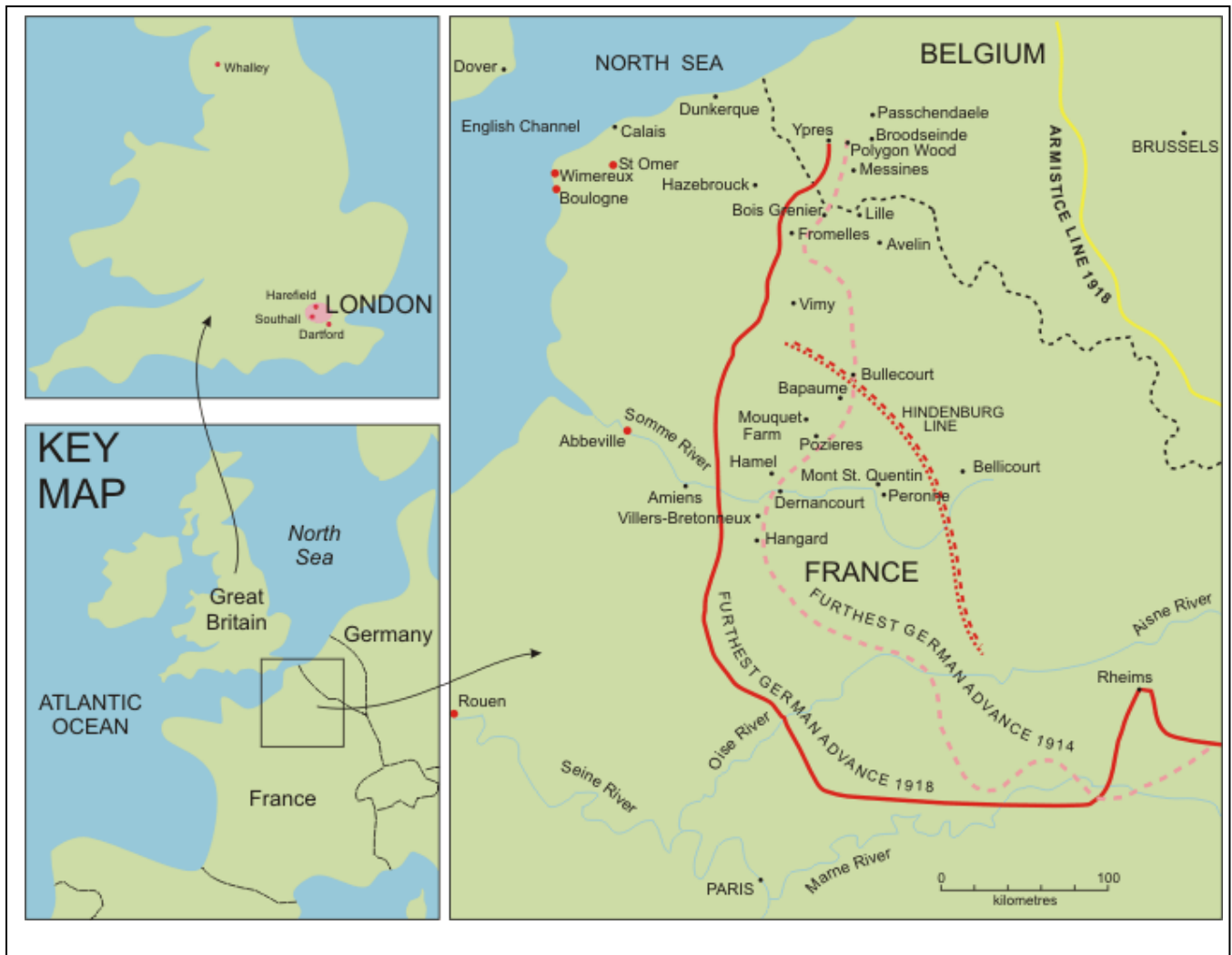
Major.

Tempy. Commanding 52nd Battalion A.I.

Henry was treated at a local field hospital in the field before being repatriated to Boulogne for further treatment. He was transferred to the Military hospital at Folkstone and eventually transferred to the 3rd Auxiliary Hospital at Dartford in England.

Finally he was to depart for Australia on the 19th October 1917.

He was discharged unfit from his active service in January 1918.



A

42104

AUSTRALIAN



MILITARY FORCES.

4694

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 2212

Name Martin, Henry

44

Unit 4/52 Battalion

Joined on 29th March 1916.

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

1. What is your Name? ... Henry Martin
2. In the Parish of Colton in or near the Town of MARYBOROUGH state Queensland in the County of Queensland
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) ... Yes
4. What is your Age? ... 27 yrs. 5 mos
5. What is your Trade or Calling? ... Shop assistant.
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period? ... No
7. Are you married? ... No
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) ... Mrs Helens Jane Steley, Howard, Queensland
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? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge ... Wide Bay Regt: 2 yrs: no discharge.
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? If so, on what grounds? ... No.
14. (For married men, widowers with children, and soldiers who are the sole support of widowed mother)— Do you understand that no separation allowance will be issued in respect of your service beyond an amount which together with pay would reach eight shillings per day? ...
15. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small pox and enteric fever? ... Yes.

I, Henry Martin 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* † wife and children.

Date 29/3/16.

H. Martin
Signature of person enlisted.

D.377/11.15.—C.15759. * 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.

Report.		Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, casualties, &c., 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 in other official documents.
Date.	From whom Received.				
<p>21-11-16 No. 3 Con Depot Marched out to 13th Tng Bn 18, 11 13 AX4722</p>					
17.10.16	No 3 Con Depot	Adm. to 13th Tng Bn 17 mumps	England	23.10.16	A.X.4722
16.4.17	C. O. Bn.	To Hospital, Sick.	In The Field	9.4.17	B. 213 2025/2018 222/15
14.4.17	4 A.S. Co	Adm S.T. A.F.	France	9.4.17	AK 1105/91
		T'pt to D.R.S.	do	9.6.17	
14.4.17	8 A.S. Co	Adm S.T. A.F.	do	10.4.17	AK 1105/36
		T'pt to D.R.S.	do	11.4.17	
22.4.17	12 Linc Hptl	Adm S.T. A.F.	France	21.4.17	AK 1105/158
1.5.17	do	T'pt to Con Depot	do	30.4.17	AK 1221/22
1-5-17	2 C.S.	adm Sick	Rozen	30/4/17	AK 1221/26
6.5.17	2 C.S.	Hd Y.6.7 feet to 1168 Buckley in Rozen		5.5.17	AK 1221/34
6.5.17	11 C. Dep.	Adm. J.C. T. feet.	Buckley	5.5.17	AK 1221/45
24.5.17	do	Adm to 13th Tng Bn	do	23.5.17	AK 1221/08

Regimental Number 2212

Casualty Form—Active Service.

Regiment or Corps 52nd BATTALION A.I.F.
 Surname Martin Christian Name Henry
 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, &c. 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 of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks Taken from Army Form B.213, Army Form A.36, or other official documents
Date	From whom received				
		Embarked ...			
		Disembarked ...			
<u>26.5.17</u>	<u>4th A. D. B. D.</u>	<u>Marched in</u>	<u>Epales</u>	<u>22.5.17</u>	<u>B. 213</u> <u>D 0.9/21</u>
<u>26.5.17</u>	<u>4th A. D. B. D.</u>	<u>Marched in</u>	<u>Epales</u>	<u>22.5.17</u>	<u>B. 213</u> <u>D 0.9/21</u>
<u>2.6.17</u>	<u>C.O. Bn.</u>	<u>Rejoined unit</u>	<u>In the Field</u>	<u>28.5.17</u>	<u>B. 213</u> <u>D 0.9/21</u>
<u>1.6 JUN 1917</u>	<u>C.O. Bn.</u>	<u>Wounded in action</u>	<u>In The Field</u>	<u>7.6.17</u>	<u>B. 213</u> <u>VL 37-14/417</u>
<u>9.6.17</u>	<u>77th Coy</u>	<u>Adm Sgt Chas</u>	<u>Field</u>	<u>7.6.17</u>	<u>1/2 to 53 C.C.S.</u> <u>7.6.17</u> <u>AK 1334/91</u>
<u>8.6.17</u>	<u>13 Coy</u>	<u>Adm Sgt Chas</u>	<u>Banyan</u>	<u>8.6.17</u>	<u>Hpl</u> <u>AK 1334/42</u>

(a) In a 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) Slighter, Shoeing-Smith, &c.

(6228) W. 1366/M1477 2,400,000 1/17 MeA & W Ltd Perth B/1054 (E. 856) [P.T.O.]

Report		Record of promotions, reductions, transfers, casualties, &c. 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 of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks Taken from Army Form B.213, Army Form A.36, or other official documents
Date	From whom received				
<u>12.6.17</u>	<u>13 Coy</u>	<u>Transf to</u>	<u>England</u>	<u>12.6.17</u>	<u>AK 1334/76</u>
	<u>Hpl</u>				
<u>12.6.17</u>	<u>St David</u>	<u>Embarked for</u>	<u>England</u>		<u>DD.34/3241</u>
		<u>Sgt Chas</u>	<u>Banyan</u>	<u>12.6.17</u>	<u>AK 1334/97</u>
		<u>Plu</u>			<u>W.S. 483</u>
<u>13/6/17</u>	<u>Milly Hoop</u>	<u>g L W jaw bleed &</u>	<u>Stonecliffe</u>	<u>13/6/17</u>	<u>DD 388</u> <u>30/6/17</u>
		<u>abdomen (Ser)</u>			<u>398</u>
<u>27/8/17</u>	<u>3 Aus</u>	<u>Plu Frans</u>	<u>3rd Aus</u>	<u>Dartford</u>	<u>27/8/17</u> <u>SR 1658</u>
<u>29/8/17</u>	<u>Do.</u>	<u>Plu Adm</u>	<u>27/8/17</u>	<u>hulo. Do.</u>	
		<u>from 29/8/17 to 12/9/17</u>			
		<u>1 Rept to Depot Weymouth</u>			
<u>16/9/17</u>	<u>No 2 Com Dep</u>	<u>Plu No 9</u>	<u>from A to 2</u>	<u>Weymouth</u>	<u>12/9/17</u> <u>2198336</u>
		<u>London etc hulo.</u>			
<u>30/9/17</u>	<u>Do.</u>	<u>Plu No 10</u>	<u>to Sub depot</u>	<u>Do.</u>	<u>21/9/17</u> <u>198873</u>
		<u>Parkhouse</u>			
<u>30/9/17</u>	<u>2 Sub Depot</u>	<u>Plu No 9</u>	<u>from No 2</u>	<u>Pkhouse</u>	<u>27/9/17</u> <u>2198873</u>
		<u>Com Dep. Weymouth</u>			
<u>24/10/17</u>	<u>1 B 341 Co</u>	<u>Plu</u>	<u>Eng</u>	<u>19/10/17</u>	<u>SR 1803</u> <u>DOVE 11/10/17</u>

RETURN TO AUSTRALIA
 Per H.T. Post Byletter
 For change S.W. Chest

Discharged 1st 16.12.17 (W.) 1918 B.P.R. 120/9

Transferred to

DISCHARGE SECTION
D

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

No. 2212.

Rank *Pte*

Name

MARTIN. H.

Unit

52nd Battalion.

LIST.

317 Casualty

Wounded


C. P. P. 1921. 1921^E dated London 2/6/17

*Issued. Chest, Abdomen, Jaw. General adm 13.6.17. Thorncliffe
 Military Hospital W.S.M. 483. 1921^E dated London 28.6.17 *AK*
 Progressing favourably. W.S.M. 483. 1921^E dated London 7/7/17 *AK*
 Convalescent W.S.M. 2. 534. 1921^E dated London 5.9.17 *AK*
 Returning to Australia per *A. J. Lytleton, Embarked. 17-10-17*
*C. P. P. 1921. 1921^E dated London 29-10-17. *AK**
 15-12-17. Retd. to Australia per *A. J. Lytleton* per *S. J. B. R.* Hence overland to *29.10*
(Shell wound chest)
 19-1-18. Discharged. S.O.R.S. 1st Mo. H. A. 4. B. 179. *W.S. B.R. 1921**


DATE.	PURPORT.	REF. NO.
23 JUN 1917	N. O. K. Advised Wounded	
3 JUL 1917	N. O. K. Advised in Hospital 13.6.17	
16 JUL 1917	N. O. K. Advised progressing favorably.....	
SEP 10 1917	N. O. K. Advised Convalescent	
20. 11. 17	N. O. K. Advised Returning to Australia. Form 8.	

APPLICATION FOR IN SERVICE
 LEAVE GRANTING FAGED
 MAR 24 1918
 No. No. 20896


WAR HISTORY INDEX



1914/15
STAR
ISSUED
No. *N/A*



BRITISH WAR MEDAL
ISSUED
No. *20951*



VICTORY
MEDAL
ISSUED
No. *20397*

