



TOWN OF GAWLER

# Gawler's Soldiers



A portrait of six of the first young men from  
Gawler to enlist for service in the First World War,  
1914-1918

Arthur Ernest Beard, Rodney Vernon Franklin,  
Cecil Stephen Hincks, Leslie Bryant Howie,  
Arthur Harold Robinson and Frank John Scott.

## Gawler Public Library

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*"Best of Town & Country"*

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The original of this photograph hangs in the foyer of the Town Hall. It was restored using grant funds received from the Anzac Day Commemoration Council.



The first six recruits from Gawler to enlist for the First World War.  
Back row: Arthur Harold Robinson, Rodney Vernon Franklin, Leslie Bryant Howie  
Front row: Arthur Ernest Beard, Cecil Stephen Hincks, Frank John Scott.  
ca. September, 1914.

A feeling of great enthusiasm swept across the infant Commonwealth of Australia when the news of the outbreak of war in Europe reached its shores. This was the opportunity for the men of Australia to prove their worth on the battlefield.

In Gawler, as in other places, there was a rush of volunteers (including the six young men in the photograph) who were willing to join the Australian Imperial Force. Some of the volunteers had already had some experience with war, some were men who were past the prime of their life and who left behind a business or trade and many, like these six, were young men with the whole of their lives before them. But no matter what their age or from what circumstances they came, volunteers from all over Australia were willing to give their all for England. Some would not return, many would be crippled for life but, as they left Australia, the men were keen and

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fearless and possessing a resourcefulness which would become apparent on the battlefield. These six young men enlisted with the Australian Imperial Force at Morphettville and became part of the 10th Battalion which together with the 9th, 11th and 12th Battalions, formed the 3rd Brigade. The 10th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the Australian Imperial Force for service overseas. It consisted of members who were recruited from many parts of South Australia and also Broken Hill.

Recruits had to meet minimum requirements. They had to be between 19 and 38 years of age with a minimum height of 5 feet 6 inches and their chest measurement could be no less than 34 inches. Enlistment was for the duration of the war plus an extra four months unless discharged or dismissed. The preference was for single men; married men and widowers with children were accepted but only if they agreed to allot forty per cent of their pay to their dependants.

Very soon after Britain's declaration of war, a campaign began in South Australia to recruit, train and equip troops. An 80-acre property at Morphettville was selected on which to establish a military camp. It was to be erected on and around the racecourse and was ideal because of its easy access to water and rail. The Morphettville Camp officially opened on 19 August, 1914. Within a few hours, long queues of men waiting to enlist formed outside the gate. On the first day, 200 men enlisted - among them was Cecil Stephen Hincks from Gawler. The 10th Battalion reached its full strength of 1023 on 31 August, 1914. The weeks which followed were spent in equipping, organising and training the men to become a fighting unit.

All of September and the first half of October, 1914 was spent in training at Morphettville Camp. On 20 October, the men of the 10th Battalion were transferred by train to Outer Harbour where they boarded HMAT *Ascanius*. The Governor of South Australia, Sir Henry Galway, addressed the recruits and the crowd that had gathered to farewell them. He spoke of the sacrifice they were making and wished them a safe and speedy return.



Morphettville Camp, ca. 1914-15.  
(Image courtesy of the State Library of South Australia SLSA PRG 280/1/8/202)

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Detail from the enlistment form of Rodney Vernon Franklin.  
(Source: <http://mappingouranzacs.naa.gov.au>)

### Farewell from Gawler

Such was the excitement in the town, the Gawler Patriotic Fund was established and at its first meeting on 26 August 1914, the decision was made to hold a public reception as a fitting farewell to 'the young fellows who had volunteered for active service in the war'. (*The Bunyip*, 28 August, 1914)

On 1 September, 1914, the citizens of Gawler and the B Squadron of the Light Horse combined for 'an enthusiastic send off'. (*The Bunyip*, 4 September, 1914) Prior to the reception at the Gawler Institute, a procession of the Light Horse, Infantry and Defence Forces headed by Riggs' Vice-Regal Band marched from the southern end of Murray Street to the McKinlay monument and back to the Institute.

The 100 members of the military, who were distinctive in their khaki uniforms, occupied two tables in the middle of the Institute Hall. Also present were the Mayor and the fathers of the young men who were going to war. The volunteers 'looked well and strong and in the best of spirits'. A number of speakers addressed the gathering, the volunteers being urged to 'quit themselves like men and do nothing to lose the good opinions formed of Australian soldiers ...'. They were praised for being prepared to risk their lives fighting for King and Empire in upholding the traditions of Britain. (*The Bunyip*, 4 September, 1914)

It was at this farewell reception that Mr E Marchant presented each of the six men in the photograph with a copy.

HMAT *Ascanius*. Departure of the South Australian infantry of the first Australian Imperial Force  
(Image courtesy of the State Library of South Australia SLSA B10303)



It is fitting that, following the end of hostilities, the *History of the 10th Battalion A.I.F.* was written by Lieutenant Arthur Limb, a school teacher whose family lived in Gawler. Much of the following account of the 10th Battalion is taken from his book.

#### HMAT *Ascanius*

The *Ascanius*, a 10,048 gross ton ship with accommodation for 288 first-class passengers, was launched on 29 October, 1910 at Glasgow. In August, 1914 she became a troopship and in 1917 she was taken over under the Liner Requisition Scheme. Returned to her owners in August, 1920, she resumed Glasgow-Liverpool-Brisbane sailings. After refitting and alteration in 1922 and 1926, she was again taken over as a troopship in 1940. The *Ascanius* was torpedoed in the In 1945 she carried displaced persons before being sold and renamed *San Giovannino*. She was eventually scrapped in 1952.



HMAT *Ascanius*, date unknown. (Source: [www.uboat.net](http://www.uboat.net))

On 20 October, 1914, the Battalion embarked the HMAT *Ascanius* at Outer Harbour and after a brief stop at Fremantle, Western Australia, the *Ascanius* left to join the main convoy, arriving at Alexandria, Egypt in early December, 1914. The following three months were spent in rigorous training at Mena Camp, near Cairo before the Battalion returned to Alexandria to board (together with the 9th Battalion) the SS *Ionian* to travel to Mudros on the Greek island of Lemnos where, for seven weeks, training was undertaken. During April, the Battalion was trained in embarking and disembarking on HMS *Prince of Wales*. It was at this time that the plans for the Gallipoli landing became known and it was here that the 10th Battalion received its colours.



10th Battalion Colour Patch  
(Source: [www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au))

#### 10th Battalion Colour Patch

Each Division of the infantry was allotted a shape; each Brigade was allotted a 'senior' (lower) colour and each Battalion was allotted a 'junior' (upper) colour. The 10th Battalion was a member of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Division. The shape for the 3rd Brigade was a rectangle; the 'senior' colour was mid-blue and the 'junior' colour was purple.

On 24 April, 1915, some members of the 10th Battalion transferred to HMS *Prince of Wales*, while others boarded the destroyers *Foxhound* and *Scourge*. Later that day, the boats sailed from Mudros to a rendezvous point near the landing place at Gallipoli. Early on Sunday morning, 25 April, B and C Companies and the commanders of 10th Battalion left HMS *Prince of Wales* in lifeboats and were rowed to within 50 metres of the shore. When the boats were about 30 metres from the shore, rifles and machine-guns opened fire from the land.

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Lines of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Battalions at Mena Camp, looking towards the pyramids. The soldier in the foreground is playing with the regimental mascot. Many Australian units took kangaroos to Egypt and some were given to the Cairo Zoological Gardens when the soldiers went to Gallipoli. (Source: [www.defence.gov.au](http://www.defence.gov.au))



Troops of an Australian Battalion (possibly the 10<sup>th</sup>) on the deck of the battleship *Prince of Wales* in Mudros Harbour just before the landing. This ship was part of the fleet which transported Australian troops to the Gallipoli landing at Anzac Cove. (Source: <http://www.awm.gov.au>)

The boats moved closer to shore and when they could, the men leapt into the water and waded ashore. Some were killed before they left the boats, some died in the water, but others, fixing their bayonets, charged the Turks who fled, closely pursued by men of the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Battalions. Under heavy machine-gun and shrapnel fire, they reached the beach and joined the general advance. By mid-afternoon, 12,000 men of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigades had been landed. Later in the afternoon, the Turks delivered two counter-attacks which threatened to overwhelm the tired and disorganised Australian troops. The guns from the ships opened fire on the Turks and the attack gradually abated. When darkness came, it was bitterly cold but the soldiers continued to fight and each time the enemy was beaten back, they were able to seize new ground and dig in.

It is now a matter of history that the offensive at Gallipoli was a failure. The fighting continued; the Turks attacked with fresh forces but neither side made any significant gains. The Imperial Forces were suffering from exhaustion and conditions were appalling. The stench from the bodies was so great that an armistice was called on 24 May, 1915 so that the dead could be buried.

Arthur Limb reported that, with the arrival of Summer, so too came a plague of flies and other insects which made life unbearable. The heat was unrelenting, water was in short supply and diseases such as diarrhoea and dysentery were rife. By August, flies and vermin were everywhere and soldiers were constantly being evacuated.

A re-evaluation of the situation and a blizzard at the end of November hastened preparations for a complete evacuation from the Gallipoli

peninsula. The 10th Battalion together with the 12th departed for Mudros on 25 November, 1915. The final evacuation from Gallipoli was on 19 December, 1915.

From Lemnos, the Battalion returned to Egypt, arriving at Alexandria on 29 December, 1916. Until the end of January, the men spent time resting, re-organising and training before the entire 3rd Brigade was sent to the Suez Canal Defences at Habieta. There the battalions spent the next two months digging trenches until departing for France on 28 March, 1916.



An unidentified soldier of the 10th Battalion stands to attention before a sand sculpture that designates the Battalion's section of Mena Camp, ten miles from Cairo. Located in front of tent lines, the sand sculpture features the legend '10th Btn' in the centre of which is the AIF rising sun symbol. Underneath is the 1908 version of the Australian Coat-of-Arms, with a shield decorated by a cross of St George containing five stars. Various units created such 'sculptures' from coloured sand, chalk or stones. (Source: [www..awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au))

Part of Mena Camp, ten miles from Cairo, seen from the road running up the centre of the camp, known as Artillery Road. At the far end of the road can be seen one of the reservoirs built at the camp; in this one the water burst through the walls. On the left are the lines of the 1st Australia Divisional Artillery, and on the right the lines of the 3rd Infantry Brigade (in the foreground), and the Divisional Engineers (in the background). On the horizon is one of the pyramids at nearby Gizeh. (Source: [www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au))



On 6 June, 1916, following rest and training, the 10th Battalion went to the front line for the first time in France and it spent the first three weeks relatively battle-free. It seems that for the Battalion, this was an easy period which preceded events during the next two months which would truly test their mettle and again prove the worth of the Australians. At that time, Britain believed it had enough troops on the Western Front to mount an offensive against the Germans in the Somme area. The 10th Battalion was part of this offensive and during June participated in heavy fighting, the likes of which they had never before seen.

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On 22 July, 1916, the 10th Battalion supported the 9th Battalion in the attack on Pozieres. They met strong opposition and there were many casualties. By 19 August the Battalion had been moved to Moquet Farm where casualties were heavy and many soldiers were taken captive. On 22 August, having been relieved by the 21st Battalion, the 10th was transported by train to Belgium.



View of the cross erected at Pozieres in memory of men of the 10th Battalion who fell during the fighting on Pozieres battlefield in August 1916. (Source: [www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au))

In Belgium, reinforcements joined the 10th Battalion to fill the gaps which occurred as a result of the Battle of the Somme. After a brief spell, the Battalion spent a month in the front line at Hill 60 before a route march of four days' duration to board a train at Audruicq to take it back to the Somme area. The weather, which had until that time been fine, broke and the constant rain turned the churned earth into deep mud making travel arduous and living conditions unbearable. On November 6, the Battalion moved on to Gueudecourt in atrocious conditions. The men carried all that was necessary when going into the front line (extra ammunition, bombs, rations, sandbags, water) through deep and sticky mud. After a week, the constant exposure and constantly sodden feet began to cause illness which necessitated evacuation and during the first week more than 200 men left the front with 'trench feet' and sickness.

The conditions were such that something had to be done and after a brief rest, the Battalion returned to the front line. A new system was in place whereby hot food and drinks were available as well as changes of socks and foot powder to combat the problems of living in the continuous cold and damp. Christmas 1916 was spent in the trenches and was made bearable by the distribution of Christmas parcels and the ongoing comfort provided by members of the YMCA, Red Cross and Australian Comforts Fund. These



people worked night and day and as close as was permitted to the front line.

During February, 1917, the Germans evacuated the forward position they held and withdrew to what became known as the Hindenburg Line. On 25 February, the 10th Battalion moved forward, attacked and occupied le Barque. A month followed, during which time the Battalion was engaged in training and salvaging operations. By 7 April, it, together with other members of the British forces, was again on the front line and for ten days fought to advance the line at Lagnicourt. On the night of 16 April, the Battalion was sent to Bancourt where it rested until 4 May when, as part of the attacking force in support of the 9th Battalion, it returned to the front line at Bullecourt. For ten days the men of the 9th and 10th Battalions withstood heavy

bombardment and engaged in desperate fighting and not only moved the line forward but also prevented a breakthrough by the enemy.

After the winter, the 10th Battalion (with the rest of the 1st Division) spent almost four months resting before being sent back to the Front. The men took part in sporting competitions and training and won the Brigade Drill Cup. On 26 July, 1917 the Battalion was sent north by train and spent the following two months resting and training while in constant expectation of being re-called to the Front. Early in September, the Battalion was moved near to Château Segard in preparation for an attack on Passchendaele Ridge.

Late on the night of 19 September, 1917 the 10th Battalion marched to Polygon Wood where, on the following morning, it came under heavy barrage fire. This marked the beginning of the horrific Third Battle of Ypres. The noise was deafening and casualties heavy but with a quick response from the artillery and the troops, the enemy was beaten back.

During early October, after a rest, the 10th Battalion was returned to the front line, not to attack but to hold the line while the 1st Brigade advanced.

### The Hindenburg Line

The Hindenburg Line consisted of three deep, wide trenches, belts of barbed-wire, machine-gun positions, concrete bunkers, tunnels, command posts, roads and an interior system of railways. It was a fortified position from which the Germans could send troops into any weak spot with little effort and in a



A group of 12 unidentified German engineers preparing mines in a French village before they began withdrawing to the Hindenburg Line in early spring 1917. (Source: <http://awm.gov.au>)

By midday on 4 October, many prisoners had been taken despite heavy counter-attacks by the enemy. It was around this time, at Celtic Wood, that Lieutenant Frank Scott was killed. He was part of a raiding party consisting of five officers and 80 others which aimed at gathering information and drawing fire from the enemy. It was hoped that this action would create a diversion while the real offensive to gain control of Passchendaele took place. Of the 85-strong raiding party, just 19 returned.



Members of the 3rd Australian Divisional Artillery resting in the valley north-west of Helles, near Zonnebeke, in the Ypres Sector, September 1917.

But the losses were not in vain: the fighting continued through October and November and Passchendaele Ridge was taken. Many men were lost: the 10th Battalion lost almost 500 men in this battle. The remains of the Division withdrew to the Boulogne area where the men spent a month resting. On 16 December, the 10th Battalion relieved the 13th Battalion in the Front Line at Messines.

February, 1918 was spent in rest and recreation before the 10th Battalion returned to the front line at Hollebeke on the night of 1 March. There it remained until relieved at the beginning of April. On the first night, a raid by the enemy was beaten off (but with heavy casualties) by Lieutenant Cleve Scott (brother of Lieutenant Frank Scott) and support platoons. Cleve Scott was later awarded the Military Cross for his heroic actions. The constant shelling of the camps, transport lines and back areas resulted in the death or wounding of many men and horses.

On 21 March, 1918, the Germans launched a massive attack on a 50-mile front on the Somme and by 27 March had reached Albert. Some 50,000

prisoners and 600 guns were captured. Near Albert, the Germans were met by some of the Australian divisions who, against overwhelming odds, held their ground despite strong and repeated counter-attacks, thus saving Amiens.



Trenches in the Australian Corps Defence System far behind the front lines at Coisy, near Amiens. They were well wired and dug through the growing crops, July 1918. (Source: [www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au))

By mid-April, the 10th Battalion had been sent to support the 1st and 2nd Brigades near Borre. They dug in at the rear of Dieppe forest but were not called upon to defend the position. The advance by the enemy had been stopped there as it had on the Somme. Most of the Belgian and French residents of the area had long left and their homes and farms had been destroyed. Any livestock that remained was rounded up and some was eaten by the troops.

For four months, the 10th Battalion fought in this area, around Strazeele and Merris and by constant attacks, regained important strategic positions from the Germans. It was here, on 22 July, 1918, that Lieutenant Cleve Scott was killed. In late July, the Battalion was taken by bus to Heurighem where it remained for six days. On 6 August, the 10th Battalion travelled by train to the south to re-join the Australian Corps. Upon arriving at Poulanville on 8 August, the Battalion learnt of a planned offensive by the British Army (which included Australian and Canadian troops) and which, by early evening of that day, had advanced many miles. On 11 August, two companies of the 10th Battalion, in conjunction with the 12th Battalion, fought fiercely to take and pass through Lihons. There were many casualties and many enemy prisoners taken, but the ground was held.

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Trench near Crepy Wood during the attack upon Lihons. The 10th Battalion on 10 August 1918 in the Old Somme trench system near Lihons; Crepy Wood in the background, and some of the enemy field guns which destroyed the tanks with the 2nd Brigade on 9 August 1918. (Source: [www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au))



Following a five-day rest, the Battalion was again moved forward ready for an attack on Proyart on 23 August. The 10th Battalion again excelled and by operation's end, had advanced approximately five kilometres, taking woods and high ground near Cappy. Less than a month later, on 18 September, another offensive in conjunction with the American Army saw an advance of almost another five kilometres on an almost one-kilometre front. A few days later, the British and American forces had pushed right up to the outposts of the Hindenburg Line.

This was the 10th Battalion's last operation in the First World War. Approximately thirty of the men who left Australia aboard the *Ascanius* in 1914 remained. The Battalion was officially disbanded at Châtelet on 17 March, 1919 but some had already left France to return to Australia before the Armistice was declared on 11 November, 1918.



An unidentified cinematographer capturing the last shots to be fired before the armistice on 11 November 1918. Note the line of bare trees under which the guns are placed. (Source: [www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au))

A group of Australian soldiers from various units, Armistice Day, 11 November, 1918. (Source: [www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au))



### Arthur Limb



Lieutenant Arthur Limb, ca. 1919. (Image courtesy of the State Library of South Australia SLSA B46553)

Arthur Limb was born at Gawler and was 22 years of age when he signed up with the AIF on 29 October, 1915. He attended Adelaide High School and had served for four years with the Voluntary Cadets and was working as a school teacher at the Sturt Street Public School.

On 26 March, 1916 Arthur Limb left Australia with the 16th reinforcements for service in France. He received his commission in 1917. He took part in all of the 10th Battalion battles on the Western Front. He was mentioned in despatches on two occasions for conduct 'deserving special mention'. At the conclusion of the War, Arthur Limb was chosen to go to Oxford to write his short history of the 10th Battalion which he dedicated to "The

Digger". In the preface to his book, Arthur Limb stated that he did not intend it to be a detailed history of the 10th Battalion but rather a brief sketch of the main events of the four years of war.

On completion of the book, Arthur Limb returned to Australia. Tragically, having survived the horrors of war, he contracted pneumonia while on board the ship. He was admitted to Bedford Park Sanatorium where he was diagnosed with pulmonary tuberculosis. He died at Gawler on 7 May, 1920 and was buried at Willaston Cemetery.

### Arthur Ernest Beard

Arthur Beard was working as a mate on a river steamer when he signed up at Morphettville as a member of the Australian Imperial Force on 24 August, 1914. Born at Maryborough in Victoria, he gave his age as 20 years and stated that his next of kin was V A Beard, brother, of Gawler and that his address was 'Care of Mrs I Scott, Church Hill, Gawler'. Arthur also stated that he had been a member of the Colonial Forces Infantry for four years at the time of enlistment. The medical certificate which was issued at the time described Arthur Beard as 5 feet 9½ inches tall, weighing 154 pounds with blue eyes, fair hair and a fair complexion. His religion was listed as Church of Christ.



Arthur Ernest Beard, ca. September, 1914. Detail from *The first six recruits from Gawler to enlist for the First World War*. (Town of Gawler, Gawler Heritage Collection)

The Statement of Service for Private Arthur Ernest Beard shows that he was assigned to 'G' Company, 10th Infantry Battalion and, at the time of enlistment, he was suffering from bronchitis for which he was treated before embarking the HMAT *Ascanius* at Adelaide on 20 October, 1914. Arthur Beard was part of the landing force at Gallipoli but he was injured in battle and was sent to St Andrews Hospital at Malta on 28 July, 1915. In mid-August he was again admitted to hospital, this time with bronchitis. Two weeks later, on 9 September, 1915, he embarked a ship for England where he was admitted to St George's Hospital, Stamford, on 16 September, 1915.

Following his recovery, Arthur Beard was promoted to the rank of Lance-Corporal for the period 19 August, 1916 and on 5 October, 1916 was attached for duty to Administration Headquarters in London. While in London, Arthur Beard married Jessie Rachel Bailey on 7 October, 1916. Just over a year later, on 21 December, 1917, Arthur Beard was detached from duty and returned to Australia for discharge. He, with his British wife, arrived from England in March 1918, his final discharge from the 10th Battalion being recorded on 22 March, 1918. The reason given for final discharge was 'disease of heart'. It is likely that he spent the rest of his life in Victoria, some of it in various suburbs of Melbourne and perhaps some in Wodonga. He died on 28 June, 1940.

### **Rodney Vernon Franklin**

Rodney Franklin was born at Mount Barker and was 19 years of age and working as a junior draughtsman when he enlisted with the Australian Imperial Force at Morphettville on 24 August, 1914. His father was the station-master at Gawler Railway Station and his address was given as Saddleworth.

He had already served with cadets for three years and the 79th Infantry for one year before enlistment and had achieved the rank of Lance-Corporal. Described as 5 feet 10½ inches and 155 pounds with fair hair and complexion and hazel eyes, Rodney Franklin stated his religion as Church of England. He was assigned to 'G' Company of the 10th Battalion and embarked the HMAT *Ascanius* at Adelaide on 20 October, 1914.



Rodney Vernon Franklin, ca. September, 1914. Detail from *The first six recruits from Gawler to enlist for the First World War*. (Town of Gawler, Gawler Heritage Collection)

Rodney Franklin was part of the landing force at Gallipoli on 25 April, 1915. He was either wounded or became ill as he was sent to hospital at

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Gallipoli on 26 April, 1915. On 12 June, he was sent to Alexandria suffering from tonsillitis but returned to duty on 13 July, 1915. In August he was diagnosed as 'febrile' and admitted to hospital at Gallipoli and from there he was sent to the Australian Casualty Clearing Station. He was evacuated from Lemnos on 14 August, 1915 and admitted to the Wandsworth General Hospital on 23 August, 1915, suffering from dysentery. A descendant of Rodney Franklin states that he went through the wrong door when sent to re-join the 10th Battalion on 26 November, 1915 and found himself persuaded to join the 10th Reserve Battalion, Royal Lancaster Regiment. Upon discharge from the AIF, Rodney Franklin's conduct and character was described as 'very good'.



The Martinsyde S.1 which Rodney Vernon Franklin flew with 58 Squadron.  
(Source: <http://acepilots.com>)

Rodney Franklin initially joined 16 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps with the commission of Lieutenant and later transferred to 58 Squadron as a test pilot, but perhaps also as an instructor. He saw action while flying and was wounded by ground fire on at least two occasions.

2nd-Lieutenant Franklin was transferred to 58 Squadron which was based in Egypt and was killed on 24 June, 1917 while testing a new kind of aircraft. At the time of his death it is likely that he had just been promoted to squadron leader and had been recommended for Captain.

He was posthumously awarded the Croix de Guerre by France which his father received on his behalf. He was also awarded the Military Cross.

### Croix de Guerre



The French Croix de Guerre was instituted on 8 April, 1915 by the French Government to recognise acts of bravery in the face of the enemy specifically mentioned in despatches. It was open to soldiers, sailors and airmen of all ranks whether

French or foreign nationals and could be bronze, silver or silver-gilt. The medal was in the form of a cross surmounted by crossed swords, the centrepiece bearing the head of the French Republic.

(Source: [www.firstworldwar.com](http://www.firstworldwar.com))

### Cecil Stephen Hincks

Cecil Hincks, the son of Henry Stephen Hincks, a miller, was born at Maitland. At the time of enlistment the Hincks family was living in Murray Street, Gawler. After joining the Australian Imperial Force at Morphettville on 28 August, 1914, he was assigned to 'G' Company, 10th Battalion with the rank of Lance-Corporal. He had already completed two years of training with the cadets and citizens' force. He was 20 years of age, worked as a clerk and gave his religion as Church of England. He was described as being 5 feet 8¼ inches tall, 153 pounds with a fresh complexion, brown eyes and brown hair.



Cecil Stephen Hincks, ca. September, 1914. Detail from *The first six recruits from Gawler to enlist for the First World War*. (Town of Gawler, Gawler Heritage Collection)

Cecil Hincks served at Gallipoli and was promoted to Corporal on 28 April, 1915 and then to Sergeant on 4 August, 1915. His medical record shows that he suffered from influenza and an intestinal disease which necessitated his evacuation to Mudros on 1 September, 1915 and then to England on 23 September, 1915. On 5 October, 1915 he was admitted to Cardiff Hospital and later to Salisbury (28 June, 1916). Fully recovered, he rejoined the 10th Battalion in France on 23 August, 1916. A short period of illness saw him treated in the field in late October. On 24 January, 1917 he was promoted to 2nd-Lieutenant. During the battle to advance the Front Line at Lagnicourt, Cecil Hincks received gunshot wounds to his chest and legs. He was assessed and sent to Rouen where, by 30 April, 1917, he was reported to be 'dangerously ill' and promoted to Lieutenant on 15 June, 1917. A year later, having been evacuated to England and treated in a number of hospitals, surgeons amputated his injured leg. Extended sick leave was granted for the period 30 January to 25 September, 1919 during which time Cecil Hincks attended Pitmans School in London. He returned to Australia, leaving England on 10 December, 1919 and was terminated from the 10th Battalion, AIF on 13 December, 1920.

Lieutenant Cecil Hincks served with the Australian Military Forces as Recruiting Officer at Yorketown with the Central Recruiting Depot during World War Two. He was promoted to the rank of Temporary Captain for the period 22 August to 27 November 1941. He was transferred to the Reserve of Officers until 16 May, 1946, when he was discharged.

Cecil Hincks was employed at Port Victoria by the Wheat Harvest Board before he set up his own business of managing grain and insurance agencies. He took up positions with a number of charitable organisations and was elected to the House of Assembly in March 1941 as member for Yorke Peninsula, a seat he held until his death on 1 January, 1963. He was knighted in 1960.



### Leslie Bryant Howie

Leslie Howie was born at Caltowie near Jamestown. When he signed up for the AIF at Morphettville on 24 August, 1914, he was 20 years of age and had been apprenticed as a wheelwright for three years to T J Wilkinson at Gawler. He gave his address as Moore Street, Gawler and stated that he had served with the 79th Infantry for two years. His physical appearance was described as 5 feet 7½ inches, 142 pounds, dark complexion, brown eyes and black hair.



Leslie Bryant Howie, ca. September, 1914. Detail from *The first six recruits from Gawler to enlist for the First World War*. (Town of Gawler, Gawler Heritage Collection)

As with the other young men in the photograph, Leslie Howe was assigned to 'G' Company, 10th Battalion. He was part of the invading force at Gallipoli on 25 April, 1915. The first entry on his Statement of Service indicates that he was sick and taken to hospital at Gallipoli on 17 September, 1915 before being shipped to Mudros and then to Egypt. On 3 October, 1916, he transferred from the 10th Battalion to the 3rd Division Signal Company and was again taken to hospital in France on 31 December, 1916. He rejoined his unit on 19 January, 1917. He was sent from France to England on 14 April, 1918 and he left for Australia on 21 April, 1918.

Leslie Howe returned to England on 2 December, 1918 as a Private in the 1 to 6 (SA) Reinforcements. He re-joined the 3rd Division Signal Company and was finally discharged on 5 August, 1919. He died on 3 April, 1964.



A cable section of the 3rd Divisional Signal Company laying a telephone cable near Ronssoy, when the 3rd Division assisted in retrieving the misfortune of the 27th American Division in the left sector over the canal tunnel against Bony and Le Catelet on the Main Hindenburg Line, 30 September, 1918. (Source: [www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au))

### Arthur Harold Robinson

Lance-Corporal Arthur Robinson had previous experience in the 79th Infantry before he enlisted with the AIF on 24 August, 1914. The son of James and Fanny (née Haynes) Robinson of Gawler Railway, Gawler. He was just 19 years of age and a fitter and turner by trade.

Arthur Robinson was assigned to 'G' Company, 10th Battalion; he left Adelaide on the HMAT *Ascanius* on 20 October, 1914. His Statement of Service shows that he embarked the *Ionian* at Alexandria to join the Military Expeditionary Force (MEF) at Gallipoli. He spent a number of periods in a Cairo hospital, the first recorded being during May, 1915. During October he was admitted suffering from enteritis, and then during November and December, he was treated for colitis before being discharged early in January, 1916 and sent to Alexandria.



Arthur Harold Robinson, ca. September, 1914. Detail from *The first six recruits from Gawler to enlist for the First World War*. (Town of Gawler, Gawler Heritage Collection)

On 17 September, 1915, at the Gallipoli Peninsula, it is recorded that Arthur Robinson was severely reprimanded for not complying with orders. Then on 6 October, 1915, he was reduced to the ranks for neglect of duty. The next entry on his Statement of Service is from early July, 1916, when he was transferred to the 3rd Infantry Battalion in England. He received another reprimand, this time for being absent without leave for two days in early August and reverted to Private. On 10 September, 1916 he proceeded to France and following the heavy losses of the battle of the Somme, he was appointed in the field to the rank of Lance-Corporal. This was followed by promotion in France to Corporal on 19 January, 1917. During that year, there were periods spent in hospital in France as a result of sickness and minor injuries.

Relief from front line duty came when Arthur Robinson was selected to attend Officers' Cadet Battalion at Oxford following which he was appointed 2nd-Lieutenant and posted to the General Infantry Regiment. On 14 November, 1917 he left England to return to France. His time in the field was short-lived as he was wounded in action on 29 December, 1917. A gunshot wound to the face and a compound fracture of the jaw necessitated evacuation to England and admission to hospital. On 22 January he was promoted to Lieutenant before leaving England to return to Australia. His appointment to Lieutenant was terminated at the time of his discharge from the AIF on 30 September, 1918.

### Frank John Scott

Frank Scott, son of James and Felicia (née Saint) Scott was born at Port Broughton and was 20 years of age when he enlisted with the AIF at Morphetville on 22 August, 1914. He had already served with the 79th Infantry for two years. He was working as a porter and lived with his family at Church Hill, Gawler. He was declared medically fit and was appointed to 'G' Company, 10th Battalion.

Described as having a fresh complexion, blue eyes and dark brown hair, Frank Scott was 5 feet 8½ inches tall, 137 pounds and a member of the Salvation Army.



Frank John Scott, ca. September, 1914. Detail from *The first six recruits from Gawler to enlist for the First World War*. (Town of Gawler, Gawler Heritage Collection)

Frank Scott's Statement of Service shows that on 2 March, 1915, he embarked the *Ionian* at Alexandria to join the Military Expeditionary Force (MEF) at Gallipoli. He remained with his Battalion for the entire time that the Gallipoli Peninsula was occupied by the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) and was promoted twice in that time; first, to Lance-Corporal on 11 August, 1915 and then to temporary Corporal on 29 October, 1915. The second promotion became permanent on 3 December, 1915 after the evacuation of troops from Gallipoli to Mudros. On 17 December, 1915, Frank Scott was promoted to Sergeant at Alexandria while awaiting further orders.

On 28 March, 1916, the 10th Battalion left Alexandria to travel to France to join the BEF. Two weeks after disembarking at Marseilles, Frank Scott was admitted to hospital at St Omer suffering from mumps. He rejoined his unit in mid-May and in late June, 1916 joined the training battalion where he was promoted to 2nd-Lieutenant and then Lieutenant on 27 November, 1916. For four months during 1917 he was a temporary Adjutant and he was sent on Command to the 5th Army Infantry School in France during July and August.

On 9 October, 1917, at Celtic Wood in Belgium, Frank Scott was killed in action. His body was not recovered but an unofficial burial report stated that he was buried near Spoilbank in Belgium. Frank Scott was twice mentioned in despatches for his bravery in battle.

[For more information about Frank John Scott, see Historical Pamphlet Number 18, *Frank John Scott and Cleve James Scott*, available from Gawler Public Library or at [www.gawler.sa.gov.au](http://www.gawler.sa.gov.au)]

### **Gawler South Soldiers' Reception Committee**

When the soldiers began to return from the war, the residents of Gawler South and Gawler Blocks convened a meeting at which it was decided to form the Gawler South Soldiers' Reception Committee. Members of the Committee were responsible for providing transport from the railway station to home for more than 300 young men from the Gawler area and their families. Later, a large welcome involving all of the local community was arranged and from this evolved the decision to erect a lasting tribute to the memory of the young men who served their country, some making the ultimate sacrifice. Through fundraising efforts the money was raised to erect the Gawler South Memorial.



Gawler South Memorial, date unknown. (Town of Gawler, Gawler Heritage Collection)

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