

## HISTORY OF 15<sup>TH</sup> BATTALION – HENRY A CARR 11/15<sup>TH</sup> - #3258

BORN – 5/8/1891

DIED - 17/6/1961

ENLISTED – 18/7/1915 IN Toowoomba from Goondiwindi Qld and embarked on 21/10/1915 in the 11<sup>th</sup> reinforcements for 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Sailed on the A48 SEANG BEE for Egypt. Joined the 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion in Egypt at Tel El Kebir in December 1915 after being hospitalised for a short period with mumps. He survived from 1916 to 1918 in France and Belgium but Henry was wounded (WIA) 4 times in action – 3 being serious machine gun wounds to chest and legs with the 4<sup>th</sup> being a serious shrapnel wound to the shoulder.

First WIA was at Pozieres on 6/8/1916; the second WIA was at Geudecourt on the 1/2/1917. These were with serious M.G. wounds. Henry Carr was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) second only to the Victoria Cross; at the First Battle of Bullecourt on 11/4/1917. The citation states the award is recommended for Henry's gallant behavior in attack on the Hindenburg Line south of Reincourt. The difference for this battle was that for the first time there would be no artillery barrage prior and it was thought by using tanks there would be no forewarning of the impending attack; the tanks did not arrive to provide that support and the 4<sup>th</sup> division attacked unsupported. The efforts of these men was even more meritorious in my opinion.

From the citation "When his platoon commander and platoon sergeant were wounded he took charge of his platoon and led them across enemy fire suffering heavy casualties from enemy M.G. fire. He took charge of consolidation of a captured trench and fought gallantly while holding the enemy trench. When our troops retired he brought back what remained of his platoon and on reaching our line took a party out with a stretcher to bring in the wounded from ground swept by enemy M.G. fire.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> WIA occurred at Messines on 12/6/1917. After recuperation Henry was transferred to the 12<sup>th</sup> Training Battalion on 31/12/1917 and trained as a Sergeant and in Lewis Gun operations. Henry returned to the 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion on 30/6/1918 as a Sergeant. Henry's 4<sup>th</sup> WIA occurred on the 18/9/1918 at the Jeancourt Battle for outpost of the Hindenburg Line. This wound was a serious shrapnel wound to the right shoulder while attacking as a Lewis Gunner. Henry was repatriated to Australia in January 1919. I never met my grandfather but the research of the 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion engagements is truly amazing and unbelievable. The battalion was made up of 75% Queenslanders and 25% Tasmanians.

I am planning to visit the Anzac Square shrine on Anzac day as I believe this was a meeting place for the 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion servicemen after 1930's? – The Angels Remembrance Club? The RSL next to the shrine may have more details of this group. I intend to travel to France in April 2017 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Henry Carr's DCM award from that 1<sup>st</sup> Battle of Bullecourt.

After the war Henry Carr's life was even more amazing in that he died west of Dalby largely unknown and without any of his exploits recognised.

Henry was married to Nellie Watkins in 1923 but their first baby Agnes died after 6 months. Two sons Harold and Ronald were born in 1924 and 1928. For unknown reasons Henry did leave the family 6 weeks prior to Ronald's birth and his whereabouts were unknown to the family until 1961. On the 17<sup>th</sup> June 1961 Henry did take his own life at a property called "Wongle" Meandarra Qld and is buried in the Tara cemetery. Ronald Carr and family did visit the property owned by a Mr Tom Wormald and he confirmed that Henry Carr, known to him as William Johnson worked at the property from the early 1930's till his death.

He lived this part of his life as William Johnson and on his death his discharge papers and matching wound scars indicated his real name as Henry Carr. As a substantial bank account was left the State Govt was able to locate Ronald who resided in Brisbane. A court case pursued with a Rody Kenneally who fought alongside Henry Carr in the 15<sup>th</sup> actually travelling from Mareeba to Brisbane to give evidence supporting Harold and Ronald's claim to their inheritance. Nobody knew his real identity or that he owned a modest fortune, mostly in gilt edged securities and negotiable debentures.