

Augustus Charles Adridge 10/479 WW1 Service Record

After accessing Uncle Gus's WWI service record from New Zealand Government Archives (<https://www.archway.archives.govt.nz/>) we now have the bare bones of his personal record of the war. I have also found more information at the Auckland War Memorial Museum's OnLine Cenotaph (<http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C37240.aspx>).

The government archive preserves his service file and thus has all the dates of postings, promotions, sickness and leave. What I have set out to do here is to use the Official History of the Wellington Infantry Battalion to put these raw dates into historical perspective.

From Wellington Infantry Battalion History	From Uncle Gus's Service Record
<p>4 August 1914 War declared The WIB is formed consisting of 4 companies of 227 men. These companies are based on the area Territorial battalions and are: 7th Wellington West Coast 9th Hawkes Bay 11th Taranaki 17th Ruahine</p> <p>See https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/infantry-units/wellington-infantry-regiment WIB mobilises at Awapuni Race Course Palmerston North by end of August 1914 and commences training.</p> <p>22 Sept 1914 WIB embarks on troopships at Wellington Harbour, 7th WWC on board the "Maunganui". However, ships stay in Harbour and return to wharf on 28th Sept as sufficient escorts have not arrived. Troops continue training in the Wellington area while living on the transport ships until convoy arrangements are finalised.</p> <p>16 Oct 1914 Convoy of 10 transports and 4 warships sails from Wellington Harbour. Convoy arrives in Hobart 21 Oct and WIB parade through the town in full kit. Convoy sails from Hobart on 23 Oct and arrives in Albany on 28 Oct where it joins the convoy of the Australian Expeditionary Force.</p> <p>1 Nov 1914 Combined New Zealand and Australian troop convoy of 38 transports and 4 escorts departs Australia. 11 Nov HMAS Sydney departs convoy to seek German Cruiser Emden and is replaced by the Japanese battleship Ibuki.</p>	<p>15 Aug 1914 – <i>Uncle Gus enlists "for the duration" and is appointed as a Private to 7th Wellington West Coast Company of the Wellington Infantry Battalion. He is 25 years old.</i></p> <p>15 Oct 1914 – <i>Uncle Gus boards Transport No 3</i></p>

15 Nov 1914 Convoy reaches Colombo for recoaling. Some leave ashore taken. HMAS Sydney returns to convoy with prisoners from the Emden which are distributed among the transports.

25th Nov Convoy ports at Aden.

3 Dec Convoy arrives at Alexandra.

4 Dec 1914 WIB embarks train to Cairo. Next month is spent on training and setting up camp. Soliders have opportunity to take leave in Cairo.

25 Jan 1915 WIB moves to Khubri on the Suez canal to assist in its defence against Turkish raiders. Returns to Cairo on 26 Feb, joined by 2nd reinforcements and commences training for Gallipoli campaign.

12 April 1915 7th WCC embarks on the "Achaia" – a captured German Tramp - for Lemnos. At Lemnos the Gallipoli invasion fleet is gathering. WIB spends time training on boat disembarkation in full kit and landing from small boats.

25 April 1915 7th WCC arrives off Gallipoli at 1pm. Company goes ashore 5am on 26 April. On 27th Apr 7th WCC reinforces hard pressed Australian forces on Walkers Ridge and is joined by rest of WIB.

5 May 15 WIB relieved at Walkers Ridge and then embarks on RN destroyers to reinforce British and French position at Cape Helliers with the balance of the NZ Infantry Brigade and the 2nd Australian Brigade. WIB ashore by daybreak on 6 May. On 9th May WIB attacks Turkish trenches, joined by Auckland and Canterbury IB they take severe casualties in an area known as the Daisy Patch and the attack stalls. WIB remains in front line till 12th May.

19 May 15 WIB re-embarks for ANZAC cove. The battalion passed on now to a period of garrison duty in the trenches alternated with periods of supplying working parties in the trenches and on the beaches and in rear areas, designated *periods of rest*.

4 Dec 1914 Uncle Gus disembarks in Egypt

12 April 1915 Uncle Gus embarks for Dardenelles and Gallipoli.

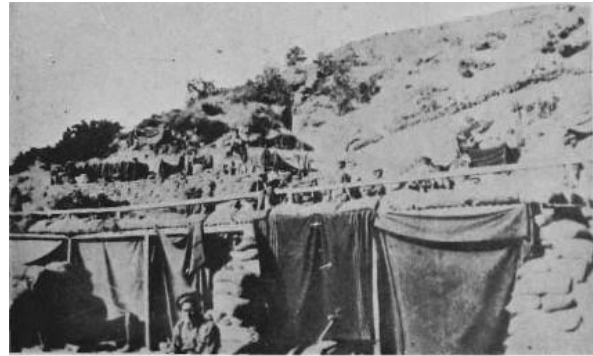
30 May 15 WIB moves to take over defence of Courtney's Post. 9 June relieves Auckland IB at Quinns Post. The period from the 9th June, until the end of July, is largely the story of how the Colonel converted the most dangerous and insecure post on the Anzac Position into the safest and most impregnable, and turned a higgledy piggledy collection of battered and insanitary trenches into a clean, well-organized post. 5 Aug 1915 WIB relieved at Quinns post by 2nd Australian Light Horse.

6 August 1915 WIB starts moving into position for attack on Chunuk Bair.

8 Aug 15 7th WCC and 9th Hawkes Bay lead attack on Chunuk Bair. Attacking before first light they take the ridge without opposition. The Battalion stopped to dig into very rocky ground to try and hold against Turkish counterattacks which commenced with first light. This continued throughout the day with mass casualties incurred by WIB. Relieved that night by 7th Lancashires and 5th Whiltshires who were wiped out the next day by Turks retaking Chunuk Bair. By the end 7th WCC numbered 51 reinforcements instead of its full strength of 227. For the Battalion as a whole only 70 out of 760 were still standing. What is left of WIB moves to trenches at Cheshire Ridge where in the words of the official history of the Battalion "The days in the trenches were hellish. The heat of the sun was terrific. Diarrhoea and dysentery were rampant. Flies were a torment. Splendid fellows of a few months ago were little more than scare-crows. We were but hanging on now. There were spells in the front line at Rhododendron Spur or at the Apex varied with days in reserve in Rhododendron Gully. It was all deadly monotonous. Everyone now had dysentery and was fast reaching the limit of physical endurance. They were indeed grim days."

14 Sep 1915 Remnants of NZ Infantry Brigade embarked to the "Osmanieh" for Lemnos and hence to camp at Mudros West. At this time the Wellington Battalion of 1000 men (inc reinforcements) had been reduced to 100. Reinforced back up to about 500 WIB re-embarked for Gallipoli on 8 Nov.

9 Nov 15 WIB return to Gallipoli. While conditions have improved with better trenches and bunkers now in place by December it was determined that the position would be



Quinn's Post, 1915.

See <http://www.armymuseum.co.nz/kiwis-at-war/did-you-know/chunuk-bair-100-years-on-we-remember-the-heroism-and-sacrifice/>

18 Aug 1915 Uncle Gus admitted to 16 Casualty Clearing Station at ANZAC Cove with severe Influenza.

25 Aug embarked to hospital ship "Ulysses" and then admitted to NZ Gen Hospital at Abbassia.

8 Sept shipped to 2nd Southern Gen Hospital in Bristol, England, arriving there **15 October 1915**.

untenable over winter.

18 Dec 15 WIB evacuate from Gallipoli to Lemnos.

24/25 Dec 15 WIB board "Simla" for Alexandria, arriving there on 28 Dec and entraining for Moascar near Cairo on 29 Dec. Here they became a unit in the Suez Canal defences.

8 Jan 16 274 reinforcements join the WIB and unit was reorganised and started training.

Feb 16 New Zealand forces organised into a new Division and the old WIB becomes the 1st Battalion of the Wellington Regiment and one of the battalions of the first Brigade. The other battalions of that Brigade were the old battalions from Auckland, Canterbury and Otago. After this reorganisation training began in earnest for the New Zealand troops redeployment to France.

6 Apr 16 1st Battalion left Moascar camp by train to embark on the "Arcadian" for Marseilles, arriving there on 14 April and entraining for Northern France.

9 May 16 1st Battalion moves to the front line sector at Estaires, France. From here they took over the front near Armentieres on **13 May** which they then held till **18 August**.

18 Aug 16 Relieved from front line and moved to billets in Armentieres. Next day marched to Steenwerck and then entrained to Ebblinghem and finally Fricourt & Airaines. Here they trained for a coming offensive at the Somme.

2 Sep 16 1st and 2nd Battalions march out of Airaines to eventually arrive at Fricourt Wood on 10 Sep preparatory to taking part in the Battle of the Somme. New Zealand action here opened on 15 Sep 16. By 18th Sep 1st Batt casualties totalled 10 officers and 282 other ranks from 25 officers and 784 other ranks who went into battle on the 15th. Positions had consolidated by 2 Oct and the Batt was relieved by 26th Royal Fusiliers on 3 Oct.

4 Oct 16 Following relief from the Somme 1st Batt moved from 4th Army area to 2nd Army area at Caestra, arriving there by 10 Oct. They then took over a section of front at Armentieres again, relieving 59 Batt, 15 Brig Australians. They maintained positions here until the end of the year.

1 Jan 17 1st Battalion in billets at Sailly-Sur-Lys, back in the line by 8 Jan to relieve 4th Batt NZ Rifle Brigade. They were relieved by 2nd Batt WIB

***11 Jan 16** Uncle Gus discharged from Hospital and taken on at the New Zealand Base, Grey Towers, England*

***16 Apr 16** Uncle Gus attached to strength B Depot No 14 Etaples, France*

***18 May 16** Uncle Gus rejoins 1st Batt, 7th WCC in the field.*

***24 May to 1 Jun** Sick in hospital in France*

***17 Sep 16** Uncle Gus appointed Lance Sergeant 7th WCC, 1st Batt.*

***26 Dec 16** Uncle Gus promoted to Sergeant 7th WCC, 1st Batt.*

16 Jan. This swapping between frontline and billets at Fleurbaix continued until 23 Feb until they were relieved and moved to Le Bizet. Back in trenches at Le Touquet 1 Mar 17.

9 Mar 17 7th WCC detached and marching to Ravelsburg to work on trenches, etc., at the new Divisional School there. Till end of March 1st Batt working in secondary defence areas but were back in the line by **1 April** and involved with preliminary work for the Messines offensive.

10 May 17 1st Batt relieved and moves to Grand Sec Bois till 19 May when they moved to St Omer. Here they were involved in extensive training for Messines until the end of May. By 2nd June they were camped at De Seule preparatory to the offensive.

6 June 17 1st Batt marches to assembly trenches at 9:30pm for the Messines offensive with 22 Officers and 795 other ranks, 7th WCC comprises 4 Officers and 190 other ranks. Germans shell Battalion with gas as they move forward. Attack commences at 3:30am and initial objectives are captured by 5:30am. By time of relief by supporting troops on 10 Jun 1st Batt casualties amounted to 73 dead, 8 missing and 337 wounded.

12 Jun 17 1st Batt moves to rest billets at Rue de Sac. Moved to Brigade reserve 18 June and then to front line position 23 June. On 28 Jun relieved and moved back to De Seule

30 Jun 17 to 19 Jul 17 1st Batt moves to Billets in Le Varrier region.

19th July 1st Batt back as Brigade Reserve.

25 August 1st Batt moves to Hondeghem in the Caestre Area.

29 August 1st Batt move to Selles. This will be their base for training for the Passchendaele offensive.

25 September 1st Batt commences marching to holding area for offensive reaching there on 28 September. Reserves drawn from their Battalions and sent to Reinforcement camp at Morbeeque.

4 Oct 17 Offensive commences with attack on Gravenstafel Spur. Planned objectives achieved Battalion was relieved and moved back to bivouac. 1st Batt moved to Brandhoek area on 7 Oct and camped there until 15 Oct.

16 Apr 17 to 10 May 17 *In hospital in France with Mumps.*



Our First Aid Post at Messines.

15 Jul 17 to 21 Jul 17 *Uncle Gus on leave in Paris.*

20 Sep *goes on leave in the field. Returns from leave on 6 Oct 17 and attached to the NZ Wing Reinforcements Camp*

10 Oct 17 *Uncle Gus admitted to hospital with Influenza.*

From here we leave our connection with the Wellington Infantry Brigade as Uncle Gus was to spend the rest of the war in England. An ebook copy of the Official History of the Wellington Infantry Battalion can be obtained from at <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-WH1-Well.html> .

After admission to hospital Uncle Gus was transferred to 35 General Hospital, Calais on 10 Oct 17. On 31 Oct he was embarked Newhaven for England and admitted to Military Hospital, Endall St, London on 1 Nov. On 3 Nov 17 he was then transferred to the New Zealand convalescent depot of Hornchurch set up on the grounds of Grey Towers Manor 20 miles from London. On 30 Nov he was transferred to Codford camp, a camp set up on the Salisbury Plains a few miles from Sling camp to reintroduce recovering soliders to the hardships of a full military training regime. He then transferred to Sling camp on 25 Jan 18.



Sling Camp was the chief New Zealand training camp in England throughout the war. It was situated in the heart of the great Salisbury Plains twelve miles to the north of the ancient town of Salisbury. It was the camp where new reinforcements from New Zealand were introduced to the rigours of warfare on the Western Front.



As a veteran of the Western Front Uncle Gus took a course in Musketry instruction from 25 Feb 18 to 23 Mar 18 at Hayling Island (a small island of approx 4 by 6 miles to the east of Portsmouth, Hampshire which was used for training by the British Armed Forces) and then joined the cadre at Sling Camp as a Musketry Instructor for New Zealand reinforcements. He was to remain here until he re embarked for New Zealand on the "Ruahine" on 3 Nov 1919. Upon return to New Zealand he was discharged from service 22 Jan 1920. Later during WW2 Uncle Gus also served as a Lieutenant in the Taihape Home Guard.

Following is a picture of the medals that Uncle Gus was awarded for his service in WW1



While full details can be found at <http://medals.nzdf.mil.nz/category/index.html> following is a brief description:

1. Top Left: ANZAC Commemorative Medallion - instituted in 1967 for award to Australian and New Zealand personnel who participated in the Gallipoli campaign in 1915. Those personnel who were still alive when the medallion was issued also received a lapel badge sized version (shown here) of the full medallion, numbered on the reverse with the individual's First World War service number.
2. Bottom Left & Right: Collar insignia of the 7th Wellington West Coast Company of the Wellington Infantry Battalion.
3. Medals Left to Right:
 - a. The 1914-15 Star - awarded to servicemen and servicewomen who served between 5 August 1914 and 31 December 1915 in any "theatre of war".
 - b. The British War Medal - instituted in 1919 to recognise the successful conclusion of the First World War (1914-1918).
 - c. The Victory Medal - issued to all New Zealand troops serving overseas.