## Archie Fred Lidgett



Archie Fred Lidgett was believed to have been born in 1895 at White House Farm, Springthorpe, Lincolnshire. In the 1901 British Census he is shown living with his family at 64 Glentworth Road, Kexby, Lincolnshire. The family listed on the Census form are; his father Frederick aged 36, a farmer, born in Corringham; his mother Sarah Ann, aged 38, born in Ingham; sisters, Lilly aged 10, born in Heapham and Eva, aged 3, born in Kexby; and brother Cecil James, aged 2, born in Kexby. Archie Fred is listed as being 5 years old (thus stating his birth date as 1896) and born in Heapham. The '1837-1915 Birth Index lists his birth as being registered in the period July, August, and September 1895.<sup>2</sup>

Archie emigrated to Australia, in about 1914, possibly aboard a ship named the 'S.S. Commonwealth'.

1.

<sup>1 &#</sup>x27;1901 British Census'. National Archives

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> 'Births registered in July, August and September 1895'. Ancestry.co.uk



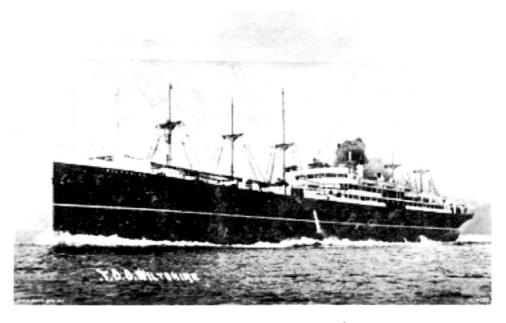
Britain entered the Great War on 4 August 1914 and many of those like Archie, who had emigrated to such far flung lands as Australia and Canada, nevertheless answered the call to arms to fight on the Allied side. Archie joined the Australian Imperial Force in Melbourne, Victoria, on 3 November 1915. His Attestation documents<sup>3</sup> help build a picture of the man.

He states his age on that date as 20 years and four months, indicating that he was born in August 1895, and his trade or calling as 'Labourer'. He was 5'3" tall, weighed 9 stoned 3 pounds, with a chest measurement of 31 ½". He had a fresh complexion, blue eyes, brown hair, with the following distinguishing marks; a vaccination scar on his left arm, moles on the back of his neck and his head and a scar also on his head. He was considered fit at his medical examination for active service and was appointed as 4832 Private Lidgett.

Initially stationed at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Depot Battalion, Royal Park, on 11 November 1915 he was transferred to the 16<sup>th</sup> Depot Battalion at Bendigo, where he remained until 7 December 1915. Archie was then transferred to what is believed to have been the 15<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion on the 6 January 1916. On 7 March 1916 he embarked at Melbourne on HMAT 'Wiltshire' where he joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Training battalion at Telel-Kebir, Egypt.

<sup>2.</sup> 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> 'Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad'. Australian Archives



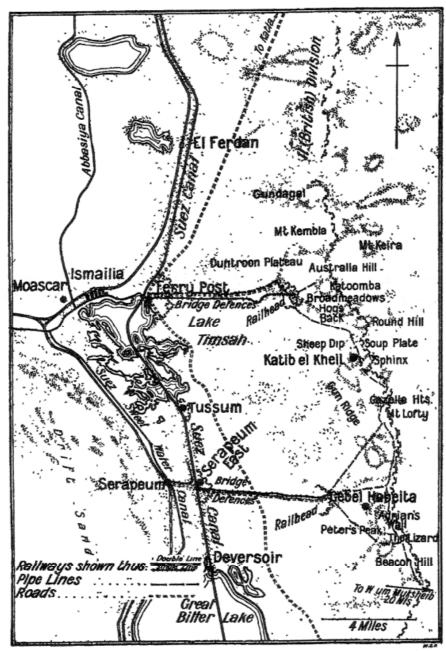
His training complete he was finally transferred to the 59<sup>th</sup> Battalion at Duntroon Plateau, an Australian post in the Sinai Desert, near the Suez Canal, on 20 April 1916.



A camel train at Duntroon Plateau4

<sup>3.</sup> 

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No. 2 (Central) Section of the Suez Canal Defences, dug by Australian divisions, January-March 1916

4.

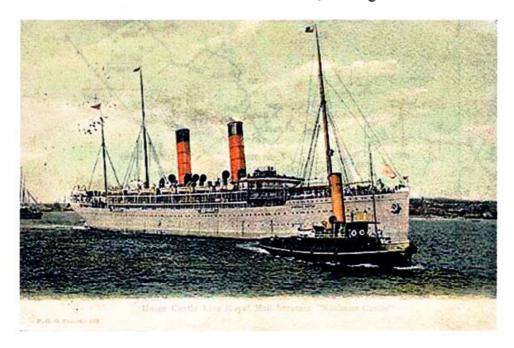
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Map. 'Australian Official History Of The Great War'

## Egypt<sup>6</sup>

The 5<sup>th</sup> Australian Division was formed in Egypt in February 1916. Major General the Honourable J.W. McCay formerly commander of the Australian 2nd Infantry Brigade, assumed command of the division on March 22.

The first "test" for the division was a training march of 40 miles (64 km) from the Anzac camp at Tel el Kebir to the Suez Canal defences, which were being maintained in expectation of a Turkish attack. McCay objected to the undertaking but nevertheless imposed strict march discipline on his men. Taking three days over soft sand and in extreme heat, the brigades suffered severely and the march was completed in disarray.

On 18 June 1916 Archie embarked to join the British Expeditionary Force [BEF] on board the 'SS Kinfauns Castle' bound for Marsailles, arriving there on 29 June 1916.

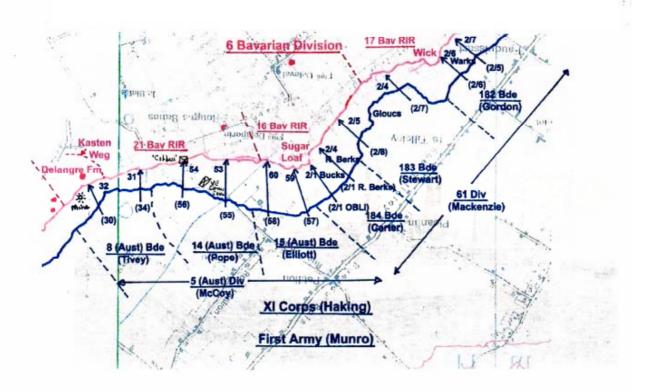


The 5th Division began arriving in France in July, the last of the four Australian divisions from Egypt to do so. The three Australian divisions of I Anzac, which had been acclimatising on the quiet sector near Armentières, had been dispatched to the Somme as reinforcements and so the 5th Division took their place at Armentières on July 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> This account is taken from Wikipedia

### Fromelles

The result of this move was that the 5th Division, the most inexperienced of the Australian divisions in France, would be the first to see major action in the Battle of Fromelles, a week after going in to the trenches. As the Germans had been reinforcing their Somme front with troops from the north, the British planned a "demonstration" to try and pin these troops to the front. The attack was masterminded by Lieutenant - General Richard Haking, commander of the British XI Corps, which adjoined II Anzac Corps to the south. The aim was to reduce the slight German salient known as the "Sugar Loaf", north west of the German-held town of Fromelles. The 5th Division happened to be the unit facing the northern flank of the salient.



By the time the attack was ready to be launched, its purpose as a preliminary diversion to the main action at the Somme had passed; yet Haking and his army commander, General Sir Charles Monro, were keen to go ahead. At 6 pm on July 19, after 11 hours of preliminary bombardment, the 5th Division and British 61st Division attacked. The Australian 8th and 14th Brigades, attacking north of the salient, occupied the German trenches but became isolated and out-flanked. They were forced to withdraw, through withering German enfilades, by morning. The 15th Brigade and the British 184th Brigade were cut to pieces while attempting to cross no man's land.

Archie was a member of the 59th Battalion, led by Lieutenant – Colonel E.A. Harris, which was part of the 15<sup>th</sup> Brigade, commanded by Brigadier-General H.E. (Pompey) Elliott.



Brigadier-General 'Pompey' Elliot

The 8th and 14th Brigades were forced to withdraw, through withering German enfilades, the following morning. The failure was compounded when the 61st Division asked the 15th Brigade to join in a renewed attempt at 9 pm, but cancelled without informing the Australians. Consequently half of the Australian 58th Battalion made another futile, solo effort to capture the salient.

Archie was initially declared as 'Missing in Action', and was subsequently, on the 29 August 1917, listed as 'Killed in Action' by a Court of Inquiry. He was killed either in the initial attack on the German Sugar Loaf strongpoint, or in the subsequent failed attack at 9 pm.

The battle was responsible for one of the greatest losses of Australian lives in one 24-hour period, surpassed only by later World War I actions like the Battle of Bullecourt. The 5,533 Australian casualties, including 400 prisoners, were equivalent to the total Australian losses in the Boer War, Korean War and Vietnam War combined. The 5th Division was effectively incapacitated for many months afterwards. Two battalions, the 60th and the 32nd, each suffered more than 700 casualties, or more than 90% of their fighting strength and had to be rebuilt: out of 887 personnel from the 60th

Battalion, only one officer and 106 other ranks survived; the 32nd Battalion sustained

718 casualties. The attack had completely failed as a diversion when its limited nature became obvious to the German defenders. The perceived "failure" of the British 61st Division poisoned relations between the AIF divisions and the British. In its communiqués, the British GHQ passed the Battle of Fromelles off as "some important raids".

It would be many months before the Australian 5th Division was serviceable again. In October the 5th Division joined the other Australian divisions in holding the line on the Somme in dreadful winter conditions.

Despite his relatively short time as a soldier in the Australian Imperial Force Archie qualified for the 1915 Star, the War Medal and the Victory Medal.

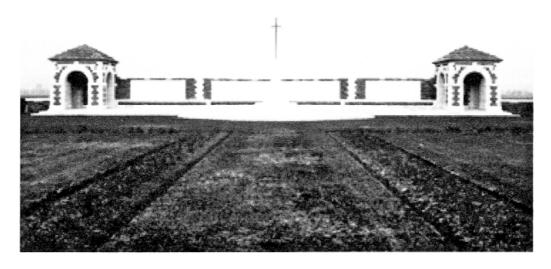
The Australians informed Archie's father that his son was 'Missing in Action' and eventually that he was presumed 'Killed in Action', and eventually the family would have received a Memorial Scroll, a Death Plaque and his medals.



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Private Archie Fred Lidgett is commemorated in VC Corner Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Cemetery, Fromelles. <sup>7</sup> This cemetery is the only complete Australian cemetery in France, and has no headstones. The unidentified bodies of 410 Australian soldiers are buried under two lawns, each marked with a white stone cross set into the grass. Archie's name is on the commemorative screen wall that records the names of the 1,299 Australians who died on 19/20<sup>th</sup> July 1916, during the Battle of Fromelles.

He is also commemorated on Panel 168 in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia and in Springthorpe, Lincolnshire



VC CWGC Cemetery Fromelies8

8 CWGC photograph

<sup>9.</sup> 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Major and Mrs Holt's 'Western Front North'

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1901 Census.

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		- Ella	2 b. 535	Linguis, Alfred	Woolwich	8 b.	229 1282	
- Walter Bisbain GMaldon - Walter EdwardBirkenhead - Walter GordonWesthampmett	8 a. 579	Liberman, Joseph	1 c. 281	Alice	Nuneaton	6 d.	475	
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— William Preston — William Kington	8 c. 691 6 a. 534	LIGHENSTEIN, Andrew Reuben Romfurd	1 b. 726 4 a. 437	LIGHT, Alfred Charles	Newton A.	Бb.	124	
William Bolton	8 c. 433	LICHPIELD, Elsie Mand Ecclesall B.	9 c. 459	Alfred Clitford	. W. Bremwish	6 b.	878	
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- William John Newcastle E.	11 b. 22	- Frank St. Austell	5 c. 104	Emmie Chambers	Northwich	8 a.	273	
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- William JohnBedwelty - William JohnNeath	11 a. 883	LIUDIMENT France Norwich	4 D. 121	Florence	h'restwich	8 d.	386	
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- William Thomas Conway Willie Pontardawe	11 b. 472	- Emily SnowdonSunderland - Ernest	10 a. 705	- John Bernard	Holbeck	9 b.	341	
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- Winifred Maud Islington	1 0. 307	George Durbain	10.00 40.5	— Maggie	Cockermouth	10 Б.	657 280	
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Willie Leicester	7 a. 273	- John Joseph Auck and	10 n. 270	— Sarah Isabella Thomas	Durham	10 p.	391	
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- Edward	8 b. 746	— Grorgo Caistor — Themas Hull	9d. 316	- Elsie May	Dewsbury	9Ъ.	622	
Joen Berwick	10 b. 473	Libert, William Henry Sheffield Libert, Archie Fred Gainsbro'	9 c. 602	- Ernest	Donester	9 c.	252 794	
- John Alfred Leigh - Margaret Elsie Lambeth	1 d. 422	Ernest Coventry	6 d. 525	- Tom Heric	Gravesend	2 a.	138	
- Martha Alice Salford Sarah Warrington	8 d. 177 8 c. 199	Ilarry	7 m. 001	Lurose, Edward Palmer	Northampton	3 Ъ.	262 91	
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- Ethel Jane Hartlepool LEUSER, Albert William St. Olave		Nellie Isabella W Newton A.	5 b. 95 5 b. 158	LILLIMAN, Joseph William.	Ecclesall B.	ve.	457	
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an Albert & H. St. Sec. H. Sq.	IA 472A							

4832 Private Archie Fred Lidgett 59th Battalion Australian Imperial Force Killed in Action at Fromelles 19 July 1916



This is a contified had Copy AUSTRALIAN 4 MILITARY FORCES Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad. No. 4832 Joined on Questions to be put to the Person Inlisting before Attestation. arche 1. What is your Name! 2. In the Parish of .. pear the Town of luc olush 2. In or near what Parish or Town weep you been ! in the County of. born British Solijont or a Naturalized IN ICH the bitter, popers to be hat is your trade or calling? you, at there you been, an Apprentice! If so, where, Are for married 1 ... H. Who is your next of kin! (Add. on to be stated) 9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power! 10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His-Majesty's Forces, with Ignomicy, or as Incorrigible and Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a Bentonce of Femal Servitude, or have you been dismined with Diagrace from the Navy! ... Do you now belong to, or have you over served in, His-Majorty's Army, the Marinea, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces 1 If m, state which, and if not now serving. state cause of discharge ... 12. Harp you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service ! 13. Have you ever been enjected as unfit for His Majorty's Bervice! If so, on what grounds! 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 toyond on amount which begather with pay would reach night shiftings per day? 15. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small pox; and enterio ferne! do scientily declare that the above answers n agell and I say willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the by me to the shore questions are true, Componwealth of Australia within or beyond the lours of the Commonwealth. wo fithe And I further acres for the support of my hie Fred Ledgett This chairs should be struck out in the case of memorrish man or widesours without children under 18 years of age. I Two fifthe most be alliated to the soft, and if there are children three-fifthe most be alliated. U 107/1-16 -- 0.608

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	CERTIFICATE OF ATTESTING OFFICER.	
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	ave transined his naturalization papers and am of opinion that they are of	
Date .	3-11-15 Her chill Signature of Attenting C	View Officer.
	OATH TO BE TAKEN BY PERSON BEING ENLISTED.  Cracke Gred Ledgett swear the truly serve our Sovereign Lord the King in the Australian Impe	nat I will
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	So HELP ME, Gob.	
	So Help Mr., Gon.  A of Lidgett Signafure of Person Estates and subscribed at Melbourne in	elisted.
Te	aken and subscribed at Melbourne in	
the State	Third day of	
	ovember 1915, before me	
·	John chill	Lies
	Signature of Attenting	-11
*A person se	alleting who objects to taking an oath may make an affirmation in accordance with the Third Schoolule of the above both must be attended accordingly. All according to must be initiated by the Atlenting Office	C the Art, an

v
Discription or Liagest arche Fred Entistement.
Discription of Enlistment.
Age 90 years 4 months Distinctive Mapes
lieght 5 feet 3 motes fac / & arm
Weight 921 16 lbs. 1 les Bolkeck
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Viva Leur
Hair Brown Sear "
Religious Denomination Coff
CERTIFICATE OF MEDICAL EXAMINATION.
I nave examined the above named person, and find that he does not present any of the
following on trions, via :
Scrofula , phthisis; syphilis; impaired constitution; defective intelligence; defects of vision, voice, or hearing; herais; heroarchoids; variouse veins, heroard a limited extent;
marked variescele with unroually pendent testicle; inveterate cutaneous disease; chronic
ulcers; traces of corporal punishment, or evidence of having been marked with the letters  D. or B.C.; contracted or deformed chest; absormal curvature of spine; or any other
disease or physical defect calculated to unfit him for the duties of a soldier.
He can see the required distance with either eye; his bears and lungs are healthy; he has the free use of his joints and limbs; and he declares he is not subject to fits of any
description.
I consider him fit for agrice service.
Date 181.01.5
Mare Jarram Javan
Mage farram fairment
Signatur Por Example in Medical Officer
Crook Was Lakene
CERTIFICATE OF COMMANDING OFFICER
I centrey that this Attestation of the above-named person is correct, and that the requiped forms have been compliged with - I accordingly approve, and appoint him
w 15 Rear to 7 hattle.
1 3 1 2/1
Place Gadiner dous Commanding 1971 Pole
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CARD CHECKED

Name reagett archie Tred Statement of Service of No.4 7 32 Cain in which served. Transferrer to 23" Depet Han Royal Mark Malis 6.1.11 HA to 15th Reint 16 Depoi Balla 15/1 R/h Privales Broadmendono TRANSPORTED TO SUPER Reported museing in artim 19-7-16 PAZ 95669 Now kep France 19 2 16 J. B.L. 1802

SEE COPY AF BIG + ENGLOSED!

I have examined the above details, and find them correct in every respect.

Statement of Service of No. 4832 Name Liagett audion Fred

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Unit in which served.	Promotiona, Refuntiona, Casualtina, Sc.	Portion of se	To-	Remarks
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I have examined the above details, and find them correct in every respect.

	FIELD SERVICE. Army Form B. 2090.
in PORT of Death of a Soldier I notification of death on Army	to be forwarded to the War Office with the least possible delay after receip Form B. 213 or Army Form A. 36, or from other official documentary source
EGIMENT 59 th INFANTRY	BATTALION AIF Squadron, Troop, 1 Battery or Company
egimental No. 4832	Rank Private
reame LIDGETY	F Christian Names Archie Fred.
(Date 19th July, 191	
ied	risce in the France
Cause of Death*	KILLED IN ACTION
	OF ENQUINY convened by Commanding Officer 59th) Sattalion A.I.F. held In the Field France on 29th
By whom made. A	TOF ENQUINY convened by Commanding Officer 59th) Sattalion A.I.F. held In the Field France on 29th Lugust, 1917.  Trum wounds received in action, or from illness due to field operations or to fatigue, privation or exposure while on military duty, or from injury while on military duty.
By whom made A  * Specially state if killed in action, or died in action and in the state of the	fugust, 1917. held In the Field France on 29th
By whom made.  * Specially state if killed in action, or died to tate whether he leaves   a Will or not	fattalion A.I.F. held In the Field France on 29th ugust, 1917.  from wounds received in action, or from illness due to field operations or to fatigue, privation or exposure while on military duty, or from injury while on military duty.
By whom made.  * Specially state if killed in action, or died if ate whether he leaves  a Will or not  (c) as a separate private documents and effects	Sattalion A.I.F. held in the Field France on 29th (ugust, 1917.  from wounds received in action, or from litness due to field operations or to fatigue, privation or exposure white on military duty, or from injury white on military duty.  Book (Army Book 64)WIII not received mall Book (if at Base)  arate document.  received from the front or hospital, as well as the Pay Book, should be examined, and if ar
By whom made.  * Specially state if killed in action, or died if the control of t	from wounds received in action, or from timess due to field operations or to fatigue, privation or exposure white on military duty, or from injury white on military duty.  Book (Army Book 64) 111 not received from the front or hospital, as well as the Pay Book, should be examined, and if ar d to the War Office.
By whom made  * Specially state if killed in action, or stied if  ate whether he leaves  a Will or not  (c) as a sept  All private documents and effects it is found it should be at once forwarded  Any information received as to velocited to the War Office as soon as possib  A duplicate of this Report is te is  Field Disbursing Officer, as the case  ter). If the deceased a Small Book is at	from wounds received in action, or from iliness due to field operations or to fatigue, privation or exposure white on solidary duty, or from injury white on military duty.  Book (Army Book 64) Ill not received from the front or hospital, as well as the Pay Book, should be examined, and if are to the War Office.  For the Fixed Centre Paymaster at Home, or to the D.F.A.G. Indian Expeditionary Force may require, together with the Deceased's Pay Book (after withgrawal of any will from the base, it should be forwarded to the War Office at the Base, it should be forwarded to the War Office at the Base, it should be forwarded to the War Office at the Base, it should be forwarded to the War Office at the Base, it should be forwarded to the War Office at the Base, it should be forwarded to the War Office at the Base, it should be forwarded to the War Office at the Base.
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By whom made.  *Specially state if killed in action, or died to tate whether he leaves a Will or not  (c) as a separate documents and effects ill is found it should be at ones forwarded.  Any information received as to very ported to the War Office as soon as possible A duplicate of this Report is to be fired Disbursing Officer, as the case iter). If the deceased a Small Book is at NZAC SECTION. 3rd EC	from wounds received in action, or from timess due to field operations or to fatigue, privation or exposure while on military duty, or from injury while on military duty.  Book (Army Book 64) 1111 not received from the front or hospital, as well as the Pay Book, should be examined, and if are determined to the War Office.  For the sent to the Fixed Centre Paymaster at Home, or to the D.F.A.G. Indian Expeditionary Force may require, together with the Deceased's Pay Book (after withdrawal of any will from the the Base, it should be forwarded to the War Office with this Report.  HELON G.H.Q.  The ry Substance of Officer in charge of Section (Capt.)

LIDGETT Surname	Archie Fred.	4832 pte. Regimental No.	15/7th.Batin.
	PURPORT.	79	AUTHORITY.
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•	Army Form	B. 108	Casualty Form—Active Service.  Regiment of Corps. 15th Rfte 2th Bette 59th Battalion A.I.F.							
	Rank Priv	rate Surname	LIDGETT Christ							
4						months				
	Enlisted (a) 3.11.15 Terms of Service (a). Service reckons from (a) 3.11.15									
	Date of promotion to present rank Date of appointment to lance rank									
	Extended Re-engaged Qualification (b)									
						nature of Officer.				
		Report	Report of promotions, reductions, transfers, essentities, &c. during series service, as reported on Army Form H.213, Army Form A.M. or in other official documents. The authority to be quoted in each case.	Piace of Casualty	Date of Casualty	Remarks Taken from Army Form B.313, Army Form A 36, or other official				
	Date	From whom received	The authority to be quoted in each zene.			documents				
			Embarked Disembarked							
	21.4.16	0.0. 59th Bn	Taken on strenght 59th Bn	Duntroon Plateau	20.4.1	AL1059 B213 D0 8/3100				
	18.6.16	O.C.Troops	Embarked to join B E F on "Kinfaune Castle	Alexandria	18,8,16	AP9070 -				
	29.6.16	do	Disembarked at	Marseille	29.6.16	LR 5959				
**************************************	28.7.16	C.O.59th Bn	MISSING	FRANCE	19.7.16	A01816 B213 V.L. 54 D080/5689				
	29.8.17	ourt of Enqui	ry KILLED IN ACTION	FRANCE / M	9.7.16	19/575/13 VI 460 of 5.9.1 00.36/5743				
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# Roll of Honour - Archie Fred Lidgett

## Archie Fred Lidgett

Service number: 4832

Rank: Private [Pte]

Unit: 59th Battalion (Infantry)

Service: Army

Conflict: 1914-1918

Date of death: 19 July 1916

Cause of death: Killed in action

Cemetery or memorial details: VC Corner Australian Cemetery Memorial, Fromelles, France

War Grave Register notes: LIDGETT, Pte. Archie Fred, 4832. 59th Bn. Killed in action 19th July, 1916. Age 21.

Son of Fred and Sarah Ann Lidgett, of Springthorpe, Gainsborough, Lincs, England. 17.

Source: AWM145 Roll of Honour cards, 1914-1918 War, Army



DA13796

#### Location on the Roll of Honour

Archie Fred Lidgett's name is located at **panel 168** in the <u>Commemorative Area</u> at the Australian War Memorial (as indicated by the poppy on the plan).

