

RBDM Family History Journal

Edition 6

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This edition features stories with an ANZAC theme and serves to commemorate our brave fallen soldiers lost during the Great War. We have also included a past article about our World War One death records. This edition welcomes the contribution of articles from two of our subscribers. I would encourage you to distribute the newsletter through your networks, [send it to interested friends](#) and [subscribe](#) to receive future editions.

As the sole agency responsible for recording, storing and administering life event records in Queensland, the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages (RBDM) is the custodian of Queensland's family history. Whether you're an amateur historian researching your family tree or a professional genealogist, we want to make it as easy as possible for you to access the information you need from our archives.

David John
Registrar General

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RBDM's World War One records



During the early 1920's the then Registrar General George Porter decided to compile death registers for service personnel who enlisted in Queensland and died on active service or from wounds suffered after the war. A monumental task given that the only way to send and receive mass information to and from the general public in those days was by post. The article describes how this task was done.

[Read More](#)

Queensland's boy soldiers

During the First World War, the Australian Army's enlistment age was 21 or 18 with the permission of a parent or guardian. Many Queensland boys keen to go and fight managed to get around these rules. Read about the tales of these brave lads.

[Read More](#)

Tubby Clayton and the Toc H movement

Founded by Rev Phillip "Tubby" Clayton, Talbot House (abbreviated to "Toc H") was a place of refuge for battle weary soldiers. A place where all soldiers regardless of rank were treated equally and could relax and recuperate from the front line. Read the story about the club.

[Read More](#)

RBDMs Death records

Have you searched our database for a death record that you are certain exists but will not appear in your search results? This article explains why and what we are doing to make more records available for you to search.

[Read More](#)

The ANZAC life of "Barney" Phillips

An article by one of our subscribers Mr Alan Phillips on the life of his uncle George. George served with the AIF and this story is a recollection of the first few days of action by the troops at Gallipoli.

[Read More](#)



The brothers Finn and World War One

Another contribution from one of our avid supporters, Shauna Hicks. In this story Shauna describes her efforts to research information about her three great uncles Denis, John and Robert Finn.

(Australian troops marching at Albany on Western Australia's south coast. The first Australian convoy departed Albany on November 1, 1914.

Supplied: Albany Historical Collection)

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More about Sister Kenny

What connects controversial polio nurse Sister Elizabeth Kenny, Brisbane's new children's hospital and James Bond? This article reveals all.

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RBDM's World War One records

Story by Adrian Harrison

Few people realise that RBDM holds comprehensive death registrations for a large number of service men and women^[1] who enlisted in Queensland and who died while on active duty during both world wars. Only the registries in South Australia and Tasmania took the trouble to compile similar archives. In total RBDM holds close to 10,000 death registrations for World War One and a further 5,000 from World War Two.

^[1] There are at least two nurses listed in the records as dying in the line of duty; Norma Mowbray from St George and Rosa O'Kane from Charters Towers.



Above: Some of the registers holding the 10,000 World War One death registrations in the RBDM archive. Unlike the standard registers, these are in alphabetical rather than date of event order.

By the time a volunteer from Queensland died, they could well have been fighting in a unit raised anywhere in Australia. So not only was a list of dead service personnel needed—and Australia had suffered close to 62,000 killed and missing during the course of the war—this had to be cross checked against where the person had enlisted. There were nearly 58,000 enlistments registered in Queensland.

Once it was established that the dead soldier had indeed enlisted in Queensland, information was taken from their service record and sent to the next of kin on a death registration form. This was accompanied by a letter from George Porter explaining the work the registry was undertaking.

The next of kin were asked to add further detail and sign to certify that the information was correct, and if they could not do so, forward it to someone who could. The certified details were then entered into the registers in alphabetical order. It was a process which could take

years to complete as many Queensland volunteers had been born in another state and many in a different country altogether^[2].

^[2] Close to 20% of those who served in the AIF during World War One had been born in the United Kingdom

The First World War registrations were compiled under the direction of George Porter, who became Registrar-General in October 1921. Porter was by all accounts a bit of a maverick who did not necessarily rely on legislation to back up his decisions, and he took it upon himself to register the deaths of all the men and women who had, in his words, 'given their lives for Queensland'.

Porter believed that the registration of the death, and so the ready availability of a death certificate, would provide bereaved families with some form of closure for their lost loved ones, who at best were buried on the other side of the world—the British Empire had a strict policy of not repatriating its war dead—and at worst, had no known grave at all. Copies of the completed death certificates would be made available to the relatives for two shillings.

Compiling and entering the records was a mammoth and complex task. The battalion in which a dead soldier was serving when they died was not necessarily an accurate reflection of where they had enlisted. Although at the outbreak of war battalions had been raised largely within individual states, as the war progressed and casualties grew, battalions were merged and re-organised and reinforcements were sent wherever they were needed.



Left: George Porter's accompanying form letter sent to John Wilson's widow Kate, in Longreach, along with a death registration form. John Wilson was a railway worker originally from Rockhampton. He volunteered in September 1915 and was sent to the Western Front as reinforcement for the 26th AIF Battalion. He was killed in action on November 5 1916 during the assault on German trenches north of Gueudecourt. It was one of the last actions of the battle of the Somme which officially ended 13 days later on November 18.

This letter was sent to John Wilson's widow in April 1922 but the completed death registration wasn't received back at the registry until October, after being sent on to the soldier's bereaved father. John Wilson has no known grave and is remembered on the Australian War Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux.

The registers themselves were compiled between 1921 and 1924; separate registers were created specifically to record the war dead. As detailed in the first issue of our Family History Newsletter, these registrations were given the prefix letter 'F' in the index, indicating an AIF death from the First World War and an 'S' indicating a World War Two death that may have occurred outside Australia; some of those registered had been repatriated to Australia and subsequently died of their wounds.



Above: Terence Keating's entry in the RBDM death register. The registration shows he died of wounds, 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth. His service records, which can be viewed online at the National Archives of Australia, show he died of septicemia.



Above: The record even states how long he had lived in Queensland 'about two years'. As the registrar was recording so many deaths, stamps were made up for Registrar-General George Porter's signature, where the death was registered and the burial details.

Thanks to the meticulous research of Registrar-General George Porter and his staff, Terence Keating now has a death certificate in England, where he died, and Queensland where he enlisted.

With more than 2 million [historical records](#) including more than 15,000 records of deceased World War One and World War Two military personnel, you never know what you might find through a [simple search](#) of the official Queensland Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages database.

It's free to search, so why not [jump online](#) and discover your family history. You may find an image of the original hand written record of one of your relatives.

Do you have a rich past? Find out with just [one search](#).

Boy soldiers of the Great War

Story by Adrian Harrison

Anyone who has seen Peter Weir's magnificent if historically inaccurate film, *Gallipoli*, will be familiar with the story of boy soldiers who, in defiance of their parent's wishes, ran away to join the army during the First World War. In the film, Weir's fictional lead character, Archie Hamilton, attempts to sign up only to be exposed as under age but then travels hundreds of kilometers to enlist under an assumed name. The tragedy of the story is that the young man, so desperate to fight for king and country, is then callously sacrificed in the futile attack on the Nek at Gallipoli. While many of the events in Peter Weir's film have been criticised for portraying a simplistic stereotypical view of the Gallipoli campaign, one undeniable fact is that countless under-age men signed up to fight in the Great War and many followed a tragically similar path to young Archie Hamilton in the film.

During the First World War, the Australian Army's enlistment age was 21 or 18 with the permission of a parent or guardian; this was higher than in Britain where young men could sign up of their own volition at just 19. Many young Aussies under the enlistment age, particularly first generation immigrants from Britain, became swept up in the patriotic fervor whipped up at the start of the war and lied about their age to join up. Even more boy soldiers came forward to enlist as heroic tales of derring-do from the Gallipoli landings were publicised in the Australian press.

Private James Charles 'Jim' Martin from Melbourne is probably the best known non fictional boy soldier, believed to be the youngest Australian soldier to die in the Great War. Born on 3 January 1901 young Jim, the only boy amongst his family's six children, enlisted on 12 April 1915, aged just 14 years and 3 months old; ironically Jim's father had earlier tried to join up but was rejected for being too old. His distraught parents did try and stop him, but young Jim threatened to run away, sign on under an assumed name and never to write to them if they didn't let him enlist. After basic training Jim embarked from Melbourne with the 21st Battalion's 1st Reinforcements bound for Gallipoli. On route, the transport in which he was travelling—the HMT Southland—was torpedoed in the Aegean Sea. Forty men died, but Jim was plucked from the water, eventually landing on the peninsula on 8 September 1915. A cruel winter was already creeping up on Gallipoli and conditions for the troops steadily worsened. In early October young Jim contracted enteric fever(1) - better known as typhoid - and he was evacuated from the peninsula on a hospital ship. Tragically he died on 25 October 1915 and was buried at sea, he was still only 14 years and nine months old.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P05051.001

14-year-old Jim Martin pictured in uniform with his five sisters before embarking for Gallipoli. It's evident from the picture that Jim was a big lad and could pass for being much older. His family were complicit with Jim lying on his enlistment forms, as Jim threatened to run away, enlist and never contact them if they didn't help him. Jim was still over two months shy of his 15th birthday when he died.

Picture: Australian War Memorial P05051.001

From the Roll of Honour—the list of war dead—we know that there were at least 14 boy soldiers from Queensland who signed up to fight and died in the Great War, although there are probably many more, and there are likely to be hundreds of boy soldiers from Queensland who survived the war that we don't know about.

[illegible]

Ernie was indeed awfully keen, and wasn't going to let minor issues like his age and ignominious discharge from the army stop him joining up again. He therefore travelled down to Sydney and enlisted for a second time on 13 April 1916, this time under the alias of Eric Pinches and stating he was 21 so didn't need parental consent! At the end of the year he was sent to France with the 3rd reinforcements of the 14th Machine Gun Company and his bravery proved beyond question. In late April 1917 he single handedly rushed and enemy machine gun, capturing it and its German crew. For this act of 'conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty' as the citation stated, he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM). The award was gazetted—published in *The London Gazette* an official journal of the British Government—on 18 June 1917, but tragically Ernie didn't get to see it.

[illegible]

R.G. 5230-017

CERTIFICATE OF DEATH

NOTE: Registration for this certificate is required for all deaths except those which occur while serving in the armed forces of the United States. For further information on this subject, see U.S. Social Security Administration, Bureau of Census, Washington, D.C. 20540.

Date of Death: 1943

1. Name of Deceased: John William Tracy

2. Date of Birth: 1901 12 27 Calgary, Alberta, Canada

3. Sex: Male

4. Race: White

5. Marital Status: Married

6. Occupation: Tractor Driver

7. Cause of Death: Heart Disease

8. Date of Death: 1943 12 27

9. Place of Death: Home

10. Signature of Physician: [Signature]

11. Signature of Minister: [Signature]

12. Signature of Coroner: [Signature]

13. Signature of Registrar: [Signature]

14. Signature of Deceased: [Signature]

15. Signature of Next of Kin: [Signature]

16. Signature of Burial Officer: [Signature]

17. Signature of Undertaker: [Signature]

18. Signature of Burial Officer: [Signature]

19. Signature of Burial Officer: [Signature]

20. Signature of Burial Officer: [Signature]

21. Signature of Burial Officer: [Signature]

22. Signature of Burial Officer: [Signature]

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99. Signature of Burial Officer: [Signature]

100. Signature of Burial Officer: [Signature]

Above left, William Henry Adams enlistment papers from the Australian National archive which states he was 20 years and 10 months old at enlistment. **Above right**, his death record, held by the Queensland Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages completed by his grief-stricken mother in 1922 who was now living in Bowen Hills, Brisbane. She states he was just 17 years, 6 months and 14 days old when he died on Gallipoli just over 8 months later. She obviously felt unable to stop him as the record implies she saw him after his enlistment.

Just three weeks after his act of heroism, on 5 May 1917, Ernie died in a lonely shell-hole from wounds he'd received during the second battle of Bullecourt, a costly attack on a fortified German village south-east of Arras which resulted in nearly 7500 Australian casualties. He was only 17 years and 3 weeks old. His body was never recovered and he is commemorated on the Villers-Bretonneux Memorial in France, which records the names of 11,000 Australians who were killed in the Great War who have no known grave.

At least two boy soldiers from Queensland died on Gallipoli, Albert Scott from Gympie and William 'Bill' Henry Adams. Like Archie Hamilton in Peter Weir's film, Bill Adams was a trooper in the Light Horse, born on 18 November 1897 in Thargomindah, 1,100 kilometres west of Brisbane. Raised in the bush he was an expert shot and could ride, although he later moved to the city and was working as a motor mechanic when he enlisted in the 2nd Light Horse on 4 September 1914.

Bill decided to use reverse psychology to get past the suspicions of the enlistment officer, brazenly stating he was 20 years and 10 months old and therefore only two months short of being able to enlist without his parent's consent; enlistment officers often didn't bother to ask for consent forms if the volunteer was close to being old enough to sign up of their own volition. In fact Bill had added four years to his real age, being only 16 years and 10 months old. William was shot and killed on Gallipoli near Quinn's post, the tiny strongpoint clinging precariously to the cliffs high above ANZAC cove on 13/14 May 1915; he was initially reported missing but his body was later recovered and was buried in Shrapnel Valley Cemetery. He was still only 17 years 6 months old. William's brother, Sergeant Vivian Douglas Adams, was also to be killed at Gallipoli on 31 October 1915.

Obviously a large number of boy soldiers from Queensland lived to tell the tale. One was Jim Arkell, who established the Christian philanthropic movement, Toc H, in Queensland. According to his birth record, Jim Celtic Arkell was born in Cricket Street, Brisbane on 8 April 1899. His mother was English, his father a salesman from Eight Mile Plains. The family later moved to Hall Street in Alderley in Brisbane's north and this is the address he used when he joined the army in September 1915. Young James gave his age as 18 years and 5 months on enlistment when he was actually only 16. He also claimed he had served in the militia for three years before joining up(2).

Although he was passed fit for service Jim had poor eyesight and wore glasses which meant he couldn't fight in the trenches; for some reason during the First World War good eyesight was seen as a necessity for front line infantrymen, which seems ironic in trench warfare when many men died without getting even the merest glimpse of an enemy soldier. Men who wore spectacles were allowed to enter the Army Service Corp (ASC), Army Medical Corps (AMC) or the Ordnance Corps and young Jim was accepted into the AMC's 7th Australian Field Ambulance. This was a front line medical unit—not a vehicle as the name suggests—comprising stretcher bearers, emergency aid posts, advanced dressing stations (ADS), and a Main Dressing Station (MDS). A field ambulance was designed to care for around 150 casualties at a time, but this was a theoretical number and in battle a field ambulance was simply swamped with wounded men. Jim Arkell was later transferred to the 8th Australian Field Ambulance and was based for a long period around the Ypres salient in Belgium. During this time Jim Arkell was a regular visitor to Toc H's Talbot House in Poperinge where he became friends with the movement's founder, the Reverend Philip 'Tubby' Clayton. Unfortunately in 1917 he suffered a debilitating bout of influenza; he was hospitalised and ultimately discharged from the army. A proud ex-serviceman, through his close friendship with Philip Clayton he effectively founded the Toc H movement in Queensland in 1925, remaining a committed member of the organisation throughout his life. I say he lived to tell the tale, but as far as we know he never told anyone about enlisting under age and this only came to light when I was researching another project; if he did tell anyone no one thought less of him for it, as he was later made a Member of the British Empire (MBE) for his charity work and in 1966 was named Queensland Father of the Year.



Above: Although a field ambulance was a front line medical unit—not a vehicle as the name suggests—it did have ambulances. Here a horse drawn ambulance, similar to the one 17-year-old boy soldier Lionel Howarth was riding on when he died, is drawn up outside an Australian tent hospital in France.

Picture: Australian War Memorial P01064.021

Not all boy soldiers who joined the 8th Field Ambulance were so lucky. A comrade of Jim Arkell in the 8th Field Ambulance, Private Lionel Reginald Howarth from New South Wales, enlisted in October 1916. On 4 May 1918, Lionel was helping drive a horse ambulance along the Corbie-Fulloy Road near the River Somme in France, when a shell landed nearby killing both him and the other driver. His foster mother later wrote to the army informing them he was only 17 years old when he died.

Lest we forget – Queensland's boy soldiers

The 14 boy soldiers from Queensland who died during the Great War that we know of are:

Private Sidney James Joseph Pelin (6072, 15th Battalion) from Mount Morgan. Died 1 February 1917 aged 17 years.

Private Ernest Wilson Pinches D.C.M. (296, 14th Company, Australian Machine Gun Corps) from Brisbane. Died 5 May 1917 aged 17 years and 3 weeks.

Private Walter James Missingham (5184, 47th Battalion) from Townsville. Died 12 August 1917 aged 17 years 2 months.

Private Ernest Wills Beer (1913, 6th Battalion) from Mackay. Died 9 August 1915 aged 17 years 4 months.

Private Donald Collins Leslie Smith (3939, 4th Pioneer Battalion) from Marburg. Died 25 September 1917 aged 17 years 4 months.

Trooper William Henry Adams (611, 2nd Australian Light Horse) from Thargomindah. Died 13/14 May 1915 aged 17 years 6 months.

Private Robert Semmens (3121, 9th Battalion) from Brisbane. Died 25 July 1916 aged 17 years 7 months.

Private George Bentley Guymer (5679, 4th Pioneer Battalion) from Yangan. Died 4 June 1917 aged 17 years 8 months.

Private Albert Stanley Scott (949, 15th Battalion) from Gympie. Died 28 April 1915 on the hills above the beach at Gallipoli aged 17 years 8 months.

Lance Corporal Frank Gilbert Usher (337, 21st Company, Australian Machine Gun Corps) from Oakey. Died 20 September 1917 aged 17 years 8 months.

Private Patrick Petherbridge (3654, 47th Battalion) from Woodford. Died 28 March 1918 aged 17 years 9 months.

Private Thomas Arthur Rabnott (3838, 15th Battalion) from Ipswich. Died 4 July 1916, just three days before his 18th birthday.

Private Frederick Clarence Fuljames (5272, 9th Battalion) from Sunbeam. Died 27 February 1917 aged 18 years.

Private Roy Clarence Lucas (7508, 41st Battalion) from Goondiwindi. Died 12th August 1918, aged 18 years.

List taken from the Honour Roll at the Australian War Memorial.

With more than 2 million [historical records](#) including more than 15,000 records of deceased World War One and World War Two military personnel, you never know what you might find through a [simple search](#) of the official Queensland Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages database.

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Do you have a rich past? Find out with just [one search](#)

(1) With a plague of flies feasting on the unburied corpses in no mans-land, the open latrines and the men's rancid food, intestinal diseases such as dysentery and enteric fever were rife on Gallipoli. Of the 213,000 casualties the allies suffered on Gallipoli, 145,000 were due to sickness, predominantly dysentery, diarrhoea, and like poor Jim Martin, enteric fever.

(2) Before the First World War Australia had a system of compulsory military training during peacetime—the universal service scheme—which was introduced in 1911. There were three categories: boys 12–14 years old had to enroll in the junior cadets, 14–18 year olds enrolled in the senior cadets, and 18–26 year olds had to register with the home defence militia. So Jim Arkell at 16 had probably spent three years in the cadets.

Philip "Tubby" Clayton and the Toc H movement

Story by Adrian Harrison

Toc H is a philanthropic Christian movement founded during the First World War by a Queensland born clergyman, the Reverend Phillip Clayton.

Philip 'Tubby' Clayton—he was nicknamed 'Tubby' because of his short and rather portly stature—was born in Maryborough on December 12 1885 to English parents. The Clayton's moved back to England when Philip was just two years of age and he was educated at the prestigious St Paul's School in London; he was there at the same time as Field Marshal Montgomery of Alamein and the school's list of illustrious former alumni includes Samuel Pepys and John Milton, as well as Sir Leslie Orme Wilson, a future Governor of Queensland. Philip Clayton went on to study Theology at Oxford University before being ordained as an Anglican clergyman.

The image shows a handwritten birth record from 1886. The left page is titled 'BIRTHS in the District of Tiara' and the right page is titled 'in the Colony of Queensland Registered by [Signature]'. The record for Philip Clayton is as follows:

DATE	NAME	RESIDENCE	DATE OF BIRTH	PLACE OF BIRTH	DATE OF BAPTISM	PLACE OF BAPTISM
12 Dec 1885	Philip Clayton	Planter	25 June 1885	Magnolia	12 Dec 1885	St Paul's Anglican Church

Additional handwritten notes include: 'Born at Magnolia', 'Baptized in the Colony of Queensland', 'Registered by [Signature]', and '12 Dec 1885'.

Above Philip 'Tubby' Clayton's birth record from the RBDM archive. It shows he was born in Magnolia in the district of Tiara just south of Maryborough. His father is listed as a planter from Farnborough in England. He was baptized at St Paul's Anglican Church in the city.

Following the outbreak of the First World War the now Reverend Clayton volunteered as an army chaplain ministering to soldiers fighting on the Western Front, and in 1915 he found himself in the little Belgian town of Poperinge.

Poperinge, or 'Pops' as it became known to the British and Australian troops, was an important railhead and the gateway to battered and besieged city of Ypres, 10 kilometers to the east. Thousands of troops passed through Poperinge on their way to and from the front line and the little Flemish town became bloated by huge stockpiles of supplies and ammunition, its narrow cobbled streets choked with military transports of every description. Day and night the town centre teemed with troops; those arriving in trainloads for the front, those billeted in the town on a few days rest from the front line, and the less seriously wounded that spilled from the casualty clearing stations that surrounded the town.

Poperinge was well within range of the German guns positioned around Ypres and it was regularly bombed by German aircraft; however, while most of the population had fled, their place had been taken by the nefarious and unscrupulous attracted to the town to cash-in on the soldiers. Shabby estaminets sprang up selling wine and beer to the troops, and these sat side by side with makeshift gambling dens and brothels which simply took over the abandoned buildings.

Prompted by his friend Neville Talbot—senior chaplain in the 6th British Division—Philip Clayton decided something needed to be done to provide a more moral place for the troops to come and rest, away from the sins of the flesh that surrounded them and where they could be ministered to. The two clergymen were able to acquire a large damaged house in the Rue de l'Hôpital, one of the streets leading from the town's main square in the centre of town, which had been abandoned in the wake of the first German bombardments of Poperinge. Its wealthy owners were more than happy to rent the house to the army for a nominal monthly fee—150 Belgian francs—on the condition they repaired some of the bomb damage and made it waterproof.

Initially it was proposed that the new club should be called Church House, but this was perceived as being too off-putting to a large section of the soldiery who were as wary of being preached at as they were of walking into a shabby estaminet or brothel. As a result it was decided to call it Talbot House in memory of Neville

Talbot's 23-year-old brother, Gilbert, who had been killed in July 1915 during the bitter fighting for Hooge Chateau just two miles east of Ypers. Talbot House was soon abbreviated by the soldiers to its initials 'Toc H', 'Toc' being the code British and Commonwealth army signalers used for the letter 'T', while 'H' was just plain 'H'.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

A02561

Above A contemporary view of Talbot House in the Rue de l'Hôpital Poperinge. The name of the road has changed since the First World War and the house, now a museum run by the Talbot House Association, stands in Gasthuisstraat

Picture courtesy of the Australian War Memorial. Image A02561

The new club opened its doors in early December 1915. It was promoted as 'The every man's club' and was run very much on egalitarian principals with all soldiers treated equally; a notice was hung by the front door bearing the message 'All rank abandon, ye who enter here'. It was comfortably furnished with donations from the British public and boasted a piano for entertainment, an extensive library, and pens, paper and envelopes were freely available for the soldiers to write letters home. The house also had a large garden at the back which provided the soldiers with a haven away from the chaos and carnage that surrounded them, or at least as much as could be found in a war zone. The attic of the house was converted into a tiny non-denominational chapel complete with a portable organ and it is estimated that more than 50,000^[1] soldiers found solace there during the course of the war, many of them Australians. After the evacuation of Gallipoli at the end of 1915, most Australian troops were transferred to the Western Front and many fought in Flanders, particularly in the summer of 1917 during the Third Battle of Ypers. Better known as Passchendaele, the tiny village which was the battle's objective, it was a three month struggle through the mud east of Ypers at the cost of 38,000 Australian casualties.

Toc H remained open for the duration of the war, although it was forced to briefly close in May 1918 when the German spring offensive brought Poperinge under intensive bombardment. It closed its doors for good in January 1919 when the owners returned to reclaim their house; however, the Christian ethic of 'helping your fellow man' fostered by Philip Clayton and Neville Talbot at Toc H, and the spirit of camaraderie they had created, refused to die.



(Left) Philip 'Tubby' Clayton pictured in his British Army chaplain's uniform in July 1933 by British portrait photographer Walter Stoneman.

Picture courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London

On his return to England Philip Clayton set about building Toc H into a philanthropic Christian movement. The initial motivation was to help returned servicemen find employment—many of whom had visited Talbot House during the war—and a Toc H hostel was opened in London for men to stay in while they looked for work. Within weeks the hostel was oversubscribed and bigger premises had to be found and with the success of the fledgling movement in London, the idea quickly spread, with Toc H branches springing up around the UK. While many of its members—and many of those it initially helped—had fought in the war, it was always intended that the Toc H movement should be more than an ex-servicemen's club and branches were encouraged to become involved in a wide variety of projects that helped those less fortunate.

The momentum for the organisation's growth was accelerated by some high profile patronage including that of the writer G.K. Chesterton—now best known for his Father Brown priest-detective novels—and most significantly the Prince of Wales—the future Edward VIII—who was an active supporter; the movement consequently received Royal assent as early as 1922.

The symbol of Toc H became a simple oil lamp, similar to the ones used at the time of Christ, which had burned in the attic chapel above Talbot House in Poperinge. Prominent on the Toc H lamp, known as the 'The Lamp of Maintenance, is the Cross of Lorraine—a Christian heraldic device comprising a two barred cross—carried on the Crusades by the Knights Templar and which features prominently on the flag and coat of arms of the city of Ypres. Each branch of Toc H was to be presented with a replica lamp which was to be lit on various occasions, including every year to mark Philip 'Tubby' Clayton's birthday.

The Toc H movement soon spread around the British Commonwealth, and Australia was one of the first countries outside Britain to embrace the movement. In 1923 Lord Henry Forster, the then Governor-General of Australia, wrote to the Reverend Philip Clayton saying he would like to establish the movement in Australia, requesting a lamp in the memory of his two sons—John and Alfred—killed during the Great War. The following year the Forster Lamp, as it became known, was lit by the Prince of Wales at a Toc H Festival in London's Albert Hall before being brought to Australia by Philip Clayton himself and presented to Lord and Lady Forster. It was intended that lamp would be held by the first Toc H Branch established in Australia; however, so many branches sprang up at the same time that it was decided that the Forster Lamp should become the Federal Lamp, it was to be kept burning and future lamps would be lit from its flame. The Federal Lamp was enshrined in Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle in 1926 at a ceremony attended by more than 2000 people.

The first Toc H branch in Queensland was set up in Brisbane as early as 1925 following a personal visit to the city by the Reverend Philip Clayton in July; however, it was in Queensland's country towns that the movement really flourished and at its high point there were close to forty branches across the State. With its philosophy of 'helping your fellow man' the Toc H movement in Queensland was heavily involved in a number of

philanthropic initiatives, particularly for disadvantaged children.

In the early 1930's Toc H established a number of programs to help children from the west of the state who were suffering from the combined effect of The Great Depression and prolonged drought. Toc H branches in Townsville and Maryborough established schemes to bring bush children for a break by the seaside, away from the rigours of outback life. These embryonic schemes evolved into the Royal Queensland Bush Children's Health scheme, a not for profit organisation which still provides free health care to disadvantaged children in remote areas of Queensland.

Although Toc H membership has declined since the end of the Second World War it remains a very active Christian voluntary movement, still guided by the original ethos and spirit that was created by Neville Talbot and Philip 'Tubby' Clayton in Poperinge 100 years ago. In Queensland it organises a midnight service on ANZAC eve at Brisbane's Shrine of Remembrance and takes part in the ANZAC day parade in Brisbane, Bribie Island and Cairns. In December this year the organisation celebrates its centenary.

Philip 'Tubby' Clayton died in 1972. In his birthplace of Maryborough he is remembered in St Paul's Anglican Church, the church in which he was baptized, and there is a stained glass panel of a Toc H Lamp in the Parish Hall. He is also remembered with a plaque in the footpath of the Maryborough Heritage Trail. In 1929 a wealthy benefactor, Lord Wakefield of Hythe, bought Talbot House for £9,200 and donated it to the movement. It was largely restored to how it looked during the Great War and is now a museum run by the Talbot House Association, an Anglo-Belgian organisation. The story of Toc H and the museum were featured in the 2012 series of the highly popular UK TV genealogy documentary 'Who do you think you are?' in an episode about UK stand-up comedian Hugh Dennis.

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Do you have a rich past? Find out with just [one search](#).

(1) Queues often stretched down the stairs and out into the street for services held in the attic chapel and more than fifty thousand signatures appeared in the Communicants' Rolls kept by the Reverend Philip Clayton.

BDM death records (or why can't I find an historical death record of someone who I know died in QLD?)

Story by Mike Vitobello

We often have enquiries from family history researchers advising that they are certain that a historical death happened in Queensland but our search engine does not produce a result.

There are a number of reasons why an historical death record might not be displayed in your search results. The most common reason is incorrect entry of search data by the user. Other reasons may be insufficient event details provided by the user or the event was not recorded or the record of the event may not exist at all.

While the BDM search engine is quite robust and flexible there are minimum data fields that must be completed and information that must be supplied to produce a successful search. You can find detailed information about the best way to use the search engine and how to maximise the potential for your results on our website at ["Searching our historical records - hints and tips"](#).

There may be a situation where the place of death was not in Queensland but the person was buried in Queensland. In this case the person's death record will not be held in Queensland. You can try your search using [another state's BDM historical search facility](#).

Unfortunately, in earlier times before compulsory death records were kept (from 1856 onwards), on occasion a death was not reported. It should be understood that BDM are the official record keepers for life events that occur in Queensland. These records are compiled from information that is supplied to us. BDM do not check or "investigate" life events. For example, we have had enquiries like "My great great grandfather died in Charters Towers in 1822 and I have seen his grave but you don't have a record of this in your database". This may be a case of BDM never receiving notification of the death.

There may be another reason.

The details of death are recorded in BDM's records from information submitted on a death registration form. The death registration form is usually compiled by the funeral director from information provided by the deceased's family or friends. The doctor and/or coroner also provide information in relation to cause of death and time of death. The date of death is stored in a "Date of death" field in our database.

In some cases the cause of death details (and consequent date of death) may not be known. The coroner may be required to carry out an autopsy on the deceased person and conclude an approximate range of date of death. For example the date of death as provided to BDM on the coroner's report might be "Between 7 September 1980 and 10 September 1980". This date of death range information is stored in a separate field. In this instance an exact date of death cannot be entered into the "date of death" field in the database.

BDM must use the exact information as provided on the death registration form and cause of death notification.

When the searcher enters a date of death (dd/mm/yyyy or mm/yyyy or yyyy) the search script matches the information to the "date of death" field in our records database. If there has been no exact date of death entered into the database the search script will not identify the record. Currently, BDM's search engine will only produce death results that contain an exact date of death.

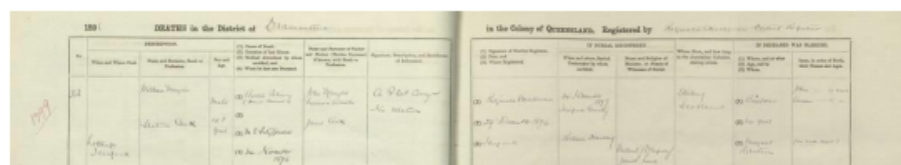
In the example above this record will not be displayed in the search results because an exact date of death has not been recorded in the BDM records.

Take the example of William Menzies. This death is registered in our database with a year of registration

of 1896.

If a search for "Menzies" and "Year of death - 1896" is conducted the search engine will not produce a result for this person.

Further investigation in the database reveals that the date of death is recorded as "Date of death not recorded". The place of death is recorded as the "Lockup, Isisford", His profession as "Station Cook" and the cause of death as "Aortic disease".



Above *The BDM death register entry image for the death of William Menzies*

Did William go into town one Friday night had a tad too many libations, got into a fight or caused some trouble, was thrown into the Isis garrison to sober up and at some time during his incarceration die of a heart problem? I'm sure some of our busy researchers could investigate and find out the whole story. In fact, if anyone is able to unearth William's story we will publish the details for all to read in the next edition of the family history journal.

What are we doing about these records? There are around 3,500 historical records that have no exact date of death. We are currently reviewing the search script so that a record may be potentially identified from all sources within the database containing date of death information. For example, the searcher enters a name and a date of death of 1915. The search script will look at the name and find a match then the "Date of death" field in the database and try to match the exact date of death. If there is no "Date of death" the search script will then try to match date of death information from any other location in that particular record.

We will keep our readers posted about our progress on this issue.

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A returned ANZAC soldier's story

Story by Alan Phillips

In collaboration with my brother John and in recalling family memories passed down to us I have put together an article on the "ANZAC" life of my uncle – George Henry (Barney) Phillips 1895 - 1932. On returning from Gallipoli to his home in Rockhampton Barney related the story of his personal experiences on and after his landing at Gallipoli on that first Anzac day on 25th April 1915, whilst serving with the Australian Imperial Forces (AIF 9th Battalion). As well as data sourced from Queensland's Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages other information has been obtained from Queensland State Archives at Runcorn and war records were obtained from Canberra's war memorial web site and the National Archives of Australia.

Recounting his experiences, he said on that first ANZAC day the Ninth Battalion drove the Turks from their entrenched positions. Machine guns were positioned before them inland for a distance of two and a half miles. Towards Sunday evening Turkish reinforcements arrived in massed formation on the left and as the Australians were without their artillery and field support they were compelled to fall back a mile and a half and retrench for the night. The Australians held on to their positions that night against big odds. During the entire campaign the Australians had been so far inland as they were on that Sunday afternoon and it was simply a case of hanging on. The Australians came under heavy artillery fire during the day. The Turks' poor accuracy was offset by the heavy and sustained fire. The ordinance used was very poor in quality, and it was presumed that it was old reserve that had been saved up as many of the shells failed to burst.

On the Sunday afternoon one shell hit and injured a young soldier next to Barney and buried itself in the trench without exploding. Soon after another shell burst high in the air above Barney showering shrapnel all over the trench and this time Barney was not so lucky. He received shrapnel wounds to the knee and shin and although his wounds were only slight he was compelled to go aboard a hospital ship and was repatriated to Alexandria. Barney reached Alexandria for treatment but so great was the fascination of trench life he was back at Anzac on the following Saturday night and in the trenches again on Sunday morning.



"Several men were turning in for the night, lying down fully dressed with only their boots off. Their bed consisted of one blanket and an overcoat. Lying down left us more pressed for room than ever, as nobody was willing to leave the immediate shelter of the bank...the place was full of stones and rather exposed. I moved as close as possible under the bank and removed the largest stones. At uncertain intervals they were shelling us again. The shells burst overhead with a blinding flash, as though they were pictures of fireworks in a storybook."

An account of Sydney Loch, trying to sleep on his first night in ANZAC Cove.

Loch, Sydney. To Hell and Back: The banned account of Gallipoli, Sydney: Harper Collins, 2007, p92.

On the 19th and 20th May the Turkish general Enver Pasha launched his attack with the objective to drive the allied invaders into the sea. Barney said that the Turks were simply mown down as they advanced in the mass formation taught them by their German instructors. He instanced where between 200 and 300 Turks advance to the positions which he was assisting to defend, "I was on the right flank" and the trenches were about 230 yards apart. As the enemy came over the open ground the H.M.S Triumph anchored offshore fired a shell which burst on the right Turkish flank. Within a second or two, the Australian heavy guns split the Turks on the left flank. When the atmosphere cleared the ground was strewn with dead and wounded, and only a few stragglers, who were promptly picked off by the sharpshooters, remained. On the left flank the Turks managed to penetrate the Australian lines, but were immediately expelled. It was during this battle Corporal Albert Jacka won the Victoria Cross. After the Turks retired, they shelled the Australian position very heavily.

During the night Barney was struck on the left side of his body by a piece of shrapnel, but beyond bruising on the skin, it did no damage.



War Office, 24th July, 1915

"His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to award the Victoria Cross to the undermentioned Officers and Non-commissioned Officers:-

No. 465 Lance-Corporal Albert Jacka, 14th Battalion, Australian Imperial Forces.

For most conspicuous bravery on the night of the 19th-20th May, 1915 at "Courtney's Post", Gallipoli Peninsula.

Lance-Corporal Jacka, while holding a portion of our trench with four other men, was heavily attacked. When all except himself were killed or wounded, the trench was rushed and occupied by seven Turks. Lance-Corporal Jacka at once most gallantly attacked them single-handed, and killed the whole party, five by rifle fire and two with the bayonet".

Corporal Albert Jacka on the island of Mudros during the battle of Gallipoli - picture courtesy of the Australian War Memorial PO2141.003

Barney also recounted the incident of the British ship H.M.S. Triumph being torpedoed off Gaba-tepe before their very eyes and sinking in seventeen minutes. She had been with the Australians since the moment they landed. "It was a spectacle" he said, witnessing it as it went down, "but the Turks shelled during the whole of the time while the rescue boats were doing their work." On the 29th of June the 9th were deputed to make a demonstration in front of the Turkish trenches at Achi-boha while an attack was made from Cape Heller section. The battleships and the artillery participated and he was certain that heavy damage was inflicted on the enemy.

On the 23rd of July, Barney was sent into hospital suffering from rheumatic fever, and conveyed to St. Andrew's and St. David's Hospital at Malta. While being taken from the shore to the hospital ship at Gallipoli the Turkish artillery shelled the mine sweeper that was towing the tug conveying the sick and wounded, but happily no shots hit although one fell between the two vessels.

Among the many stories that Barney told he mentioned an instance of trickery on the part of the Turks. They were discovered bringing machine guns to advanced positions on stretchers under protection of the Red Cross, but the ruse was detected and the offenders were dealt with in a 'salutary manner.'

Upon his "bitter sweet" return to Australia Barney never fully recovered from his now diagnosed Rheumatic Fever. He died at the home of his mother and his younger sister Emily on 26th July 1932 aged 37. official Queensland Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages database.

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The brothers Finn and World War One

Story by Shauna Hicks

Every April and November I try and do a military blog post to help commemorate my military ancestors. This post was first written on 24 April 2013 and at the time I said I hoped to learn more about the brothers Finn. In our exciting electronic world that has happened and I can now add a photograph of Denis Finn to the blog post. I have also updated the text to include other new information.

My father's three great uncles Robert, John and Denis Patrick Finn enlisted in World War One. Although all three returned to Australia, I believe that the experience changed them and their lives were totally different from what they might have been had not war intervened.

John and Sarah Finn emigrated from County Wicklow, Ireland in 1882 to Queensland with their eldest son Robert. Another son James was born on the voyage and a further eight children were born in Queensland and northern New South Wales.

Their youngest son Denis Patrick Finn was the first of the Finn brothers to enlist on 19 September 1915 in Brisbane. Denis claimed to be 18½ years old and single and working as a labourer when he enlisted. At the time of writing the original blog post, I did not question his age but recently I found this photograph of Denis through the State Library of Queensland [QANZAC100](#) project.



Caption: Denis Patrick Finn, The Queenslander 8 Jan 1916

As he looks incredibly young, I immediately went to my family history database and sure enough, he was only 17 years old and had lied about his age at the time of enlistment. This is a great example of why we should check all new information against existing information just in case there are inconsistencies. This discovery of his extreme youth probably explains even more why Denis had a hard time after his war experience.

Denis joined the 52nd Battalion and was wounded in action in France. He was mentioned in dispatches (not dated) for bravery under fire and it is probably then that he was wounded. Denis was the only Finn brother to become a prisoner of war in Germany. In September 1916 he sent his sister Sarah Jane Jewsbury a postcard:

"Dear Sister

Just a postcard to let you know that I am getting on very well and my wound is nearly better. I am at a German Camp here, you can send me anything you like at the address on the other side in full. We get no money here so you can tell Kitty to send me a pound or so. Good bye, best love to all. Tell Kitty to write.
Signed Denis"

In 1923 Denis married and had two children but the marriage did not last and by the early 1930s Denis had been convicted of a number of petty crimes. He was also using the alias Johan Romanoff and perhaps he was someone who Denis had met in the prison camp or at some other point during the war.

Denis seems to have disappeared after that and I am still trying to trace when and where he died. Recently I found a divorce record for his first marriage and a second divorce record (possibly for him) in State Records New South Wales. He may have remarried and even had more children. I will not know for sure until I receive copies of both divorces and follow up the clues. Denis' story continues.

Robert Finn, the eldest son was the next to enlist on 12 February 1916 in Cairns and he joined the 9th Battalion. Prior to that he was working as a miner at Wolfram in Queensland and was still single at 36 years of age. Like Denis, Robert was also sent to France and returned to Australia on 18 July 1919. Robert never married and died in Mount Morgan hospital in 1953 but prior to his death he was living in Bouldercombe, another mining town in Queensland.

John Finn was the third brother to enlist on 10 June 1916 in Brisbane. He was also single, working as a labourer and 26 years old. He too saw service in France and returned to Australia on 2 June 1919. Like his older brother Robert, John never married and spent time working on the sugar cane plantations in north Queensland. John died in Cairns in 1967 and had been living at Trinity Bay.

All three brothers received the 1914-18 Star Medal, the British War Medal and the Victory Medal for their service overseas.

Why did Robert and John never marry? Were they just confirmed bachelors or did the war change how they viewed their world? Why did they live so far away from their family in Brisbane? Would Denis have turned to petty crime if he had not gone to war or not spent time in a prisoner of war camp?

Not only did the war impact on the brothers but it also must have impacted on their father and their siblings. My grandmother would never talk about her mother's family so I will probably never know. However, as more and more records are digitised and made more easily accessible, I can continue to slowly piece together their stories.

Lest we forget.

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What connects Sister Kenny, the new Brisbane children's hospital and James Bond?

Story by Adrian Harrison

In issue four of the Family History Journal we covered the life of Sister Elizabeth Kenny, the self-taught bush nurse from the little town of Nobby on the Darling Downs who in the days before vaccination developed a controversial method for treating polio victims. What connects her to Brisbane's new children's hospital and James Bond is the name Cilento, and it really is a 'who' rather than a what.

Sir Raphael Cilento—who preferred to be known as Ray—was Director-General of Health and Medical Services in Queensland between 1934 and 1945. Originally from South Australia, he served with the Australian Army Medical Corps in New Guinea at the end of the First World War where he became interested in tropical medicine. Returning to Australia he settled in Queensland, becoming Director of Tropical Medicine in Townsville and later Director of the Commonwealth Government's Division of Tropical Hygiene in Brisbane. His work in promoting public health, particularly in the area of tropical medicine, was so highly revered that he was knighted in the 1935 New Year's Honours List at the age of just 42.

When he was made Director-General of Queensland's Health and Medical Services in 1934, Sir Raphael became firmly opposed to the methods for 'curing' polio pioneered by Sister Elizabeth Kenny although at first he spoke politely enough about her work—which the government were actually helping to fund—giving the impression that he favoured it. Her method was a form of early physiotherapy involving hot towels, powerful massage and manipulation to keep a child's paralysed limbs mobile; however, this flew in the face of medical opinion which advocated immobilising a stricken child's body in a plaster cast or metal brace to stop the limbs deforming. Despite the popularity of Sister Kenny's treatment, which brought her both fame and fortune, Sir Raphael's opinion didn't mellow over time and if anything it intensified. He remained convinced her ideas were flawed and that she was simply a charlatan praying on vulnerable people who were prepared to try—and pay—anything to cure their stricken children. In 1936 Sir Raphael set up a Queensland Government Royal Commission to evaluate her work which in 1938 published a fairly damning report, labeling it 'a grievous error and fraught with grave danger'. Her reputation damaged and personally upset by the report's findings, Sister Kenny moved to America where her work was more sympathetically received; here she became feted as a heroine, dining with President Roosevelt and even having a Hollywood movie made about her.



State Library of Queensland Record Number
200455

The outspoken critic of Sister Kenny, Sir Raphael Cilento, pictured in July 1939 during his tenure as Queensland's Director-General of Health and Medical Services.

Sister Kenny demonstrating her controversial therapy for treating polio patients in a Queensland hospital during the 1930s.

Sir Raphael's connection to Brisbane's new children's Hospital and James Bond dates back to his time in as a student in South Australia. While studying at the University of Adelaide, Raphael Cilento had met fellow medical student Phyllis McGlew and they were married on 18 March 1920. While Raphael Cilento made his name in tropical medicine, his wife became well-known as a passionate advocate of women and children's health issues, particularly the promotion of good nutrition when raising children. She wrote a number of books on the subject and was a firm believer in the use of dietary vitamin supplements to combat poor nutrition; this was slightly ironic as, like Sister Kenny's polio treatment which Sir Raphael so vehemently opposed, the use of vitamin supplements was seen as rather controversial treatment at the time. While Phyllis Cilento had her own medical practice specialising in obstetrics, throughout the 1930's she also worked tirelessly for Brisbane's Hospital for Sick Children (which became the Royal Children's Hospital) in Herston. Elevated to the title of Lady Cilento in 1935 following her husband's knighthood, she was also showered with honours in her own right, these included earning the title Queensland Mother of the Year in 1974 and being chosen as the first Queenslander of the Year in 1981. Lady Cilento died in July 1987, two years after her husband Sir Raphael. In December 2013 it was announced that Brisbane's new state-of-the-art 359-bed Children's Hospital built adjoining the Mater hospital complex in South Brisbane—which replaced the Royal children's Hospital where Phyllis Cilento worked—would be named the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital in her honour.

Raphael and Phyllis Cilento had three sons and three daughters. The most famous was the couple's youngest daughter, Dianne, who rather than following the family tradition of pursuing a medical career—four of her siblings became medical practitioners—became an actress.

After being expelled from school in Australia, she was educated in New York where in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War Sir Raphael was working as Director for Refugees for the United Nations. Blessed with striking good looks, Dianne showed a talent for acting rather than academic study and won a scholarship to the prestigious Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (RADA) in England. She went on to star in Hollywood films alongside the likes of Paul Newman and Charlton Heston and was even nominated for an Oscar for her supporting role in the 1963 film *Tom Jones*.



State Library of Queensland Record Number 194199

The new state-of-the-art Lady Cilento Children's Hospital named after Lady Phyllis which had been built as part of the Mater hospital complex in South Brisbane.

Dianne Cilento lunching with compatriot Peter Finch at Pinewood Studios, during filming of Passage Home in 1954. You can see the picture has been marked for cropping; all that was wanted was Dianne's face!

In 1962 she married an up and coming Scottish actor called Sean Connery. The former Edinburgh milkman had just completed filming *Dr No*, the first of seven highly successful films he was to star in as British secret agent James Bond. Dianne Cilento even doubled for Connery's female co-star in the fifth film in the franchise, *You Only Live Twice*. The couple had one child, Jason—who was to follow his parents into acting—before they divorced in 1973. Dianne later married English playwright Anthony Shaffer who she met while filming Shaffer's cult horror film *The Wicker Man* and settled in Mossman North Queensland where she built her own outdoor theatre amongst the tropical rainforest. She died in Cairns in October 2011 aged 78.

Sir Raphael Cilento died in Oxley in 1985 aged 91. In January 2015 his death certificate was released into the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages historical archive; to prevent fraud, death certificates are only released into the archive after 30 years, while marriage records are only released after 75 years and birth records after 100 years of the event.