

# Condah during World War I

What was the Condah experience during the 1914-1918 war?

Heywood Sub-branch RSL presents...



*Front cover:*

*A collage of Condah images showing life at home and some of those who enlisted*

*Back cover:*

*Letter from Condah resident Elizabeth Malt to Officer in Charge, Base Record Office, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne in 1918, requesting information about the grave of Pte Ernest Albert Looker, No 6059 and 39<sup>th</sup> Battalion, her daughter's fiancé.*



This booklet has been prepared using a limited number of primary sources. It provides a 'snapshot' of some members of the Condah community during the 1914 to 1919 period. A more extensive study using a broader range of sources would be needed for it to have a claim to be representative of the community and time.

Maryanne Martin, 2014

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## Dedicated to Susan Jane Routledge, née McLeod

In her late twenties Susie fell in love with Howard Routledge the storekeeper at Branhholme. Before they could be married the war broke out and Howard decided to enlist. He refused to marry before leaving, fearful that if he did not return he would leave behind a widow and child.

During the war Susie continued her work as a domestic servant on Arrandoovong, wrote letters to



Howard, her brother Norman (Scotty) and her four first cousins who had also enlisted (Donny McLeod, Dugald and Duncan McCallum and Hugh McLachlan). It's probable that she participated in fund raising for the war effort and also corresponded with other men who had enlisted from her community.

Around about Christmas 1917 Susie heard that Howard had been badly wounded in November and was recuperating in England. In June 1918 along with her parents and siblings she was saddened at the loss of her larger than life elder brother, 'Scotty' who was killed in action, May 31 1918.

Luckily for Susie (and for me) Howard returned in 1919 though he was probably not the same man who left in 1915. The couple were married in Condah in July 1920. In June 1921 baby George arrived, followed soon after by Emily and Peter. I can't imagine what Susie felt when in 1939 George rushed to enlist in World War II, followed a few years later by Peter.

During their time together, Howard and Susie worked tirelessly for the Port Fairy RSL where Howard served as the secretary for many years.

So I dedicate the work I've done to bring about today to my grandmother, Susie, (shown above with her son George), who was also known as the 'Angel of Bank Street' (Port Fairy).

*Maryanne Martin,  
Editor and Event Organiser, Condah, April 2014*

## Photo credits

Greenhills Hotel; Condah Mission School; Wanderers Football team: from photo records at the Hamilton History Centre

Condah garden fete; Malseed family photo Christmas 1915; Condah Show; FA Baker: courtesy of Erica Mather

Donny McLeod photos: from Kevin McLeod, courtesy of Ian McLeod

St Mary's Honour Roll: courtesy of Damein Bell

Duncan McCallum: courtesy of Heather Funk

JW Malseed and wife Cecilia on their wedding day: courtesy of Pat Learmonth

Leonard Charles Lovett, Alfred Lovett & family, Frederick Lovett, Herbert Lovett: courtesy of [www.dpc.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au) from Victorian Indigenous Roll of Honour

Allonville Communal Cemetery: <http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/64903/Allonville%20Communal%20Cemetery>

Menin Gate: <http://www.greatwar.co.uk/ypres-salient/memorial-menin-gate.htm>

# 1914-18

## What was it like to live in Condah?

The First World War was one of the most significant events of the 20th Century, claiming the lives of more than 16 million people across the globe.

Almost 100 years on, many Australians are connected to this war through their family history, the heritage of their local communities, or the lasting impact the war left on generations of Australians. More than 416, 000 Australians enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) for overseas service. The vast majority were men, but a small number were women also joined the Australian Army Nursing Service.

The AIF was not the regular Australian army. It was a force raised especially for overseas service for the duration of the war, and every man and woman in it was a volunteer. Of these volunteers, more than 331,000 were sent overseas, where they served in Egypt, Gallipoli, the Middle East and predominantly on the Western Front in France and Belgium.

For Australia, as for many nations, the First World War remains the most costly conflict in terms of deaths and casualties. From a population of fewer than five million, 416,809 men enlisted, of which over 60,000 were killed and 156,000 wounded, gassed, or taken prisoner.

Source: <http://www.dva.gov.au/aboutDVA/publications/commemorative/awf/Pages/topic2.aspx>

## Condah: a facilitated community conversation

A facilitated community conversation is one which helps a group of people explore ideas and concepts around a topic or theme. Through their involvement, they share knowledge and experience, build understanding, promote subject matter learning, and strengthen relationships and connections.

A facilitated conversation is characterized by being open, exploratory, participatory and informal. A facilitator, using an open ended questioning technique, assists the group to share their thoughts and insights and to be curious about the ideas of others.

### **The Condah experience**

The aim of holding a community conversation about Condah in World War 1 is so we can learn more about what the community was like and what happened within it during the war. We can also discover the stories of those of whom served in the war, as well as those of whom stayed at home. Because people and their communities are diverse, the interpretations of the community's war story will also be diverse. This diversity is helpful to communities in this century, one that is characterized by complexity, ambiguity, and constant, unrelenting change. More than ever individuals and communities need to be resilient, able to think for themselves, act with integrity and independence and maintain a resourceful solution focused approach to their future. Through the conversation we are able to explore how people faced uncertainty, coped with adversity and managed their differences.

Every day we unconsciously seek answers to the question: Who am I? Who are we? We search for answers in many places: our work, our family, our faith, our community, our hobbies and interests. All of the places provide fragments that allow us to piece together answers to our identity puzzle. The facilitated community conversation encourages participants to consider how events one hundred years ago shaped the current 21st century community identity. Importantly, the conversation allows participants to learn more about what it means to be Australian and through the dialogue reshape their ideas about their local and national identity. Above all people are able to decide for themselves how they will enact their learning from the conversation in their day to day lives.

## Questions for the Condah conversation

### The soldiers

1. What does the information tell us about the men from Condah and Lake Condah who enlisted?

### The community

2. What was happening in the community during the war years?
3. What would it have been like living in this community?
4. What was it like for women, children, indigenous members, and the men who did not enlist?
5. How did people support, or not support, the war?

### Community learning about the soldiers' experiences

6. What and how did the community learn about what it was like for those at the front?
7. In what way is the Condah experience relevant to us today?

# 1914

Condah in 1914 – before the outbreak of the war

In 1914 Condah had three churches (Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and Anglican), a hotel (Greenhills Hotel, *shown below*) state school (Condah Number 1019), butter and cheese factory, bank, mechanics hall, railway station, saddler, general store, post office, showground and a cemetery. There were also a number of houses within the town.



The Condah Pastoral and Agricultural Show was held in November. The ‘Ladies of Condah’ held an annual dance by invitation in the mechanics hall in August. There was a football club, racing club, trotting club and tennis club. During the war a number of groups and individuals within the community conducted fund raising activities to support the war effort.

## Lake Condah Mission

***The Forty Eighth Report by The Board, Protection of Aborigines  
presented to the Houses of Parliament on 12 November 1912***

accessed from University of Melbourne website: <http://www.lib.unimelb.edu.au/collections/digital/protection.html>

Number of aborigines at Lake Condah Mission: 34 Blacks, 27 Half Castes: Total 61\*



\* In 1886 the “Act to Provide for the Protection and Management of the Aboriginal Natives of Victoria” aimed to remove Aboriginal people of mixed descent, from the Aboriginal stations or reserves to force them to assimilate into white society. These expulsions separated families and communities causing great distress.

**Letter to The Secretary, Board of Protection of Aborigines, Melbourne.**  
**Lake Condah Report 24/8/1912**

‘The Land belonging to the station consists of 2050 acres. All is fenced in with post and wire



fences, and about 500 acres are enclosed with wire netting... The number of cattle, sheep and horses on the land ...was 44 cows, 49 calves, 49 heifers, 31 steers, 1 bull, 25 ewes, 7 wethers, 8 horses... The buildings are... 23 inclusive of church, school house (*left*), teacher’s house and mission house. The latter are the property of the Church of England Mission Society... the health and conduct of the people were fair. The men were employed in shearing, stripping bark, haymaking, gardening, stock riding, fencing and repairing fences, road

carting, milking and keeping buildings in repair. The women attended to their household duties and the girls who are under my wife’s training are taught all kinds of domestic work. The people are induced to keep themselves in health and habits of cleanliness and the children examined every Monday morning to see if their bodies are clean and their garments mended. Each child receives a warm bath at least once a week.

I have the honour to be Sir your obedient servant,

JH Stahle



*Left: The Condah  
Wanderers football team  
taken circa 1896*



## 1914 in the newspapers

### **Hamilton Spectator**

Tuesday 25 August 1914

### **Movement at Condah** From Our Own Correspondent.

#### **Condah, Monday**

The leading topic at present is the war, all being eager to learn the latest developments. An opportunity will be offered those willing to contribute to the Australian Patriotic fund on Wednesday evening next, when a patriotic rally will be held in the hall. Addresses and patriotic songs will be given. A charge of one shilling for admission will be made, children half price. Badges will also be disposed of during the evening, all takings to be devoted to the fund, and a big attendance is desired.

### **Hamilton Spectator**

Wednesday 9 December 1914, page 6

### **Condah and Wallacedale Volunteers** From Our Own Correspondent

#### **Condah, Monday**

Mr. Kenneth Cameron, one of our local footballers who recently volunteered to go to the front with the second contingent of the expeditionary forces, arrived, home some days ago on leave to visit his friends preparatory to the departure of the troops. A number of the residents took advantage of the occasion, and made arrangements for a social to be tendered Private Cameron on Thursday evening. Although the gathering was hurriedly prepared there was a good attendance, including a number of the Myamyn residents. Mr. N. G. Saunders occupied the chair.

The early portion of the evening was devoted to vocal items, to which the following contributed: Messrs. Walters, J. Milne, J. Gurry, Costello, H. Saunders, H. O. Baker, W. Kearney and A. Cameron, while Mrs. and Miss Saunders assisted at the piano. The chairman called on Mr. John Gurry to make the presentation of a set of military hair brushes in case to Private Cameron, which Mr. Gurry did in a few well-chosen remarks, expressive of the Condah people's appreciation towards Mr. Cameron, wishing him every success and a speedy return. Mr Colyer followed with a lengthy address on the importance of every assistance being given to the Empire. He had no doubt the Australians would not be found wanting when in the battle line. This was fully exemplified already on the sea (if not on the land), when the Sydney captured the Emden, one of the German raiders. The speaker's remarks were punctuated with applause. Mr G. Carter said the guest and other Australians would render a good account of themselves wherever they were sent. The chairman also spoke at some length. The following also briefly congratulated Private Cameron and wished him bon voyage: Messrs. H. Cameron, Walters, H. Baker, W. Carter, and A. Quinlan. The recipient briefly expressed his thanks for the present and for the many expressions of good feeling towards him. At the conclusion of the National Anthem three hearty cheers were lustily given for the guest. The ladies, as usual, contributed their share by providing the luncheon, and dancing was indulged in by the young folk till about three a.m. Wallacedale is also providing several volunteers for the second

contingent, viz:- Lieut. Jaffray, Privates David Millard and Albert Hately. The two latter were home on leave for a few days and returned to camp by this morning's train, with a few others from Heywood.

### **Hamilton Spectator**

Monday 14th December

### **Horses for the war**

In our advertising columns Messrs. P. Learmonth and Co. announce that buyers for remounts, gun horses and ponies will be in attendance at their Condah yards next Thursday, the 17th inst.

### **Hamilton Spectator**

Saturday 19 December 1914

### **Country patriotism. Social at Condah**

On Wednesday evening a social held in the mechanics' hall was well attended. Vocal items filled in the early part of the evening. Mr. T. Colyer, the head teacher of the local State school, delivered an address on the distress and devastation caused by the war in Belgium, and made a special appeal for contributions towards the State school patriotic fund. A collection taken up in the hall yielded £7/4/6. The ladies, as usual, provided an enjoyable supper, after which dancing was indulged in by the younger folk for some time. Mrs. Saunders providing the music. Altogether an enjoyable evening was spent. The following was the programme:—Pianoforte duet, Mesdames Collins and S. Malseed ; song, "Sweethearts will be joyful," Miss Vida Carter ; song, " Seashells," Mr. W. Vaughan, encored ; song, " That's how I saved my life," Mr. T. Gurry, encored : song, "There's a land," Mrs. Collins : song, "The powder monkey," Mr. J. C. Malseed, encored ; address by Mr. T. Colyer on the war : comic song, Mr. Walters, encored : song, "Come, sing to me," Mr. H. O. Baker; song, " It's a long way to Tipperary," Mr. S. Rundell, encored ; National Anthem.

# 1915

Condah in 1915 – life at home during the war

## 1915 in the newspapers

### **Hamilton Spectator**

Saturday 17 July 1915

### **Recruiting campaign. Meeting at Condah**

In connection with the State Parliamentary recruiting campaign, Mr. H. Baker inaugurated a meeting here for Monday evening last, having first secured the assistance of Mr. E. J. White M.L.C., and Mr. Campbell, M.L.A., as speakers. Despite unfavourable weather, a fair audience assembled in the mechanics' hall, when the stage was tastefully decorated with flags, wattle blossom, etc., for the occasion. Cr. F. W. Cope presided and read apologies from Mr. A. S. Rodgers, M.H.R., Rev. R. A. Gales and the president of the shire (Cr. Righetti). The proceedings opened with the National Anthem, after which the chairman explained that the object of the meeting was to encourage our young men to enlist for the front, and the State Parliament had adjourned for a week to allow its members to conduct a recruiting campaign throughout Victoria. More men were dead. The call from over the seas was for more men. Our district has responded fairly well so far, still everyone who could go should enlist, which was the only means of terminating the war early. Song, "Tommy Brown," Mr. H. Maddock. Mr. E. J. White, M.L.C., spoke at some length and said at the present time we are passing through the most momentous time in the history of the world. Never before were such large armies in deadly conflict. War in itself was a shocking thing, but add to this the inhuman methods one party was adopting, imagine the use of asphyxiating gases, the sinking of the Lusitania, and other outrages, coming from a nation which pretended to be the highest cultured in the world. The atrocities were enough to make every man in the world rise up against them. When we consider it might be our lot to be in the same unfortunate position as Belgium we should hasten with our assistance to end the war in favour of the Allies. If Germany won through they would be in occupation of Australia in less than 12 months, having a score to wipe off in the taking of the Island of New Guinea and the sinking of the Emden. The findings of the commission, who dealt with atrocities committed in Belgium, were so shocking that they could not be put in print, even those printed he would not dare to read to a mixed audience. God help if the Germans ever occupied our land. Rather than allow his women kind to meet the same fate he would sooner shoot them at his feet. No people ever enjoyed such privileges as those of Australia, who are preserved at the present time by the British fleet. He did not come there that night to ask them to fight for the Motherland, but to fight for Australia, their very homes, and their womankind. He felt that he would not ask in vain, but that they would rise in such numbers that we might be unable to get equipment for them all. With regard to German Australians he thought they were as loyal as sons of British parents. He had always said when necessity arose they would be found fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Australians. Now was the time to show their loyalty or otherwise be branded cowards. It grieved him to see the people still attending sports, picture shows etc while our boys were dying for us at the Dardanelles. Although he had taken part in all kind of sports through life, this was a time when

all sport should be put aside. It was gratifying to see the increased enlistment for the week, and he was certain that the people of Victoria after realising the position, would come forward of their own accord from time to time to the extent of a quarter of a million if necessary.

Australia had done well in the past when her services were voluntarily offered. But now Britain had asked for recruits for the first time in history. Two weeks ago the message came: "Send more men, with or without equipment." Now, there was the necessity ; every man who could go should respond in this hour of distress. Were he within the age limit, notwithstanding his public and private duties, he would offer his services to the call. The question everyman should ask himself was, "Can I go?" Every shot fired at Gallipoli Galicia would be towards the security of our nation. We could thank the enthusiasm and bravery of our Australian troops for the landing at Gallipoli. To the mothers he would say it was a terrible sacrifice to give up their boys, but everyone had to make sacrifices at such a time. Would not they be prouder of their lives, than have them skulk behind. Those who could not go could perform a duty they owe. The wealthy must give of their wealth for the sustenance of our boys or their dependents. Many had given freely. Others had given a little, while some had given nothing. It was only right that legislation should be brought into make everyone contribute to the cause in accordance with their means. He entreated them to do their duty to King and country, to their womankind and home by enlisting in as great numbers as possible. (Applause.) Song, "Your King and Country need you," Mr. L. Righetti. Mr. H. J. M. Campbell, M.L.A., delivered a stirring appeal, in the course of which he said their recruiting campaign had exceeded the most sanguine expectations. They wanted volunteers. There was no conscription in the State. When the people saw the necessity, he was sure recruits would come forward in even greater numbers. The position was so serious that the people should divert their mind from sport at the present time. Lord Kitchener said the war would be a prolonged one, and more men were needed. He (the speaker) would like to give them the message of Mr. Clarke (chairman of the State Parliamentary Recruiting Committee):- "Come along, Condah." Many of our good men who had volunteered had been turned down for some slight defects, but this difficulty has been largely over come, and the regulations since altered. Now the need of men is more urgently required. The Allies were lighting the cause of liberty, freedom, and righteousness for humanity. The speaker called for three cheers for the Australians at the front, which were lustily given. He said everybody had got to do something. They were fighting the German people, who believe they are in the right (not the Kaiser alone). Even the children in Germany were, working to obtain victory. Victoria alone has supplied over £1,000,000 to the different funds, and the time had come for every one to help, as it required their last ounce of effort, if they were going to win, and they were going to win. (Cheers.) They were unprepared, but not decayed by any means, as Australians had shown. The appeal for more men coming from Britain was so urgent that no Australian who was physically fit and could carry arms could resist. They owed it to the Motherland in the cause of liberty and freedom, and that those gallant men at the front shall not go unsupported. The mothers who were sending their boys were as brave as those fighting at the front. Shame on those who were sending round white feathers, in many instances to brave men. This was simply the act of silly girls. It was some consolation to the mothers of those brave boys who had fallen to know their boys died for King and country. He would say to those who were hesitating, "Rise for the day is passing, a place in the ranks awaits you." Song: "The British Navy," Mr. J.C. Malseed. The Rev. M. D. Williams and Mr. Thos. Colyer also addressed the meeting. Song, "I'm only one of the toys," Mr. L. Righetti.

The following motion was submitted by the Rev. M. D. Williams, seconded by Mr. N. G. Saunders, and carried by acclamation: "That this meeting of Condah and district residents is

proud of the present part Australia has taken in the present world-wide, struggle in the defence of our common liberties, and urges every man who can to emulate their gallant deeds, to do his duty and enlist for service, so that the reward of victory their heroism demands, may be the sooner won. It further wishes to express its deepest sympathy with the relatives of the heroes who have fallen in the gallant fight."

Two volunteers, Messrs. J. Downes and D. McKellar, responded to the call in the room, while several others have since enlisted. The chairman, in proposing a hearty vote of thanks to the speakers and all who had assisted to make the gathering a success, said Condah and district had so far supplied 41 recruits, and read a list of the names. Wallacedale had sent about 31 of this number. The total has since been added to. The Heywood visitors, Mr. and Mrs L. Righetti, and Mr. H. Maddock, are to be commended for braving the demons, to be present to assist in the vocal and instrumental part of the proceedings. The singing of "Rule Britannia" and the National Anthem brought the meeting to a close.

### **Hamilton Spectator**

Saturday 31 July 1915

### **Unfair criticism**

#### **To the Editor of the "Spectator"**

Sir. - I was at the concert at Spring Creek in aid of the Red Cross, funds on 27th inst., and it was also used as a place and means of abuse to the young men (amongst whom were some who were rejected) by Mrs. Morton, who said, amongst other things, that all the young men who did not go to the war were shirkers and cowards, and cut for dear life to her buggy. No doubt, she thought she had done a great stroke, but in reality had only showed her ignorance because it was not a recruiting meeting but a means of raising funds for the wounded soldiers. I hold a medical certificate to the effect that I am unfit for service, and I am sure it is not fair to the rejected or unfit to be slandered by people who consider they know more about other people's business than they do themselves. I would like to know where my friend got her information that there were not other people who might be in the same boat as I am. Also, she appears to have forgotten to remember that conscription is not in force yet, and there is no credit to be bestowed on a man who knows he is unfit, but simply volunteers to raise himself in the eyes of the public. I trust that this will be a lesson to my friend and any other people who are unauthorised and likely to speak out of their turn to pause and be particular what and where they say things of which they know nothing about.

- I am. etc., D. SUTTON.

Condah.

### **Hamilton Spectator**

Friday 6 August 1915

### **Unfair criticism**

#### **To Editor of "Spectator."**

Sir, I crave space to make a few remarks re Mr. D. Sutton's letter, headed "Unfair Criticism,"

which appeared in your issue of the 31st inst. I think it was D. Sutton that was not minding his own business, as I did not speak to him that evening and was not aware he was at the concert. I was talking to Mr. W. Cannes about married men having to go to the war, and he said it gave them all sorts of credit for going and I asked him what, he gave the cowards and shirkers that stay at home. I walked quietly to the buggy and if D. Sutton or any one wished to speak to me they could have done so as I did not leave the ground for some time afterwards. I may be wrong, but I thought it every woman's duty to try and get recruits, not specified places by authorised persons. I may say H. Morton, a lad of 20, is the only recruit from the south end of Condah Swamp. Surely, among so many, there is some sound men. I think the cap fitted more than one there that night.

I am, etc.,

\_T- MORTON

### **Portland Observer and Normanby Advertiser**

Thursday 16 September 1915

### **Condah Society**

At the weekly meeting of the Condah Red Cross Society on Thursday the following donations were acknowledged by the Secretary. Mr D R M'Leod, 5/ and auction of golliwog per Mr T Clarke;, Mr J Jess, 4/9, Mr R G Carter. 3/6, Mr I Pearce, 3/,Mr L Lovell, 2/ 6, Mr T Clarke, 2/6, Mr S Cain. 1/: Total 17/3.

Also: Miss Urquhart, 3 pairs socks; Mrs T Gurry, flannelette and hand-painted table cover; Miss Alice Cameron, tray cloth; Mrs J D Smith, shirt; Mrs Moore, pillow case, Mrs H Cameron, scarf; Mrs McDonald (Elgin), and Miss Teenie McDonald, pair socks each; Miss Flora Smith (Hotspur), 5 washers; Miss Hilda King (Hotspur), 8 washers. Work returned from the following: Mrs A Rosevear, Miss K Rosevear, Mrs J Dwyer, Mrs Malt, Miss William, Miss Milne, pair socks each; Helen Malt, scarf; Fanny Saunders, 12 feeders; Mrs W Carter, 26 washers; Mrs A.T McDonald and Miss Williams, set pyjamas each. Shirts: Mrs H Cameron, Miss J Cameron. Mrs Milne, 1 each; Mrs El Looker, Miss L McLeod, 2 each. Reg. Saunders and Gerald Gurry, pair of mittens each.

A donation of £4 was voted by the ladies' Red Cross branch to the men's branch for the purpose of buying material to enable the branch to carry on its work until they can raise funds of their own.

Next Thursday afternoon will be devoted to the making of slippers and a good attendance of members is desired.



*Left: Garden Fete at the home of Muriel Malseed (née Baker), February 1910.*

*During the war, similar fetes would have been held by Condah society to raise funds for the war effort and for those at home.*

## **Hamilton Spectator**

November 30 1915

### **To the Mothers** by Pte Norman “Scotty” McLeod, Shrapnel Valley

Who tended you in weakness when in your narrow cot?  
Did you ever dream she'd comfort you when you nigh forgot  
You little thought the 'wild oats' or the head that could not yield  
Was weak enough to think of her when on the battlefield  
Did pride beam stronger in your breast, and ever the winning tear  
Did you feel you were a coward then or had betrayed a fear?  
Methinks I see shadowed ghosts rise up from where they lie  
To steep their blades once more in those who mother love deny  
Let vain and haughty iron men be game to stand before  
The thousands who took courage from the mothers they adore  
That strain and waiting patience, which won praise everywhere  
Was but maternal instincts of a mother's loving care  
As you a reckless soldier, seeking pleasure not renown  
Walked through the Cairo city with no sense of shame or frown  
You were mighty in your onslaughts as your human weakness ran  
A proud conceited idiot commonly known as a man  
But don't be narrow minded and condemn us one and all  
For all of us have something wrong – our excuse is Adam's fall  
I care not what the world may say as I saw them sin and die  
And the men who loved their home and kin were on Gallipoli  
Of course they were on other fields but this sacred spot was ours  
So to the mothers of all of them I send my spirit flowers  
And far above the ridges that sheltered us from fire  
Across the souls of mothers true, whose love doth never t're  
And I can voice it strongly no mother was like mine  
In those moments of perdition – in hell at Lonesome Pine

## **Hamilton Spectator**

Wednesday 8 December 1915

Josie Galbraith's poem appeared in the Hamilton Spectator and several newspapers at the time, including The Camperdown Chronicle, Flemington Spectator and Mt Gambier Border Watch

### **'Australia Day'** by Josie Galbraith, Matron, Condah Aboriginal Station

I walked the streets in the twilight  
My steps were heavy and slow  
My heart was sore and drooping  
I knew not where to go

I felt that life was a burden  
Of worry, sorrow and care  
How I longed for a glimpse of heaven  
Trials never enter there



Then a sound pierced the soft sweet twilight  
Like the chime of a deep church bell  
I listened in awe and silence  
It grasped my like a spell

My thoughts were suddenly scattered  
I saw a crowded street  
With its masses of eager faces  
And tramp of hurrying feet

But the noise grew louder and louder  
Till it sounded over all  
T'was the voice of our boys in anguish  
Our first Australian call

Come all from sunny homeland  
Don't let us call in vain  
We all love the land of magpie  
And dear old ti tree plain

Let not stranger tramp on our freedom  
Or crush our blackwood bough  
Rise ye sons of the wattle  
Come quickly, but come now

The cry I heard in the distance  
Is your brother with suffering torn  
His hand will fall in battle  
If he of help is shorn

Soon some will come gaily marching  
To retrace the steps they've trod  
Will the rest come back? No never!  
They sleep beneath the sod

There will be many wives and mothers  
Whose hearts will be made glad,  
But also their bright home coming  
To others will be sad

But the dead that lie on Gallipoli  
Have touched a heavenly chord  
Their tears will water the wattle  
In the garden of our Lord

They are shoulder to shoulder together  
In the thick of the terrible fray  
The rose, shamrock, thistle and wattle  
Are brother and sister today.



*Above: the Malseed family at Pine Grove, Christmas 1915*

*Left to right: Isabella Malseed with her horse, Norman McLeod, John Wallace Malseed, Belle Malseed, Thomas Malseed, Nance Malseed with husband Roy Malseed and small daughter Nancy, James (Jim) Malseed holding daughter Lorraine and wife Muriel (nee Baker)*

*Seated: May McLeod (nee Malseed) with her children Norma, Les and Keith*

# 1916

Condah in 1916 -- life at home during the war

## 1916 in the newspapers

### **Hamilton Spectator**

Wednesday January 19 1916

### **Patriotic fete at Myamyn** From Our Own Correspondent

#### **Condah, Monday**

On Saturday last a very successful and enjoyable garden fete was held at Pine Grove, Myamyn, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. T. Malseed. The fete was in aid of the Breakaway Red Cross Society, and all of the members of the society contributed to, and helped to make it the success it proved. The choice of grounds for a garden party was particularly happy, as a more ideal spot for the purpose would be hard to find. The large lawns set out with small tables and chairs, looked very inviting, with the welcome shade of pine large pine trees in the background. The house and lawns were gaily decorated with flags, and at the front gate a large Union Jack flew at half-mast in honour of the late Private W. Adamson, of Myamyn (a near neighbour), who was killed in action, the sad news having only reached his parents a day or two before. A large gathering of people assembled at the fete from all parts of the district. The piano had been placed on the front verandah and a musical programme was rendered during the afternoon, the following ladies and gentlemen taking part — Overture, Miss Chisholm ; song, Mrs. Collins ; song, Mr. T. Gurry ; song, Miss Winnie Rundell ; recitation, Mr. W. Cannon, song, Mr. J. C. Malseed ; recitation, Mrs. Malseed ; song, Miss Lizzie Emerson song, Mr. Norman Black ; recitation, Mr. R. M. Malseed ; song, Miss Trixie Rundell ; recitation, Mrs Sarah Adamson. Afternoon tea was served on the lawn. Homemade sweets were offered for sale in fancy baskets; a soft drinks stall was well patronised, as was also a fish pond. No raffling took place, but several guessing competitions were conducted. The sheep donated by Mr. T. -Malseed realised 2s/8 in the guessing competition, and was afterwards sold the quarters bringing 32 shillings. Goods donated to the society were disposed of by auction, the total proceeds amounting to, £14/4/35. Company, songs, choruses, and games concluded very enjoyable day. Mr. and Mrs. T. Malseed are to be commended for devoting the use of their fine house and grounds for the benefit of the Red Cross Society, an example that might well be followed by others.

### **Portland Guardian**

Wednesday 15 March 1916

### **Recruiting meeting at Condah**

A recruiting meeting was held here last night at the local mechanics' hall. Owing to the date of this meeting clashing with other meetings in the district, Sergeant Campbell was the only recruiting sergeant present, and with the assistance of Mr. A. W. Letts, he conducted the

meeting in a very able manner. Speeches were given by Sergeant Campbell, and Messrs. Letts, Cannon, and Saunders, the latter gentlemen volunteering for active service at the close of the meeting. Sergeant Campbell made a straightforward speech, in which he very earnestly appealed for men. He said that if Australia was nearer to the war zone they would realise the absolute necessity of sending every available man. He appealed to the women to let their men folk go forward and protect them. In Germany a man was not asked to go to the war; he was simply given an order and had to obey it. Did they want the same thing in Australia? No. It should never be said that an Australian was forced to fight. He said as long as he got recruits he would stay there and speak till 3 o'clock in the morning if necessary. He closed his speech by asking every fit man to come forward. During the speeches there were interruptions from men at the back of the hall who ought to have known better. If they had not the heart to volunteer the least they could have done was to keep quiet and give their more patriotic townsmen a chance to listen to the speeches of the meeting. Any man who tries to make a disturbance at a meeting of this kind ought to be under lock and key. At the close of the meeting five men, all fit looking fellows, volunteered their services for king and country. The meeting was extremely well conducted considering the circumstances, and much credit is due to Sergeant Campbell for the way in which everything connected with the meeting was carried out.

### **Ballarat Courier**

March 16 1916

## **Recruiting at Hamilton. Contingent from Condah Mission Station**

Hamilton, Monday.

Considerable interest was aroused this afternoon when 11 stalwart men from the Lake Condah Mission Station, accompanied by Recruiting-Sergt Campbell marched through Gray Street to the recruiting office. Eight were accepted for active service, and the men were heartily congratulated on their patriotism.

### **Portland Guardian**

29 March 1916

## **Rejection of Mission Station Recruits**

Great indignation is expressed at Heywood (writes a correspondent) at the action of the military authorities in refusing the acceptance of the batch of men from the Condah mission station after they had passed the necessary medical examination and made final arrangements to go into camp. The men are all well known here, and are some of the finest athletes of the Western district. They are prepared to take their share in the defence of the Empire as eagerly as in the sport of the community. Three of Mr William Lovett's brothers enlisted and sailed for the front last year - two in the A.I.F., and one in the naval department. Mr James Lovett, their father, also offered his services, but the age limit was against his acceptance.

## Portland Observer and Normanby Advertiser

Thursday 13 April 1916

### Aborigines in Camp

Among the soldiers at present in the Ballarat training camp are two-blooded natives from the Lake Condah aboriginal station, named James Harding and Richard King. The first named is a well-known rough rider, while his comrade has claimed distinction as a footballer and an all-round athlete. Both are men of splendid physique. They state that they are anxious to get to the front as soon as possible in order to fight for the Empire. Harding, in discussing on Monday the matter of his enlistment, mentioned that the natives at the Condah station felt that they were real Britishers, having been born under the Australian flag, and were willing to fight to a man if accepted by the military authorities.

### Writing home

#### A letter from Donald McLeod, to his younger brother Malcolm, August 1916

Excerpts from a letter from Donald McLeod, to his younger brother Malcolm, August 1916. The original, censored letter appeared in the Hamilton Spectator on 23 November 1916.

*I suppose you have read in the papers ere this of the great charge and good work done by the ---- division at ---. The --- and ---- brigade went in first, and cleared the Germans out of a couple of lines of trenches. They charged in the early hours of the morning (of 24 July 1916). Of course, our artillery had bombarded the German lines for hours beforehand. We were in supports the night before they attacked, and marched up close to where the battle had been in the early hours of Sunday morning. Oh, I shall never forget that sight as we went along that shell-torn road, but it was nothing to what we saw and went through afterwards. On enquiring from the wounded how things were going in the firing line, some replied "Things are hot up there mate." One chap said "It is a perfect hell up there."*

*Our company halted in a trench, where they were fairly safe. They were to be kept there as a reserve for the time being. We were not there long when about a quarter of us were ordered to carry supplies, ammunition, etc. up to the first line. We had to go along the road that the Germans had held the night before, and over the ground where the battle had been fought. Jack McGrath said, "You and I will carry together." Poor fellow, he was killed two days later (on 26 July 1916). We had been together ever since we went into camp and were outpost together in the desert at Serapeum Egypt, and here in France we were in the same company and on the same watch log the first time we went into the trenches. He was as cool and game as you could get.*

*We hadn't gone far when we met about 50 German prisoners taken by our boys in the fighting. A little further on we went over a bit of a rise. It was littered with wreckage of every description — broken carts, wagons, rifles, ammunition and bombs lay everywhere, as they were dropped by the dead and wounded. ... All along that road shells were falling and men were getting wounded and killed as we went along. ... I shall never forget that sight. It is impossible for me to describe or you imagine. It had been a wood, but not a limb or leaf was left by our bombardment. Big trees had been shattered and uprooted. The trenches the Germans had held the night before were blown about terribly. I don't think there was a foot of ground that had not been blown about by shells. Some of the shell craters were that deep and big that you could back a horse and cart into them. Perhaps you remember the pictures of San Francisco after the earthquake. Only there were dead lying about everywhere. At the entrance of the dugout I saw six dead Germans piled on top of one another. ....*

*Next morning early we went into do our part. But didn't know what it was. As we passed through one trench we were halted and told to leave our overcoats there. (We hadn't carried pack or blankets in — only overcoat and waterproof rolled up.) We were then told we had to make a new firing line, that we had to advance out into no man's land past our own first line. Remember this was not at night, but in the middle of the day. Our platoon commander told us we would be under all sorts of fire all the time we were digging in, but never mind how we were shelled or how many were hit we had to keep digging. Jack McGrath was near me as we rolled our coats up, and said, "I suppose we may as well roll them up properly, but a lot of us will never need them again."*

*We doubled out over our own first line to where we were to dig in, and started to dig for our lives. I didn't think we would last ten minutes. In the first 20 minutes three of our sergeants were hit. We only had four, also our two master sergeants and two officers out of four, all within the first half hour. They couldn't carry away the wounded and men had to be taken out of the trenches to do stretcher bearing. We got dug in by dark, but those who were not on watch kept on working and improving the trench. No one was allowed to sleep, and they couldn't have slept even if they were allowed, for the Germans shelled us continually, and a few good men were hit during the night. Our steel helmets saved many a life. My helmet was hit often with shrapnel. ....*

*Charlie Read (KIA 26 July 1916) was one of the most unselfish fellows I ever met and there wasn't a lazy bone in his body. I sent his photo home last Christmas, of he and Harold Cuthbertson taken on a log. His father is a widower, and is over 70, and that accounts for Charlie being as handy as a woman. .... Jack McGrath was killed the same day. A man in his bay was badly wounded, and Jack and two more volunteered to carry him back. They had to carry the wounded about a mile and a half under shell fire all the time. They got down all right, but on the way back Jack and another chap named Jennings were killed by a shell. Jack was one of the whitest men I ever met, also the coolest and gamest.*

*Colin Duncan, George Dunn, and H Davies were all wounded. They also went into camp with Mac and me, and we had been together ever since. Before we went into the last fight there were eight of us who had been together ever since we went into camp (nearly a year now). There are only three of us left now. ....*

*Men who were on Gallipoli from the landing to the evacuation say that Gallipoli was nothing to our last stunt. Men were being sent away with shell shock all day. Our other times in the trenches were play in comparison to this. They say it was as bad as Verdun. The German prisoners were taken altogether. Lieutenant Taylor was also killed. He used to be assistant to the Reverend Williams and was stationed at Macarthur...*

## **The Argus**

Friday 13 October 1916

### **Undelivered letters to a soldier: to the Editor of The Argus**

Sir, By the last mail I had two letters returned to me from the Intermediate Base Egypt fully addressed to No 6887 Driver FA Baker, No 1 Company 1st Divisional Train 1st A A S C Intermediate Base, Egypt. These letters were posted one at Condah on April 17 1916 and the other in Melbourne April 4 1916 and although for the whole of the time that these letters were lying in Egypt my son was with his company at Serapeum, they are now returned to me endorsed "present address unknown" and "unable to deliver". Written on May 20 after being seven weeks on the Canal my son tells me that he has not had any letters for that time but strange to say that day a parcel posted at Condah in December 1915 was delivered to him.

During the time he was at Serapeum he should have had at least thirty letters from home without any outside mail. Now what I would like to know is this: Why the authorities could find out my boy's whereabouts for the delivery of a parcel yet couldn't deliver his letters which

were of a great deal more importance to him?

Evidently there is more than a screw loose in the mechanism of the military department's affairs at the Intermediate Base in Egypt as the foregoing facts prove – Yours etc

H. BAKER Condah Oct 10



*Above: the Condah Show with Henry Baker front row second left. Thomas Malseed is on his left.*



*Left: Frank Albert Baker, subject of the letter written by his father Henry Baker. Frank wrote on the back of this formal photograph: "To Muriel with love from Frank. The would be soldier"*

# 1917

Condah in 1917 – life at home during the war

## Conscription referendum

### Conscription during the First World War, 1914 – 1918

Source: Australian War Memorial: [www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/conscription/ww1.asp](http://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/conscription/ww1.asp)

‘At the outbreak of the First World War, the number of people volunteering to enlist for the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) was so high that recruitment officers were forced to turn people away. However, as the war went on, casualty rates increased and the number of volunteers declined, so that by 1916 the AIF faced a shortage of men. Despite opposition from his own party, Labor Prime Minister Billy Hughes decided to take the issue to the people in a referendum. The nation was asked to grant the government the power to compel citizens to serve overseas during the current war. The referendum provoked furious debate within the Australian community. It was held on 28 October 1916, and the proposal for conscription was narrowly defeated. In the ensuing political fall-out, the Labor Party split and Hughes formed a breakaway party called the Nationalist Party. Enlistment for the war continued to fall, and in 1917 Hughes called for another referendum on the conscription issue. This conscription campaign was just as heated as the first, with the most prominent anti-conscription activist being the Catholic archbishop of Melbourne, Dr Daniel Mannix. On 20 December 1917 the nation again voted "No" to conscription, this time with a slightly larger majority. Australia and South Africa were the only participating countries not to introduce conscription during the First World War.’

### The Horsham Times

Tuesday 24 October 1916

### “Irresistible YES wave,” says Mr Rodgers

Telegraphing last night from Portland, Mr. Rodgers\* said: Senator Shannon and myself addressed large and enthusiastic audiences in Hamilton, Casterton, Coleraine, Macarthur, Byaduk, Penshurst, Dunkeld, Condah, Heywood and Portland. An irresistible "Yes" wave is gathering, submerging the self interest and vile misrepresentations. We have nailed the lie that conscription is being “fastened on Australia,” by proving that the present "antis" claimed at the last election to be the authors of Australia’s conscriptive naval and military defence law.

*\* Member House of Representatives for Wannon*

### Hamilton Spectator

Monday July 30, 1917

Private Norman McLeod of Condah, in forwarding the poetry below says ‘Just an attempt after request from my mates. Despite my pre war political convictions I must admit the grave



necessity of something being done when the voluntary system fails – call it what you like.  
There's only one road to victory- so decide whether you take it or not.'

## To My Cobbers in Regret, by Norman "Scotty" McLeod,



Would you see Australia ruined  
While you're staying safe at home  
While your mates are fighting bravely  
In a country 'cross the foam

Do you read the Roll of Honour  
That appears from day to day  
Don't you see the names of cobbers  
Will you mock them while you stay?

You can little know the hardships  
That your mates have undergone  
These thirty months and over  
They have kept you from the Hun

Yes their losses have been heavy  
And who's going to take their place  
Of the men who have gone under  
To uphold the British race

Give up your life of pleasure  
Learn how to use and load a gun  
Be worthy of your ancestry  
That victory may be won

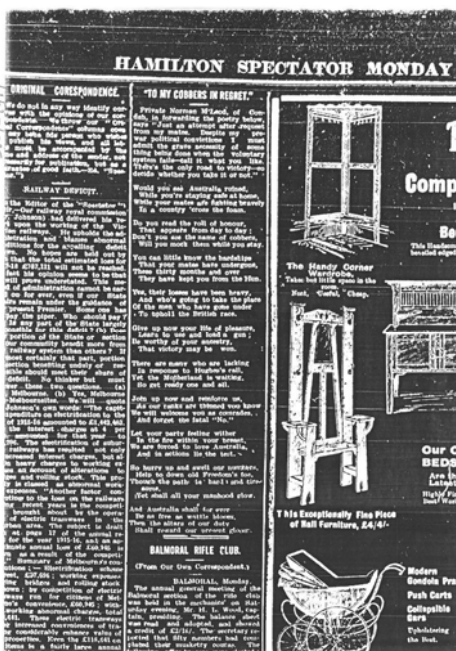
There are many who are lacking  
In response to Hughes call  
Yet the Mother land is waiting  
So get ready one and all

Join up now and reinforce us  
As our ranks are thinned you know  
We will welcome you as comrades  
And forget the fatal 'NO'

Let you party feeling wither  
In the fire within your breast  
We are forced to love Australia  
And in actions lie the test

So hurry up and swell our numbers  
Help to down old freedom's foe  
Though the path's hard and tiresome  
Yet shall our manhood grow

And Australia shall forever  
Be as free as wattle bloom  
Then the altars of our duty  
Shall reward our present gloom



Top: Norman "Scotty" McLeod in his Boer War uniform

Above: Norman "Scotty" McLeod's poem as it appeared in the Hamilton Spectator

## 1917 in the newspapers

### **Hamilton Spectator**

Tuesday 16 January 1917

### **Condah soldier awarded military medal**

Mr. N. G. Saunders, of Condah has received an intimation from Base Records, relating to conscious services rendered by his son Corporal Wm Saunders, for which the military medal for bravery in the field has been awarded.

### **Hamilton Spectator**

Saturday 24 March 1917, page 3

### **Gifts to soldiers**

Writing to Miss Vida Carter, Condah, Private B. F. Elliott under date France, January 16, 1917, says: I recently found your little note which was enclosed in a pair of socks. Doubtless you will think that your gift has long since reached its unknown wearer, but as, this will prove it is not so. Your note is dated October 12th, 1915. It was received on January 12th, 1917. Now let me express not only for myself, for all the "Tommies" who receive these little comforts, my gratitude for the kindnesses, thoughts, and good wishes, sent from our friend way over which are heartily reciprocated by all. To give you a little version of my experiences which I hope may prove interesting. At the beginning of the war I was on the Army Reserve of the Royal Army Medical Corps. I landed in France on the 19th August 1911 with a field ambulance. Was in the retreat from Mons, when, as you may remember, the boys marched 273 miles before having a chance to "hit back," went through the battle of the Aisne, then the first battle of Ypres, then Neuve Chapelle, then Festubert and Givenchy. I was taken ill at the last named, and was sent to hospital on April 15th and finally sent here for duty—a large hospital for sick and wounded officers. Just near us are the Australian Medical Corps. I have a chum an Australian here. He was born in Victoria but before the war lived somewhere in New South Wales. I forget the name of the town. I am enclosing you a photograph of myself, taken whilst home on leave in 1915, the only one I have to hand at present. Keep it as a souvenir from a "Tommy," who comes from London.

### **From the Service record of Herbert Lovett**

Recruiting Office, Hamilton

30 April 1917

This recruit has two other brothers with A.I.F and his parents are not pure blooded Blacks. White people both side.

Recruiting officer for Wannon

## Lake Condah soldier welcomed home

Private H. Morton, eldest son of Mr. A. J. Morton, of Lake Condah, who has had one of his legs amputated below the knee as a result of wounds received in France, recently returned home, and on Wednesday evening he was entertained at a welcome home social in the old school room at Spring Creek. Despite the unfavourable weather there was a record attendance of district residents. During an enjoyable evening speeches interspersed with musical and vocal items were given. Private Morton was made the recipient of a handsome gold curb chain and locket, with inscription, the gift being suitably acknowledged. A collection taken up for the British Red Cross yielded over £3. The ladies, as usual, provided supper.

## Writing home

### **Donald McLeod, writing to his first cousin Susan McLeod (Condah)**

D. Company, Westham Camp, Weymouth, England 13-12-17

*Dear Susie*

*I was so sorry to hear you had been under going an operation for appendicitis but sincerely hope that you are on the high road to recovery and that now you will be restored to the best of health. No doubt that was what was troubling you all along. I hope Auntie and Uncle and all the rest are in the best of health. Glad to say that I am getting on well. The last letter I had from you was written early in September before you went under the operation. I won't repeat here about my wounds as no doubt you would hear from home. The one on my thigh is just about healed, the others have been healed a couple of weeks. I am glad to say my right eye is getting stronger\*. It was very weak for some time. My right arm and hand will always be weak and rather stiff. It is ten weeks today since I was wounded. I had a couple of weeks in France and over seven at Stratford on Avon (Shakespeare's birth and burial place). We were treated splendidly there, every body was so kind. The nurses could not have been more attentive or kind if we were their brothers. We were all very sorry to leave it. We left there last Saturday and arrived in London the same night, stayed there until Monday and then came here. I was the only one of the convoy sent here and as yet do not know a soul, so I have been feeling rather lonely. Lonely among thousands. I went before a board on Tuesday, think I was marked C3. If I was and they don't alter it, it means Australia. We have to go before another board tomorrow (Ryan, perhaps you have heard of him, is on it) So perhaps by the time you get this I may be on my way to Australia. 'Perhaps' what a lot that little word means. Things here are very rough after the hospital, we are just treated as soldiers in camp, only of course we do no drill. I have to go to the AMC hut every day to get my eye dressed. It is sad to see the hundreds of fine young men who have been maimed and crippled, some of them with their faces knocked out of recognition. Men made hideous to by 'Man's inhumanity to man'. One sees them here all waiting to be sent to Australia. Sorry to hear Keith Armstrong has been killed and that Leo Power\*\* has died of illness. They were both fine young fellows. I suppose you have heard this that Charlie McLean, Byaduk was killed. I think the same day I was hit. I have only heard it but suppose it is only too true. This is a very cold place. It is now getting dark, so hoping you are doing well and with best wishes to you all for the New Year. I couldn't get cards in time for Xmas as I was on my back at the time. Best love to all. Your affectionate cousin, Donnie McLeod.*

(Added) 'I hope Norman\*\*\* is alright. I haven't heard from him since I was wounded. It takes a long time for our mail to get to us now. No doubt he has written to the Bathm (?) Last time I heard he was at base.



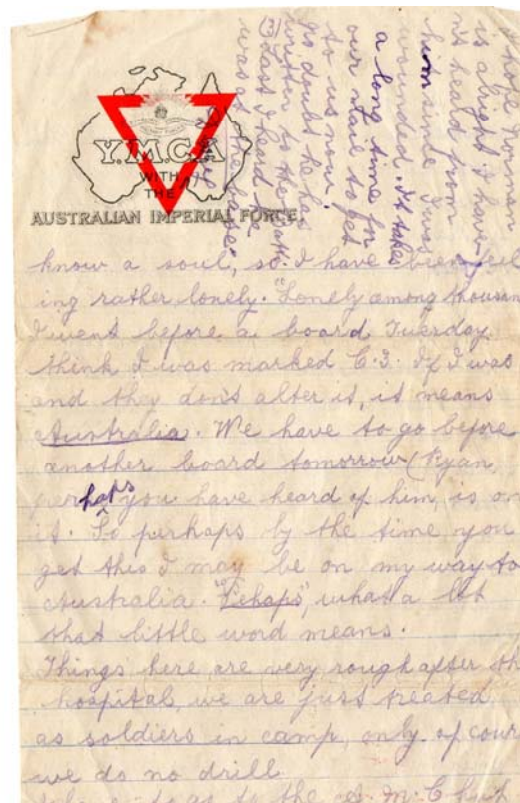
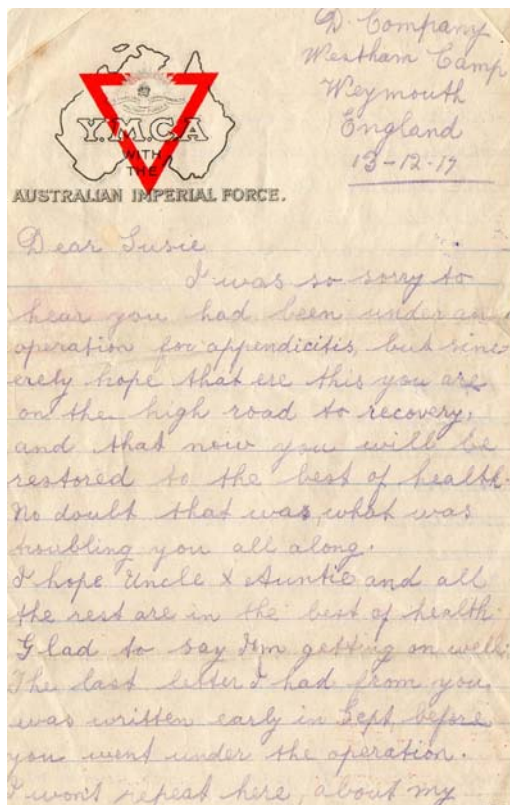
\* He does not mention that he lost his left eye

\*\* Armstrong and Power are on Branhholme Roll of Honour

\*\*\* Norman ("Scotty") is his first cousin and Susie's eldest brother. Norman was killed on the day a welcome home meeting was held for Donny in the mechanics hall, Condah, 31 May 1918.

Left: Donnie McLeod in his service uniform

Below: excerpts from his letter to Susie



# 1918

Condah in 1918 – life at home during the war

## **Portland Observer and Normanby Advertiser**

Thursday 31 January 1918, page 3

### **Police Court**

Wednesday January 30

Before Messrs. W. G. Smith. P.M. and Joseph Wiltshire, J.P.

### **Offensive behaviour**

Frederick Oscar Borsum, on behalf of the Railway Department, proceeded against Alfred James Hogan, a returned soldier, on a charge of offensive behaviour in a public place, to wit, a railway carriage on a journey from Condah to Portland on 28th November last. Inspector T. H. O'Brien prosecuted. Defendant pleaded guilty. The prosecutor briefly outlined the facts of the case to be that defendant while traveling from Condah to Portland became abusive towards passengers, assaulting one young man, insulting ladies and using disgusting language. The train was pulled up and Constable Rowley, who happened to be on board, restored order. James Newton, farmer, residing at Lower Cape Bridgewater, sworn, deposed that on the evening in question, he was a passenger on the train from Condah to Portland. After the train had left Heywood defendant walked up and down the corridor, beating his kettledrum sticks on the carriages, greatly to the annoyance of everybody. He was partly under the influence of liquor. He (witness) and several others were standing in the corridor, and defendant asked if he could get past. Witness said, "I suppose you can, but it is a bit of a crush." Defendant got past, and then said to Edith Larkin who was standing in the corridor, "You insulting little bitch; you would sooner talk to that cold-footed b----- than to me who fought for you." Defendant struck witness, making his nose bleed. He also struck Eva Larkin. Witness and his companions went into the carriage and shut the door. Nelson Beglin, a companion of defendant, came in and there was further disturbance, whereupon Maud Kempton pulled the alarm signal and stopped the train. The guard came along, and afterwards brought Constable Rowley. All was quiet then till Portland was reached, when defendant caught witness by the shoulder and said "I want to settle this." Constable Adams interposed. Defendant made a statement on oath. He accompanied the Portland band to Condah as side drummer. On the return journey to Portland he wanted to get to the gentlemen's lavatory, but the corridor was blocked by Newton and his friends. He asked to be allowed to pass, and one of the young ladies with Newton said, "Don't move. That is Hogan from Portland, and he thinks he owns everything." He again asked for permission to pass, and thinking that Newton was going to strike him he decided to get in first, and hit him. He then went to the lavatory. Later his friend, Nelson Beglin, came along to settle things, and some confusion arose, during which Maud Kempton pulled the train up. In reply to the bench, defendant denied having used bad language. He had had a few drinks, but knew what he was doing. One lady fainted during the disturbance. He denied striking Miss Larkin, or calling her offensive names. Constable Rowley deposed that when he was called by the guard the trouble was practically over. Defendant admitted having struck Newton, and said she girl was struck accidentally, the blow being meant for Newton. In reply to the bench, defendant said he was a returned soldier receiving a pension of 22/ a week. He was badly wounded in

both legs and back, and was still unable to work. The bench imposed a fine of £1, with 10/ costs, and the P.M. strongly advised defendant to leave strong drink alone.

### **Hamilton Spectator**

23 May 1918

The poem below, 'To My Brother Bill', was written by John S Egan of Purnim and published in the Hamilton Spectator on 23 May 1918.

#### **To My Brother Bill**

Somewhere in Belgium, dear brother  
Somewhere where cannons roar  
Somewhere in Belgium you, are sleeping  
Where brave men slept before.

No sister near to caress you  
No brother to bid you farewell,  
But we know you fought like a soldier j  
And we know like a soldier you fell.

You showed that you were never a 'quitter'  
You showed that 'colour' was nought,  
You fought for the same reasons, dear Bill.  
An others before you have sought.

Years may go by my dear brother  
But your memory we'll ever hold dear  
In our thoughts, words, deeds, or our actions,  
Your presence will always be near  
We will never forgot you, dear brother

You throw down your pick and your shovel.  
When your Country was calling for men  
Now in far distant Belgium you're sleeping  
Away from your kindred and kin.

And your picture that hangs on the wall,  
Will always remind us, dear Bill,  
Of the day when you answered the call

### **Australian National Memorial and Villers-Bretonneux**

Private William Egan, 60th Battalion, age 25, labourer, of Purnim, Victoria  
Indigenous Australia – name on Condah Mission ROH;  
KIA night of 24/25 April 1918 at the retaking of Villers-Bretonneux from the Germans;  
Missing in action – name on Australian National Memorial, VB;

A letter of condolence to 'Miss Egan' (sister) from Lieutenant Dyke, OC, 'B' Company 60th Battalion appeared in the Warrnambool Standard on 29 July 1918.

### **Hamilton Spectator**

Thursday 10 October 1918

#### **Death of a returned soldier**

On Tuesday night at the Hamilton hospital, Lance-Corporal David Millard second son of Mr. W.J. Millard of Wallacedale, passed away after a severe illness, caused through being gassed in January last while taking part in the campaign on the Western Front. Lance-Corporal Millard, who was a fine type of Australian soldier, enlisted on October 5, 1914, and saw three years and six months of active service in Egypt and in France before being returned invalided on May 13, 1918.



The remains will be interred in the Condah cemetery, the funeral leaving the hospital at half-past ten o'clock this morning. The Returned Soldiers' Association, which is sending a memorial wreath, will be represented by Corporal A. Cameron, of Calstock, Condah, a returned soldier.



*Left: The grave of David Millard as it stands 8 December 2013.*

*The inscription is barely visible but says 'Erected to the memory David Millard, Late LC CORPL, No. 265, MVS, AIF, Who died Oct 5, 1918 from effects of gas received on active service after 3 1/2 years abroad. Aged 37 years. For Britain's sake. Erected by his fellow citizens.'*

## **Hamilton Spectator**

Saturday 21 December 1918

### **Condah** From Our Own Correspondent.

#### **Saturday.**

A very enjoyable picnic was given on Saturday at Condah Hills estate by Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Smith. More than 200 hundred guests were present. Prizes on a very generous scale were provided for the children, every child present receiving a prize. A splendid afternoon tea was served. During the afternoon a tug of war, races for adults and children, made up a very good sports programme, supervised by Mr. E. Manning. lolly scrambles, Aunt Sally and numerous other events added to the afternoon amusement. Three cheers for the host and hostess were called for by the Rev. T. Gair, who thanked Mr and Mrs. Smith for their hospitality.

At the Condah Presbyterian church the Rev. Houston preached a memorial service for the late-private E. A. Looker, who was killed in action September 29. The church was draped with white and the colours of the 39th. Battalion to which the deceased belonged. Appropriate hymns were sung, and a most solemn impressive sermon delivered by the preacher. The church was well filled.

## **Hamilton Spectator**

Tuesday 24 December 1918

### **Condah peace demonstration** From Our Own Correspondent

#### **Condah, Monday**

On Saturday, December 14th, the Condah school celebrated their flower day, in aid of the repatriation fund, and it was in every way a most pronounced success. The procession, led by the Heywood band, from the hall, thence to the post office, and from there to the show ground, where the sports were held, drew forth a large number of fancy dress characters, both



juvenile and grown- up, all being excellent and well carried out. Several groups added to the general effect, also others in fancy characters on horseback. Immediately behind the band was a decorated wagon with a platform on which "Peace" (represented by Connie Saunders) was the central figure, surrounded by the Allied nations, represented by Edna Pitcher (Britannia), Inez Looker (America), Mary Gorrie (France), Mamie Dwyer (Belgium), Lizzie Gorrie (Japan), (Effie Urquhart (Italy). A large crowd of people followed the procession to the show grounds, where the fancy dress characters were judged by Mr. and Mrs. Officer, of Hamilton. A well prepared group of Chinese, comprising Misses Hazel and Omie Baker, Lexie McLeod, and Annie Quinn easily secured first prize for the group. This trophy was returned by the winners. The president's (Mr. J. Gurry's) prize of 10/6 for best lady character was won by Miss Annie Carter, as Italian Peasant Girl. The secretary's prize of 10/6, one given by Mr. W. C. Carter for best male character, was won by Mr. Irwin Rhook, as an Indian Chief, and Miss Ring's prize of 10/6 for best juvenile character, was won by Master Ray Gurry as a soldier. The juveniles turned out in full force in fancy characters, jockeys, clowns, boy scouts, newsboys, Charlie Chaplin, soldiers, sailors, nurses, wounded soldiers, footballers, rough riders, flower girls, etc. The grown-up section also received admiring comment. Mr. Hector McLean was awarded a certificate for the best turn-out. On reaching the ground the band played the National Anthem, and speeches were delivered by Mr. F. W. Cone (president of the shire), the Rev. T. Gair, and Mr. S. L. Officer, of Hamilton. The latter gentleman dealt at length on the needs of repatriation for our returning soldiers, and of the much-needed reform in the present system of repatriation. The president (Mr. John Gurry) thanked the speakers for their kind assistance and also the members of the Heywood band, for their gratuitous services, after which a start was made with the ring contests, where Mr. A. W. Thomson, of Crawford, proved a capable and painstaking judge of the horse events, while Mr. E. Manning rendered valuable assistance during the day. The gathering was whole heartedly supported by the local residents, who contributed generously. The net result is expected to be about £65. The programme of events, which was only partly concluded owing to the late start, was interesting to the spectators. Following are the results:

Members' race, 100 yards - Les.Read. Bending race - E. Satchell, 1; J. R. Malseed, 2. Pony 14 a.u. over brush hurdles — A. Bannam, 1. D. Cameron, 2. Maiden pony, 14 a.u., over brush hurdles — F. Cain, 1; A. Bannam, 2. Horse, any height, over brush hurdles — Miss M. Drew, 1; A. Bannam, 2. Tilting in the ring — Jno. Gurry, 1; James Black, 2. Draught horse trot — H. H. Price, 1; J. R. Malseed, 2. Flag race — J. R. Malseed, 1; R. F. Alexander, 2. Pony hack, 14 a.u., ridden by a boy or girl attending school — Miss M. Drew, 1. Miss Gladys Cain, 2. Ladies' stepping the chain — Miss Ring. Gentlemen stepping the chain — R. H. Rundell. Sheep guessing competition — W. R. Satchell and G. Carter divided the prize money, both guessing the live weight of the two sheep, 180lbs. The classes for cookery, where the exhibits became the property of the committee were judged by Miss May McDonald, Mrs. J. D. Smith, and a lady visitor. First and second certificates were awarded as prizes. The results are as follow: Sausage roll — Mrs. Cottier. Ginger bread - Mrs. A. Rosevear. Plate of scones — Miss S. Alexander. Cup cake — Miss Connie Saunders, 1; Miss Winnie Saunders, 2. Plate cream puffs — Miss Jean Cameron. Plate of tarts — Miss Jean Cameron. Shortbread — Miss McDonald. Swiss roll — Mrs. A. Cottier, 1, Miss Alexander, 2. Sponge sandwich — Mrs. A. Cottier, 1. Miss McDonald, 2. Pound of butter — Mrs. J. Black, 1. Winners of other goods disposed of are as follow: Lady's hand bag (the gift of Miss M. McDonald) — Miss N. Annett. Box of chocolates (the gift of Mrs. J. B. Gurry) — Mr. W. R. Satchell. Ten shilling note (the gift of Mr. Philip Claarke) — Mr. D. Sutton. Inkstand (the gift of Mrs. C. McDowall — Miss F. McGillivray. Stock whip handle (donated by Mr. Thos. Cainsen.) — Mr. R. F. Alexander.

Fox terrier pup (donated by Miss E. Pitcher) — Master Ray Gurry. Pin cushion — Mr. L. Malseed.

The following ladies had charge of the stalls: Soft drinks stall — Mesdames H. Cameron and D. Rosevear, assisted by Misses Jean Cameron, Jean and Stella Looker. Refreshment rooms — Mesdames J. Urquhart, J. Malt, J. Gurry, H. Looker, and Miss Black. Children's stall — Mrs. P. Pitcher, and Misses Alice and Emmie Cameron. Produce stall — Mesdames J. Black, N. G. Saunders, and E. L. Brown. Sweet and fruit stall — Mrs. C. McDowall and Miss May McDonald. Hoopla and Fortune telling — Mrs. W. C. Carter, Cuthbert Carter, and Eddie Saunders. Fruit salad and ice cream — Misses H. and O. Baker, L. McLeod, and A. Quinn. Bran dip and fish pond — Misses A. Carter and C. Saunders. Toy stall — Inez Looker. Peace cake — Maizie Looker, Messrs. W. R. Carter and D. Rosevear kindly took charge of the gates, and a "darts" on the ground contributed £1/1/3 to the funds. The members of committee engaged in the ring were kept busy, while the secretaries, Mr. W. Carter and Miss Ring worked unceasingly. In the evening a concert in the mechanics' hall was well attended. An interesting and entertaining programme met with keen appreciation from the audience. The performers comprised a party of six from Hamilton, organised by Mr. J. Scott and Miss Robertson from Homerton, assisted by a number of well-known locals and a number of school children. The chairman, Mr. J. Black, at the close expressed the thanks of the committee to all those who had assisted during the day and the evening, especially thanking Mr. Scott and his party. The ladies, as usual, dispensed supper to the visitors and others.

# 1919

Condah in 1919 – life at home just after the war

## **The Argus**

Wednesday 23 July 1919

## **Repatriation**

### **Wannon Fund.**

Mr. Rodgers; M.H.R on Saturday, at the Peace celebrations at Branxholme; Wallacedale, and Condah, made appeals in aid of the Wannon Repatriation Fund, which resulted in £100, £85, mid £190 respectively being given. A carnival held at Goroke resulted in £250 being raised for the funds of that branch.

### **Wallacedale**

7<sup>th</sup> October 1919

Sir

In reference to No 394 Private CHJ Rundell, 22<sup>nd</sup> Machine Gunners Company who was killed Sept 14 1917. I would very much like to know where he was killed and the battle he was killed in.

And oblige

Yours truly

Mrs H Rundell, Wallacedale

## **Reply**

13<sup>th</sup> October 1919

I have to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 7<sup>th</sup> Oct, and to state the only information available regarding the report of the regrettable loss of your son, the late No 394 Private CHJ Rundell 22<sup>nd</sup> Machine Gun Company is to the effect that he was killed in action in section in Belgium on 14/9/17. An intense search is now being made over all battlefields with a view to locating un registered graves and should any further information be received it will be promptly transmitted next of kin (father).

Records of various engagements in which members of the A.I.F took part are not received here and I am unable to state in what battle this casualty occurred.

Yours faithfully

Officer i/c Base Records

### **From the service record of Cecil Rundell (undated)**

Order form Menin Gate Memorial (Australians R – Z)

Rundell Pte Cecil Henry James 394 22<sup>nd</sup> Coy Machine Gunners Corps, 14<sup>th</sup> Sept, 1917, Age 19. Son of Henry and L.L Rundell of Wallacedale, Native of Condah



*Left: The 'Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing' is in Ypres, Belgium. It is dedicated to the British and Commonwealth soldiers who were killed in the Ypres Salient and whose graves are unknown.*

# 1914-1918

## Condah life during the war

Year	Social or community happenings	Political events/ groups	Economic
1914	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train services: Hamilton to Portland (morning and afternoon service). Trip took over 3 hours with stops at the following stations: Hamilton, Branhholme, Condah, Myamyn, Milltown, Heywood, Portland. Also Portland to Hamilton service (morning and afternoon service).</li> <li>Annual Show held</li> <li>Races, trots, tennis, football all held</li> <li>Junior Football Club premiers</li> <li>Various concerts held featuring local singers and poets</li> <li>Mr Donald Coutts the local storekeeper drowns in a waterhole in November</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australian Women's National League Condah branch held their annual meeting (August)</li> <li>Federal election held September 1914</li> </ul>	Messrs. P. Learmonth and Co stock sales usually held monthly
1915	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Races, trots, tennis, football all held</li> <li>Tender approved for erection of new state school £280</li> <li>Show cancelled because of the drought</li> <li>Newspaper report of a 7 year old ewe that had given birth to 19 lambs over a number of years (2,3,4,2,3,2,3)</li> <li>Lake Condah Mission Sports held in January</li> <li>Mrs Betsy Wheeler dies by the side of the road after leaving the train and trying to walk home to Wallacedale.</li> </ul>	State parliamentary recruiting committee visits Condah in July, with guest speakers Mr. E. J. White M.L.C., and Mr. Campbell, M.L.A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Messrs. P. Learmonth and Co held stock sales usually monthly</li> <li>Drought affects community but the Condah Swamp Butter &amp; Cheese Factory still records profit of £147/19/8 despite dairy farmers hand feeding cows. 253,949 pounds of butter produced (this would have included figures for later half of 1914)</li> <li>Railway dam runs dry</li> </ul>

1916	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Races, trots, tennis, football all held</li> <li>• Annual Show held</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruiting meeting March 14th</li> <li>• Referendum meeting held October 4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Messrs. P. Learmonth and Co held stock sales usually monthly. On July 13 1018 sheep were yarded, 55 cattle, 3 horses, 1 pig</li> <li>• Condah Swamp Butter &amp; Cheese Factory records profit of £141/18/1.</li> </ul>
1917	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Races, trots, tennis, football all held</li> <li>• Annual Show held</li> <li>• Concert held to raise funds to fence in Catholic Church grounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal election held on May 5. Mr AS Rodgers (Lib/National) represented Wannon from 1913 - 1922</li> <li>• State election held on November 15<sup>th</sup>. The Liberal candidate spoke at Condah on November 6<sup>th</sup>. Retiring State MP, Mr Campbell addressed voters saying “The Peacock government had always show itself a friend of the farmer and producer”</li> </ul>	Messrs. P. Learmonth and Co held stock sales usually monthly
1918	Grass fire threatens the town in March 1917		Condah Swamp Butter & Cheese Factory records profit of £243/14/4 and produces 351,094 pounds of butter

# Case studies

## Soldier Case Studies

The following provide more information on four soldiers who did not return to their community: William John Dasper, Ernest Albert Looker, Norman McLeod and Herbert George Winter.

### ✚ Norman “Scotty” McLeod’s World War I record 1915-1918

Service Number	55A (also enlisted Boer War)
Enlisted	29 January 1915 at Hamilton
Regiment	13 <sup>th</sup> Lighthorse, later 14 <sup>th</sup> Battalion
Rank	Corporal on enlistment later demoted to Private
Age at enlistment	34 years 11 months
Occupation	Labourer
Height	5ft 8” (173 cms)
Weight	160 lbs (72.6 kilos)
Chest	35/37 inches (90cms)
Features	Fair complexion, greyish eyes, hair dark brown
Distinctive Marks	Mole in front of neck slightly to left side
Religion	Presbyterian
Died	Killed in action 31 May 1918
Buried	Allonville Communal Cemetery, 4 miles NNE Amiens, France *

\* The Allonville communal cemetery was used from August 1916 to February 1917 by the 39th Casualty Clearing Station then posted at Allonville. From April to July 1918 it was used by the Australian fighting units. The cemetery contains 78 Commonwealth burials of the First World War. There is also one Second World War burial.

Source: <http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/64903/Allonville%20Communal%20Cemetery> accessed February 26, 2014





*Left: Allonville Communal Cemetery, the burial place of Australian soldiers, including Norman "Scotty" McLeod. His grave is on the right, closest to the camera.*

## Norman McLeod's will (from his service record)

**10<sup>th</sup> April 1917**

In the event of my death I Trooper Norman McLeod, No 55, originally of 13<sup>th</sup> Lighthorse now of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anzac Military Regiment France hereby make my last will and testament in all faith, goodwill and solemnity.

I bequeath to my father and mother all my allotment as from May 1915. My deferred pay of 1/- per day amounting to date to something like 40 pounds, I bequeath thus as under. It will be drawn after the war is over and the longer I live the more of course will be coming to me.

From say 40 pounds

- 10 pounds to Annie McLeod, sister
- 10 pounds to Susan Jane McLeod, sister
- 10 pounds to Duncan McLeod, brother
- 10 pounds to fund to erect tombstone over grave of my fond bother, Dugald in Winton

Any deferred pay in excess of 40 pounds I bequeath thus

- 10 pounds to Hugh McLeod, brother
- 10 pounds to Jeane McLeod sister
- 10 pounds to Lexie McLeod, sister
- 10 pounds to Donald Roderick McLeod, brother

My football medals one to Duncan McLeod my youngest brother whom I love.

One medal to Master Frank Coutts late of Condah subject to consent of my loving mother.

Beneficiaries under this scanty will in event of my death remember I wish to be just if you feel you can without prejudice to yourself give unto any poor, bereaved and oppressed friend of mine made in God's image who has been a friend to me in my money less days, in the name of God our father do so and may you dwell in peace instead of misunderstandings that surround us today. Dear Parents do not be alarmed I may not need to dispose of my money in this fashion but I am advised by my officer and my own common sense to make a will in case of possibilities.

With God helping me I have tried to be fair and forgive my past, forgive anything amiss, trusting that yet in life I may meet you, still trusting that I shall meet my brothers\* and my darling mother in heaven exhorting you all as a sinner to be kinder than I was to my dear father and mother and each of you, truer to God who appears to us all in the end when the critical moment arises.

Sorrow not over much life is but the prelude to death and I can honestly say I have lost the fear of death I once had. Love to all my relations, poor Aunty Kate. God bless you all. Norman McLeod. Scotty

*\* McLeod had two younger brothers die in infancy (Lachlan and Kenneth) and another brother Dugald died of typhoid June 1914 whilst shearing in Queensland*

## The Hamilton Spectator

June 16<sup>th</sup>, 1918

Our Condah correspondent writes that the sad tidings have been broken to Mr and Mrs McLeod of Morven Park that Pte Norman McLeod, their eldest son, was killed in action in France on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Pte McLeod (better known as "Scotty") was well known throughout the western district, and was a noted footballer. He enlisted in January 1915, and sailed for Egypt on May 28<sup>th</sup> of the same year, and was at the evacuation of Gallipoli. He was originally in the Australian Light Horse but transferred back to the infantry on leaving Egypt, and in France took part in many big stunts without receiving a scratch, and gained the reputation of being a great fighter. Pte McLeod was 38 years of age and the sympathy of all goes out to his parents.

## ✚ Herbert George Winter's World War I record 1915-1916

Service Number	3956
Enlisted	13 July 1915 at Portland
Regiment	21 <sup>st</sup> Battalion
Rank	Private. Acting Corporal June 1916
Age at enlistment	31
Occupation	Labourer
Height	5 foot 7 inches (170 cm)
Weight	152 pounds (68.9 kg)
Chest	36/39.5 inches
Features	Black complexion, brown eyes, black hair
Distinctive Marks	Linear scar inside right shin
Religion	Church of England
Died	24/8/16*
Buried	Beauval Communal Cemetery, France+

\* Admitted hospital with pneumonia on 12th August 1916. Died of Lobar pneumonia at the 4th Casualty Clearing Station, 24th August 1916 - ANZAC section 3rd Echelon, GHQ, British Expeditionary Force.

+ The 4th Casualty Clearing Station was at Beauval from June 1915 to October 1916 and the 47th from October to December 1916. The great majority of the burials were carried out from these hospitals, but a few were made as late as March 1918. Beauval Communal Cemetery contains 248 Commonwealth burials of the First World War. There is also one Second World War burial. Source: [www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/3601/BEAUVAL%20COMMUNAL%20CEMETERY](http://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/3601/BEAUVAL%20COMMUNAL%20CEMETERY)

### From Herbert Winter's service record

To Mrs W Clarke, Mission Station Post Office, Milltown, 23 January 1917  
Dear Madam

With reference to the report of the regrettable loss of your brother the late No 3956 Private H. Winter 21<sup>st</sup> Battalion. I am now in receipt of advice which shows that he died at the 4<sup>th</sup> Casualty Clearing Station, France, on the 24<sup>th</sup> August 1916 of Pneumonia.

These additional details are furnished by direction, it being the policy of the Department to forward all information received in connection with deaths of members of the Australian Imperial Force.

Yours faithfully, Major Officer i/c Base Records

### ✚ Ernest Albert Looker's World War I record 1916- 1918

Service Number	6059
Enlisted	10 April 1916 at Hamilton
Regiment	8 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, later the 39 <sup>th</sup> Battalion
Rank	Private
Age at enlistment	28 years 8 months
Occupation	Labourer
Height	5 foot 2 inches (157 cm)
Weight	113 pounds (51.3 kg)
Chest	33/35 inches
Features	Fair complexion, blue eyes, fair hair
Distinctive Marks	None
Religion	Presbyterian
Died	29/9/18
Buried	No known grave. Name on wall Villers Bretonneux *

\* At the back of the Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery is the site of the Australian National Memorial to the Australian soldiers who fought in France and Belgium and who lie under the battlefields. The Memorial consists of a great central tower flanked by wing walls carrying panels commemorating the 10,772 Australian casualties who died in France and who have no known grave.

Source: [http://www.dva.gov.au/commems\\_oawg/OAWG/about\\_OAWG/Documents/P01096%20Villers-Bretonneux%20brochure.pdf](http://www.dva.gov.au/commems_oawg/OAWG/about_OAWG/Documents/P01096%20Villers-Bretonneux%20brochure.pdf) accessed on November 6 2013

## Hamilton Spectator

Tuesday October 22, 1918.

## Australia's heroes

Our Condah correspondent, writes: General regret was expressed when the news became known that Private Ernest Looker, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Looker, of Condah, was killed in action in France on September 29th. Private Looker had been on active service for two years and three months, and during that time had been wounded twice. The news of his death comes as a profound shock to all.

## From Ernest Looker's service record

Hawthorn Cottage, Condah, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 1918

To Officer in Charge, Base Record Office, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne

To, Officer in Charge  
Base Record Office  
Victoria Barracks  
Melbourne

Hawthorn Cottage  
Condah  
Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> 1918  
Cover 5/11/18

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you, as we have had a friend fallen lately on the Battle Field. He was next to being one of our own. He was engaged to my daughter for nearly four years, and we missed him very much from the home when he went to do his duty. We knew him from his boyhood, and we would like you very much to try and get a photo of his grave for us. The Red Cross at Melbourne has advised us to write to you for it. This is our great friend's name - Pte. Earnest Albert Looker, No 6059, and 39<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

Yours faithfully,  
Elizabeth Malt

Address - Mrs E. Malt  
Hawthorn Cottage  
Condah

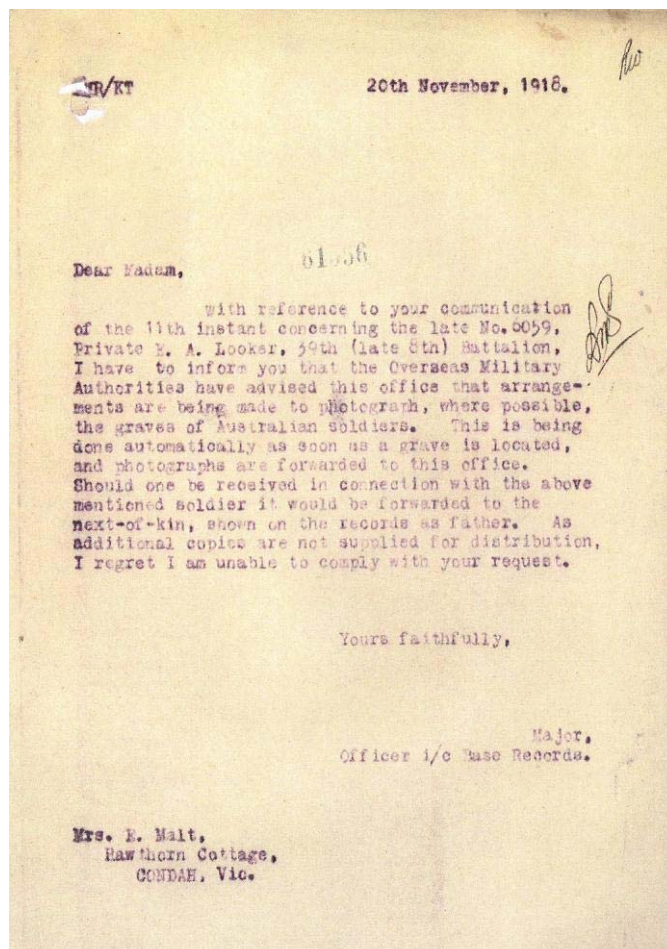
Dr. Muggan  
1911  
To Mr R 30/11

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing to you as we have had a friend fallen lately on the Battle Field. He was next to being one of our own. He was engaged to my daughter for nearly four years and we missed him very much from the home when he went to do his duty. We knew him from boyhood and we would like very much to try to get a photo of his grave for us. The Red Cross at Melbourne advised us to write to you for it. This is our great friend's name Pte Earnest Albert Looker, No 6059 and 39<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

Yours faithfully,  
Elizabeth Malt  
Mrs E Malt

Hawthorn Cottage, Condah  
20<sup>th</sup> November 1918

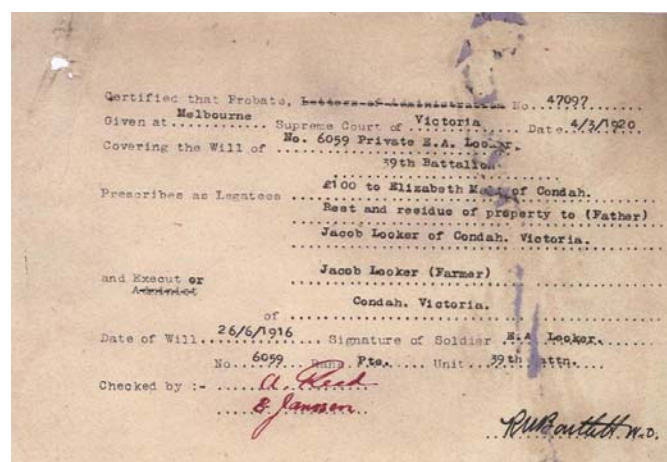


Dear Madam

With reference to your communication of the 11<sup>th</sup> instant concerning the late 6059 Private E.A. Looker, 39<sup>th</sup> (late 8<sup>th</sup>) Battalion I have to inform you that the Overseas Military Authorities have advised this office that arrangements are being made to photograph where possible the graves of Australian soldiers. This is being done automatically as soon as a grave is located and photographs are forwarded to this office. Should one be received in connection with the above mentioned soldier it would be forwarded to the next of kin shown on records as father. As additional copies are not supplied for distribution I regret I am unable to comply with your request.

Yours faithfully  
Major Officer I/C Based Records

Mrs E Malt  
Hawthorn Cottage, Condah



\* In Looker's will he left £100 to Mrs Malt and the rest of his estate to his father



## ✚ William John Dashper's World War I record 1916-1917

Service Number	2185
Enlisted	9 February 1916 at Hamilton
Regiment	39 <sup>th</sup> Battalion
Rank	Private
Age at enlistment	30 years 2 months
Occupation	Farmer
Height	5 foot 7 inches (170 cm)
Weight	120 pounds (54.4 kg)
Chest	33/35 inches
Features	Fair complexion, grey eyes, brown hair
Distinctive Marks	None
Religion	Church of England
Died	Killed in action 27/02/17
Buried	Cite BonJean Cemetery Armentiers France*

\*Cite BonJean Cemetery contains 2,132 Commonwealth burials of the First World War.

**Hamilton Spectator** (Vic.1914 - 1918),  
Thursday 22 March 1917, page 4

## Australia's heroes



Our Milltown correspondent writes: The Rev. Mr. Williams on Saturday morning conveyed the sad news to Mr. and Mrs. John Dashper of Lake Condah, that their son, Private William John Dashper, had been killed in action in France. The deceased soldier was an only son, and the deepest sympathy is expressed for the parents and other members of the family.

*Left: St Mary's Honour Board – showing 18 enlistments for Lake Condah, most of whom were aboriginal*

*William Dashper is second from the top*

# Those who came home

Some of the Condah soldiers survived World War I to raise families, live productive lives and even enlist in World War II. A few are shown below. In 2013 the Lovett brothers (Alfred, Leonard, Frederick, Herbert and Edward) became the first family group to be inducted to the Victorian Indigenous Honour Roll. They have been recognised for their unique record of military service which spans two World Wars.

For more information please visit [www.dpc.vic.gov.au/vihr](http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/vihr)

*Below left-right: Leonard Lovett, Alfred Lovett (with Sarah and children), Frederick Lovett and Herbert Stahle Lovett*



*Below left-right: Duncan McCallum, Frank Albert Baker and JW Malseed, with his wife Cecilia on their wedding day in 1919*



# Condah soldiers' personal details

Condah men left behind homes, jobs, families and a small country town, when they became soldiers in World War I. Donnie McLeod's story, written by his nephew Ian McLeod and shown on page 45, illustrates the Condah home and war experience most movingly. The men enlisted at varied ages ranging from 18 to 43, but most were in their 20s. A handful under 21 needed formal permission from their parents. The soldiers had vastly differing home and war experiences, with promotion, discharge for medical reasons, or tragically, death in action. Several survivors enlisted again in World War II.

**Table 1: Condah enlistments 1914-1918**

Year	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept	October	Nov	Dec
1914	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			2		1
1915	2		3	1	1		6	3	2		1	
1916	1	2	6	2	4		2				1	
1917				1		1	1					
1918												-

**Table 2: Condah enlistments by occupation**

Occupation	Number
Labourer	25
Farmer	7
Drover	2
Clerical/ storekeeper	2
Teacher	2
Blacksmith	1
Carrier	1
Groom	1
Jockey	1
Lorry Driver	1
TOTAL	43

**Table 3: Percentage of Condah war deaths and injuries**

Age	Percentage
Killed in action/died in service	25.5%
Wounded	32.5%
Gassed	7%

Three men were wounded, returned to field, then later KIA: Egan, Green, Looker

**Table 4: Age range of enlistments**

Age range	Percentage
18-20	18.6%
21-29	53.4%
30-39	23.2%
40-45	4.6%



**Table 5: Condah enlistments by religious denomination**

Religion	Percentage
Church of England	58.1%
Presbyterian	32.5%
Methodist	6.9%
Wesley	2.3%
Roman Catholic	0

## Condah Roll of Honour

The detailed record beginning on page 45 shows the men's lives at enlistment and brief glimpses into their war records. The record attempts to recreate the original Condah Roll of Honour (currently missing), however it overlaps with names on the Myamyn and Wallacedale rolls. Where it is known the soldiers had family, or close connections to the Condah community their names have been included. For example, William Saunders was living in Port Fairy at the time of his enlistment but his father was a well-known Condah identity and during the war, Saunders' wife, Katie, and their six children spent time living in Condah with their grandfather and father in law. Additionally, all soldiers who appeared on the St Mary's Mission Church Roll of Honour appear in the table. The conversion tables below show height and weight in both metric and imperial measurements for comparison.

**Table 6: Weight conversion table**

Stones and pounds (lb)	Kilograms
7 stone 2lb	45.4
8 stone	50.8
9 stone	57.1
10 stone	63.5
11 stone	69.9
12 stone	76.2
13 stone	82.5

14 pounds (lb) in one stone

**Table 7: Height conversion table**

Feet and inches	Centimetres
5 ft 1 inch	155cm
5ft 2"	157
5 ft 3"	160
5ft 4"	163
5ft 6"	168
5ft 7"	170
5ft 8"	173
5ft 9 "	175
5ft 10"	178
5ft11'	180
6ft	183
6ft 1"	186

Surname	First name	Age enlisted	Date enlisted / Battalion at end of service	Occupation	Height cm	Weight kg	Religion	Lake Condah	Wounded	Killed/ Died	Other/ interesting
Adamson	Charles Wesley	25 11m	May 1915 23 Battalion	Farmer	176	78	Methodist			6/12/15	Killed Gallipoli Peninsula
Arden	James	43	March 1916 39 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Labourer	165	80	C of E	Yes			Married, 6 children. Discharged medically unfit 7 months after enlisted
Baker	Eric Jack	19	July 1915 7 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Bank clerk	173	68	C of E				Discharged July 1916
Baker	Frank Albert	22	April 1915 4 <sup>th</sup> Pioneers	Storekeeper	186	75	C of E				Became SGT
Beecham	George	21	March 1916 39 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Lorry Driver	163	54.4	C of E			7/06/17	Reared by aunt Mrs L.Franks but Beecham cited father as NOK. Franks wrote army -struggled to get details of will & personal effects. Buried Strand
Blackwood	William	23	May 1916 6 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Labourer	173	64	Presby			4/10/17	Buried Oositaverne Wood Cemetery
Cameron	Archibald	25	March 1915 4 <sup>th</sup> Light Horse	Grazier	168	62	Presby				Promoted to Corporal Discharged April 1918 suffered asthma and bronchitis. Gallipoli & Palestine
Cameron	George	22	July 1915 59 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Labourer	179	70.8	Presby		2/9/18		Promoted to Corporal
Cameron	Kenneth	24	October 1914 9 <sup>th</sup> Light Horse	Farmer	173	70	Presby		GSW R arm 16/6/15		Discharged 'mental insanity' 15/8/18. Returned to community & recovered
Creasey	James	19	July 1916 60 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Farmer	168	64.9	C of E		GSW face 23/3/17		Parents wrote letter consenting to his enlistment
Dashpar	William	30	February 1916 39 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Farmer	170	54.4	C of E	Yes		27/02/17	Killed in action
Egan	William	32	August 1915	Labourer	176	79.3	C of E	Yes	GSW L	25/4/18	Killed in action

			60 <sup>th</sup> Battalion						thigh 11/12/17		
Green	Percy	21 11mths	July 1915 22 <sup>nd</sup> Battalion	Labourer	173	77.6	Wesley		5/8/16	5/6/18	Killed in action
Jeffries	Reuben	21	March 1916	Carrier	174	60	C of E				'Not fit for service' May 1916
King	Richard	34	March 1916	Labourer	180	85.3	C of E	Yes		15/5/16	Died heart failure, Ballarat. In army 2 months
Looker	Ernest	28	April 1916 39 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Labourer	157	51.3	Presby		13/12/16 & 7/6/17	29/09/18	Known to God. Name on wall Villers Bretonneux
Lovett	Edward	26	August 1915 4 <sup>th</sup> Light Horse	Labourer	165	59.4	C of E	Yes			Also Served World War 2
Lovett	Frederick	28	June 1917 4 <sup>th</sup> Light Horse	Labourer	155	54.9	C of E	Yes			Also Served World War 2
Lovett	Alfred	35 11m	July 1917 12 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Jockey	157	53.5	C of E	Yes			Discharged 17/6/18
Lovett	Herbert	20	April 1917 5 <sup>th</sup> MG Battalion	Labourer	155	45.2	C of E	Yes			Also Served World War 2
Lovett	Leonard	36	April 1916 39 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Drover	160	59.9	C of E	Yes	12/10/17 GSW R arm, knee		Also Served World War 2
Malseed	John	21	March 1916 14 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Teacher	180	59.9	Presby		26/9/17 & 30/3/18		Married Cecilia Wilks, nurse UK 12/5/19
McCallum	Dugald	23	March 1915 7 <sup>th</sup> Lighthorse	Drover	165	71.7	Presby				Often sick
McCallum	Duncan	21	Nov 1916 8 <sup>th</sup> Lighthorse	Teacher	173	78.5	Presby				Attained rank SGT reverted to CPL
McDonald	Allan	27	December 1914 8 <sup>th</sup> LH	Labourer	Info missing	Info missing	C of E	Yes	Fractured leg 1915		
McDonald	Donald	21	March 1916 6 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Labourer	175	68	Presby		4/10/17 &		

									23/8/18		
McDonald	George W	24	Sept 1915 5 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Labourer	173	68.5	C of E	Yes			Discharged Oct 1916. Also enlisted WW2
McLeod	Donald	25	July 1915 6 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Farmer	182	72.6	Presby		5/10/17 multiple GSW		Lost eye.
McLeod	Norman	34 11mths	January 1915 14 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Labourer	173	72.6	Presby			31/05/18	Killed in action. Wrote poems from Gallipoli & Western Front
Millard	David	33	October 1914 4 <sup>th</sup> Mobile Vet Section	Labourer	173	78.4	C of E		Gassed 1917		Invalided Chronic Bronchitis. Service record doesn't say gassed. H'ton Spec says gassed reporting death Oct 1918
Moreton	Herney	20	March 1915	Labourer	174	68	Presby		R foot blown off 28/5/16		Gangrene in leg, amputation below the knee
Mullett	David	43	Nov 1915 Remount Unit	Labourer	174	72	C of E	Yes			Had 4 children at time of enlistment
Rundell	Cecil HJ	18 2mths	July 1916 22 <sup>nd</sup> MG Coy	Labourer	163	60.5	Presby			14/9/17	Known to God. Name on Menin Gate.
Saunders	Harry D	18	July 1915 13 <sup>th</sup> Light H	Blacksmith	161	50	Presby				Parents written consent to enlist
Saunders	Walter CG	21	February 1916 3 <sup>rd</sup> Machine Gunnery	Groom	174	66.7	Methodist	Yes			
Saunders	William	30	Sept 1915 57 Battalion	Labourer	174	68	C of E		29/9/18		Awarded Military Medal Became SGT. 6 children at enlistment
Sharrock	Joseph	30	August 1915 14 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Labourer	183	65	C of E		18/10/16		Critically in 1916
Taylor	Robert	19	May 1916	Labourer	169	51	C of E	Yes	Gassed		Deserted April 1918. Served

			38 <sup>th</sup> Battalion						16/6/17 Wounded 19/7/17		military prison July – Nov 1918. Sentence remitted.
Vaughan	William	21	January 1916 46 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Dairy farm work	163	45.8	C of E		11/4/17 GSW L foot		Discharged 1917 medically unfit
Winter	Herbert	31	July 1915 21 <sup>st</sup> Battalion	Labourer	170	68.9	C of E	Yes		24/8/16	Died pneumonia in France. Acting CPL
Winter	Theodore	26	May 1916 24 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Labourer	169	69.9	C of E	Yes			
Wheeler	John	19	January 1915 14 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Labourer	173	62.1	Methodist		GSW 30/8/16 & 20/9/17 Gassed 31/1/18		Parents written consent to enlist. Discharged 8/4/18 due to gassing. Attained Corporal
Young	Laurence	28	May 1916 6 <sup>th</sup> Battalion	Labourer	170	56	C of E	Yes	GSW arm & hip 5/10/17		July 1918 - April 1919 military prison for desertion. Sentence later remitted

# A reflection from 2014

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My Uncle Donnie was the son of Ruaridh McLeod (born about 1846 on the Island of Raasay) and Bessie Murchison (born about 1859 in Ballarat, a daughter of emigrant parents from the neighbouring Isle of Skye). Ruaridh's parents had arrived in Australia in 1854 as part of the "Highland Clearances".

Donald McLeod, (*below*) was born in 1890, the fourth of eight siblings. His father Ruaridh (anglicised to Roderick, but not by himself,) had not married until comparatively late in life. Both of Ruaridh's parents were dead by the time he was 22. He, with the help of his brother Norman (aged 20), and his sister Lexy (aged 18) thus had the major responsibility of raising the three younger surviving siblings: Ann (12), Christina (6) and Kate (2). Probably Ruaridh learned at this early stage of his life about the need for the "parental" discipline he later administered to his own children. Certainly he was held in high respect - even awe - by all of his progeny.

By the time he married Bessie Murchison in the Free Presbyterian Church at Hamilton, Victoria, Ruaridh was the owner of a substantial estate on McLeod's Road, Condah, that he called "Albanella" (Gaelic for "other Scotland"). It bordered Scotsman's Hill Road, also named after Ruaridh. At "Albanella" his children were brought up in much more prosperous circumstances than had he. Doubtlessly his farming success was much due to the belief in the moral values of hard work and diligence that his parents (and preceding forebears) had passed on to him - and that he in turn would pass on to his children.

Donald McLeod and his seven siblings grew up with respect and love for their parents, the Free Presbyterian Church, farm animals (especially horses and dogs) and each other. The Free Presbyterian Church was situated in neighbouring Branhholme, about 10 k from Condah, and the family drove there in a buggy every Sunday morning. Members of the Free Church observed the Sabbath religiously; there would have been no optional work nor any play, singing or whistling by any members of the family on that day of the week.



Ruaridh's son Donald entered the First Grade at the Condah State School in 1895. He would have had eight years of schooling there and left with his Merit Certificate in 1903. That would have been the completion of his formal education. From the age of thirteen he worked on his father's property or at nearby farms.

Little is known of his teenage years. His Attestation Paper for Enlistment in the 1st AIF, dated 17 July 1915, discloses that he had had previous military service of two years with the Australian Light Horse. At least part of that service must have preceded World War 1.

What caused Donald McLeod to volunteer for overseas service is a matter of conjecture. His political convictions were certainly community focused - in 1911, at age 21, he was the President of the local branch of the Political Labor Council (PLC). (In 1901

the PLC had become the State Branch of the newly formed Australian Labor Party). His two years in the Light Horse suggest that he by no means lacked the spirit of adventure common in men of his age and era, and the opportunity to “see the world” seems a likely factor. In the light of his dispossessed Highlands heritage, it is doubtful that he was motivated to fight for “King and Country”.

At the time of his enlistment there was no inkling that the war would drag on for another three years, or any general presentiment of the dreadful carnage that would ensue on the Western Front. In the midst of that slaughter he would later write a letter to his father Ruairidh imploring him not to let Malcolm enlist. Malcom McLeod was a brother, five years younger than Donald.

A long, partly censored and moving letter headed was written by Donald from France on 8 August 1916, to his brother Malcolm. It was published in the Hamilton Spectator on 23 November 1916. Excerpts from that letter follow:

*I suppose you have read in the papers ere this of the great charge and good work done by the --- division at ---. The --- and --- brigade went in first, and cleared the Germans out of a couple of lines of trenches. They charged in the early hours of the morning (of 24 July 1916). Of course, our artillery had bombarded the German lines for hours beforehand. We were in supports the night before they attacked, and marched up close to where the battle had been in the early hours of Sunday morning. Oh, I shall never forget that sight as we went along that shell-torn road, but it was nothing to what we saw and went through afterwards. On enquiring from the wounded how things were going in the firing line, some replied "Things are hot up there mate." One chap said "It is a perfect hell up there."*

*Our company halted in a trench, where they were fairly safe. They were to be kept there as a reserve for the time being. We were not there long when about a quarter of us were ordered to carry supplies, ammunition, etc. up to the first line. We had to go along the road that the Germans had held the night before, and over the ground where the battle had been fought. Jack McGrath said, "You and I will carry together." Poor fellow, he was killed two days later (on 26 July 1916). We had been together ever since we went into camp and were outpost together in the desert at Serapeum Egypt, and here in France we were in the same company and on the same watch log the first time we went into the trenches. He was as cool and game as you could get.*

*We hadn't gone far when we met about 50 German prisoners taken by our boys in the fighting. A little further on we went over a bit of a rise. It was littered with wreckage of every description – broken carts, wagons, rifles, ammunition and bombs lay everywhere, as they were dropped by the dead and wounded. ... All along that road shells were falling and men were getting wounded and killed as we went along. ... I shall never forget that sight. It is impossible for me to describe or you imagine. It had been a wood, but not a limb or leaf was left by our bombardment. Big trees had been shattered and uprooted. The trenches the Germans had held the night before were blown about terribly. I don't think there was a foot of ground that had not been blown about by shells. Some of the shell craters were that deep and big that you could back a horse and cart into them. Perhaps you remember the pictures of San Francisco after the earthquake. Only there were dead lying about everywhere. At the entrance of the dugout I saw six dead Germans piled on top of one another. ....*

*Next morning early we went into do our part. But didn't know what it was. As we passed through one trench we were halted and told to leave our overcoats there. (We hadn't carried pack or blankets in – only overcoat and waterproof rolled up.) We were then told we had to make a new firing line, that we had to advance out into no man's land past our own first line. Remember this was not at night, but in the middle of the day. Our platoon commander told us we would be under all sorts of fire all the time we were digging in, but never mind how we were shelled or how many were hit we had to keep digging. Jack McGrath was near me as we rolled our coats up, and said, "I suppose we may as well roll them up properly, but a lot of us will never need them again."*

*We doubled out over our own first line to where we were to dig in, and started to dig for our lives. I didn't think we would last ten minutes. In the first 20 minutes three of our sergeants were hit. We only had four, also our two master sergeants and two officers out of four, all within the first half hour. They couldn't carry away the wounded*

*and men had to be taken out of the trenches to do stretcher bearing. We got dug in by dark, but those who were not on watch kept on working and improving the trench. No one was allowed to sleep, and they couldn't have slept even if they were allowed, for the Germans shelled us continually, and a few good men were hit during the night. Our steel helmets saved many a life. My helmet was hit often with shrapnel. ....*

*Charlie Read (KIA 26 July 1916) was one of the most unselfish fellows I ever met and there wasn't a lazy bone in his body. I sent his photo home last Christmas, of he and Harold Cuthbertson taken on a log. His father is a widower, and is over 70, and that accounts for Charlie being as handy as a woman. . . . . Jack McGrath was killed the same day. A man in his bay was badly wounded, and Jack and two more volunteered to carry him back. They had to carry the wounded about a mile and a half under shell fire all the time. They got down all right, but on the way back Jack and another chap named Jennings were killed by a shell. Jack was one of the whitest men I ever met, also the coolest and gamest.*

*Colin Duncan, George Dunn, and H Davies were all wounded. They also went into camp with Mac and me, and we had been together ever since. Before we went into the last fight there were eight of us who had been together ever since we went into camp (nearly a year now). There are only three of us left now. ....*

*Men who were on Gallipoli from the landing to the evacuation say that Gallipoli was nothing to our last stunt. Men were being sent away with shell shock all day. Our other times in the trenches were play in comparison to this. They say it was as bad as Verdun. The German prisoners were taken altogether. Lieutenant Taylor was also killed. He used to be assistant to the Reverend Williams and was stationed at Macarthur. I met him at Cannon's once. ....*

I suspect that his brother's vivid tale of the hell of the Battle of the Somme would have done nothing to spur on any desire Malcolm had to enlist himself – and that may well have been the writer's intention. A couple of months after writing that letter, Donald McLeod was badly wounded. He suffered severe shrapnel injuries to his right thigh, side, arm and hand and completely lost his left eye. The story was told that he had been considered dead by the soldiers gathering the corpses of their comrades for burial until one of them called out “Hey, that fellow moved!”

After being wounded he spent a couple of weeks in France, then seven weeks hospitalization at Stratford-on-Avon, and was then posted to an Army Camp at Weymouth to await his return to Australia. From there he wrote a letter to his first cousin Susie McLeod in which he made light of his injuries. He was “glad to say that his right eye was getting stronger” but, typically, made no mention of the fact that he had lost his left one. He also spent a few days at the home of Professor McLeod of the University of Edinburgh. He finally embarked for Australia on 10 January 1918.

As reported by the Hamilton Spectator on 6 June 1918, a Welcome Home was arranged for Pte Donald McLeod by the PLC. Mr J. H. Black, the presiding Chairman, declared that Donald,

*“was known to most of those present since boyhood, and had proved himself an estimable citizen, as well as being popular with every class in the community. Early in life he had decided convictions on political matters, and was one of the founders of the local branch of the PLC, had held every possible office and prior to leaving Australia was their secretary. During his 12 years association with the branch he was a staunch supporter, and had the ability to express his opinions, but was always tolerant to those who disagreed with him”.*

He applied for and was granted a Soldier Settlement block on the sub-divided Knebsworth station. For the first two years he lived there in a tent and “soldiered on” as he commenced work on his new property, which he named “Dunvegan”. Despite his war injuries and with the help of younger brothers, the advice of his father and by dint of hard work he was successful in transforming his 200



acre block into a viable farm. Neighbouring soldier settlers were not so successful, and over time he added their blocks to his. Eventually the area of the farm increased to about 1,500 acres.



In 1926 he married a Digby girl, Bessie Ruth Dougheny (*left, on their wedding day*). He was then 36 years of age and she was 25. I remember from my childhood that the fact that they had no children was the cause of ribald speculation as to the extent of Donald's war injuries.

Post war, Donald McLeod continued to be engaged in community matters. He was, locally, a Justice of the Peace, a member of the Fire Brigade, Secretary of the Political Labor Council and, though childless, a member of the local School Committee.

I and a younger brother, Rex, as boys, spent a couple of Christmas holidays together with them at "Dunvegan". Uncle Donnie raised very good bullocks and crossbred Merinos and grew more than sufficient oats for his own needs. He had a team of about eight Clydesdale draught horses of most impressive size and gentle manners. On one occasion we watched him breaking in a

temperamental, unriden four year old mare and marvelled at his horsemanship and at his refusal to allow his injuries, still present, to prevent him from tackling any task.

On only one occasion did I ask him anything about the World War. My juvenile question was "Which nation had the best soldiers and which had the worst?" His response was thoughtful and measured. "Australian, English, Scots, French, Italians, Americans, Canadians, New Zealanders, Germans – they were all good soldiers. There were no bad soldiers." I realized that his respect extended to all those who had experienced the traumas of trench warfare and that he felt bonded with all of them, not only with his immediate comrades.

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War he and many of his neighbours each had a purple-clad Italian Prisoner of War to help with farm labour. His POW was Nicola Montenegri, from Florence. Uncle Donnie treated "Nicky" with respect and flouted governmental rules against "prisoners" congregating by allowing other local POWs to meet with Nicky at "Dunvegan" on Sunday afternoons. One day he was told that the authorities had been informed of those improper gatherings and were planning to raid his property the next Sunday afternoon. He promptly made arrangements to ensure that there were no unlawful visitors on that particular Sunday. My brother Rex remembers that after the end of WW2 the POWs were marched to the local railway station for repatriation to Italy. He still recalls his embarrassment at Nicky's farewell gesture to him - a kiss on each cheek.

Donald McLeod, a man of principle and honour, was much loved and respected by his family and by the wider community. He died of bowel cancer on 10 December 1956.

**By Ian Douglas McLeod**

# Thanks/ acknowledgements

## **Opening of event**

Lyall Saunders, President Heywood Sub-branch RSL, also for his encouragement, patience and support for running the event

## **Acknowledgement of country**

Damein Bell, Gunditjmara, also for his support for booklet production

## **Readers of newspaper extracts, poems and letters**

Damein Bell, Gunditjmara, grandson of Frederick Amos Lovett, great nephew of Edward, Alfred, Herbert and Leonard Lovett

Laura Bell, Gunditjmara, daughter of Frederick Amos Lovett, niece of Edward, Alfred, Herbert and Leonard Lovett

Tim Gurry, great grandson of John Gurry

Trish Gurry, great granddaughter in law of John Gurry

Cindy Hann, amateur historian, also for enthusiasm and advice for research

Patricia Learmonth, daughter of John Wallace Malseed

Lucy Martin, great-great niece of Norman 'Scotty' McLeod

Ian McLeod, nephew of Donnie McLeod

Erica Mather, great granddaughter of Henry Baker, also for sharing photos and memorabilia

Leon McLeod, great nephew of Norman "Scotty" McLeod

Valerie Little, Braxholme resident

## **Facilitators of small groups**

Cindy Hann

Trish Gurry

Valerie Little

Keith McKenzie, Department of Veterans' Affairs

Terry Sim

## **Music**

Donald Blair, bagpipes, '*Flowers of the Forest*'

Dennis Turner, guitar and vocals, '*And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda*', and '*Green Fields of France*' also known as *Willy McBride*

Terry Sim, vocals, '*Green Fields of France*' also known as *Willy McBride*

## **Filming**

Tim Gurry, Ryebuck Media

Kevin Manning, Ryebuck Media

## **Formatting of booklet**

Jude Niemiec – many thanks for your patience and advice

## **RSLs members Heywood, Macarthur, Hamilton and Warrnambool**

For their interest and participation

## **Morning tea cooks**

Providing food that the 'Ladies of Condah' 1914 -1918 would have approved

My sincere thanks to all participants for your willingness and good humour to be involved.

Special thanks to my partner, Terry Sim, for listening and encouraging me as well as tramping around cemeteries to locate graves and many other acts of love and support.

To, Officer in Charge  
Base Records Office  
Victoria Barracks  
Melbourne

Hawthorn Postage  
bondah  
Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> 1918

Coverp 5/11/18

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you, as we have had a friend fallen lately on the Battle Field. He was next to being one of our own. He was engaged to my daughter for nearly four years, and we missed him very much from the home when he went to do his duty. We knew him from his boy-hood, and we would like you very much to try and get a photo of his grave for us. The Red Cross at Melbourne has advised us to write to you for it. This <sup>was</sup> our great friend's name -  
Pte. Earnest Albert Looker, No 6059, and 39<sup>th</sup> Battalion.

Yours Faithfully,  
Elizabeth Malt

Address:- Mrs E. Malt  
Hawthorn Postage  
bondah

Dr. Mungam  
13/11

Letter 20/11