Denny, Arnold Lorimer

ASC 1910

Cemetery or memorial details: Estaires Communal Cemetery and Extension, France


Son of Thomas James Denny A.S.C. 1878-86. One of the “Notable Old Boys,” in School History. It is interesting that his father did not mention A.S.C. in filling in the “Roll of Honour Card” below.

ARRIVALS.—Maefarlane, Mackinnon, Korff, Thompson II., Gillham, Tinning II., Houliston, Denny (the son of one of our former students), and Woolcott.

Above scan is from Bathurstian circa 1910. Note the clue that his father was an Old Boy. Hubert Thompson was one of those killed. There is also the listing of “Korff” who proves to be another of the Fallen Saints' not listed among the original 34.

1696 DENNY Arnold Lorimer
Nom Roll 523 2Lt 56 Bn Left 15/11/14 DOW 26/7/16 cwgc

Above extract was sent from “Shore” archives, with appreciation.

Editor’s note: School archivist should note that his rank was 2nd Lt and not “Lieut.” as listed in school history.
In Egypt, after Gallipoli, Denny transferred as 2Lt. from 6LHR to 56Bn.
Fromelles was the first major battle fought by Australian troops on the Western Front. Directed against a strong German position known as the Sugar Loaf salient, the attack was intended primarily as a feint to draw German troops away from the Somme offensive then being pursued further to the south. A seven-hour preparatory bombardment deprived the attack of any hope of surprise, and ultimately proved ineffective in subduing the well-entrenched defenders. When the troops of the 5th Australian and 61st British Divisions attacked at 6 pm on 19 July 1916, they suffered heavily at the hands of German machine-gunners. Small parts of the German trenches were captured by the 8th and 14th Australian Brigades, but, devoid of flanking support and subjected to fierce counter-attacks, they were forced to withdraw. By 8am on 20 July 1916, the battle was over. The 5th Australian Division suffered 5,533 casualties, rendering it incapable of offensive action for many months; the 61st British Division suffered 1,547. The German casualties were little more than 1,000. The attack was a complete failure as the Germans realised within a few hours
it was merely a feint. It therefore had no impact whatsoever upon the progress of the Somme offensive.

(Note this battle was concluded on 20th with Denny being mortally wounded in the aftermath 4 days later)

56th Battalion

The 56th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 14 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 4th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 4th, the 56th was predominantly composed of men from New South Wales. The battalion became part of the 14th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division.

Arriving in France on 30 June 1916, the battalion entered the frontline trenches for the first time on 12 July and fought its first major battle at Fromelles a week later. The battle was a disaster, resulting in heavy casualties across the division. Despite these losses the 5th Division continued to man the front in the Fromelles sector for a further two months.

(Article copied in its entirety form Australian War Memorial Site)

The 56th was engaged in reserve duties during the battle. Unlike the 60th which lost 16 officers and 741 men (almost wiped out?). The 56th lost, respectively, 2 and 141.

(See last two lines from each of the following actual daily intelligence summaries). Observe also, that the “Place” given in the report is “Fleurbaix” sector of trenches Wye Farm” In some accounts “The Battle of Fleurbaix,” is synonymous for “The Battle of Fromelles.”
Battalion stood to arms between the usual hours — morning and evening. Word was received during the morning that 2nd Lt. W.H. Gilbey had been evacuated sick to London, and consequently he was struck off the strength. Burials of the men killed on the previous day took place at the Wye Farm cemetery — Chaplain Holliday and Father Kennedy officiating. During the morning very little Artillery fire was indulged in by either side. During the afternoon a note was received from Bde., HQs., asking for names of Officers, suitable for appointment to commissioned rank, also those that would probably be suitable, after going through a course of instruction in England. The following names were sent forward: — No 2568 C.S.M., Benson R.C., No 1363A Sgtn., Gordon P.F., No 1367 Sgtn., Johnston C.H., 2371 Sgtn., Greer P.S.A., (wounded) No 1125 Cpl., Maltie H., McLeod, 2132 Pte., Forsythe G.P., No 1713 C.S.M., Bull J. The following names were submitted for appointment to Commissioned rank after undergoing instruction: — No 3700 Cpl., Wood W.G., No 3073 L/Cpl., Donaldson G.T.

3 p.m. Bn., Scout & Intelligence Officer — 2nd Lt. A.L. Denny was shot through the head by an enemy sniper — he was immediately sent to Hospital, but condition very critical.

Denny’s wounding mentioned in above two lines copied from the official war diary. His death recorded in the last paragraph of the following:

WAR DIARY

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY.

(Erase heading not required.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Hour</th>
<th>Summary of Events and Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fleurbaix</td>
<td>July</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>During the night 26/27, wiring parties were sent out and were able to put out more wire in front of B &amp; C Company’s sectors. Although more enemy flares were evident than through the night 26/27th, the number was much less than usual. C Company’s wiring party, during the night, reported that a party of the enemy was cutting our wire. The A.C.O., in charge of our party returned immediately to our lines and reported matters. On rejoining his party, all was quiet. Nothing else of much importance happened during the night. En., stood to arms during the usual hours, morning and evening. News received from Bde., that 2nd Lieutenant A.L. Denny, who was shot through the head by an enemy sniper on the previous day, passed away during the night 26th/27th, also that his funeral would take place at 4 p.m., at Balaika.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector of Trenches</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wye Farm</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/6/15</td>
<td>O/C 6th AIE</td>
<td>To Hospital Sick</td>
<td>Anzac Cove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/6/15</td>
<td>2nd.Fld.Ambt.</td>
<td>Rheumatism- Admitted</td>
<td>Gallipoli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/6/15</td>
<td>O/C &quot;Clacton&quot;</td>
<td>Rheumatism- Admitted</td>
<td>Mudros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Transferred to Mudros</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27/6/15</td>
<td>O/C &quot;Scotia&quot;</td>
<td>Rheumatism- Disembarked</td>
<td>Alexandria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/6/15</td>
<td>O/C 1st.AGH.</td>
<td>Rheumatism- Admitted</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/7/15</td>
<td>O/C 1st.AGH.</td>
<td>Rheumatism-Tfrd.to Helouan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Convalescent Hospital</td>
<td>Cairo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22/8/15</td>
<td>O/C &quot;Huptaend&quot;</td>
<td>Embarked for Gallipoli</td>
<td>Alexandria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/10/15</td>
<td>34th.C.C.Stn. Gonorrhoea-Admitted</td>
<td>Mudros</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
16/10/15 24th.C.C.Str. Gonorrhoea—Discharged Class "A" Mudros
22/10/15 A & N.Z.Base Admitted ex Rest Camp Mudros
Discharged to Anzac Mudros
24/10/15 O/C Regt.B213 Rejoined ex Hospital Anzac Cove
25/12/15 HT "Beltana" Disembarked at Alexandria
28/2/16 O/C Regt. Marched out to Seraeum ex Maadi
14/4/16 O/56th.Bn. To be 2/Lieut.56th.Bn. Tel-el-Kebi
19/6/16 C/O En.Roll. Embarked HT "Huntsend" to ex
Join B.B.F. Alexandria.
29/6/16 C/O Troops Disembarked ex Huntsend Marseilles.
14/7/15 C/O En.B213 O/Command to Sniping School France
21/7/15 C/O En.B213 Rejoined ex Sniping School France
26/7/16 C/O En.B213 Wounded in Action France
29/7/16 6th.Fld.Art. GS# HMAD—Admitted Transfd. to A.C.C.S. France.
27/7/16 Ist.A.C.C.Str. Died of Wounds France
30/7/16 Ist.A.C.C.Str. Buried Estaires Communal Cemetery France
5/8/16 AIF Orders 74 Reported "Died of Wounds" and is struck off strength of 56th.Battalion. France
DENNY, 2nd Lt. A.L.

D/W July 26th. 1916.

Little short man, clean shaven, 26 years old. The Lt. was in trenches at Fleurbaix on July 26th, at about 11.45 a.m. someone pointed out to him an enemy sniper. He looked over the parapet to see the sniper and got a bullet wound through the head. Was taken to No. 1 Australian Clearing Station at Estaires, and died there midday next day. Informant was told this by Sergt. Johnstone of A.Coy. There is no proper Cemetery at Estaires but informant thinks the Lt. was buried there.

Informant: A. Ashmore. 5328
No. 5 Stationary Hospital.
BOULOGNE. Sept. 19. 1916.

DENNY, 2nd Lt. A.L.

D/W July 26 1916. Dtt.

Informant says "Between Possieres and Armentieres I saw Lt. Denny lying dead in our own trench. We were standing to in our trench and I had seen him just before standing on the parapet looking out. I did not see him hit, but it was about 2 o'clock that he was caught by a sniper. He was shot through the head and must have been killed instantly. My chums in A. Coy said he was a very good officer to talk to them."  

No. 3 Canadian General Hospital.
BOULOGNE. Sept. 7th. 1916.

56th Australians
Denny, Lieut. A.L.,
A. Company

(D/W 26th July 1916.
Details D & E)

Informant has had a letter from Cpl H.R. (Dick) Williams, No. about 2476, A. Coy, 56th Australians to say that Lieut Denny was shot through the head by a sniper whilst looking over the parapet. He was taken to Estaires, the first dressing station and died there that night. He expects he is buried in the Military Cemetery there near that Town.

Reference: Pte W.J. Joyce, 2391,
56th Australians,
Queen's Hospital, Birmingham.

Home address:
680, Canning Street,
15th Sept. 1916. North Carlton,
Informant states that 2nd Lt. Denny was shot through the head. For details apply Capt. Penning, O/C. A. Coy., 56th Australians, France.


Denny, 2nd Lieut. A.I.

Informant states that towards the end of July last at Pleurbaix in our own trenches (Fye Farm trenches) Lieut Denny was hit in the forehead by a sniper. This was in daylight in the morning. Informant did not actually see, but was near him; he was informed that Lieut Denny was taken to the first Casualty Clearing Hospital behind our lines, and that he died there.

Reference: Pte G.V. Ballard, 3137, 56th A. I. F., Machine Gun Section, Mount Hospital, Epsom.

Home address: Singleton, N.S.W.

5th Sept. 1916.
P.J. Waterhouse.
Informant states that Lieut Denny was shot by sniper, and that Capt. Smyth of B Company, 56th Batt. A.I.F. was with him at the time.

Reference: Pte C.G. Legar, 2863, 56th A.I.F., 3rd London General Hospital, Wandsworth, S.W.

Home address: Australian Headquarters, Horseferry Road, S.W.

7th Sept. 1916.
Rosie R. Moffrey.

Informant states that on or about July near Wye Farm Lieut. Denny was killed by a sniper. He had been looking through his periscope, lowered it and then put his head over the parapet, and was hit immediately in the head. He died a day or two after. Witness was away at the time at an Aerial School and was told about it. Capt. Flaming went to Mr. Denny's funeral, which probably took place at Hastings or Sallly. Witness knew Mr. Denny well and says he was "a fine young fellow," and came from the Light Horse.

56. R.Q. Signallers, A.I.F.
Tunbridge Wells General Hospital.

Sept: 4th
Campbell.
Informant states that: "Lieut. Denny was looking through his field glasses about 4 o'clock in the afternoon and was shot by sniper. He lived about 3 hours after but never recovered consciousness. He was buried in the cemetery at Bezzantin by the Field Ambulance man. He was my platoon officer."

56th. A.I. P.
4th Northern Hospital
Lincoln.

Home Address:— c/o. C. Elliott,
Koppin Yerrit,
Central Lansdown,
N.S. Wales.

Sept. 6/16.
J. N. Neill.

News has been received by Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Denny of the death of their only son, Lieut. A. L. Denny, from wounds in France. He received his education at Chatswood Preparatory School, and the North Shore Grammar School, and when war broke out enlisted from Hawkesbury Agricultural College, where he was a student, leaving as a trooper in December, 1914. After some months in Gallipoli, where he remained until the evacuation, he passed brilliantly in gunnery, and in the officers' school, and received his commission as 2nd lieutenant.

Following copy from “The Torch Bearer” Magazine of “Shore,” publishes a letter from Denny describing his activities in the closing hours of the evacuation from Anzac. One suggests that this is a significant primary historical source, as it is a personal account from one of the relatively few involved.
H. O. Mocatta writes that he had received a commission in the Royal Horse Artillery and was stationed for the time being at St. John's Wood Barracks in London. From there they will go to Shoe bury ness before being sent to the front.

The following extract from a letter from Lieut. A. L. Denny referring to the evacuation of Gallipoli will be found interesting:—

The evacuation was most exciting. A rearguard of picked men were left in the trenches until the last moment. On the word being passed round, these last men, with muffled feet and muffled bayonets, all sneaked away gradually, and in regular order, until one man had perhaps 20 or 30 firing positions to himself in the front line.

The great bluff was kept going by those men, who walked from position to position, firing their rifles alternately through the loopholes. For an hour of suspense these men were acting this way, when at last the final word came round—"Embarkation of all troops successful; rear guard prepare to retreat."

Now this is where we came in. Our officer, two N.C.O's., another and myself, had charge of covering the whole of the right flank of the Anzacs in their retreat to the boats. Our orders were not to shift our machine gun until the whole of the brigade had embarked. In this way you can imagine we had an anxious moment, or rather moments, when the firing line had been deserted, and there was nothing between us and perhaps 40,000 Turks. If they had dropped to it it goes without saying that none of us last few would have got out of it alive. However it was a great experience, and the Turks were bluffed beautifully. It was very nice for me that I was given one of the pieces of honour, and everybody in the section was glad to see us at Lemnos again. All the rest of the section except us five went off at about 8 o'clock the last day. Our own ever this is only a rough sketch of what really happened, and I hope some day to convey in a more graphic manner the thrills we experienced.

In order to get to the front Theo. Thompson resigned from the Hussars and received a commission in the R.F.A., coming out first in the examinations. Jim Thompson has a commission in the Wiltshire Regiment, doing well at examinations and playing football for his regiment. McCall-

School

We regret to announce that, since our last issue, news has been received of the death in the service of the Empire of G. A. Uther (Major in 20th Battalion), F. W. Bayley (Yeoman Signaller H.M.A.S. Melbourne), A. W. Walker (Lieut. Royal Flying Corps). We take this opportunity of expressing the sympathy of the School with their parents and relations.

The School heard with deep regret of the death of Harold Edward Dean, which occurred on December 20th as the result of a gunshot wound accidentally inflicted by a companion, and desires to express its most sincere sympathy with his family. Dean was a boy of great intellectual promise, and had throughout his career taken a prominent place among his fellows, with whom he was deservedly popu-
There was a brief newspaper reference to connect Denny with Forbes? But it was not until the local papers were digitized that the following clues emerged:

We received the following cable message from Clive Hunter on 9th inst.:-
Cabling fortnightly for self, Cecil Holland, Snow Nelson, Arnold Denny, ----., 8th December. The message came from Cairo.

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**Killed in Action in France.**

Lieutenant Arnold Denny, nephew of Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Stitt, of Boyd. Has been killed in action in France. The deceased young soldier had already seen service at Gallipoli, and was well known in Forbes, having paid many visits to Forbes district.

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Mr. and Mrs. Denny, of Leura, passed through Forbes on Sunday, on their way to pay a visit to Messrs A. J. and Hugh Stitt, of Boyd, who are brothers of Mrs. Denny.

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**PURELY PERSONAL.**

Lieutenant Arnold Denny, nephew of Mr. Hugh Stitt of Boyd, has been killed on the western front. He had on several occasions been a visitor to Boyd and Wandary, Forbes.

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**The Freedom Bell of Fromelles**

The Fromelles' Freedom Bell, hanging in the school entry way.

The Bell is flanked by three plaques. The centre plaque depicts the colour patches of the 5th Division AIF, the outer plaques tell the story behind the Freedom Bell in both French and English.