



PRIVATE THOMAS CHANDLER

23rd Battalion, 6th Reinforcement Regiment

58th Australian Imperial Force

Service number 2597

19th July 1916 – killed in action and buried in vicinity of Fleurbaix, France

Australian Cemetery, Fromelles, France and Bungaree War Memorial, Australia

Born in Derbyshire, 1891 and moved to Great Brington aged 4

Parents records not located

69 Great Brington – living with grandparents and uncle (Charles Haynes)

Sister – Drusilla (housemaid at The Hall, Long Buckby)

Little Brington School then worked as a farm labourer.

Emigrated to Australia on 9th January 1913. Sailed from Liverpool on SS Seuvic to Melbourne and lived in Bungaree working as a grocer and groom. Enlisted on 19th

July 1915 and the 58th which left Melbourne on the HMAT A38 “ULYSSES” for training with Battalion Tel el Kebir, Egypt. Embarked Alexandria to join the British Expeditionary Force on 17th June 1916 and disembarking at Marseilles, France.

Victory Medal and British War Medal

58th Australian Infantry Battalion

The 58th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 17 February 1916 as part of the expansion of the AIF. Roughly half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 6th Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 6th, the 58th was predominantly composed of men from Victoria.

Battle of Fromelles 19th / 20th July, 1916

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.

At V.C. corner, whilst there were no headstones, 2 large crosses are set into the ground where the remains of 400 Australians were killed in action or died of their wounds. Beyond the Cemetery is a Memorial commemorating by name the 1,299 Australians who died in the battle but have no known grave.



Pheasant Wood Cemetery, Fromelles, France

MISSING

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 2597 Name Charles Thomas
 Unit Gravelly 58th Battalion
 Joined on 19/1/10

5th. P. 111's
2nd. Division.

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

1. What is your name? Charles
2. In the Parish of Saltham near the Town of England in the County of ...
3. Are you a natural born British Subject? No
4. What is your age? 44 1/2 yrs
5. What is your trade or calling? Farmer
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, whom, to whom, and for what period? No
7. Are you married? No
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) Mr. George T. Chandler, 100 Long Buckby, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, England
9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? No
10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with ignominy, or as Inscrutable and Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been dismissed with Disgrace from the Navy? No
11. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge. No
12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? No
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? No
14. (For married men, widowers with children, and soldiers who are the sole support of widowed mothers) Do you understand that no separate allowance will be issued in respect of your service beyond an amount which together with pay would reach eight shillings per day? No
15. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small pox and enteric fever? No

I, Charles Thomas do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

And I further agree to allow not less than one-fifth of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children.

Date 19/1/10 Charles Thomas
 Signature of person enlisted.

*This clause should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 18 years of age.
 †One-fifth should be altered to six-nths, and if there are children six-nths must be struck.

