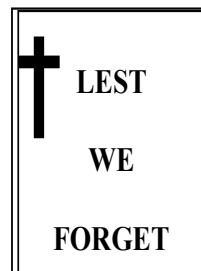


A SOLDIER'S STORY



Service No.: 1184
Name: Benjamin Thomas THORPE
Nickname: Ben



Medals and Decorations

1914 - 15 Star
British War Medal
Victory Medal

Rank: Private
Service: Army
Enlisted: 14 Sep 1914
KIA: 19 May 1915

Ben was born on 17 Feb 1890 at Tumby Bay to Thomas John Thorpe and Rose Ann Thorpe (nee McFayden). There were 6 children in the family, 2 boys and 4 girls, of which he was the second eldest. His mother was the niece of William McFayden, the owner of the Lipson Hotel in 1901; and his father worked on his grandfather's farm in the Tumby area (Sect 81 Hundred of Hutchison) until the family moved to a block at Elliston.

He went to school at Tumby Bay, before taking employ in various areas on the "west coast" until his enlistment in the Army at the age of 24 years and 6 months. His occupation at this time was given as labourer.

Ben was one of the first to enlist from this district, enlisting on 14 Sep 1914 at Tumby Bay, only 1 month after the commencement of World War 1. He went to Morphettville for processing and then undertook his basic training at 2nd Depot Battalion (Bn) before being posted to 1st Reinforcements/10th Bn.

The 10th Bn was one of the first Infantry units raised for the Australian Imperial Force and because of its long history in SA, as a militia unit, was known as the "*Adelaide Rifles*". It was manned with recruits from South Australia and along with the 9th, 11th and 12th Bns, it formed the 3rd Division.

After completing his basic training Ben embarked aboard the HMAT "*Thermistocles*" from Melbourne on 27 Dec 1914 bound for Egypt via Fremantle; the Bn had already embarked aboard HMAT "*Ascanius*" on 20 Oct 1914. On arrival in Egypt, Ben joined his Bn and undertook further training before embarking with his unit, this time bound for the Greek island of Lemnos in the Aegean Sea aboard the "*Ionian*", where they transhipped to the British battleship HMS "*Prince of Wales*" for the passage to the Dardanelles.

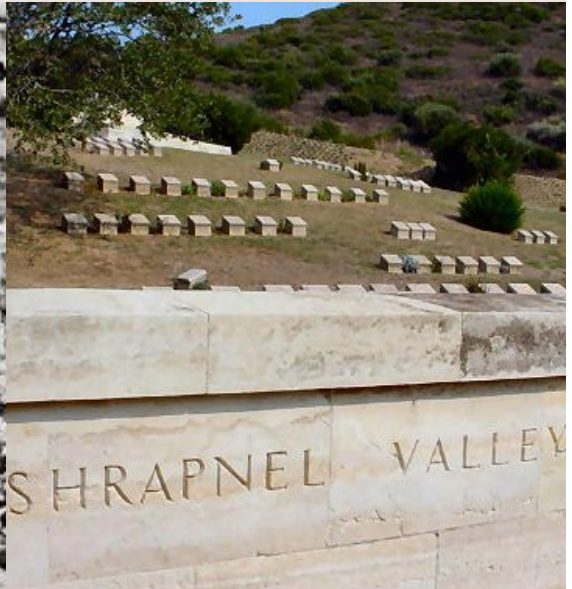
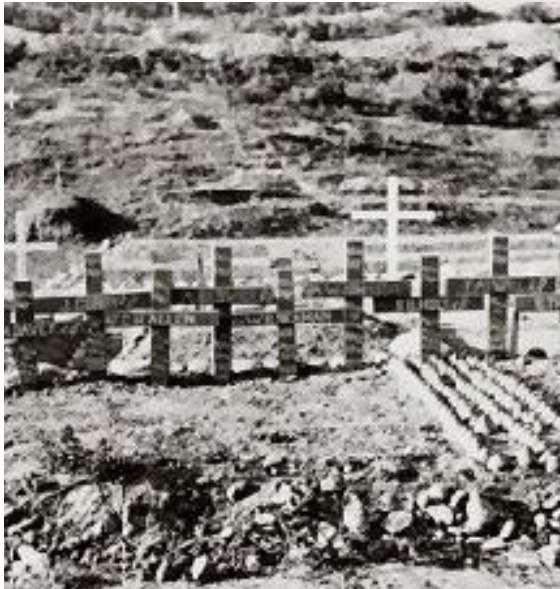
The 10th Bn was the first ashore at Gallipoli, as part of the screening force, landing at 0430 hours on 25 Apr 1915 at Anzac Cove. It had formed a Scout Company to lead the way and 2 of its members are credited as having penetrated further inland than any other Australians at Gallipoli, having reached the 'Third Ridge'. The Bn suffered nearly 50% casualties in the first few days immediately after the landing.

The Bn was also heavily involved in establishing and defending the front line of the Anzac positions and had to withstand determined counter attacks launched by the Turks in May 1915. It was during these attacks that Ben was killed in action (KIA) on 19 May 1915. he is buried in the Divisional Cemetery at Shrapnel Gully, about 400 yards (approx 350m) South East of Anzac Cove.

The Bn served at Gallipoli until the evacuation in Dec 1915, when it returned to Egypt where it was reformed and sent to the Western Front.



Private
THORPE, BENJAMIN THOMAS
Service Number 1184
Died 19/05/1915
10th Bn.
Australian Infantry, A.I.F.
Son of Thomas and Rose Ann Thorpe. Native of
Port Lincoln, South Australia.



Divisonal Cemetery, Shrapnel Gully, Gallipoli