

ALBERT VICTOR WOLF



18th July 1915

1886-1915 Aged 29

Private 674 1st Australian Naval & Military Expedition, and 1868, 2nd Battalion Australian Infantry. Albert Wolf was born in Hull in 1886. His mother Minnie was a native of the city, his father Rudolf a cigar manufacturer from Hanover in Germany, who came to Britain by way of South Africa. By 1891 his business was established at 65 Sunbridge Road, Bradford, and he became a naturalized British subject. Albert was the third of their four children. He attended Bradford Grammar School from 1895, aged 9, then from 1899 he boarded at the new Bridlington Grammar School. After school, rather than follow his elder brother Louis into the family business, he moved to London, where he was apprenticed as a motor driver, and by January 1912 he was living in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, married to Margaret Munro, a Scot, with a son Rudolf Victor (known as Albert Victor, at least after the war) and a stepson. By 1914 they lived in Sydney, New South Wales, where Albert was a motor engineer.

Australia was automatically included in Britain's declaration of war on Germany on 4th August 1914. Albert, in his late 20's with a family and no military experience, quickly volunteered—more than one fifth of the Australian forces were British-born like him. He served first with the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force raised to take the German colony of New Guinea. After six months his service expired in March 1915, and he re-enlisted within days with the 2nd Battalion Australian Infantry. They were already in Egypt with the ANZAC force since the end of 1914, and they landed at Anzac Cove on 25th April—in three days they lost 434 men fighting in the deep, scrub-covered ravines of the Gallipoli Peninsula.

Wolf arrived at Anzac Cove with a reinforcement draft of 129 men on 26th May—they were described as *"a good solid lot of men, but do not appear to include such a large number of men from the upper classes as the original drafts"*. The 2/Australian held the trenches without a



break after landing. Wolf experienced the deadlock of trench warfare as the temperature climbed and the hordes of flies and the severe water shortages resulted in diarrhoea and dysentery. They were subjected to Turkish shelling and sniping, and the explosion of two mines under their own tunnels. Fortunately, the tunnellers were having tea so only two men were killed. On 26th June, their trenches were inspected by Sir Ian Hamilton and Major-General Birdwood, the overall commander and O/C Australian 1st Division respectively. During this time 2/Australian did not mount any attacks, but they retaliated with an improvised periscope rifle and trench mortars.

The War Diary recorded on 17th July at 12.00 *"Some shelling by enemy. One man had his skull fractured by a piece of shell while observing."* This was Wolf. He was evacuated to the hospital ship *Sicilia*, where he died the next day of *"laceration to the brain"* and was buried at sea. His name is on the Lone Pine Memorial. His wife visited her family in Glasgow in 1917 and asked for his kitbag, even if empty, before returning to Sydney. In 1967 his son's widow applied for the Gallipoli Medallion.

Old Bradfordians—'We will remember them'



Wolf's age: his Attestation for the 2/Australian Infantry dated 18th March 1915 gave his age as 31 years 4 months, whereas his attestation for the AN&MEF on 17th August 1914 gave it as 29 years, and the Roll of Honour states he was 28! His birth was registered in Britain in the fourth quarter of 1886.

Acknowledgements:

Wolf's photo is reproduced from the Old Boys Association Roll of Honour, with permission. I am extremely grateful to Keith Roberts OB for photographing Wolf's grave and leaving a cross there, and for pointing me in the direction of the Australian Records: The War Diary for the 2/Australian Infantry can be found at <http://www.awm.gov.au/collection/RCDIG1007889/?image=10&fullscreen=true#display-image>; the "First World War Embarkation Rolls" record for Wolf is at http://static.awm.gov.au/images/collection/items/ACCNUM_LARGE/RCDIG1067363/RCDIG1067363--270-.JPG; his entry on the Roll of Honour is at <https://www.awm.gov.au/people/rolls/R1679337/>; his file, containing 68 pages, is at <http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Gallery151/dist/JGalleryViewer.aspx?B=8846962&S=38&N=68#/SearchNRetrieve/NAAMedia/ShowImage.aspx?B=8846962&T=P&S=1>—much of it concerns his widow's changes of address, his war pension, the despatch of his effects, her attempts to secure a certificate of death in order that she could claim on his life insurance policy, in addition to his Attestation Records. His UK family history was traced through Ancestry.com. Information about the New Guinea expedition can conveniently be found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_Naval_and_Military_Expeditionary_Force.

Researched and composed by Nicholas Hooper June 2015.

Nhooper1956@googlemail.com



Lone Pine Memorial, Gallipoli Peninsula, Turkey. Pictures courtesy of Keith Roberts OB 2014.