

NAME: **MULLINS, THOMAS**

SERVICE: CHAPLAIN

ENLISTED: 17 MAY 1915

AGE: 38 YEARS 3 MONTHS – BORN IN IRELAND 12 FEBRUARY 1877.

NEXT OF KIN: MOTHER – CATHERINE MULLINS – GLENVILLE, ARDAGH, CO. LIMERICK, IRELAND.

POWER OF ATTORNEY: M.J. MEAGHER – TEMORA

LIVED: ARRIVED IN AUSTRALIA 1900 & SERVED AT YASS; CROOKWELL; WAGGA WAGGA; KOORAWATHA and ARDLETHAN.

EMBARKED: 29 MAY 1915 ON TROOPSHIP HMAT SUEVIC.

MEMBER: 4th and 2nd LIGHT HORSE BRIGADES.

TO GALLIPOLI: 02 NOVEMBER 1915 UNTIL 20 DECEMBER 1915.

REFERENCES: “At Gallipoli, as padre of the regiment, exhibited splendid courage & dedication to duty. For weeks he never left the trenches & lived & slept in the dressing station”.

Mentioned in despatches 30 November 1916 in the Australian Commonwealth Gazette.

“At GAZA on 26 March 1917 this padre showed conspicuous gallantry & devotion to duty. In the severe fighting at the back of GAZA he was all the time up with the men in the front line attending to the wounded. He displayed great fearlessness & was right up in the firing line – Recommended for the Military Cross which was awarded”.

PHOTOGRAPH:

CHAPLAIN THOMAS MULLINS
CAPT. HERBERT F. McLAUGHLIN
CAPT. WILLIAM L.F. WRIGHT
LT. JOHN R. CAIN
LT. AUGUSTUS M. RYAN
LT. BERNARD MAHONEY.





Fr Thomas Mullins

OLIVE TREE GROVE DATES BACK TO BIBLICAL GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

April 22, 2003

A ROW of olive trees offering leafy shade to a stately old presbytery in a small country town in NSW

give no clue to their fascinating origins and how they came to be where they are today.

The story behind the trees is an absorbing one and goes back to one of the most significant Christian sites in the world, Gethsemane, the garden across the Kidron Valley from Jerusalem in which Jesus went on the night of his arrest.

Catholic priest and decorated army chaplain, Fr Thomas Mullins brought to Australia cuttings from olive trees in Gethsemane, the trees of which are said to be descended from those in the garden at the time of Christ.

Fr Mullins, the first parish priest at Ardlethan, in south-west NSW, planted the cuttings when he returned home from World War I duty in the Middle East.

They have flourished into tall, fruit-bearing trees providing shade and an important historic link to a

proud part of the Church's heritage.

Fr Mullins' adventurous life is an engrossing tale. Born in County Limerick, Ireland, he came to Australia in 1900.

He was the priest at Barmedman, the parish which then included Ardlethan, and he celebrated fortnightly Mass in the town which would eventually become his home from 1910 in the newly-built public hall which later became the Masonic Temple.

A good horseman, Fr Mullins in the early days often rode from Barmedman to Ardlethan, a good 80km on rough roads, to say Mass.

On other occasions, he served his large parish travelling in a buggy drawn by his two fractious horses.

Fr Mullins was rector when Bishop of Goulburn, John Gallagher, laid the foundation stone of Ardlethan's Church of Our Lady Help of Christians on May 21, 1911.

The church, completed at a cost of £1200, opened in March 1914, just months before the outbreak of hostilities in Europe.

Enlisting from Barmedman in March 1915, Fr Mullins was appointed chaplain to the 5th Light Horse Regiment, joining the unit at Gallipoli in November 1915, one of the 331,781 brave Australians to serve overseas in the Great War of 1914-18.

The Australian War Memorial in Canberra has a narrative of Fr Mullins when he was in Egypt, in which he mentions the water shortages and dysentery at Gallipoli and the non-effectiveness of other Catholic chaplains due to illness or wounds.