

NAME: **TONKIN, WALTER JOHN**

SERVICE NO: 1132

ENLISTED: 17 AUGUST 1914 @ RANDWICK.

AGE: 21 YEARS (AS STATED) – BORN 1893 @ COOTAMUNDRA.

OCCUPATION: LINOTYPR OPERATOR – TEMORA and TOCUMWAL.

FAMILY: FATHER – JOHN WALTER TONKIN – 1856/1913;
(MARRIED 12 JANUARY 1881 @ TEMORA)
MOTHER – EMILY FREEMAN – 1861/1935.

SIBLINGS: SISTER – ADA TONKIN – Born 1881 @ TEMORA.

NEXT OF KIN: MOTHER – MRS EMILY TONKIN – TEMORA.

EMBARKED: 20 OCTOBER 1914 ex SYDNEY on HMAT “EURIPIDES” A14.

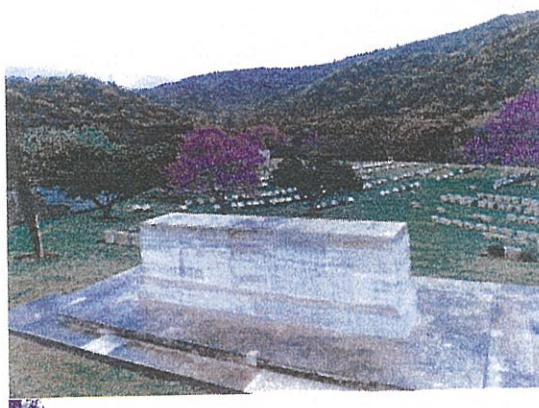
MEMBER: 4th BATTALION 1st INFANTRY BRIGADE LATER TRAINED IN MACHINE GUN SECTION IN EGYPT.

GALLIPOLI: ARRIVED ON PENINSULA MAY 1915 AS PER POSTCARD ATTACHED.

KILLED IN ACTION – 23rd JULY 1915 & BURIED SHRAPNEL VALLEY CEMETERY.

NOTE:- GRANDPARENTS RALPH POOL TONKIN and MARIA VIRET WERE BORN IN SOUTH AFRICA.

SHRAPNEL VALLEY CEMETERY



WALTER JOHN TONKIN.

LETTERS FROM THE FRONT – WW1.

From EGYPT – 27th March 1915.

Mail & pay days are the principal events in the life of a soldier in Cairo. The Australians are tired of admiring the sights, & enduring the natives & evil odours. In addition to the Pyramids, a very interesting & wonderful building is the Citadel, a huge mass of stone built upon solid rock & surrounded by a massive stone wall. The highest tower is said to be 300 feet high. Inside the mosque, it is something grand & beautiful, so grand, that it cannot be explained in a letter. The domed roof is inlaid with coloured glassware of almost every conceivable colour, precious metals & Mother-of-Pearl. So as to prevent the designer of this piece of grandeur, excelling it, Aby Pacha had his eyes removed.

Walter has finished his course of training in the Machine Gun Section & is looking forward to the day when the Australian boys will be given a chance to prove themselves worthy of their native land.

Post card from GALLIPOLI – 30th May 1915.

I am in the trenches. Had a narrow escape a few days ago. A 4.7 shell lobbed on the parapet of our trench & blew in a lot of dirt & sand-bags. I got off with a smack in the jaw with a clod of dirt. The Turks tried blowing up our trenches but did no good, & the New Zealanders on our left seized the opportunity & turned the tables by capturing the trenches of the enemy.

From GALLIPOLI – 27th June 1915.

From the firing line on a piece of paper taken from the "Daily Telegraph" he writes – Are you surprised getting this letter from me, & a little amused at the stationery I am using? Of course you have heard of our landing here, so I will say nothing about it. This is a bright & sunny country, especially now as we are nearly mid-summer. (Just a moment till I sharpen this pencil). Now, off we go again. The enemy's trenches are close in front but it so quiet at times that one would think they were miles away. We are as comfortable as dug-outs can make us up here in the firing line. My dug-out is particularly roomy & is roofed with old biscuit tins & earth – do stop laughing & go on reading! About twice a week we are able to go to the waterside for a dip, & are glad that it is so close, otherwise we would not even get two washes a week. But we know the secret of "How to be happy through dirty", so that is some help.

WALTER JOHN TONKIN – KILLED IN ACTION – 23rd JULY 1915.