

17: Donald Herbert Culbard

Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: Donald Herbert Culbard

Rank: Sergeant

Battalion / Regiment: 52nd Bn. Australian Infantry [Australian Imperial Force]

Service Number: 2330 Date of Death: 28 August 1917 Age at Death: 21

Buried / Commemorated at: Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial, Ypres (Ieper), West Flanders, Belgium and Dollar Academy War Memorial

Additional information given by CWGC: The son of Wallace and Emlie Culbard of Parkgate Road, Neston. A native of Dollar, Scotland.

The National Archives of Australia records, for their WW1 records:

Culbard Donald Herbert : SERN 2330 : POB Liverpool England : POE Keswick SA : NOK M Culbard Emily [source: <http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/>]

Donald Culbard was born in India (1911 census) although it appears that his birth was registered in Birkenhead in the last quarter of 1895 and that he was baptised at Egremont on 8 January 1896.

The book *Hillfoots Armed Forces Fatalities 1914 – 1919* (compiled by Ian Middleton) looks in detail at armed forces personnel from the Hillfoots towns of Clackmannanshire who died in WW1 and notes:

DONALD HERBERT CULBARD Born at Liverpool, England. Youngest son of Wallace and Emily Culbard, of Park Gate Road, Neston, Cheshire, England. Father's occupation: tea planter, Soongal, India. Educated at Dollar Academy. He boarded with Mr Malcolm and left in 1911. Occupation: apprentice baker. Subsequently he emigrated to Adelaide, South Australia, where he was engaged in farming. Sergeant 2330 Australian Infantry, A.I.F. 52nd Bn. He attested at Keswick, South Australia on 06/04/1915. He saw active service in Egypt and at Gallipoli. He had been six months in France when he was killed. Killed in action on 28/08/1917, aged 21. Belgium YPRES (MENIN GATE) MEMORIAL Panel 7 - 17 - 23 - 25 - 27 - 29 - 31. Also commemorated at Dollar Academy.

[Source: http://www.scotlandswar.ed.ac.uk/sites/default/files/pdf_Hillfoots_Fatalities.pdf]

It is known that Donald Culbard was a Private in the 12th Infantry Battalion, 7th Reinforcements, when he sailed for service in Europe and that he embarked on the RMS *Persia* at Melbourne, Victoria, on 10 June 1915. He was then 19 and his occupation was recorded as being a baker. Donald had enlisted on 6 April 1915 and his daily rate of pay, both before and after embarkation, was 5s per day (with an additional 1s per day of Deferred Pay which was ‘...only Issuable on Completion of Service with Expeditionary Force’. He gave his religion as Church of England and it was recorded that he was single. [<http://www.awm.gov.au/people/rolls/R1741646/>]

The only census record of the Culbard family in Neston (or, indeed, anywhere in England & Wales) was in 1911 when Donald's widowed mother and four of his siblings were living off Parkgate Road:

CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES, 1911.

Before writing on this Schedule please read the Examples and the Instructions given on the other side of the paper, as well as the headings of the Columns. The entries should be written in Ink.

The contents of the Schedule will be treated as confidential. Strict care will be taken that no information is disclosed with regard to individual persons. The returns are not to be used for proof of age, as in connection with Old Age Pensions, or for any other purpose than the preparation of Statistical Tables.

Number of Schedule. 99
 (To be filled up by the Enumerator after collection.)

NAME AND SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Family.	AGE last Birthday and SEX.	PARTICULARS as to MARRIAGE.			PROFESSION or OCCUPATION of Persons aged ten years and upwards.	BIRTHPLACE of every person.	NATIONALITY of every Person born in a Foreign Country.	INFIRMITY.	
<p>of every Person, whether Member of Family, Visitor, Boarder, or Servant, who</p> <p>(1) passed the night of Sunday, April 2nd, 1911, in this dwelling and was alive at midnight, or</p> <p>(2) arrived in this dwelling on the morning of Monday, April 3rd, not having been enumerated elsewhere.</p> <p>No one else must be included.</p> <p>(For order of entering names see Examples on back of Schedule.)</p>										
	<p>State whether—</p> <p>“Head,” or “Wife,” or “Son,” or “Daughter,” or other Relative, or “Boarder,” or “Servant.”</p>	<p>For Infants under one year state the age in months as “under one month,” “one month,” etc.</p>	<p>Write—</p> <p>“Single,” “Married,” “Widower,” or “Widow,” or “Sep.”</p>	<p>Children born alive to present Marriage. (If no children born alive to “X” in Column 7.)</p>	<p>The reply should generally be answered by stating the business carried on by the employer. (If this is clearly shown in Col. 6, the question need not be answered here.)</p>	<p>Whether Employed, or not, in any Trade or Occupation.</p>	<p>Whether Working at Home.</p>	<p>(1) If born in the United Kingdom, write the name of the County, and Town or Parish.</p> <p>(2) If born in any other part of Great Britain, write the name of the Dependency, Colony, etc., and of the Province or State.</p> <p>(3) If born in a Foreign Country, write the name of the Country.</p> <p>(4) If born at sea, write “At Sea.”</p>	<p>State whether—</p> <p>(1) “British subject by parentage.”</p> <p>(2) “Naturalized British subject,” giving year of naturalization.</p> <p>(3) “Foreign,” or “Alien.”</p> <p>(4) “Irish,” or “Fuldaic.”</p>	<p>If any person included in this Schedule is—</p> <p>(1) “Totally Deaf,” or “Deaf and Dumb,”</p> <p>(2) “Totally Blind,”</p> <p>(3) “Lunatic,” or “Insane,”</p> <p>(4) “Paralysed,” or “Fuldaic.”</p>
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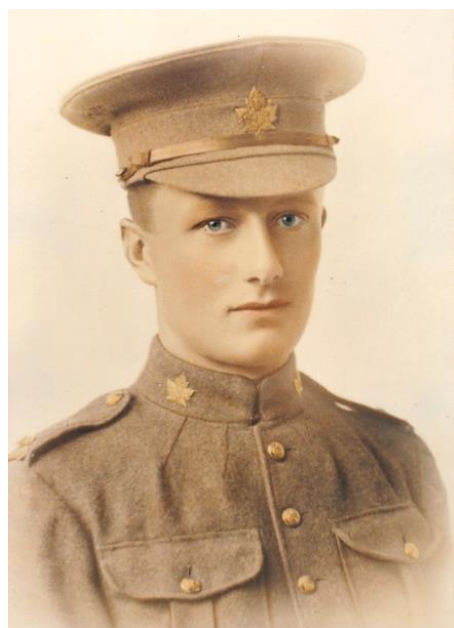
1911 census (condensed) – 'Soongal', Parkgate Road [actually on Earle Drive]

Emily Culbard	48	widow (retired) tea planter	born Shrewsbury
Wallace B.	20	bank clerk	born Punjab, India
Janet C.	17		born Punjab, India
Cynthia	13		born Punjab, India
Christina	8		born Punjab, India

Emily recorded that all of her six children were still living.

Of Donald's five siblings it is believed that:

Francis Arthur Hampton Culbard was born in Palampur, Bengal, India on 8 May 1889 and he was baptised 1 July. He was sent to school in Scotland and, in 1901 (aged 11) he was boarding at



Francis Arthur Hamptington Culbard

Burnside House, Clackmannanshire and was attending Dollar Academy. On 22 June 1908 he attested for the 14th Battalion County of London (London Scottish) Regiment, a volunteer infantry unit. At that date he was working in Putney, London, as a bank clerk with the Bank of Montreal and he was 19yrs 3 months old. His service lasted until 5 April 1910. In 1911 Francis emigrated to Canada although he returned to Britain and married Margaret Paula Bullen in Lewisham in September 1919. Following their marriage Francis and Margaret returned to Canada, sailing from Southampton on the *Royal George* which arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on 1 November. In the June 1921 census Francis, aged 32, and Paula Margaret (29) were living on 22nd Argyle Street, West Vancouver, British Columbia. Francis was a cashier earning \$2000pa. A young son, Frank Wallace Culbard (1) was also in the household. Frank died in Victoria, British Columbia, on 18 July 1996. At least four daughters were born and Francis died in Campbell River, British Columbia, on 21 March 1936.

Wallace Benjamin Culbard - generally called Benjamin - was born on 16 December 1890 in the Punjab and baptised on 9 February 1891 in Palampur. Wikipedia notes that *Palampur is a green hill station and a municipal council in the Kangra Valley in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, surrounded by tea gardens and pine forests before they merge with the Dhauladhar ranges. Palampur is the tea capital of northwest India....*

In 1901, Benjamin (10) was attending Dollar Academy and was a boarder with his brother Francis at Burnside House, Clackmannanshire. On 6 July 1921 he sailed from Liverpool on the *City of Karachi* to Calcutta returning to London on 27 July on the *City of Poona*. However, Benjamin appears to have settled in India as a tea planter although it is recorded that he returned to London on the *Manela* from Bombay on 18 May 1927 when he was aged 34. He also appears to have married in Kensington, Middlesex, in June 1936 and it is believed that his wife, Mona, died in Southwark in September 1948. In 1955 Benjamin was living at 32 Quiet Corner, Spelthorne, Middlesex but it is not known where and when he died.

Janet Chisholm Culbard (also known as Jean) was born in 1894 in the Punjab but nothing is known of her after the 1911 census. Janet married John Elliot Scott of the Sholayor Tea Estate, S. India, (the son of the late William Scott, solicitor) at Christ Church, Colombo (Sri Lanka) on 14 April 1914. Nothing further is known of her.

A marriage arranged at Colombo will take place on the 13th of April between John Elliot Scott, Pollachi, India, and Jean, daughter of the late Wallace Culbard and Mrs. Culbard, "Soongul," Neston. cp 1056.

Chester Chronicle - Saturday 21 March 1914

Cynthia Culbard was born on 18 August 1897 in Palampur, India. Cynthia, 23, married Robert Buchanan, 23, gentleman, of Ledbury, Hertfordshire, at Neston Parish Church on 30 March 1921. Robert's deceased father was a miller. Nothing further is known of her.

Christina Margaret Culbard was born on 21 August 1902 in Palampur, six months after her father had died. It is believed that she did not marry and that she died in late 1963 in Reading.

Donald, at the time of the 1911 census, was boarding at the Dollar Academy in Clackmannanshire and he seems to have left the school in this year.

There is no record in England or Wales of the marriage of Donald's parents, Emily and Wallace, but Wallace is known to have died on 10 February 1902 at Palampur, Kangra Valley, Pumqant, India. It is presumed also that Emily and her family came back to Britain after Wallace's death although it is not known why they settled in Neston - no other family of this name was recorded in Neston in the 1911, or earlier, census returns.

The 52nd Battalion was originally raised in Egypt on 1 March 1916 as part of the reorganisation and expansion of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) following the Gallipoli campaign. This was achieved by transferring experienced personnel predominately from the 1st Division to the newly formed battalions and combining them with recently recruited personnel dispatched as reinforcements from Australia. With an authorised strength of just over 1,000 men of all ranks, the unit's first intake of personnel were drawn from men originating from South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania, some of whom had already served with the 12th Battalion. Under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Miles Fitzroy Beevor, the veterans were bolstered by a large number of new recruits, who were mainly drawn from Queensland. The battalion became part of the 13th Brigade attached to the 4th Australian Division.

AUSTRALIAN
AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

ATTESTATION PAPER OF PERSONS ENLISTED FOR SERVICE ABROAD.

No. 2330 Name CULBARD Donald Herbert
Unit 52nd BATTN
Joined on 6/4/15

Certified true copy.
W. H. Christopher
C. L. 1st Reinforcements 12th Inf

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

- What is your Name? ... Donald Herbert Culbard
- In the Parish of ... in or near the Town of Sunderpool in the County of England
- Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown) ... AB
- What is your age? ... 19 5/8 Years
- What is your trade or calling? ... Baker
- Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period? ... No
- Are you married? ... No
- Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) ... Donald (Mother) Mrs Evelyn Culbard, 10 Park Road, Weston, Wiltshire, England
- Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? ... No
- Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces with ignominy, or as incorrigible 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
- 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
- Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? ... Yes
- Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's service? If so, on what grounds? ... No
- (For married men and widowers with children)—Do you understand that no Separation Allowance will be issued to you either before or after embarkation during your term of service? ... No
- Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against Smallpox and Enteric Fever? ... Yes

Donald Herbert Culbard 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 allot not less than two-fifths of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children.

Date 6-4-15 D. H. Culbard
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.

Donald Culbard, a baker aged 19 years 5 months, enlisted in the 52nd Battalion on 6 April 1915.

[<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/>]

An intense period of training followed, but in mid-1916 the AIF's infantry units were sent to Europe to fight on the Western Front. Sailing on the transport ship HMT *Ivernia*, the battalion departed Alexandria and landed in Marseilles on 11 June 1916, and was then moved by rail to northern France where they undertook gas training and received new equipment to prepare them for trench warfare. A period of acclimatisation followed in a "nursery sector" around Petillon before, in mid-August the battalion played a support role in the initial fighting during The Battle of Mouquet Farm, before being committed to the fighting for the first time, launching an attack in early September during which they suffered heavy casualties, losing nine officers and 170 other ranks.

The 52nd Battalion did not take part in any significant attacks for the remainder of the year. In early 1917, after a bitter winter, the Germans withdrew to the defences of the Hindenburg Line in an effort to shorten their lines and free up a pool of

reserves. A brief advance following as the Allies pursued them, during which the 52nd took part in an action around Noreuil on 2 April. Later, after they were moved to the Ypres salient in Belgium they fought around Messines between 7 and 12 June.

[Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/52nd_Battalion_\(Australia\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/52nd_Battalion_(Australia))]

The War Diary for the 52nd Battalion for August notes that, at the beginning of the month, they were stationed in the area of Berquin, not far from Kemmel, in Flanders. Heavy rain was causing operations and training to be cancelled but at 3pm on 8 August the battalion marched to Kemmel; despite the violent thunderstorms and heavy rain they arrived there at 6.45pm and were accommodated in tents and huts. The following days, when the weather had improved, were spent at Kemmel where there was mainly domestic activity; on 9 August two enemy planes flew over the camp at 4.30am and on the 16th the Battalion bathed at Lindenhoek and obtained clean clothes.

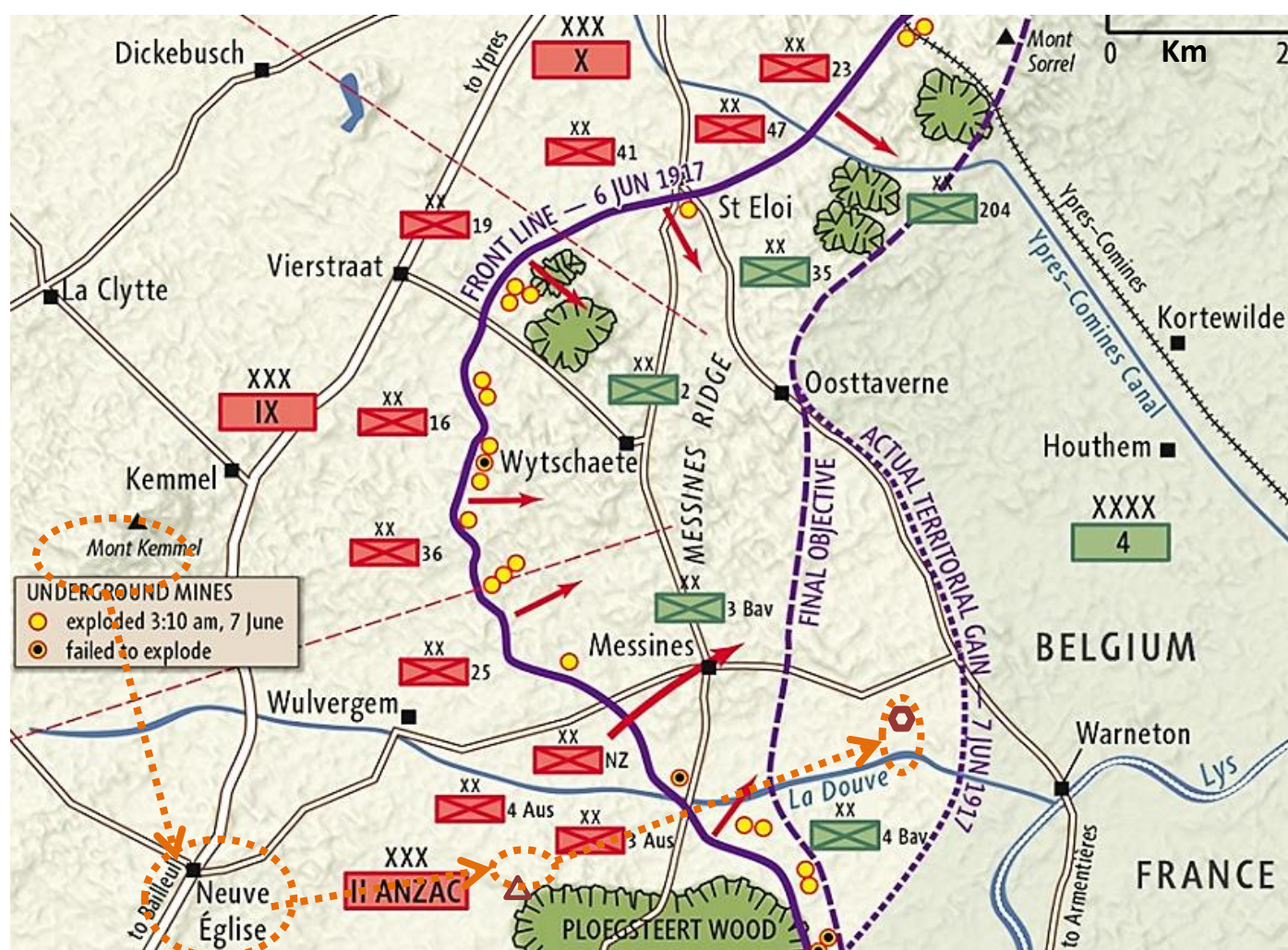
Over the following days the battalion moved a short distance further east and closer to the front line:

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information
KEMMEL.	1917. Aug. 20.		All blankets de-verminised. Training - Musketry, Bayonet Fighting, Bombing., Lewis Guns, &c.
KEMMEL? NEUVE EGLISE, HILL 63.	21		Marched from Camp on Mt KEMMEL at 9-45 a.m. to Bivouac Area at NEUVE EGLISE (length of march 4 miles). Resumed March at 7-0 p.m. to an area at foot of Northern Slopes of HILL 63, arriving at 9-0 p.m.: Bivouacked here for 24 hours as a Support Battalion to 3rd. N.Zealand Rifle Brigade who were in the line opposite WARNETON. (Operation Order and March Order in appendices) Lieutenants CONWELL and BOASE re-joined from leave. Captain A.M. MAXWELL evacuated to Rest House.
RIVER DOUVE- STEIGNAST FARM. (WARNETON-MESSINES AREA)	22		In bivouac area. At night relieved the 3rd, Battalion New Zealand Rifle Brigade in the line on the frontage from RIVER DOUVE (Exclusive) to STEIGNAST FARM ROAD (Inclusive) (See dispositions in Operation Order No.66 "G" Appendix.)
do	23		Relief reported as complete to Brigade Headquarters at 2-25 a.m. Front Line Companies had actually completed their reliefs by 1 a.m. Lieut. TURNBULL wounded 4 a.m. 1 other rank killed, 6 other ranks wounded. Units on our flanks - 50th. Battalion on right their frontage included River DOUVE. 13th. Battalion (4th. Australian Infantry Brigade) on left directly East of MESSINES. Quiet day. Weather fine. Arrangements for Working Parties completed and work commenced at night, deepening Front Line trenches and preparing Communication Trench from Front Line to New Support Line for revetting and duck-boarding. Artillery active in afternoon and evening. Lieut. A.O. BILSON joined Battalion from leave.

WARNETON - MESSINES AREA.	1917. Aug. 24		Quiet day generally. Artillery of both sides active in afternoon. Several casualties in Support Area. Captain W.F. WILMOTT O.C. "A" Company wounded by M.G. bullet at night, evacuated. Lieut. H. THOMAS assumed command of "A" Company. Lieut A.B. SPIERS re-joined Battalion from School of Instruction. Weather continued fine.
do	25		Enemy Artillery active in forenoon 11-45 a.m. and again from 2 to 3 p.m. on our left flank. Fine Weather.
do	26		Enemy attempted a raid on our No.8 Post at 3-30 a.m. See copy of report to Brigade Headquarters appendix "H" Quiet day. Artillery activity by both sides: Aerial activity also. Carried out inter-Company relief on night 26/27th. "B" & "D" Companies relieving "A" & "C" Coys in the front line. The two last named moving to Support and Reserve positions near Battalion Headquarters.
do	27		Lieut. R. DICKSON wounded early in morning at No.9 Post. Wet weather - difficult to deepen or improve trenches and work already done lost much of its value owing to flooding of trenches before revetting could be completed. Our Artillery carried out "Harassing Fire" on enemy opposite our sector. (See Operation Order by Southern Group Commander - attached appendix "I").
do	28		Weather still wet, showers throughout day and night. Reconnaissance made at night by Officers of another unit in preparation for relieving us in the sector now held.
do	29		Working Parties completed all work in forward area, that it was possible to do before the relief. Dull and showery weather.
WARNETON - MESSINES AREA.	1917. Aug. 29		Patrol reports by Lieut. L.C. BOASE satisfactory, his patrol got through German wire, were fired on, two casualties, but by using grenades made several of the enemy return to their trenches. Summary of work done See appendix "Ia".

NEUVE EGLISE.	30	Relief of 52nd. Battalion in the line by 17th. Battalion Manchester Regiment commenced 9-0 p.m. weather showery, very muddy underfoot. Slight moon which facilitated direct ion of incoming units. See Operation Order No.67 appendix "J". Relief completed by 2-30 a.m. 52nd. Battalion moved to NEUVE EGLISE Area last troops arrived by 6-0 a.m., went into ALDERSHOT CAMP (T.19.b.9.1) sheet 28). Morning spent in resting, afternoon in cleaning and Bathing parades, also pay issued. Fine day, Rain at night
	31	In Camp; cleaning up parade in morning and Company inspection. Afternoon - Route March by Battalion of 3½ miles; hardening up for next days march. Billeting party sent ahead to new area in afternoon. Orders received in afternoon for Brigade to move on 1st. September to new area between BAILLEUL and HAZEBROUCK.

Following The Battle of Messines (7 - 14 June 1917), and the retaking of the Messines Ridge, the front line was pushed eastwards and it was in this area, near Steignast Farm in August 1917, that the 52nd Battalion Australian Infantry was based and where Donald Culbard died:



The front line in the vicinity of the Messines Ridge, June 1917, and the movement of the 52nd Battalion Australian Infantry through late August 1917.

--- Locations of the 52nd Battalion
 ▲ Hill 63
 ⬡ Steignast Farm
 ➔ Battalion movement
 (Base map: <https://ww1live.wordpress.com/tag/british-army/>)



Trench map of the Messines Ridge - Ploegsteert region shortly before the Battle of Messines (7 - 14 June 1917) two months before Donald Culbard was killed in action near Steignast Farm (outlined in purple, NE corner of map).

On this map all British trenches with names are shown in blue with the German trench system in red with names in blue. Contours are shown in brown and the location of Hill 63, just north of the western extension of Ploegsteert Wood, has been outlined in green.

(Source: <http://digitalarchive.mcmaster.ca/islandora/object/macrepo%3A67458>)

On the date that Duncan Culbard died - 28 August 1917 - the Battalion War Diary makes no mention of any incident although it is apparent from previous entries that there was local activity which had produced casualties. As no detailed record for Duncan has been found no details of the circumstances of his death are known.

The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–1918 notes that, around this time:

It cannot be said that the news of the coming transference, with its corollary of an early plunge into the offensive, was received with pleasure by the 4th Division. Even in the three well-rested divisions, which it was joining, the troops had seen too much hard fighting to welcome the prospect of more. It is true that their apparent fighting quality made a marked impression on the succession of generals who now reviewed them. The last, Sir Douglas Haig, after watching with his cold, steady scrutiny the 2nd and 5th Divisions on August 29th, remarked to General White that they could not have marched better if they had received years of peace training. But those same troops would have strongly objected to any despatch from a war correspondent describing them as "itching for a fight."

And yet no one living among them could help observing that, as the day for marching to the forward areas drew near, there came over them a marked eagerness. Each man had faced up to whatever private problems this battle had in store for him. There flew round the messes grim jokes as to who should inherit his friend's boots or binoculars, and, despite old dreads and horrid memories, men were obviously keen to put into use the drill they had been practising, and confident they could outplay the enemy. The excitement of the great game, which must be won, mingled with their other feelings.

After the first sharp shock of disappointment even the 4th Division, though heavily diluted with new reinforcements and deprived of the long rest which it expected after Bullecourt and Messines, settled down to three weeks' training, and quickly picked up the same eager spirit that animated the sister divisions.

[Source: *The Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–1918* Volume IV – The Australian Imperial Force in France, 1917 (11th edition, 1941)]

Particulars Required for the Roll of Honour of Australia in the Memorial War Museum.

1. Name (in full) of Fallen Soldier Donald Herbert Culbard
2. Unit and Number (if known) No. 1530 52nd Bn.
3. With what Town or District in Australia was he chiefly connected (under which his name ought to come on the Memorial) —
Town (if any) Jamestown District _____ State SA: Australia
4. What was his Birthplace _____
5. Date of Death August 28th 1917
6. Place where Killed or Wounded Killed - Somme.

Particulars Required for the Nation's Histories.

1. What was his Calling Tea-planter
2. Age at time of Death 21 years & 9 months
3. What was his School Dollar Academy, Clackmannanshire Scotland.
4. What was his other Training Farming
5. If born in Britain or Abroad, at what age did he come to Australia 17 when left for Australia
6. Had he ever served in any Military or Naval Force before Enlisting in the A.I.F. (Please state particulars) no
7. Any other biographical details likely to be of interest to the Historian of the A.I.F., or of his Regiment—

8. Was he connected with any other Member of the A.I.F. who died or who distinguished himself. (Please state Relationship) —

9. Name and Address of the Parent or other person giving this information—

Name Emily Culbard

Relationship to Soldier Mother

Address "Sungai" Parkgate Rd. Norton, Cheshire

10. Names and Addresses of any other persons to whom reference could be made by the Historian for further information—

Name _____

Address _____

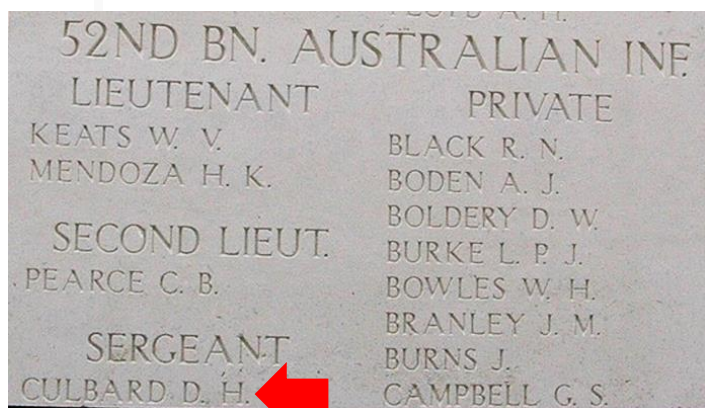
NOTE.—This Folder is Addressed to the Secretary, Department of Defence, Melbourne. Please fold in four, and stick down gummed flap so that the addressed portion is outside. The information is required urgently.

Roll of Honour circular

Completed by his mother, Emily Culbard, this gives details of Donald Culbard which would be included on panel 155 in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial and retained for the history of the 52nd Australian Infantry Battalion. The form shows that he: was a resident of Jamestown, South Australia; was a tea planter; was actually 21 years and 9 months old when he was killed; had attended Dollar Academy in Clackmannanshire; had trained originally as a farmer; had left for Australia when he was 17; his mother was living in Parkgate Road, Neston, (at a house called 'Soongal')



Donald Herbert Culbard
The Dollar Magazine, 1918, p36.



Inscription on the Menin Memorial, Belgium

Sergeant DON. CULBARD,¹ C Company, 52nd Battalion A.I.F., also writes from "Somewhere in France" :—

"I have just received two *Dollar Magazines*, which I was very much pleased to get, so as I could see how the old boys were getting on. I am sorry to see that so many have fallen at the front. Tell Mr Dougall that I am sorry to learn that Charlie is a prisoner in Germany. . . . We were in that charge at Messines in the beginning of June, and it was a great success in every way in my estimation. The New Zealanders went over the top in the morning, and we went through them about two in the afternoon for our objective. The only time we got shelled at all was when we were on the top of the Messines ridge. On the whole we had very few killed. Again I got out without a scratch; I hope my luck keeps with me. We got a good few machine guns and one or two field guns. . . . The best of it was, we got two bicycles in very good order in one of his dug-outs. . . . We had to do another stunt three nights after this, as there was about three hundred yards of trench that Fritz managed to hold on to, so it was given to our battalion and part of another to get. It was worse in a way than the first one we took, as Fritz saw us coming into position, and when our artillery opened up he was prepared, and he did put a nasty taste into our mouths, but we got there for all that.

"I have been promoted to sergeant since the start, coming up by degrees!"

[For the moment the sergeant must have been back to the schoolboy when he wrote "*The best of it was.*"]

¹ Just as we had finished revising "proof" of this letter on 11th September, we received the sad news that Sergeant Don. Culbard was killed in action on 28th August.



Inscription on the Dollar Academy memorial

Following Donald's death on 28 August 1917 Emily Culbard (who gave her age as 36) married George Denholm (38, salesman) in Liverpool, at St Margaret's Church, Toxteth Park, on 27 September 1917. George's address was recorded as 63 Hatherley Street (just south of Upper Parliament Street), Liverpool. Emily noted that her father was *William Hamilton, (deceased), Market Gardener* and George's father was *John Denholm, Foreman Surfaceman*.

DONALD CULBARD, Sergeant, A.I.F., was the youngest son of the late Mr Wallace Culbard, tea-planter, Soongal, India, and of Mrs Culbard, Soongal, Neston, Cheshire. He boarded with Mr Malcolm, along with his two brothers, and left School in 1911. He afterwards emigrated to Adelaide, South Australia, where he was engaged in farming. He joined the Australian Imperial Force immediately after the outbreak of war, and saw active service in Egypt and Gallipoli. He had been six months in France when he was killed in action on 28th August 1917.

Both excerpts taken from '*The Dollar Magazine*' Vol. XVI., No. 63. September 1917



The Dollar Academy War Memorial in front of the school.
[Source: <http://jackdeighton.co.uk/2011/09/11/war-memorials-dollar-8-ssep-2011/>]

At the time of the 1939 Register (29 September) she and George were living at 'Soongal' off Parkgate Road, Neston; the Register records Emily as having been born on 6 February 1872 and George, a grocery manager, having been born on 18 November 1878. With them was Emily's unmarried daughter Christina E Culbard (born 21 August 1902). Emily Denholme died on Wirral, aged 68, in early 1940. Christina died, unmarried, in Reading, in late 1963 aged 61. It is not known when George Denholm died.



'Soongal', the Culbard family home in Earle Drive, Parkgate, in 2017

The 'AUSTRALIAN ANZACS IN THE GREAT WAR 1914-1918' Project gives additional information about Donald: He was 5' 6.75" tall, weighed 140lb, had enlisted at Keswick (South Australia), his parents were Wallace and Emlie Culbard and his war service was:

Egypt, Gallipoli, Western Front

Taken on strength, 12th Bn, Gallipoli, 28 September 1915.

Disembarked Alexandria, 6 January 1916 (general Gallipoli evacuation).

Transferred to 52nd Bn, Railhead, 1 March 1916.

Embarked Alexandria to join the British Expeditionary Force, 5 June 1916; disembarked Marseilles, France, 12 June 1916.

Appointed Lance Corporal, 3 October 1916.

Appointed Corporal, 8 November 1916.

Admitted to NZ Stationary Hospital, Amiens, 12 March 1917 (injured heel); transferred to 1st Australian General Hospital, Rouen, 29 March 1917; to No 2 Convalescent Depot, 7 April 1917; discharged to Base Details, 2 May 1917.

Found guilty, 2 May 1917, of irregular conduct, viz. posting a letter in French Post Office in order to avoid Censor at Rouen, 27 April 1917: reprimanded.

Killed in action, Belgium, 28 August 1918. [\[Note: the year is incorrect – Donald was killed in 1917\]](#)

Handwritten note on Form B103: 'Buried W. of Messines, France [sic].'

Medals: 1914-15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal