

Private Richard Prosser©

Regimental number: 3215

60th Australian Infantry Battalion, Australian Imperial Force

born: 9 September 1897–died: 21 July 1916

“Sadly Missed/Gone But Not Forgotten/Ever in Our Thoughts” was inscribed on Private Richard Prosser’s gravestone in Bailleul Communal Cemetery.¹ He was one of 61,522 Australians who died in or because of the First World War.²

Richard (a.k.a. Dick) was born on 9 September 1897 in North Fitzroy, Bourke County, Victoria, Australia.³ He was the youngest child of Mary Ann (née Beer) (1852–1930)⁴ and William Robert Prosser (1848–1943).⁵ Both his parents were born in England. Mary Ann’s family moved to Australia in 1854 and William’s in 1856.⁶ He and Mary Ann most likely married on 20 February 1871 in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.⁷

Early in their marriage, the couple moved to New Zealand, where William worked in such occupations as a livery stable keeper.⁸ Their first child, Florence (a.k.a. Florrie) (1871–?)⁹ was probably born there. She was followed by Caroline Alberta (1874–1875),¹⁰ James Samuel (1875–1932),¹¹ Joshua Henry (1876–1961),¹² William Robert (a.k.a. Will) (1878–1956),¹³ Norma (1880–1949),¹⁴ Leah Marion (1882–1960),¹⁵ and Cobb (1884–1954).¹⁶

By 1886, the couple had returned to Victoria, Australia, where Maritana (a.k.a. Tana) (1886–1968),¹⁷ Martha (1889–?),¹⁸ David (1894–1977),¹⁹ Jennie (1895–1983)²⁰ and Richard were born. At the time of Dick’s birth, his father was employed as a hairdresser (barber)²¹ and the family was living at 260 Rae Street, North Fitzroy.

During the next few years, most of Dick’s siblings established families of their own. Will married Matilda Lane in 1900; Joshua moved to Western Australia, where he married Grace Gertrude Hanham in 1901; Norma wed Robert John Ingram in 1906; Cobb married Margaret Alice Challis and Leah Marion became the wife of Thomas George Hine in 1911.²² During this time period, Richard most likely attended North Fitzroy State School, where he participated in the senior cadet program.²³

When Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914 (5 August in Australia), as a dominion of the British Empire, Australia was automatically at war. Dick was 16 years old, still living with his parents and his three sisters at 260 Rae Street, North Fitzroy, and employed as wood mechanic apprentice for J Stone Timber Merchants in Fitzroy.²⁴ His father was working as a carpenter, Tana and Martha were dressmakers and Jennie was a typewriter operator.²⁵

The outbreak of the war was greeted with great enthusiasm²⁶ by the country’s general public, its Prime Minister, Joseph Cook (Liberal Party), and the opposition leader, Andrew Fisher (Labour Party). However, Australia was in the midst of an election campaign for both the House of Representatives and the Senate. With Cabinet members dispersed electioneering, Governor General Sir Ronald Craufurd Munro Ferguson, who had been appointed on 14 May 1914, took the lead: recalling Cabinet, implementing a mobilization plan and promoting the war effort.²⁷ Andrew Fisher became prime minister on 17 September 1914 but retired on 27 October 1915 and was replaced by William Morris Hughes, who led the country first as head of the Labour Party and then until 1928 as head of the Nationalist Party.

In 1914, Australia had a small permanent army that was prohibited from deployment overseas by the *Defence Act* of 1903. To circumvent this, the mobilization plan included the creation of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), which would be staffed by volunteers. These would be men at least 5 ft. 6 in. (167 cm) tall with good eyesight and teeth and between the ages of 18 and 45. (Those 18 to 21 years of age needed a parent's permission.) The pay was six shillings a day for a private, which was higher than some of the other forces.²⁸ By the end of 1914, 52,000 men had volunteered. However, when the volunteering rate declined, Prime Minister Hughes attempted to introduce conscription on 18 October 1916 and 20 December 1917, but both times the public voted against it.²⁹ By the end of the war, 417,000 men had volunteered (about two-fifths of the eligible men), of which 315,000 served overseas.³⁰

The volunteers to the AIF were sent for training to Egypt, where the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was already in action defending the Suez Canal. Lieutenant General William Riddell Birdwood was assigned command of the New Zealand and Australian armies by Britain's Lord Kitchener. Birdwood and his staff coined the acronym ANZAC to describe the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.³¹ On 25 April 1915, Australian troops saw their first substantial action when the 1st Division and the 4th Brigade, together with other units of the BEF, were committed to the Gallipoli campaign which failed dismally. By 8 January 1916, when the last Australian was evacuated, 8,709 Australian soldiers were dead and 17,924 wounded.³²

When news of the Gallipoli landing reached Australia on 8 May 1915, patriotic fervour swept the country with the result that 10,526 men volunteered that month. By the end of 1915, the peak year for enlistment, 165,912 had volunteered.³³

Richard Prosser enlisted on 21 July 1915 in Melbourne, 50 days before his 18th birthday. His father and mother signed the permission form. Dick had black hair and brown eyes and weighed 9 stone (58 kg); at 5 feet 7½ inches (171 cm) he met the requirements for enlistment.³⁴ He was assigned to the 7th Reinforcements, 23rd Battalion. For the next four months, he most likely trained at a military camp in Melbourne. Being so young, he might have viewed enlistment in the military as an opportunity for adventure. Or, like many others by then, he might not have had any illusions left about the nature of war and volunteered for such reasons as duty, honour, and the belief that the Allies were fighting a just war.³⁵

The 23rd Battalion, 2nd Australian Division, was raised in Victoria in March 1915 as the third battalion of the 6th Brigade. It left Australia in March, trained in Egypt and in early September landed at Anzac Cove, Gallipoli. It retreated with the rest of the BEF at the end of December 1915 and returned to Egypt.³⁶

On a fine Thursday, 26 November 1915, Private Richard Prosser, 7th Reinforcements, 23rd Battalion, embarked on HMAT [His Majesty's Australian Transport] A73 *Commonwealth* from Melbourne, destined for Cairo, Egypt. Dick was one of 926 troops perched on every available spot on the ship.³⁷ His family and friends were there to wave good-bye. The *Commonwealth* docked at Port Suez at the south end of the Suez Canal probably in early January 1916. The recruits boarded trains to take them to the Australian army camp at Zeitoun near Cairo.

In Egypt at this point there were between 35,000 and 40,000 Australian and New Zealand reinforcements. With this growth came organizational change. The AIF expanded from two to five divisions. The new commander-in-chief of the BEF in Egypt, General Sir Archibald Murray,

expressed concern that the AIF troops were untidily dressed, lacked discipline, and needed to be trained to respect and salute officers.³⁸

After his initial training, Dick was not assigned to the 23rd Battalion. Instead, on 23 February 1916, he was taken on strength by the 58th Battalion, which had been raised in Egypt on 17 February 1916.³⁹ He spent the next month training with the battalion at Tel-el-Kebir.⁴⁰ On about 8 March, Lieutenant General Birdwood informed the Australian troops that they were going to France and asked them to uphold the good name of Australia among the people of France and “to play the game.”⁴¹ The transportation of I ANZAC Corps to Marseilles, France commenced on 13 March, 1916. The 25th Battalion, AIF, was the first to arrive on 19 March 1916.⁴²

On 15 March, Dick was transferred to the 60th Battalion, which was also a new battalion raised in Egypt on 24 February 1916. Half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 8th Battalion and the other half, fresh reinforcements. The majority of both groups were from Victoria. Both the 58th and 60th battalions were part of the 15th Brigade, 5th Australian Division,⁴³ commanded by Major General James Whiteside McCay.⁴⁴

The battalion’s officers began the process of integrating the new recruits and veterans into the battalion using the prescribed syllabus of training.⁴⁵ Dick was taught basic military operations such as drills, manoeuvres, and equipment usage. On 22 March, HRH the Prince of Wales inspected the battalion at Tel-el-Kebir. At the end of the month, the 5th Division was assigned responsibility for the Suez Canal’s defences and ordered by General Headquarters staff to march there because there were no trains available for transport. On 29 March, Dick—with full pack, water bottle and 120 rounds of ammunition—marched 60 km with the battalion through the desert to Moascar, Ismailia, arriving the next day. Only eight men of the battalion needed to be hospitalized. New Zealand troops stationed in the area assisted the exhausted Australian soldiers.⁴⁶ On 31 March, the battalion moved to the staging camp at Ferry Post, located east of the Suez Canal.

April was spent in a camp on the Duntroon Plateau, where Dick and his fellow recruits dug trenches for the defence line.⁴⁷ The work was strenuous. “Water was so scarce that the men seldom had a wash, and a change of clothes was out of the question. At times the men would wear their clothes inside out and fancy they had new ones.”⁴⁸ On 25 April, Anzac Day was celebrated with a parade and a half-day holiday. Troops present at the Anzac Cove landing wore red ribbons. Those who served in Gallipoli but were not at the landing wore blue ribbons.

On 9 May, the battalion marched to Hogs Back, where training continued in musketry, rifle use and artillery formation. By 15 May, it was back at Ferry Post, where besides training, the men performed divisional duties. On 31 May, it received orders to move to Moascar Camp, arriving there on 2 June. The next day, Dick and the other recruits spent the day in musketry training, bayonet fighting, and rifle exercises, followed by a swim and then a parade. This routine continued until 17 June at 10:50 p.m. when the 60th Battalion’s 30 officers and 972 other ranks (OR) embarked by train for Alexandria, arriving at 6:20 a.m. on 18 June. The majority of the battalion boarded the HMT [His Majesty’s Transport] *Kinfauns Castle*. However, 27 OR with the battalion’s equipment boarded the HMT *Georgian*. On 22 June, the ships left Alexandria Harbour, docking at Malta on 25 June for a day and then proceeding to Marseilles, France, arriving at 7:30 a.m. on 29 June.

The 60th Battalion marched through Marseilles to the train station. At 1:30 a.m. on 30 June, it began the 1,016-km journey to Thiennes, France, arriving there at 1:06 p.m. on 2 July. As the train passed through towns and villages, the French people waved and threw kisses.⁴⁹ During the next 10 days, the battalion marched 32 km from Thiennes, stopping at Steenbecque, Le Doulieu, Sailly-sur-la-Lys

to camp on 11 July at Rouge de Bout, located in the Fleurbaix/Bois-Grenier section of the Front, a 15-km section that stretched from the River Lys, past Armentières to a point opposite Sugarloaf, an enemy-held strongpoint that jutted forward from the line and rose slightly above the surrounding landscape near the village of Fromelles (aka Fleurbaix), France. As part of the 5th Division, the 60th Battalion's officers received orders on 16 July to prepare for an attack on the enemy at Fromelles.

Fromelles was the first major battle fought by Australian troops on the Western Front. The attack, led by troops from the 5th Australian and 61st British Divisions, was intended primarily as a feint to draw enemy troops away from the Somme offensive. On 19 July, the BEF's seven-hour preparatory bombardment of the enemy trenches did little damage but alerted the enemy to the upcoming attack. At 11:00 a.m., during this bombardment, Dick and the rest of the 60th Battalion moved into the front line trench near the Sugarloaf. With orders to attack the enemy trenches in four waves starting at 6:45 p.m. and ending at 7:00 p.m., he and the other troops obeyed. When Dick went "over the top" was not recorded. He was one of the battalion's casualties, cut down by enemy machine gun fire sometime between 6:45 p.m. on 19 July and 8:00 a.m. on 20 July, when the enemy's counterattack ceased. At 9:30 a.m. on 20 July, when the 60th Battalion was relieved by the 57th Battalion, only four officers and 61 OR remained.⁵⁰ The 5th Australian Division suffered 5,533 casualties; the 61st British Division suffered 1,547 and the enemy about 1,000. The attack was a complete failure and had no impact upon the progress of the Somme offensive.⁵¹ Charles E. W. Bean, the official Australian war correspondent, concluded that it failed because of "loose thinking and reckless decision-making on the part of higher staff."⁵²

Dick did not die at Fromelles but was critically injured with a gunshot wound to his abdomen. He might have crawled his way back to the BEF trenches or he might have been found by a search party in No Man's Land. He was taken to No. 1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station (CCCS), Bailleul, France, about 15 km away. A casualty clearing station was a military medical unit behind the front lines, usually located near transportation. Casualties who could not be adequately treated in the CCS were stabilized before being transported to a field or military hospital.⁵³

Dick was one of 446 casualties admitted on 20 July. He was one of nine patients who died on Friday 21 July,⁵⁴ exactly one year after enlisting and 50 days before his 19th birthday. The death was recorded by the No. 1 CCCS chaplain. In his journal, the chaplain incorrectly recorded that Dick was in the 58th Battalion.⁵⁵

Private Richard Prosser was buried at Bailleul Communal Cemetery Extension, Nord (Grave/Memorial Reference II. F. 42).⁵⁶ Bailleul is in France, close to the Belgian border. It was occupied on 14 October 1914 and became an important railhead, air depot and hospital centre. Several casualty clearing stations, including No. 1 CCCS, were quartered there. The earliest Commonwealth burials at Bailleul were made in April 1915. An extension was built and burials continued until April 1918; they occurred again in September and after the Armistice, when soldiers' remains were brought in from the neighbouring battlefields.

For the Australian public, the personal emotional impact of the war's mass casualties must have been profound. Yet, the social conventions of the day demanded that the bereaved accept their losses quietly and stoically.⁵⁷ Families expressed their public grief with eulogies in local newspapers. On Monday, 31 July 1916, the Prosser family paid this tribute to Private R. (Dick) Prosser. "Our hero/He never shunned his country's call/But gladly gave his life, his all/And died the helpless to defend/A noble soldier—noble end/He did his duty."⁵⁸ His death was officially recorded in the *Australian Casualties List No. 191*.⁵⁹ As next of kin, his father received his personal effects on 7

January 1917: a wallet, six coins, letters, cards, a fountain pen, two pencils, a comb, a ring (with initials R.P.), and a belt with badges and buttons attached.

The battle at Fromelles received brief coverage in the Australian newspapers. The number of casualties was not mentioned, but the Australian troops were praised for the manner in which they carried through the operation, which was “worthy of the tradition of Anzac.”⁶⁰ The newspapers did mention the enemy’s communique that expressed puzzlement about the British attack at Fromelles because it seemed to serve no purpose.⁶¹ Perhaps this minimal coverage was the reason that Dick’s family in their memorial to him on 21 July 1917 mistakenly attributed his death to the Battle of Pozières (23 July–7 August 1916).⁶²

The family continued to mourn the death of a cherished son and brother. His parents wrote in 1917: “It seems but a day since we bade him good-bye/His head full of hope his spirits so high/How little we thought when he left us that day/The grim hand of death would soon tear him away.” His sister Leah Hine lamented: “No loved ones stood around him/To bid a fond farewell/No word of comfort could we give to him we loved so well.” Cobb’s family wrote: “Only a boy, but he did a man’s duty/Our hero, we’re proud of him.” His sister Norma Ingram recalled that “No sadder me could fall/When we heard Dick had answered his last bugle call/Sweet to remember him, who once was near/And who, though absent, is just as dear.” Neighbours Mr. and Mrs. E Anderson of 266 Rae Street wrote that “greater love hath no man than this that he laid down his life for his friends.”⁶³

Private Richard Prosser was posthumously awarded the Victory Medal (for service in an operational theatre) and the British War Medal (for service overseas between 1914 and 1918). His father also received a parchment scroll with the words “Where the Australians Rest” and a memorial plaque.

The Prosser family’s world continued without Dick. His 32-year-old brother Cobb enlisted in the AIF on 12 January 1916, served on the Western Front, was injured twice but survived, returning to Australia in June 1919.⁶⁴ Will at age 39 enlisted on 15 February 1917, but although considered of “good character,” resigned after one month for family reasons.⁶⁵ In the following years, there were family celebrations as Dick’s remaining siblings married and established families of their own. His brother David married Myrtle Catherine Stevens in 1918, Maritana wed Ernest Kermath in 1922, Martha married Robert Francis Williams in 1925 and Jennie wed Robert Grant in 1928.⁶⁶

Private Richard Prosser’s sacrifice was not forgotten. His name was inscribed on panel 170 in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.⁶⁷ More recently, he was remembered in the AIF Project, UNSW Australia at Canberra.⁶⁸

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¹ “Headstone Documents,” *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/casualty-details/201208/RICHARD%20PROSSER>: accessed 30 May 2021), entry for Richard Prosser

² “First World War 1914–1918,” *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/atwar/first-world-war>: accessed 30 May 2021)

³ “Historical birth certificate, uncertified,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://my.rio.bdm.vic.gov.au/efamily-history/60b7ff0d0a2f001bed0dde3a/results?q=efamily>: accessed 3 June 2021), entry for Richard Prosser, Registration number: 17941/1897, When and where born: 9 September 1897, 260 Rae Street, City of Fitzroy, County of Bourke, Father, name & surname, rank or profession, age & birthplace: William Robert Prosser, hairdresser, 48, London, England, When & where

married: 20 February 1871, Melbourne, Victoria, Mother, name & maiden surname, age & birthplace: Mary Ann Beer, 45, Cornwall, England. **Note:** The names and ages of all children were listed.

⁴ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 6 June 2021), entry for Mary Ann Beer, Birth date: 25 December 1852, Birth place: St. Austell, Cornwall, England, Father: George Beer, Mother: Selina Beer, FHL film number: 2468; "Victoria, Australia, Death Index," *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 7 June 2021), entry for Mary Ann Prosser, Event: Death, Mother's family name: Lee, Father's name: George Beer, Place of birth: not stated, Place of death: Chelsea, Age at death: 77, Registration year: 1930, Registration number: 874/1930; "Family Notices," *The Argus*, 28 February 1930, p. 1, in *Trove, National Library of Australia* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>: accessed 15 June 2021). **Note:** In Mary Ann Prosser's obituary, daughter Florence was listed as deceased.

⁵ "England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538–1975," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 6 June 2021), entry for William Robert Prosser, Birth date: 5 July 1848, Baptism date: 25 July 1848, Baptism place: Saint Luke Old Street, Finsbury, London, England, Father: Samuel Prosser, Mother: Caroline Prosser, FHL film number: 585443, 585444, 585445; "Victoria, Australia, Death Index," *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for William Robert Prosser, Event: Death, Father's name: Samuel Prosser, Place of birth: London, England, Place of death: Chelsea, Age at death: 94, Registration year: 1943, Registration number: 15560/1943; "Family Notices," *The Argus*, 2 March 1943, p. 2, in *Trove, National Library of Australia* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>: accessed 15 June 2021). **Note:** In William Robert Prosser's obituary, his daughters' married names were provided.

⁶ "Victoria, Australia, Assisted and Unassisted Passenger Lists, 1839–1923," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 7 June 2021), entry for George Bear [sic], Departure place: Plymouth, Arrival date: 19 November 1854, Arrival place: Portland, Australia, Ship: *Clara*. **Note:** This is most likely the Beer family with an incorrect transcription; "Victoria, Australia, Assisted and Unassisted Passenger Lists, 1839–1923," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 7 June 2021), entry for William Prosser, Departure place: Southampton, Arrival date: 2 September 1857, Arrival place: Melbourne, Australia, Ship: *Hornet*

⁷ "Historical birth certificate, uncertified," *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://my.rio.bdm.vic.gov.au/efamily-history/60b7ff0d0a2f001bed0dde3a/results?q=efamily>: accessed 3 June 2021), entry for Richard Prosser, op. cit.

⁸ "New Zealand, Electoral Rolls, 1853–1981," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 16 June 2021), entry for William Robert Prosser, Electoral year: 1880–1881, District: Egmont, Region or province: Taranaki

⁹ "Historical birth certificate, uncertified," *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://my.rio.bdm.vic.gov.au/efamily-history/60b7ff0d0a2f001bed0dde3a/results?q=efamily>: accessed 3 June 2021), entry for Richard Prosser, op. cit. **Note:** Florence Prosser's year of birth was estimated from information in this source. Her age in 1897 was 26 years and 6 months.

¹⁰ "New Zealand Birth Index," *Findmypast* (www.findmypast.co.uk: accessed 2 June 2021), entry for Caroline Alberta Prosser, Registration year: 1874, Father's first name: William Robert, Mother's first name: Mary Ann, Registration number: 1874/25567; "Births, Deaths & Marriages Online," *New Zealand Government* (<https://bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/search>: accessed 4 June 2021), entry for Caroline Albert Prosser, Death registration number: 1875/2278, Age: 10 months

¹¹ "Births, Deaths & Marriages Online," *New Zealand Government* (<https://bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/search>: accessed 4 June 2021), entry for James Samuel Prosser, Birth registration number: 1875/7902; "Victoria, Australia, Death Index," *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for James Samuel Prosser, Event: Death, Age at death: 57, Registration year: 1932, Registration number: 2644/1932

¹² "Births, Deaths & Marriages Online," *New Zealand Government* (<https://bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/search>: accessed 4 June 2021), entry for Joshua Henry Prosser, Birth registration number: 1876/12470; "Australia, Death Index 1787–1985," *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 10 June 2021), entry for Joshua Henry Prosser, Birth year: abt 1877, Age: 84, Death place: Western Australia, Registration year: 1961, Registration place: Perth, Western Australia, Registration number: 1017

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- ¹³ “First Australian Imperial Force Personnel Dossiers, 1914–1920,” entry for Prosser, William Robert, Service number: 61864, NAA: B2455, Item ID: 8018918, *National Archives of Australia* (<https://www.naa.gov.au/explore-collection/defence-and-war-service-records/army-world-war-i-1914-18>: accessed 14 June 2021). **Note:** William Robert’s birth certificate was not readily available. His birth year (1878) and place of birth (Openaki, New Zealand) came from this source. “Victoria, Australia, Death Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for William Robert Prosser, Event: Death, Age at death: 78, Registration year: 1956, Registration number: 1057/1956
- ¹⁴ “Births, Deaths & Marriages Online,” *New Zealand Government* (<https://bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/search>: accessed 4 June 2021), entry for Norma Prosser, Birth registration number: 1880/15683; “Victoria, Australia, Death Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Norma Mary Ingram, Event: Death, Age at death: 69, Registration year: 1949, Registration number: 13908/1949; “Advertising,” *The Argus*, 24 November 1949, p. 11, in *Trove, National Library of Australia* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>: accessed 15 June 2021)
- ¹⁵ “Historical birth certificate, uncertified,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://my.rio.bdm.vic.gov.au/efamily-history/60b7ff0d0a2f001bed0dde3a/results?q=efamily>: accessed 3 June 2021), entry for Richard Prosser, op. cit. **Note:** Leah Marion Prosser’s year of birth was estimated from information in this source. “Australia, Death Index 1787–1985,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 10 June 2021), entry for Leah Marion Hine, Birth year: abt 1882, Age: 78, Death place: Warrnambool, Victoria, Registration year: 1960, Registration place: Warragul, Registration number: 35273
- ¹⁶ “Births, Deaths & Marriages Online,” *New Zealand Government* (<https://bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/search>: accessed 4 June 2021), entry for Cobb Prosser, Birth registration number: 1884/1533; “Victoria, Australia, Death Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Cobb Prosser, Event: Death, Age at death: 72, Registration year: 1956, Registration number: 11184/1956; “Family Notices,” *The Argus*, 11 August 1956, p. 21, in *Trove, National Library of Australia* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>: accessed 15 June 2021)
- ¹⁷ “Victoria, Australia, Birth Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Maritana Prosser, Event: Birth, Registration year: 1886, Registration number: 29180/1886; “Victoria, Australia, Death Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Maritana Kermath, Event: Death, Age at death: 81, Registration year: 1968, Registration number: 7075/1968
- ¹⁸ “Victoria, Australia, Birth Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Martha Prosser, Event: Birth, Registration year: 1889, Registration number: 24021/1889
- ¹⁹ “Victoria, Australia, Birth Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for David Prosser, Event: Birth, Registration year: 1894, Registration number: 51/1894; “Victoria, Australia, Death Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for David Prosser, Event: Death, Age at death: 83, Registration year: 1977, Registration number: 1575/1977
- ²⁰ “Victoria, Australia, Birth Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Jennie Prosser, Event: Birth, Registration year: 1895, Registration number: 29058/1895; “Victoria, Australia, Marriage Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Jennie Prosser, Event: Marriage, Registration year: 1928, Registration number: 6709/1928, Spouse: Robert Grant; “Victoria, Australia, Death Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria*

(<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Jennie Grant, Event: Death, Registration year: 1983, Registration number: 15640/1983

²¹ “Barber,” *Wikipedia* (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barber>: accessed 22 June 2021) **Note:** In Australia in 1914, a barber was called a hair dresser.

²² “Victoria, Australia, Marriage Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria*

(<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for William Robert Prosser, Event: Marriage, Registration year: 1900, Registration number: 5475/1900, Spouse: Matilda Lane; “Australia, Marriage Index, 1788–1950,” *Ancestry* (www.ancestry.com: accessed 14 June 2021), entry for Joshua Henry Prosser, Spouse’s name: Grace Gertrude Hanham, Marriage place: Freemantle, Registration place: Western Australia, Registration year: 1901, Registration number: 640; “Victoria, Australia, Marriage Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria*

(<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Norma Mary Prosser, Event: Marriage, Registration year: 1906, Registration number: 6579/1906, Spouse: Robert John Ingram; “Victoria, Australia, Marriage Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Cobb Prosser, Event: Marriage, Registration year: 1911, Registration number: 735/1911, Spouse: Margaret Alice Challis; “Victoria, Australia, Marriage Index,” *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Leah Marion Prosser, Event: Marriage, Registration year: 1911, Registration number: 10933/1911, Spouse: Thomas George Hine

²³ *The AIF Project: Australian Anzacs in the Great War*

(<https://www.aif.adfa.edu.au/showPerson?pid=246645>: accessed 3 June 2021), UNSW Australia Defence Force Academy, Canberra, entry for Richard Prosser, Regimental number: 3215

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³⁰ “Enlistment statistics, First World War,” *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/encyclopedia/enlistment/ww1>: accessed 5 October 2021)

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- ³⁵ Joan Beaumont, op. cit., chap. 2, “The home front mobilises,” pp. 101–119
- ³⁶ “23rd Australian Infantry Battalion,” *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/U51463>: accessed 11 June 2021)
- ³⁷ “The Weather Chart,” *The Argus*, 26 November 1915, p. 9, in *Trove, National Library of Australia* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>: accessed 8 July 2021); “First World War Embarkation Roll,” *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P10579185>: accessed 6 October 2021), entry for Richard Prosser, Service number: 3215; “Sea Transport of AIF,” *Australian National Maritime Museum* (https://issuu.com/anmmuseum/docs/sea_transport_of_the_aif: accessed 19 June 2021), p. 127
- ³⁸ Charles E. W. Bean, *Official History of Australia in the War 1914–1918, Volume III: The Australian Imperial Force in France, 1916* (12th edition, 1941), chap. “The Doubling of the A.I.F.,” pp. 32–68, *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1416847>: accessed 21 July 2021)
- ³⁹ “58th Australian Infantry Battalion,” *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/U51498>: accessed 23 June 2021)
- ⁴⁰ “Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries 1914–1918 War,” *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1339121>: accessed 24 June 2021) AWM4 Subclass 23/75–58th Infantry Battalion, AWM4 23/75/1 February 1916. **Note:** Information about the 58th Battalion’s activities in February 1916 came from this source.
- ⁴¹ Charles E. Bean, op. cit., Volume III, chap. “The Doubling of the A.I.F.,” p. 66. **Note:** The words from the Henry Newbolt poem, *Vitai Lampada* were also used as an Australian recruitment slogan.
- ⁴² Charles E. Bean, op. cit., Volume III, chap. “The Arrival in France,” p. 71
- ⁴³ “60th Australian Infantry Battalion,” *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/U51500>: accessed 23 June 2021)
- ⁴⁴ Geoffrey Serie, “McCay, Sir James Whiteside (1864–1930),” *Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University* (<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mccay-sir-james-whiteside-7312>: accessed 14 July 2021)
- ⁴⁵ “Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries 1914–1918 War,” *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1339119>: accessed 6 October 2021) AWM4 Subclass 23/77–60th Infantry Battalion, AWM4 23/77/2 March 1916 to AWM4 23/77/6 July 1916. **Note:** Information about the 60th Battalion’s activities from March through July 1916 came from this source.
- ⁴⁶ Charles E. Bean, op. cit., Volume III, chap. “The Arrival of II ANZAC,” pp. 288–290
- ⁴⁷ **Note:** The Australians gave familiar Australian names to some of the natural features in the area east of the Suez Canal where they were training and setting up defences. The Duntroon Plateau is located in the Australian Capital Territory. The Royal Military College was established at Duntroon in 1911.
- ⁴⁸ Private Douglas Bond, “Soldiers’ Letters,” *Richmond River Express & Kyogle Advertiser*, 15 August 1916, p. 6, in *Trove, National Library of Australia* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>: accessed 15 July 2021). **Note:** Private Douglas Bond, service number 2573, served in the 18th Battalion in Egypt and France during the same time period as Richard Prosser. Although wounded, Bond survived the war.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁰ “Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries 1914–1918 War,” *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1339119>: accessed 6 October 2021), AWM4 Subclass 23/77–60th Infantry Battalion, AWM4 23/77/2 March 1916 to AWM4 23/77/6 July 1916, entry for 20 June 1916
- ⁵¹ “Battle of Fromelles,” *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/E84321>: accessed 12 July 2021)
- ⁵² C.E.W. Bean, op. cit., Volume: III, chap. “Battle of Fromelles (Continued),” p. 444
- ⁵³ “Casualty Clearing Station,” *Wikipedia* (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Casualty_Clearing_Station: accessed 2 May 2020)

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- ⁵⁴ "No.1 Canadian Casualty Clear Station War Diaries of the First World War: 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station 1914/08/13–1919/03/31," *Library and Archives Canada* (<http://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/redirect?app=fonandcol&id=2005082&lang=eng>: accessed 15 July 2021), entries for 20 and 21 July 1916
- ⁵⁵ "No.1 Canadian Casualty Clearing Station," *British Isles Family History Society of Greater Ottawa* (www.bifhsgo.ca: accessed 12 July 2021), entry for Pte R. Prosser, Service number: 3215
- ⁵⁶ *Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (<https://www.cwgc.org/find-records/find-war-dead/casualty-details/201208/RICHARD%20PROSSER>: accessed 30 May 2021) entry for Richard Prosser
- ⁵⁷ Joan Beaumont, op. cit., chap. 2, "The home front mobilises," p. 104
- ⁵⁸ "Family Notices," *The Age*, 31 July 1916, p. 1, in *Trove, National Library of Australia* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>: accessed 15 July 2021)
- ⁵⁹ "Australian Casualties 191 List," *The Argus*, 10 August 1916, p.4, in *Trove, National Library of Australia* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>: accessed 19 July 2021)
- ⁶⁰ "British Attack on Fromelles," *The Capricornian*, 29 July 1916, p. 10; "Where the Australians attacked," *The Argus*, 24 July 1916, p. 7; "An Australian Sortie. Bravery of Engineers. Severe Casualties," *The Mercury*, 14 July 1916, p. 5, in *Trove, National Library of Australia* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>: accessed 25 July 2021)
- ⁶¹ "Enemy Experts Puzzled," *The Argus*, 24 July 1916, p. 7; "Object of Attacks. The Germans Puzzled, London, July 22," *The Mercury*, 24 July 1916, p. 5, in *Trove, National Library of Australia* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>: accessed 25 July 2021)
- ⁶² "Battle of Prozières," *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/E84338>: accessed 20 July 2021). **Note:** The Battle of Prozières (23 July to 07 August 1916), part of the Battle of the Somme, was fought by the 1st, 2nd and 4th Australian Division. They were successful, but there were over 12,000 Australian casualties.
- ⁶³ "Family Notices. In Memoriam," *The Age*, 21 July 1917, p. 5, 6, in *Trove, National Library of Australia* (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>: accessed 25 July 2021)
- ⁶⁴ "First Australian Imperial Force Personnel Dossiers, 1914–1920," entry for Prosser, Cobb, Service number: 4776, NAA: B2455, Item ID: 8018892, *National Archives of Australia* (<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=8018892>: accessed 19 July 2021)
- ⁶⁵ "First Australian Imperial Force Personnel Dossiers, 1914–1920," entry for Prosser, William Robert, op. cit.
- ⁶⁶ "Victoria, Australia, Marriage Index," *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for David Prosser, Event: Marriage, Registration year: 1918, Registration number: 1937/1918, Spouse: Myrtle Catherine Stevens; "Victoria, Australia, Marriage Index," *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Maritana Prosser, Event: Marriage, Registration year: 1922, Registration number: 2726/1922, Spouse: Ernest Kermath; "Victoria, Australia, Marriage Index," *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Martha Prosser, Event: Marriage, Registration year: 1925, Registration number: 6386/1925, Spouse: Robert Francis Williams; "Victoria, Australia, Marriage Index," *Births Deaths and Marriages Victoria* (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>: accessed 8 June 2021), entry for Jennie Prosser, Event: Marriage, Registration year: 1928, Registration number: 6709/1928, Spouse: Robert Grant
- ⁶⁷ "Roll of Honour," *Australian War Memorial* (<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/R1651799>: accessed 20 July 2021), entry for Richard Prosser, Service number: 3215
- ⁶⁸ *The AIF Project: Australian Anzacs in the Great War*, UNSW Australian Defence Force Academy, Canberra (<https://www.aif.adfa.edu.au/showPerson?pid=246645>: accessed 3 June 2021), entry for Richard Prosser, Regimental number: 3215