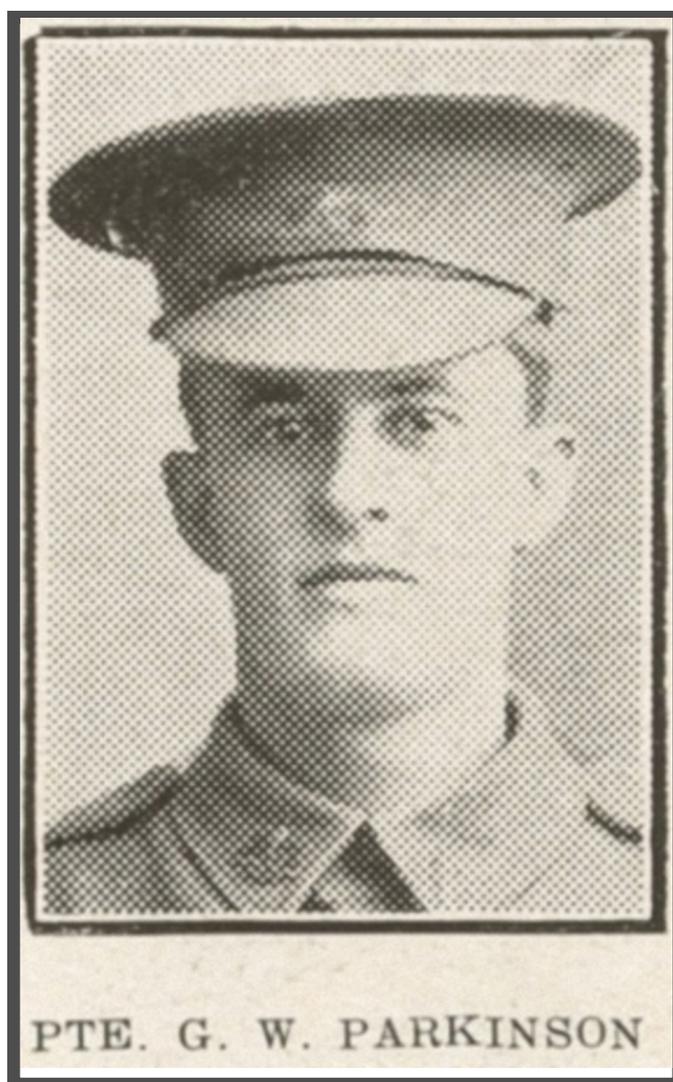


Stories from the Honour Boards

Stories of those who served and are remembered on the Honour Boards in the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel at Saint Andrew's Uniting Church

Booklet Number 25

GORDON WYNN PARKINSON 1895-1915



Queenslander Pictorial Supplement, 1915. SLQ

This booklet remains the property of Saint Andrew's Uniting Church.
Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

The beach at Anzac Cove, 2014.



*Gordon Parkinson went ashore at Anzac Cove, Gallipoli
just after the landing in April 1915.
He died there on 30 April 1915.*



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Corner Ann and Creek Streets
Brisbane QLD 4000
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for an online copy of this booklet and more pictures .

Private Gordon Wynn Parkinson

Gordon Wynn Parkinson was born in the suburb of Bowen Hills, son of Samuel and Amy Marion (née Wynn). He attended Taringa State School. His mother died in 1907 when he was 12 years old. He enlisted in Brisbane for service abroad in the Australian Imperial Force on 14 October 1914, soon after the outbreak of World War I. He gave his age as 22 years and two months but his year of birth according to the Queensland Register of Births was 1895. Gordon was only 19. His fellow employees at the timber-manufacturing firm of Brown & Broad Ltd where he was an accounts clerk gave him a send-off and a watch. He was a popular lad, a fine athlete, secretary of the Toowong Swimming Club, secretary and a prominent player of the Milton Lacrosse Club and a member of the Toowong Harriers' Club and the YMCA. Prior to his departure for the Front his lacrosse club mates presented him with another wristlet watch and an address signed by every member of the club. Given service number 638 Private Parkinson joined the 15th Infantry Battalion and embarked on HMAT *Ceramic* from Melbourne on 22 December 1914.



*Troops
boarding
HMAT Ceramic
in Melbourne*

In one of his regular letters to his father he wrote on 21 February 1915, "I could not be any better in health; the climate is suiting me down to the sand. For the first week at Heliopolis we are doing platoon drill (the new drill). On Wednesday (10th) the whole division was out. The Light Horse went past us when we were halted along the road. They are a fine body of men, but the Queenslanders are the best of the lot without a doubt. It is the same with the infantry. The 15th Battalion is acknowledged by those in authority to be the best battalion in the brigade. Three cheers from the boys in Bananaland! We will all be there when they want us.

"On Thursday we rose at 5.30 am and left at 8 am for the rifle range at Abbassiah. The march was over a good deal of sandy country, but we are getting used to this now. On Friday we took up a position on the hills, where we could see the effect of 'infantry advancing under artillery fire'. The 13th and 15th Battalions provided the performance, with the help of the New Zealand artillery. It was the first time a lot of us had seen shells bursting as they would in actual warfare, and it was a great sight.

"The infantry skirmished over two miles of country before they reached the position they were supposed to attack, and all the time the shells were flying over the top of them. When the guns were ranged for 1500 yards one of the shells burst, when it had only gone about half a mile, right over the top of the advancing infantry. One chap was wounded in the foot, but not badly. During all these manoeuvres the 14th and 15th battalions were interested spectators, sitting on one of the hills watching everything that took place. Although the outsider might say we didn't learn much, it would be wrong, as it was a great object lesson."

He was obviously an enthusiastic young soldier, patriotic and loyal, as another letter to his father in April also shows –

“Each day we have been expecting to get the order to move, but nothing definite was received until today, when our officer addressed us on the parade ground. He said that all the 15th Battalion would have left Heliopolis by next Sunday night. He gave a very thoughtful address, telling all that we had to expect. I can tell you it was not all beer and marbles. By the way he spoke we are not going far, and as soon as we land our troubles will commence.

“We will have to fight our way ashore under cover of fire from battleships, so there will be something doing. We have to fight our way as soon as we land into the interior to reach a water supply, so if the engagements take place as it is expected they will, some of us will be carrying a few ounces of lead shortly. I am explaining this now, but long before you receive this letter the action will have taken place, and the people in Australia will know all about how we have fared. We joined the force to serve our country, and die for it if necessary, and Australians will be there when they are wanted. I have not thought of the consequences that may result to myself in the coming fight, but, father, you can depend that your son will do his duty to his King and country, live or die.”

A short time later he landed at Gallipoli where he was killed. When the sad news reached his father in Brisbane, Gordon was reported first as “missing” but later confirmed as “killed in action”. His platoon commanding officer Lieutenant Harry wrote to his father praising his efficiency, stating that he was a splendid soldier and adding that it was his intention to recommend him for promotion.

**In Memory of
Private GORDON WYNNE PARKINSON
638, 15th Bn., Australian Infantry, A.I.F.
who died age 23
on 30 April 1915
Son of Samuel Parkinson, of "Myora," Gordon St., Milton,
Brisbane, and the late Amy Marion Parkinson.
Remembered with honour
LONE PINE MEMORIAL**



The captain of his company Captain Cannan also wrote endorsing the remarks of Lieutenant Harry and saying that he considered him one of the smartest and most reliable soldiers in the battalion. He revealed his platoon commander, Lieutenant Harry had also been killed.

He said in conclusion, "... Gordon was a fine lad, and as I have said before, we all thought the world of him and his military career would have been a brilliant one."

Gordon's father, Samuel Parkinson was justifiably proud of his son. On the anniversary of Gordon's death, an IN MEMORIAM NOTICE was printed, "In proud and loving memory of Gordon Wynne Parkinson, 15th Battalion, AIEF, son of Mr S Parkinson, Auchenflower, killed in action at Anzac, April 30th, 1915. His watchword, 'Duty first and duty all the time'."

Select Bibliography

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Lest we forget