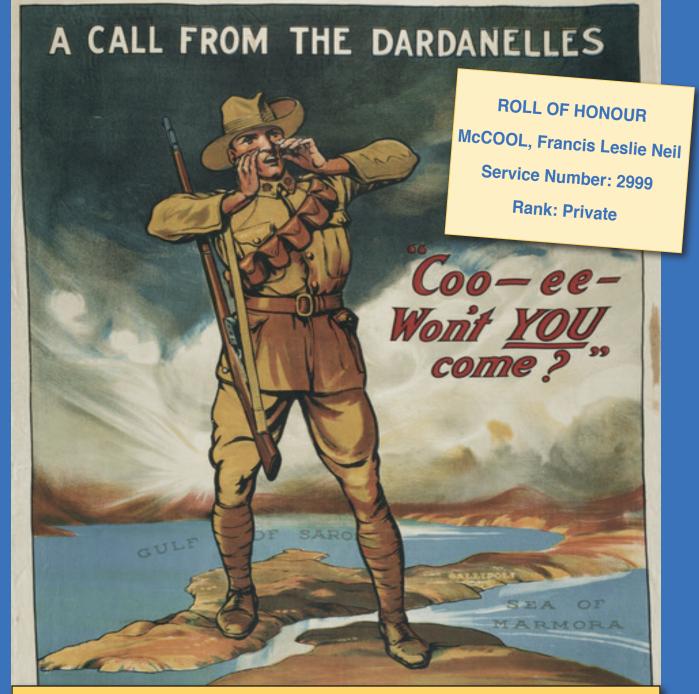
## Commemoration for the Lives of the Braidwood and District ANZACS

"We will remember them well"



From 1914 - 1918, 465 volunteers from Braidwood and the District joined the Australian Imperial Force in World War I. 88 lost their lives, never to return home. This is their story.





THE SPIRIT LIVES 2014 - 2018

#### Introduction

This year, 2015, marks the centenary of the start of the Gallipoli campaign and Australia's involvement as a nation in the greatest and most terrible conflict ever seen to that time. Australians joined their Armed Forces in large numbers. Their motives were as varied as their upbringings, from a need to save the Empire, of which Australia was an integral part, to the desire to have a great adventure.

Braidwood and district were no exception. Over the four years from 1914 to 1918, from a population of about 5000, 465 men and women from what is now the 2622 postcode area – including Braidwood, Majors Creek, Araluen, Mongarlowe, Nerriga, Ballalaba and Jembaicumbene joined the Navy or Army. Of these 377 returned to Australia. Sadly, 88 lost their lives.

A varying amount of their history is recorded in the Australian War Memorial. Some of their names, but not all, are recorded on local memorials. More is recorded in limited local histories and newspapers, not readily available to the general public; and the people who lived with and knew these distant relatives are also passing on.

The Braidwood RSL Sub Branch has collected all the information available from the Australian War Memorial and local sources, including the Braidwood Museum. Families, still resident in the district, have added their family knowledge and their precious memorabilia.

This booklet is the available story of **Francis Leslie Neil McCool**, one of the 88 Braidwood volunteers who did not return from World War I. It contains his details as recorded in the World War I Roll of Honour, his Enlistment Papers, Field Service records, any Casualty notification, correspondence relating to his death, details of decorations won, any available photos, and, in some instances, family correspondence or recollections.

**Francis Leslie Neil McCool** died for his country, for you and for me. Please pause a moment to remember him.

#### WORLD WAR I

World War I lasted four years, from 4 August 1914 until 11 November 1918. It began after the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne. The axis powers were Germany and Austria. Russia and France were the initial allies. When Germany invaded Belgium, Britain entered the war on the side of Russia and France.

The war was in Europe, the Western Front was in France and Belgium. The Eastern Front was Russia and Austria-Hungary. Africa was another front because of colonial possessions on that continent, and after Turkey entered the war on 1 November 1914, the Middle East became another theatre of war.

Australians generally thought of themselves as an integral part of the British Empire and the Australian Army and Navy were part of the Imperial Forces. In 1914, Australia's Prime Minister, Andrew Fisher, immediately promised Australian support for Britain 'to the last man and the last shilling.' The Australian population was less than five million. 324,000 Australians served overseas. 61,720 lost their lives. 155,000 were wounded. 4,044 became prisoners of war (397 died while captive).

The first Australian troops were sent to Egypt in 1915. The ANZACS – Australian and New Zealand Army Corps – were engaged in battle on the Gallipoli Peninsula against the Turks to control the Dardanelles' and open the way to Eastern Europe with their fateful landing on 25 April 1915.

The ANZACS were evacuated on 19-20 December 1915. The Gallipoli campaign resulted in the deaths of 7,600 Australians and the wounding of 19,000. Despite the defeat, the legend attached to the heroism, comradeship and valour of the soldiers remain a source of Australian pride and national identity.



Lest We Forget.

# **ROLL OF HONOUR**

## FRANCIS LESLIE NEIL McCOOL

Service Number: 2999 Rank: Private Unit: 31st Australian Infantry Battalion Service: Australian Army Conflict: First World War, 1914-1918 Date of death: 27 September 1917 Place of death: Belgium Cause of death: Killed in action Place of association: Sydney, Australia Cemetery or memorial details: Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres, Flanders, Belgium Source: AWM145 Roll of Honour cards, 1914-1918 War, Army

Location on the Roll of Honour: Francis Leslie Neil McCool's name is located at panel 119 in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial

#### **31st Australian Infantry Battalion**



31<sup>st</sup> Colour Patch

The 31st Battalion was raised as part of the 8th Brigade at Enoggera, on the outskirts of Brisbane, in August 1915. Some of the battalion's companies, however, were also raised at Broadmeadows Camp in Victoria. In early October, these two elements were united at Broadmeadows, and the battalion sailed from Melbourne the following month.

The 8th Brigade joined the newly raised 5th Australian Division in Egypt, and proceeded to France, destined for the Western Front, in June 1916. The 31st Battalion fought its first major battle at Fromelles on 19 July 1916, having only entered the front-line trenches 3 days previously. The attack was a disastrous introduction to battle for the 31st - it suffered 572 casualties, over half of its strength. Although it still spent periods in the front line, the 31st played no major offensive role for the rest of the year. In early 1917, the German Army withdrew to the Hindenburg Line allowing the British front to be advanced and the 31st Battalion participated in the follow-up operations. The battalion subsequently missed the heavy fighting to breach the Hindenburg Line during the second battle of Bullecourt as the 8th Brigade was deployed to protect the division's flank. The only large battle in 1917 in which the 31st Battalion played a major role was Polygon Wood, fought in the Ypres sector in Belgium on 26 September.

Unlike some AIF battalions, the 31st had a relatively guiet time during the German Spring Offensive of 1918 as the 5th Division was largely kept in reserve. The Allies launched their own offensive with the battle of Ameins on 8 August, in which the 31st Battalion participated. It was subsequently involved in the operations that continued to press the retreating Germans through August and into September. The 31st fought its last major action of the war in September 1918 when the 5th and 3rd Australian Divisions, and two American divisions attacked the Hindenburg Line across the top of the 6-kilometre-long St Quentin Canal tunnel; the canal was a major obstacle in the German defensive scheme. The 31st was resting and retraining out of the line when the war ended on 11 November 1918. It disbanded in France on 21 March 1919.

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Private address:

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c/o Mrs. Mulholland. PICTON.

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#### "KILLED 27.9.17"

Informant described McCool us about 5 ft 5/6 inches high, slight build, fair complexion, aged about 23/24/ Come from Paddi Come from Paddington Thought to have been a comman or connected with horses or Surry Hills. in Civil life,

Informant states that they both belonged to A. Company, 4th Platoon. On 26.9.17 the Eattalion was in action at Polygon Wood. They hopped over early in the morning and about 2 hour later before they reached the objective informant car Eccool - he said to two or three of the boys round him, including Informant "I am going in for my out". After that the party advanced and McCool soon after disappeared and no body seems to have soon him subsequently. He was reported "Missing" for a long time. The date of death officially given as 27th is wrong as on that date the Pattalion was consolidating ifter the big fight which took place on the 26th and during which McCool was missed.

Informant added that McCool was a mate of his and was well thought of by his other pates.

17.3.19

Informant: Private A.L. Reeves, No. 1771. A. Company, 31st Battalion.

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SYDNEY DUG AU.

2999

No.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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21 September 1917: Belgium: Western Front (Belgium), Ypres Area, Ypres: View from Polygon Wood looking toward Zonnebeke and Polygon Wood showing no man's land. In the background (right) is ruined structure, possibly used as a shelter or stronghold.

31459JSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES JAN **PERIAL** FORCE. Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad. CD Name No. Unit Joined on Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation. 1. Francis Leslie Neil 1. What is your Name1 .. ..... 2. In the Parish of ..... near the Town of Magori 6 2. In or near what Parish or Town were you born t in the County of Ato I mon 4. What is your age? .. .. .. .. .. .. 5. What is your trade or calling? ..... 6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period ! .... 7. Are you married ! ..... ray / 8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) 9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Powert ... assault 9. A Sarladets, 24th Inf Elesting 1. 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 ..... 1. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous 12. . Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? ..... . Do you understand that no Separation Allowance will he issued in respect of your service beyond an amount which together with Pay would reach eight shillings per day. ..... . Are you prepared to undergo incentation against smallpox and enterie fever?..... 1. Franciscole Meil & Cool. do 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 three-fifths my service for the support of my wife Signature of person enliste "I' is clause to be amended where recessary and should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 18 years of age.

DEFENCE Transferred to B.R. -D:7294 AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE 2999 No. 1 he Name M° COOL FLN Rank 31 st Bhry Unit Casualty Hillord in actions (27-9-17) 8 998 9 18993 21 0 dated To "WHERE THE AUSTRALIANS I. Furspillet unit in Unhaceables 25/9/22 a MEMORIAL SCROLL Unhaceables 331422 28/9/22 00 DATE PURPORT. REF. NO. M. C. 2 ADVISED, KILLED IN ACTION. 27 4-- 10-14 GOPY MADE FOR WAR PENSIONS 24.4. 1 SPERSONAL EFFECTS EX Barnah 16 578 PERSONAL EFFECTS EX Party des con rold and 1899 mde 9/34 8 Circular B R M 46/1868 & Booklet re Graver despatched HISTORY INDEX STAR NE AR 10.16 C.1000

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28.7.16 19.8.16 19.8.16 2.11.16 25.8.16 13.4.17	Report From show C. O. 312 B21: do 14th F10 C. O. 31 B12 D12 D12 D12 D12 D12 D12 D12 D12 D12 D	ecceiced h Bn 5. A Amb - at Bn 5. 8 at Bn 9. at Bn	Admitt Taken To Hos Admitt Discha Rejoine Offense Isali Is/1/1 P.P.Noj additie 31st Ba TOTAL J Pay. CHIMI. Trem 8, 8/2/17 4 p.m. to 5 p. C, 0.31s TOTAL J Pay. C, 0.31s TOTAL J Fay. C, 0.31s	en strängth 31st 2 pital Sick. en strängth 31st 2 pital Sick. ed Debility urged to Duty d from Sick. Absent without 100 12/11/16 to 12 6. AVARUED 28 day mal Pay. by C.O. attn. 15/11/16 WARUED 31 Day Absent without 1es 4.5.s.m. to 6.30.p and 8.45. a.m. to 9/2/17. 8.45.a.m. m. on 10/2/17. 1 4 days F.P.No 2 stattn. 12/2/17. PORTHITURE. 17 day	Place of Cs Phace of Cs Dan 2103 de de de de de de de de de de de de de	antity Ca 4 23 17 17 21 22 17 17 17 17 17 17 17 17 17 17	12.2.2.	Entry Homes Aq180 5 Aq344 5 Aq344 5 Ak203 6 55/56 5 Aq377 16 35/ D0/2 C0/2 E, 1 16 35/ 17 D09/	1 D053/41 3 D056/41 3 D056/41 4 2/6 0 D057/45 0 D057/25 0 D	44 465 87 5.2/1

Sheet #g# Army Form B. 103. 31st INFA MTRY BATTALION 4.1.F.Regimental Number. MRRY Casualty Form-Active Service. Regiment or Corps-SER-Reisfortoments, Rank Private ... Surname Medool ..... Christian Name ... Prangis Loslis Netl. Religion ..... Re-engaged Qualification (b) or Corps Trade and rate Extended Occupation. ...... Signature of Officer An address of a second Date From - been received - Benharitant Disentineire 3rd Aus.Cas. Plourisy Admitted & Trafd Field Cl. Station. to Ambulance Train. 8.4.17 4.4.17 AK1120/48 5.4.17 3rd Stat. Hesp. Pleurisy Admitted Rouan de Discharged to Con. Depot de 6,4,17 6.4.17 AM1120/39 10.4.17 AM1120/39 10.4.17 10.4.17 2nd Con. Dopot Pleurisy Admitted do 10.4.17 AX1120/82 de Dipot. 13.4.17 do Discharged to Base de 13.4.17 AK1120/01 21.4.17 O.C. 5th Aus.D. Marched in from Hospital. Etaples 16.4.17 #67/16 3.Depot 2013 de Warehed out to Unit 21.4.17 de 16.4.17 887,006 27.4.17 C.O. 31st Bn Rejoined Unit ex Hospital Field 21.4.17 B8/17 D019 3213. AND 1.14 Report Description of the second seco Date From whom required OFFICE, Abeant without Leave from 030030/4/17 till 2145 on 1/5/17. AWARDED, 7 days, F.P.No2 10.5.17 C.O.31et Bn B2069 Field 4.5.17 H108/19 D021/3711 AWARDED, 7 days, F.P.No2 By W.O.31st Bn.4.5.17 TOTAL PORFEITURE, 9 days Pay 22/5" - P.B.NO31195/8 In the Field B.M.F. 27.9.17 88/39 AT15928 VL488 D040/6099 29.9.17 0.0.31et Bn KILLED IN ACTION , B213. US G DI H L FERNS SECTION 3rd MCHELON G.H.Q. British Expeditionary Force. 0. 1/e Records. Burned in the vicinity of Polygon Wood Sh. 15 NE. J.10. U.R. 13 (sh 8)

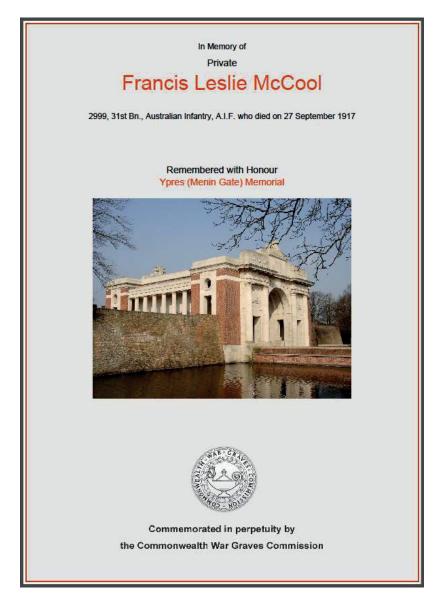
D3/45Q
FIELD SERVICE. Army Form B. 2090A.
REPORT of Death of a Soldier to be forwarded to the War Office with the least possible delay after receipt of notification of death on Army Form B. 213 or Army Form A. 36, or from other official documentary sources.
REDIMENT OR CORPS
Regimental No. 2990 Bank Private
Sumans MoCOOL Christian Names Francis Logito Heil
27th September 1917 In the Field, 3.3.3.
Died Cause of Death* MILLAID IN ACTION
Nature and Date of Report Form 19213, dated Soth Suptember 1917
C.O. 31st Battalion A.I.F.
* Specially state of killed in action, or died from wounds reserved in action, or from tituses due to fail specializes or in failingue, privation or exposure while on millingy during 1 h impry this on millingy dury. TOD 0 1 Vel d
State whether he leaves ((a) in Pay Book (Army Book 54) (b) in Small Book ((f at Base)
All private documents and efforts received from the front or hospital, as well as the Pay Book, should be snamined, and if any
Any information received as its verbal expressions by a deceased mildier of his wishes as to the diaronal of his estate should be
Properties to the was define as were as possible.
or Field Dielensing Officer, as the name may require, ingelier, with the Documel's Tay Book affords the Astrophysical Layer and a may will from the latter. If the document's grand Hook is at the Base, it should be forwarded to the War Office with this distort.
Station and Data Data 3rd Schelon, 3. M. Q. Signature of Officer in charge of Section Adjutant General's Office at the Base 15/1/10 15/1/10
W19862311710-500,000-EL& Sr5,02-(10.00)-Furnal81000-22
D.J.
* 1 110 CREVHOUND ROAD
AUTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE. FULHAM, LONDON,
KIT STORE. W. 6.
ADVANCE AUSTRALIA
Inventory of Effects of- The Late No. 2999 Pte. McCool F.L.N. 31st Batt A.I.F.
Forwarded to- SISTER.
Miss May McCool,
25 Grovenor Crescent, Summer Hill,
NEW SOUTH WALES.
and the second sec
Effects.
Ex Kit Store. ) Razor,-Strop, 2 Brushes, Diary, Shaving Brush. Book No. 13. )
No. of Package D/S 23771 Obecked by
No. of Package Checked by

Melave Mr.a. g. Alchool. 5 hille Queen St b pippendale To ett ajor have (MAY 24 1917 Wear Sir Referring to my brother Phe y. He book. I would be very much obliged if you would let me know if any thing should happen to him, as I am very anxious concerning him. This name a address as follows:-Pte. J. ett bool. 31 24 Battalion 5 50 h CORRESPONDENCE MAY 25 5 to purforcements. a. f. y. Medool, Francis Leslie Meil, 2999, Pte., 31st Bn. McCool, Amy Margaret, 8 Little Napier St., Padding Full mans and address of person for whom Wid. Step-mother I Relationship of such person to Member Pension of 22 p.f. grented from 20/12/17. . Reals of Claim 5. Name and address of Trustee (if any)

Chore ?! 2999. 5/3 Shiftle Queen St. ASE RECORD Chippendale JUN 8 1917 4/6/14. ECENE Lock ayor hear. Base Records Office Victoria Barracks DDRESS DORESS P. MA. Helbourne. Dear Sir . Received your letter referring to Miss. ch. He bool residing in Summer tell . N.S. W. I have to state that I was it in it M' bool. the sister of the th. it f. M. Me bool. lately married , to my first cousin, named 1 g. a. Mc bool. Air. the fun would gave kindly till me if I could claim my brothers money from my step mother, as Leans the next of kin. and there is no money being banked in his name , and I don't think she has any right to be getting it, as she has through an illigimate child, our father being dead only a little over two fears. and well you lit me know if I can get his money so as I can bank it for him. I remain yours faithfully ctor. a. y. Milool.

16/0 Redfinn P. O Redfirm. Dear Sir. Referring to my brother No. 2999. Ple 3. S ar ett bool. 5 th Ring. 3, & Batt, I would like you to let me know if there are any letter or. P.C. to be forwarded to me. He heard that there were two pocket wallets, letters + PC. on him when he was found. My stepmother got a letter from the chaptain saying they would be forwarded I they come to hand would fore let me know "when gets them if they are not to be sent to me I donsting you will oblige . Mr. a. S. et houl 6/0. Redfern .P.O. P.S. Fam removing & Fam Kedfin. not certain where I an going so gooded you and letters to above address. Marnorgh

25 bentre St Redfern Dear Sir. Will you kindly let me know if I am intitled to a Bronze Memorial Plaque & a Victory effeddel on account of my brother who was pelled in actub. at Polygor Wood, as Sam his ildest sester No 2999. Pter J. L. N. M. bool BLOT BOLEOEASED So hoping you will let d as no win MAN SC LIST N 80 152 RECEIVED mon Blue



#### **Acknowledgements**

Everybody responded enthusiastically to the idea of capturing the information about Braidwood's 88 World War I veterans who lost their lives. The Braidwood RSL Sub Branch is most grateful for the support they received in carrying out this task and would like to acknowledge those of whom we are aware: Karen, Chris and Renee Nelson, Roslyn Maddrell, Karen Shea, Jill Clarke, Rod McClure, Ben and Meaghan Frohling, Diane McGrath, Us On Mondays Quilting Group, Len Mutton & Co and local shopkeepers for their World War I window displays.

Thank you to the students and teachers of Braidwood Central School and St. Bedes School who have embraced these soldiers and have honoured their memories on Anzac Day 2015.

The Braidwood RSL Sub Branch raised a good proportion of the funds for the cost of producing these booklets. The efforts of the members of the sub branch involved are very much appreciated. This money was augmented by welcome funding from the Federal Government through the ANZAC Centenary Local Grants Program and the Braidwood Community Bank.

To all those who helped in any way, many thanks. Your efforts have ensured we remember these Braidwood and District Veterans well.

**Back Cover:** Peace Day, 11th November 1918, Wallace Street, Braidwood. *"Wild day in Braidwood: When Braidwood woke up on Tuesday morning to find the 'glad tidings of great joy' awaiting it that Germany had signed the armistice and the frightful carnage of the past four years or so had come to an end it simply went mad with delight. No other words could adequately describe the excitement that followed." "Braidwood Letters from the Front" by Roslyn Maddrell.* 

## **ROLL OF HONOUR**

Alley, Clair Underwood **Archer. Fred Backhouse, Victor John Barnett, Frederick George Barry, Charles Louis Beatty, Walter Cusack Bell, John Henry Edward Black, George Scott Bruce, Thomas Fraser Byrne, Cecil John** Callan, William Henry **Catlin, Robert Henry Clarke, Lester Thomas Cook. Thomas John Crandell, Christopher George Cregan, Clarence Theodore Augustus Cullen, Henry Thomas Davis, John Henry Davis, Oscar Raymond Stanley Dawson, Edric Athol Dayball, Arthur Joseph Dempsey, Charles Frederick Dempsey, Charles Dowell, Frederick Robert** Feeney, William **Fisher, Osborne** Flack, John Foster Garnett, Henry James **Geelan, Robert Michael Gosling**, Fred Gough, James RROWN 14 8 **Green, Francis Henry Healy, Myrtle James** Howard, John Alexander **Huggett**, William Hunt, Frederick William Hunt, John **Hush, Percy Alfred** Hush, Thomas Hush, Austin Septimus **Innes, Henry George** Kelly, Herbert Albert Kemp, Leslie Smith Keyte, Robert

**Knight, Charles Oliver** Lee. Thomas James Lennon, James Lupton, Spencer Lynch, James Joseph Matthews, Francis McCool. Francis Leslie Neil **McDonald, Alexander Joseph** McLean, Donald McRae, Finley Arnold Meade, Arthur Stuart **Merton**. Thomas David Montgomery, Stanley Moore, William Newberry, Alwyn (Alwin) Horace James **O'Brien, Thomas Daniel** O'Reilly, John Pooley, Edward **Rex, Horace Joseph Riley, Frank Roberts, Frederick Bede** Robinson, William James Rodgers, Albert Seidel, Alfred George Seidel, Henry Edward Sharpe, George Lyle Sharpe, Reginald Sherman, Edgar Robert Sherman, Percy Frederick Simmons, George Smith (Greenwood), George **Spicer, William Henry** Steele, Alexander Norman Stein, Daniel Godfrey **Stewart, David Walter** Styles, Reginald Lucian **Torpy, Patrick Edward Torpy, Thomas Patrick** Walker, William Albert Watt, James Watt, Oscar Harold McClure White, Alister Whitelaw, Thomas Philip Wilson, Samuel Charles

### **Lest We Forget**