

# The Newsletter

## *BERKSHIRE MILITARY MUSEUM*

### **THE STORY: GEORGE YOUNG WATSON**

GEORGE YOUNG WATSON WAS BORN ON THE 5<sup>TH</sup> OF DECEMBER, 1891, IN DUBLIN IRELAND. BOTH HIS FATHER AND GRANDFATHER WORKED FOR THE GUINNESS BREWRY, BUT BECAUSE OF A WEAK CHEST, HE MOVED TO AUSTRALIA. HE WAS ONLY 16, AND WAS SUPPOSED TO WORK WITH A BEEKEEPER. UNFORTUNATELY HE WAS ALLERGIC TO BEES, SO HE MOVED TO HIS COUSIN'S LAND IN TAMWORTH, NSW, WHERE HE MET HIS FUTURE WIFE.

GEORGE ENLISTED ON THE 25<sup>TH</sup> OF APRIL, 1917. BECAUSE HE HAD A CAST IN ONE EYE, THE ARMY WAS RELUCTANT TO ENLIST HIM, BUT AS THE WAR PROGRESSED THEY ACCEPTED HIM. GEORGE WENT INTO TRAINING AT AN ARMY CAMP IN LIVERPOOL, NSW. HE EMBARKED FROM MELBOURNE ABOARD THE HMAT NESTOR ON FEBRUARY 28<sup>TH</sup>, 1918, AND TRAVELLED THROUGH THE SUEZ CANAL TO LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND. ON JULY 18<sup>TH</sup>, 1918, HE WENT TO HAVRE, FRANCE, AND JOINED THE 35<sup>TH</sup> BATTALION AS AN AIF RESERVE, WHERE HE WAS MADE LANCE CORPORAL. WHEN THE WAR ENDED, GEORGE TRAVELLED TO DUBLIN TO VISIT FAMILY AND ARRANGE HEADSTONES FOR THE FAMILY PLOT. HE LEFT ENGLAND ON THE 22<sup>ND</sup>, OF JULY, 1919, ABOARD THE HMAT ULYSSES, AND TRAVELLED THROUGH THE PANAMA CANAL TO AUSTRALIA, WHERE HE WAS DISCHARGED ON THE 28<sup>TH</sup> OF DECEMBER, 1919.

GEORGE YOUNG WATSON DIED ON THE 26<sup>TH</sup> OF JUNE, 1976, AT AGE 84.

### **IMPORTANT DATES IN JANUARY:**

JAN. 3, 1915: FIRST USE OF POISON GAS

JAN. 27, 1916: CONSCRIPTION IS INTRODUCED BY BRITAIN

JAN. 8, 1940: RATIONING BEGINS IN THE UK

JAN. 27, 1944: END OF SIEGE OF LENINGRAD

JAN. 26, 1945: SOVIETS LIBERATE AUSCHWITZ

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**NEW ITEMS AT BMM**

ONE OF THE NEWEST ITEMS AT THE BERKSHIRE MILITARY MUSEUM IS A GERMAN WWII HELMET. THIS IS THE M1940 COMBAT TYPE, AND IS COMPLETE WITH ITS ORIGINAL LEATHER LINER. THIS PIECE WAS PURCHASED FROM A MAN WHO HAD OWNED IT SINCE THE EARLY 1950s. THE

HELMET BELONGED TO AN INFANTRYMAN, AND HIS LAST NAME, WALTER, IS PAINTED IN THE HELMET. THE ITEM IS IN EXCELLENT CONDITION, AND THE LINER HAS BEEN WELL PRESERVED WITH LEATHER PRESERVER. UNFORTUNATELY, THE SWASTIKA ON THE HELMET'S DECAL HAS BEEN SCRATCHED OUT. IN ALL, THE HELMET WAS A GOOD BUY.



PS: MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!  
FROM THE TEAM AT THE BERKSHIRE MILITARY MUSEUM