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THE NEWSLETTER

BERKSHIRE MILITARY MUSEUM

WINTER, 2016-2017



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THE STORY: HAROLD EDWARD "POMPEY" ELLIOT

HAROLD EDWARD ELLIOT WAS A FAMOUS AUSTRALIAN ARMY SENIOR OFFICER, WHO SERVED IN THE SECOND BOER WAR AND WWI. HE WAS BORN ON THE 19TH OF JUNE, 1878, IN WEST CHARLTON, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA, TO THOMAS ELLIOT. HE GRADUATED FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, AFTER FIGHTING IN SOUTH AFRICA FROM 1899-1902. HE JOINED THE AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR (1914), AND WAS GIVEN THE RANK OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL. DURING THE GALLIPOLI LANDINGS IN APRIL OF 1915, ELLIOT WAS SHOT IN THE FOOT, AND WAS FORCED TO LEAVE COMBAT. HE RETURNED IN JUNE OF 1915, AND WAS SOON

IN THE THICK OF THE BATTLE OF LONE PINE. AFTER THE EVACUATION OF AUSTRALIAN TROOPS FROM THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA, ELLIOT WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE WESTERN FRONT WHERE, IN 1916, HE WAS PROMOTED TO BRIGADIER GENERAL, AND GIVEN COMMAND OF THE 15TH BRIGADE. HE AND HIS BRIGADE PARTICIPATED IN THE CRUCIAL BATTLE TO RETAKE VILLERS BRETONNEUX, AND ARE STILL HONORED IN THAT TOWN TODAY. AFTER THE WAR, ELLIOT BECAME SENATOR FOR VICTORIA, AND HAD A SUCCESSFUL POLITICAL CAREER. HE IS STILL REMEMBERED TODAY AS A GREAT AND COMPASSIONATE LEADER, WHO INSPIRED HIS MEN TO PERFORM HEROIC FEATS IN BATTLE. ELLIOT DIED IN 1931 FROM POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER, AND DEPRESSION.

IMPORTANT DATES: DEC. - FEB.

DECEMBER 24TH, 1914: UNOFFICIAL CHRISTMAS TRUCE IS DECLARED

FEBRUARY 4TH, 1915: GERMANY BEGINS SUBMARINE BLOCKADE OF BRITAIN

FEBRUARY 21ST, 1916: BATTLE OF VERDUN (LONGEST BATTLE OF WWI) BEGINS

JANUARY 19TH, 1917: THE ZIMMERMAN TELEGRAM (SENT BY GERMANY PROPOSING AN ALLIANCE WITH MEXICO TO INVADE THE US) IS INTERCEPTED AND DECIPHERED BY BRITAIN

DECEMBER 17TH, 1917: THE ARMISTICE BETWEEN THE CENTRAL POWERS AND THE NEW RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT GOES INTO EFFECT

JANUARY 8TH, 1918: WOODROW WILSON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, ISSUES HIS 14 POINTS FOR PEACE

JANUARY 22ND, 1941: BRITISH AND AUSTRALIANS CAPTURE TOBRUK

DECEMBER 7TH, 1941: JAPANESE BOMB PEARL HARBOR

DECEMBER 11TH, 1941: GERMANY DECLARES WAR ON THE US.

JANUARY 2ND, 1942: JAPANESE CAPTURE MANILA

JANUARY 31ST, 1943: GERMAN ARMY SURRENDERS IN STALINGRAD

DECEMBER 16TH, 1944: BATTLE OF THE BULGE BEGINS

FEBRUARY 19TH, 1945: US TROOPS LAND ON IWO JIMA

NEW ITEMS AT THE BERKSHIRE MILITARY MUSEUM

ONE FASCINATING ITEM ACQUIRED BY THE BERKSHIRE MILITARY MUSEUM IS A WWI US ARMY HELMET, PAINTED BY THE VETERAN WHO WORE IT, AFTER THE WAR. THE THIRD ARMY INSIGNIA IS PAINTED ON THE FRONT, AND IS SURROUNDED BY CAMOUFLAGE PAINT. THE TOP OF THE HELMET HOWEVER HAS A PICTURE OF A NURSE, WITH THE INSCRIPTION, "THE ROSE OF NO MAN'S LAND." "THE ROSE OF NO MAN'S LAND" WAS A SONG SUNG BY SOLDIERS IN THE TRENCHES ABOUT A BEAUTIFUL NURSE WHO WENT OUT EACH NIGHT INTO THE DEADLY AREA BETWEEN THE TRENCHES, CALLED NO MAN'S LAND, AND RESCUED THE WOUNDED MEN. IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT THE VETERAN WHO PAINTED THIS WAS WOUNDED, AND HE PAINTED THE HELMET IN HONOR OF THE NURSE WHO SAVED HIS LIFE.



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