

Hugh Jabez Titus

Private (Pte) 1747 Hugh Jabez Titus enlisted in the 50th Infantry Battalion in the 13th Infantry Brigade of the 4th Australian Division at Broken Hill on 9 March 1916. He embarked overseas on 11 April and disembarked in Egypt four weeks later, where he was taken on strength of the 50th Battalion on 30 May 1916.

The battalion embarked for France on 5 June and disembarked in Marseilles on 12 June, where they entrained for the north. After a quiet stint in the line at Fleurbaix in mid-July, the battalion moved south and entered the line in front of Pozieres on 12 August. They then participated in the 4th Division's unsuccessful assault on Mouquet Farm between 12 – 16 August, for the loss of 406 casualties, including 112 killed or missing.

After a short rest, the 50th Battalion re-entered the fight for Mouquet Farm on 2 September. They attacked the German positions and while some progress was made, they could not capture the objective. The effort cost the battalion another 79 casualties, one of whom was Pte Titus who sustained a gunshot wound to his shoulder on 4 September.

He was evacuated to the 11th General Hospital at Camiers the next day and discharged to the 4th Australian Division Base Depot at Etaples on 21 September, where he remained for three months. On 27 December, Pte Titus was transferred to England as he was deemed to be under aged, and he spent the next six months at the No.1 Command Depot in Wiltshire.

Pte Titus eventually returned to France on 11 June 1917, where he rejoined the 50th Battalion, in the field near Ploegsteert Wood, on 2 July. The battalion moved to Kemmel in early August, and it was here that Pte Titus was promoted to Lance Corporal (L Cpl) on 15 August.

The battalion moved east to Westhoek Ridge in late September in preparation for the assault on Polygon Wood set for 26 September. The attack, which commenced at 5.50 am and achieved all its objectives, was not without cost as the battalion sustained 178 casualties.

A fortnight later, the 13th Brigade, including the 50th Battalion, was in the support line at Zonnebeke, waiting for the 3rd Division advance on Passchendaele to commence, when they were hit by a German artillery bombardment which resulted in several casualties, one of whom was L Cpl Titus who was killed in action on 11 October 1917.

He was buried on nearby Broodseinde Ridge, but the location was subsequently lost, and he has no known grave.

Lance Corporal 1747 Hugh Jabez Titus is remembered on Panel 29 of the Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres, Belgium.

Name: Titus, Hugh Jabez	
Service Number	1747
Date enlisted	9 March 1916
Place enlisted	Broken Hill, NSW
Rank on enlistment	Private
Initial Unit	50 th Infantry Battalion
Date and ship embarked for overseas	11 April 1916 HMAT A60 <i>Aeneas</i>
Stated age/DOB (if known)	18 years 3 months
Place of birth	Maldon, Victoria
Marital status	Single
Occupation	Shop assistant
Religion	Church of England
Next of kin and address	Titus, Mrs Ellen, mother, 67 Argent Street, Broken Hill, NSW
Permanent address	67 Argent Street, Broken Hill, NSW
Appearance	Sallow complexion, brown hair, brown eyes, height – 5 feet 8 inches, weight – 7 stone, 11 lbs, chest measurement – 33 ½ inches
Final Rank	Lance Corporal
Final Unit	50 th Infantry Battalion
Theatres of war served in	Egypt, France, Belgium
Fate	Killed in action
Date and place wounded	4 September 1916 Mouquet Farm, France
Nature of wounds	Gunshot wound to shoulder
Date and place died	11 October 1917 Zonnebeke, Belgium
Cemetery details	No known grave. Commemorated on Panel 29 of the Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres, Belgium
Honours/medals	British War Medal, Victory Medal
Notes	Also listed on the Maldon State School Roll of Honor