

Frederick Charles Mason MM



Pte Frederick Mason's WWI medal set

Boer War veteran, Private (Pte) Frederick Charles Mason enlisted in the 7th Infantry Battalion at Queenscliff on 12 July 1915 aged 44 years. He embarked overseas on 29 September and disembarked in Egypt in late October, where he was taken on strength of the 7th Battalion on 7 January 1916.

With the expansion of the AIF in early 1916, he was re-allocated to the 59th Battalion on 24 February, before finally being taken on strength of the 58th Infantry Battalion in the 15th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division at Tel el Kebir on 15 March 1916.

The 58th Battalion embarked for France on 17 June and disembarked in Marseilles on 23 June 1916, where they travelled north by train to the south-west of Hazebrouck. They marched to Sailly-sur-la-Lys and into the front line for the first time, near Fleurbaix, on 11 July, where they came under a heavy German bombardment on the night of 15 July 1916. The severity of the bombardment is evident in the high number of casualties sustained by the battalion during that one night – 150 (including 47 killed or missing).

For his actions throughout the bombardment and the following morning, Pte Mason was subsequently awarded the Military Medal on 9 August 1916. His citation read:

“At PETILLON during operations on 15 – 16 July 1916, Private Mason (a stretcher bearer) was indefatigable in attending to wounded and in carrying them down to the dressing station, while the communication trench leading to it, was being shelled by the enemy. He was slightly wounded about the face and ears but did not report at Hospital merely dressing the injuries himself.”

He was evacuated sick to the 5th Division Rest Station with arthritis from 31 July – 21 August, then transferred by hospital train and admitted to the 3rd Canadian General Hospital at Boulogne between 25 August – 13 September, diagnosed with myalgia and chronic rheumatism in his left knee and ankle.

He then spent three months at the 5th Division Base Depot at Etaples before he was again evacuated sick with myalgia and rheumatism and was admitted to the 26th General Hospital between 15 – 18 December.

Pte Mason was eventually classified as unfit for military service and left France on 27 December. He landed in England the next day and spent the next few months attached to the Command Depots at Perham Downs and Weymouth, before he embarked for return to Australia on 4 May 1917.

Private 3055 Frederick Charles Mason MM disembarked in Melbourne on 2 July, where he was medically discharged from the AIF on 9 August 1917.



Frederick Mason's grave at Queenscliff Cemetery

Name: Mason, Frederick Charles	
Service Number	3055
Date enlisted	12 July 1915
Place enlisted	Queenscliff, Victoria
Rank on enlistment	Private
Initial Unit	7 th Infantry Battalion
Previous military service	Boer War (Imperial Light Horse) 2 years
Date and ship embarked for overseas	29 September 1915 RMS <i>Osterley</i>
Stated age/DOB (if known)	44 years 8 months (12/11/1869)
Place of birth	Daylesford, Victoria
Marital status	Married
Occupation	Labourer
Religion	Church of England
Next of kin and address	Mason, Mrs Clara, wife, Stokes Street, Queenscliff, Victoria
Permanent address	Queenscliff, Victoria
Appearance	Fair complexion, fair hair, grey eyes, height – 5 feet 9 inches, weight – 10 stone, 12 lbs, chest measurement – 38/40 inches
Final Rank	Private
Final Unit	58 th Infantry Battalion
Theatres of war served in	Egypt, France
Fate	Returned to Australia
Date and ship embarked for Australia	4 May 1917 HT <i>Themistocles</i>
Date discharged	9 August 1917
Nature of discharge	Medically Unfit (chronic rheumatism and overage)
Honours/medals	Military Medal, 1914-15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal
Notes	Member of Leopold Rifle Club. Died 24 June 1939. Also remembered on the Leopold War Memorial.