

## **Martin Rollins**

Private (Pte) 5441 Martin Rollins enlisted in the 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion in the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade of the 4<sup>th</sup> Australian Division in Geelong on 8 February 1916.

He embarked overseas on 4 April and disembarked in Egypt four weeks later.

He left Egypt on 7 June and disembarked on 14 June, where he travelled north and was taken on strength of the 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion at Naours on 20 July, one of 150 reinforcements received that day.

On 6 August, the 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion entered the line at Pozieres and participated in the unsuccessful assault on Mouquet Farm a few days later, at a cost of 400 casualties (87 killed), then left the line for a rest on 13 August.

Following the German withdrawal to the Hindenburg Line in March 1917, the battalion cautiously patrolled forward to ascertain the whereabouts of the enemy.

They reached Beugnatre on 27 March where battalion headquarters took shelter in an abandoned cellar. At 6.30 am on 29 March, a delayed German mine exploded, killing four men and wounding four others, one of whom was Pte Rollins who was buried alive for a period and in shock.

He rejoined the battalion on 1 April, which next moved into the front line and took part in the poorly planned assault on the Hindenburg Line at Bullecourt on 11 April. The 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion, in the vanguard of the attack, with no artillery or tank support, sustained an incredible 601 casualties, including hundreds killed and missing (most of whom became prisoners of war).

The 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion then moved north to Belgium in early June, where it helped to hold the ground captured after the Battle of Messines between 9 – 11 June, and it was here that Pte Rollins was killed in action during a German artillery bombardment on 10 June 1917, one of 50 battalion casualties.

His body was never recovered, and he has no known grave.

Private 5441 Martin Rollins is remembered on Panel 17 of the Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres, Belgium.

Name: Rollins, Martin	
Service Number	5441
Date enlisted	8 February 1916
Place enlisted	Geelong, Victoria
Rank on enlistment	Private
Initial Unit	14 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion
Date and ship embarked for overseas	4 April 1916 HMAT A14 <i>Euripides</i>
Stated age/DOB (if known)	24 years
Place of birth	Curlewis, Victoria
Marital status	Single
Occupation	Farm labourer
Religion	Church of England
Next of kin and address	Rollins, Mr John, father, "Sea View", Curlewis, Victoria
Permanent address	Curlewis, Victoria
Appearance	Fair complexion, brown hair, blue eyes, height – 5 feet 5 inches, weight – 9 stone, 11 lbs, chest measurement – 37 inches
Final Rank	Private
Final Unit	14 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion
Theatres of war served in	Egypt, France, Belgium
Fate	Killed in action
Date and place wounded	29 March 1917 Beugnatre, France
Nature of wounds	Shell shock
Date and place died	10 June 1917 Messines, Belgium
Cemetery details	No known grave. Commemorated on Panel 17 of the Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres, Belgium
Honours/medals	British War Medal, Victory Medal
Notes	Also remembered on the Leopold State School Honor Roll, Leopold & District Honor Roll, Leopold War Memorial and East Geelong St Albans & Moolap War Memorial.