

## Frank Walker Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM)

Rank and Name	Action for which recommended	Recommended by	Rank or Service	(To be left blank)
G.S.M.G. Frank WALKER	During the period from February to September 1917, inclusive, this M.C.O. has served continuously with his unit. During the occupation of the sector at Sundaumont, through the advance on Bazancourt, and finally during the heavy fighting at Bullecourt. His conduct was such as to deserve special recognition. At all times he has set a fine example and his courage and continued devotion to duty deserve special recognition.	M.S. Elliott, Brig-Gen., 15th Tnf, D.W.V. Brigade.		DCM
	Major - General, Commanding 6th Australian Division.			

Commonwealth of Australia Gazette 30 August 1918 on page 1784 at position 3

The above recommendation came from Brigadier- General Harold (Pompey) Elliot of the 15<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 5<sup>th</sup> Division for a Bendigo soldier who had served with Pompey Elliot from the landing at Anzac Cove.

The Bendigo Independent published the following letter from Frank Walker in mid September 1915.  
BANDSMAN'S LETTERS. A TURK SURPRISE.  
Mr. O. Flight of Mitchell Street, has received the following interesting letter from Private Frank Walker of Golden Square, an old member of Flight's Band. It bears the date 7/5/15, and reads: — "Probably you have read all about our doings in the papers, and, no doubt, with a little pride. Well, our first taste of war was landing under fire and such fire — shrapnel, machine gun and rifle. It was as thick as a hailstorm. The wonder is the losses were not greater. Well, we got out of the boats, that is, those who were not hit, and swam for shore for a bit of shelter from the lead, and to get our wind. Then we pushed on up the heights, driving the Turks back a couple of ridges. Of course, we were helped by the warships. And such help: I will not forget it, if I live to 100 years. Had a little exciting episode on the third day, and won't forget it in a hurry. Our trench was rushed by a small party of Turks, led by an officer. They practically caught us napping, having crawled up to close quarters in the scrub, and the next thing I knew was some Turks on the parapet, and the officer firing point blank into the trench with his revolver. He got my second in the shoulder. We dished them up in regular style. Now, if my luck is in, the officer's sword (a rather trumpery one) should reach home; a middy on one of his Majesty's ships promised me he would forward it at the first opportunity. Remember me to all the band boys. Bob Scott wished to be remembered to you."  
On 23/7/15 Private Walker wrote: — "The opportunity and a piece of writing paper came my way, so I took both — the first during a spell of a few days away from the noise (I have been off my oats, bully and biscuit a la canine), and the second because of its scarcity.' Our part of the contract should be well on the road to a finish, before the winter sets in; if so, it should have some bearing on operations in the western zone. I have been through (personally) three months of nerve tonics, including the first landing and charge, and also another charge before Achi Baba, the stronghold at the lower end of the peninsula, and have seen men go down in hundreds before rifle, machine gun and shell fire. Naturally I have had a few close shaves, but am still "all here;" at least, I think so. The Australians are never backward, and have kept their reputation here as well as at home. A good number of poor fellows have found a last resting place on Turkish soil, as the rows of graves will testify. I saw the final act re poor old Triumph, the boat that used to stand off and hammer blazes into the Turks near our position. Things were reversed one morning. The Turks were heavily reinforced one night in the middle of May, and made a general attack on the Australians at daybreak. They came right up to the trenches in places, and if you could have been carried over here and travel the trenches to view the sight of dead Turks, you would henceforth believe what can happen in war in the space of a few minutes. They were lying in bunches, in places overlying one another, so deadly had been the hail of lead showered at them. I have great respect

for the Turk as a fighter. He is very cunning, and, to give him his due, very fair also. He could teach the Hun points in civilised warfare, but, of course, there are the, semi-civilised among them who would take no prisoners. The Turks called for an armistice a week after their foolish charge to bury the dead, which was granted, and not too soon, as the smell from the bodies was overbearing along the front, the weather being so warm."<sup>1</sup>

Frank Walker was one of the first to enlist from Bendigo and served right throughout the entire A.I.F.'s time in the Great War leaving England in November 1918. His final rank was Regimental Quarter Master Sergeant. He returned to Australia in December 1918 having been granted '1914 Leave'.



Photo left – Frank Walker in uniform<sup>2</sup>



Photo right – AWM Collection J05587 - In a dugout of the 7th Machine Gun Section at the Gallipoli Peninsula are, left to right: 56 Private (Pte) Frank Walker, of Bendigo, Vic, who enlisted on 18 August 1914 and later served as a Quartermaster Sergeant with the 15th Machine Gun Battalion. He was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) on 1 January 1918; and 44 Pte Frank Stanley (Stanley) Bowman, of Essendon, Vic, who enlisted on 18 August 1914.

Regimental No: 56  
Place of birth: Bendigo  
Religion: Church of England  
Occupation: Blacksmith  
Address: 128 Moran Street, Bendigo, Victoria  
Marital status: Single  
Age at enlistment: 30  
Next of kin: Mother, Mrs Walker, 128 Moran Street, Bendigo  
Enlistment date: 18 August 1914  
Rank on enlistment: Private  
Unit name: 7th Btn, 59<sup>th</sup> Btn, Machine Gun Section – 5<sup>th</sup> MGC  
Embarked: Transport A20 Hororata on 19 October 1914  
Final Rank: Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant  
Fate: Returned to Australia 4 December 1918  
Date of death: 8 April 1953

*Letter written to Pompey Elliot to his sister-in-law Belle Campbell on September 19 1917, the day before he recommended RQMS Frank Walker for the Distinguished Conduct Medal – "The guns are booming like the waves on the shore again – drumming to call us to battle, and for many of us beating our funeral marches at the same time. If I could leave the old lady and the wee people a little more money I would go willingly, since men must die that we may be quit of the old Kaiser and his soldiers, and it may as well be me as the next man, and my poor boys have to face it all the time after time and it is up to the officers (even the highest) not to shrink from what their men have to face. But whether we shrink or whether we don't, we must each and all go into it with what courage we can muster and take 'such chance as chance shall send'"<sup>3</sup>.*

<sup>1</sup> The Bendigo Independent, Thu 16 Sep 1915 Page 5  
BANDSMAN'S LETTERS

<sup>2</sup> Photo on Geni Website -  
<https://www.geni.com/people/Frank-Walker/6000000022785187827>

<sup>3</sup> Pompey Elliot at War, In his own words. Edited by Ross McMullin. Scribe. p.276

