

26th Battalion
7th Brigade
2nd Division



Name, rank & number	6895 Pte Edward BENNETT
Reinforcement batch	20/26 th Bn
Date & place of enlistment	23 May 1917, Rockhampton
Age on enlistment	38yrs 10mths
Year & place of birth	1878, Ballarat
Occupation	Labourer
Religion	Roman catholic
Physical Description	5' 9 1/2" dark, brown eyes, dark hair
Marital status	Single
NOK & address	Sister, Mrs May Fosse, Richmond, Vic
Embarkation date and ship	14 Jun 1917 HMAT Hororata
Repatriation date & ship	6 May 1919 Karoola
Date of discharge	28 Mar 1920
Total service	2yrs 10mths
Overseas service	2yrs
Fate	Still alive 1934 aged 56

Sicknesses: 14 Aug 1917 4 days on ship, 26 Feb 1919 influenza
Crimes: 19 Jul 1917 on ship failing to appear, 20 Aug 1917 7 days detention on ship, 18 May 1918 abusing a superior officer, AWL 2 – 17 Aug 1918

Battle honours: France & Flanders 1916-1918, Hamel

Service Outline:

23 May 1917 Enlisted in the AIF
 14 Jun 1917 Embarked for England
 26 Aug 1917 Disembarked Plymouth
 1 Jan 1918 Joined the 26th Bn in Belgium for 7 months
 2 Aug-17 Aug 1918 AWL
 19 Aug – 6 Nov 1918 In safe custody compound
 6 May 1919 Returned to Australia, influenza and debility
 28 Mar 1920 Discharged from the AIF, MU

Edward Bennett was a 38 year old labourer living in Rockhampton when he enlisted quite late in the war in May 1917. In any case as was common with the older soldiers he had a healthy disrespect for authority, which is reflected on his charge sheet. After three months training in England he joined with the 26th Bn on New Years Day 1918. For the next 7 months Edward campaigned with the 26th who were not involved in any of the big stunts until Morlancourt and Hamel in June and July respectively. In August it was obvious that a huge offensive was about to be launched. Edward, now aged 40 did a runner and deserted his mates from 2nd August until 17th August thus missing the heaviest of the action. He was court martialled and sentenced to 50 days Field Punishment No.2 which ironically kept him out of the fighting until the end of the war. In February 1918 he was dangerously ill with the flu and was repatriated back to Australia. Curiously he was not discharged until March 1920 which may indicate that he was still undergoing medical treatment well after his return to Australia. The rest of his story is unknown.