

My grandfather on my father's side, Lawrence Pollett, served in Gallipoli alongside his brothers-in-law (my great uncles) Vivian Pollard, Edgar (Ted) Pollard, and Frederick (Fred) Pollard.



These soldiers are the sons of Emma and the late George Pollard. Their mother resides at 84 Seventh Avenue, Maylands,.

(Lawrence Pollett not pictured). Fred was killed at Gallipoli in the Battle of Lone Pine, and is commemorated at the Lone Pine Memorial:



The other three went on to serve in France: in particular, the Battle of the Somme.

Vivian was killed at the famous Windmill site (\*) just outside Pozières in August 2016. His body was never recovered. He is commemorated in Australian War Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux:



Lawrence and Ted were members of the elite Provost Corps (essentially military police), and did not see front-line action.

All three of my great uncles Pollard were awarded the 1914-15 Star, the British War Medal, and the Victory Medal (these were routinely awarded).

Ted returned to Australia after the WWI, and married Lawrence's sister (!) in 1919 (note the "cross-marriage").

Lawrence was repatriated to England in 1916. In January 1919 he was reported as absent without leave after failing to return from 75 days leave. He left his wife Caroline (my grandmother) with two young children (Dad and Aunt Jean) and no Army Pension.

I know from personal experience what it is like to lose a son in their 20s, and I feel a very close connection with the Great Grand Mother Emma, who lost two sons in WW1 (and was a widow at the time - widowed in 1910). She and my grandmother Caroline (who remarried in 1924) showed great courage in life, and left a lasting legacy.

Philip K. Pollett, November 2018

\*The Windmill site at Pozières was established as an Australian memorial in the 1930s at the suggestion of Australia's official war historian, Charles Bean, because, 'The Windmill site ... marks a ridge more densely sown with Australian sacrifice than any other place on earth'. Over seven weeks in 1916, at the Battle of the Somme, the Australian Imperial Force suffered 23 000 casualties, more than 6700 of whom died, in the countryside around the Windmill. On 11 November 1993 soil from the Windmill site was cast over the coffin of Australia's Unknown Soldier during his funeral at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.