



Charles Henry Butler
4th September 1916

Name: Charles Henry Butler

Service Number: 3119

Rank: Corporal

Unit: 52nd Australian Infantry Battalion

Service: Australian Army

Conflict: First World War, 1914-1918

Date of enlistment: 22 July 1915

Date of death: 4 September 1916

Place of death: Mouquet Farm, France

Cause of death: Killed in action

Age at death: 26

Place of association: Ulverstone, Tasmania,
Australia

Memorial: Villers-Bretonneux Memorial, France

To my brother

Charles Henry Butler
The brother of five
The friend of many
The fighter of freedom

Your future ripped from you
Your service will not be overlooked
Your bravery will not be forgotten

What a world we live in now
A world you could not believe
Peace is here to stay
Peace is yours to lay

We will remember them
We will remember you
Lest we forget

Jill Hoogenhout



A studio portrait of the Butler brothers, left to right: Herbert Butler, Morton Linthorne Butler, Alexander James Peebles, Charles Henry Butler, The soldier on the right is unidentified.

On the 4th September 1916, both Herbert and Charles were reported missing in action, and then classified as killed in action at Mouquet Farm. Their bodies were never to be found.



Studio portrait of Charles Henry Butler (left) and Morton Linthorne Butler (right).

Charles Henry Butler was born in Chudleigh, Tasmania in September 1890. Son of Joseph Thomas and Sarah Alice Butler he was one of three brothers who enlisted for World War One in 1915.

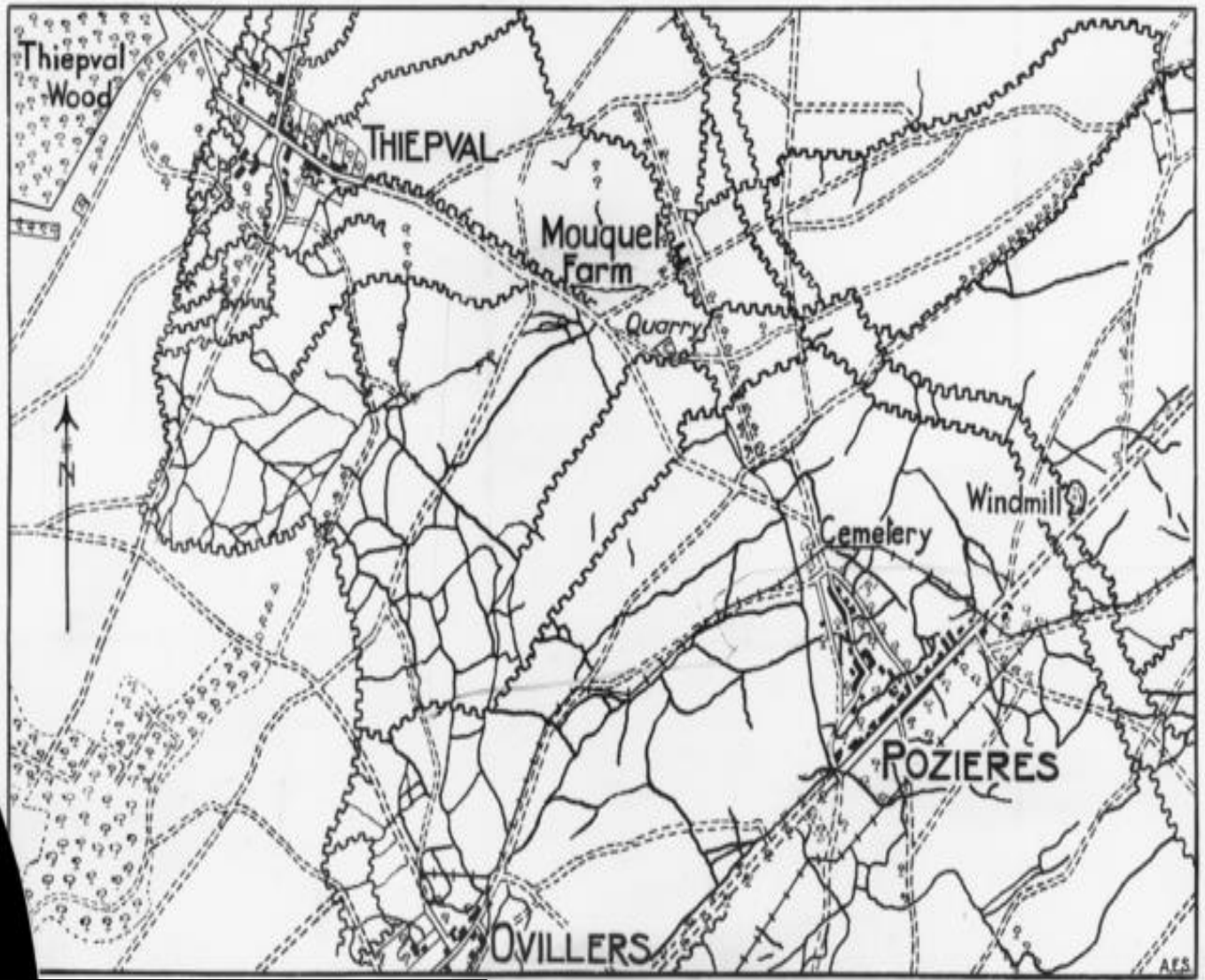
As a young man he lived and worked in Gawler with his family as a farm labourer and spent over two years in the Tasmanian Rangers 1st Battalion. This was the North-West contingent of the Tasmanian reserve infantry regiment.

On 22 July 1915, at the age of 25, Charles enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) with his brothers Morton (26), Herbert (24) and cousin Henry (21). The brothers joined one after the other, Charles given the service number 3119, Morton 3120 and Herbert 3126. They all entered the 12th battalion as sergeants.

Once all the brothers reached Alexandria, Egypt in March 1916 and before the AIF infantry battalions were sent to France, the AIF was reorganized, Charles, Morton and Herbert were transferred to the 52nd battalion. Their cousin, Henry (21), who had arrived in the Middle East a few weeks before them, was also transferred to the 52nd battalion. By 26 May 1916, both Charles and Herbert were promoted to Corporal.

Once arriving in France, the 52nd battalion were involved in numerous battles, the most infamous the battle of Pozieres which included the battle for Mouquet Farm. Charmingly known as "Moo-Cow" farm by the Australian soldiers, it was the site of nine separate attacks by three Australian divisions between 8 August and 3 September 1916. The farm stood in a dominating position on a ridge that extended north-west from the ruined, and much fought over, village of Pozieres. Although the farm buildings themselves were reduced to rubble, strong stone cellars remained below ground which were incorporated into the German defences. The attacks mounted against Mouquet Farm Australia over 11,000 casualties, and not one succeeded in capturing and holding it. The British advance eventually bypassed Mouquet Farm leaving it an isolated outpost. It fell, inevitably, on 27 September 1916.

On 4 September 1916, both Herbert and Charles were reported missing in action, and then classified as killed in action at Mouquet Farm. Their bodies were never to be found.



A map of the Pozieres Battlefront

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Morton was evacuated sick from France, and was eventually repatriated to Australia and discharged from the AIF on 18 September 1917 with a "dilated action of the heart".

For his service, Charles received the Victory Medal, British War Medal and the 1914/1915 Star. As Charles has no known grave, his name is inscribed at the Australian War Memorial in Villers-Bretonneux, France.



Mouquet Farm, April 2017



The plaque at Mouquet Farm, April 2017

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