



Norman Lindsay, *Fall in!*, 1918, lithograph printed in colour, 48.4 x 43.1 cm, AWM ARTV00027

Background image  
AWM A03406



AWM REL30251

# EDUCATION SERVICES 2014

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AWM REL36564

# Enlisting in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF)

*For good or ill, we are engaged with the mother country in fighting for liberty and peace.*

*Sydney Morning Herald, 6 August 1914*

Australia in 1914 was a young nation, its colonies having federated little more than a decade earlier. Its population of almost five million was derived largely from descendants of immigrants from the United Kingdom, and was spread across the country in the handful of developing cities and in the bush. With a culture firmly rooted in the traditions of the British Empire, Australia was still strongly tied to the mother country for trade and defence.

Many Australians followed news from abroad with interest as relations between the major European powers worsened during mid-1914. When Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August, Australia quickly pledged its support for Britain. As Andrew Fisher said shortly before he was elected prime minister, "Australians will stand beside our own to help and defend [the empire] to our last man and our last shilling".

In Australia, recruiting for the AIF began five days after war was declared. This was a force raised for overseas service for the duration of the war, and its members all volunteered to join up. Men had to be between the ages of 21 (or 18 with parental permission) and 45, with a high level of health and fitness.

Many Australians enlisted out of a sense of duty to the British Empire, which they saw as standing against German militarism. Australia was experiencing a period of high unemployment, and the soldiers' pay of a minimum of six shillings a day was an incentive to enlist. This was more than three times the wage of a British soldier, and led to Australians being nick named "six-bob-a-day tourists". Others enlisted early from a sense of adventure. Many believed that the war would be over by Christmas, and that it provided a good opportunity to see the world.

While the majority of those who enlisted were of British heritage, smaller numbers were born elsewhere. Many who had migrated to Australia in the late 19th century during the Gold Rush and subsequent industrial developments signed up as a way of showing loyalty to a new Australian homeland.

Indigenous Australians were not allowed to join up, but many still tried to volunteer, despite not being recognised as citizens in their own land. Many travelled hundreds of kilometres to enlist after being denied the chance at recruiting centres closer to their communities. It is estimated that at least 1,000 Indigenous Australians fought in the First World War.

Women also wanted to "do their bit", and around 3,000 nurses joined the AIF as part of the Australian Army Nursing Service.

As the war went on, casualty rates increased and the number of volunteers declined, so that by the middle of 1916 the AIF faced a shortage of men. Despite opposition from his own party, Labor Prime Minister Billy Hughes took the issue to the people in a referendum. Australians were asked to vote "yes" or "no" to granting the government the power to conscript citizens to serve overseas during the current war. The referendum provoked heated debate within communities. It was held on 28 October 1916, and the proposal for conscription was narrowly defeated. Enlistment for the war continued to fall, and in 1917 Hughes called for another referendum on the conscription issue. Divisions in Australian society along religious, social, and economic lines deepened even further during this second debate, but on 20 December 1917 the nation again voted "no" to conscription, this time with a slightly larger majority.

By the end of the war in 1918, around 420,000 Australians had enlisted; almost 39 per cent of the total adult male population. Approximately 330,000 served overseas. While Australia's contribution was relatively small as a percentage of those worldwide who served in the war, the death toll in the Australian forces was higher than most other nations of the Empire: 61,514 people died, or almost one in five. Many more returned home wounded in body and mind, and most would never fully recover.

## For discussion:

1. If you were eligible in Australia during 1914-1918, what would influence your decision to volunteer, or not, to go to war? (Think about the political events that led to the declaration of war, personal values and beliefs, patriotism, mateship, duty, shame, public pressure etc.)
2. Not every Australian who could have enlisted volunteered to do so. For what reasons might an eligible man have decided not to go to war? How do you think those who supported enlistment may have felt about those who did not volunteer? Were men who did not want to go to war unpatriotic?
3. What impact would the recruitment drive have had on women and families in Australia?
4. After the terrible losses sustained by the AIF in France during the fighting in 1916, the Prime Minister believed that voluntary enlistment would be insufficient to meet the demand for reinforcements in the force. Despite arguing that conscription was essential to winning the war, the vote was defeated twice by the Australian people. Why do you think the notion of conscription caused such a bitter public debate in Australia? (Look up this link to records held by the National Archive of Australia [www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs161.aspx](http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs161.aspx).)
5. Australia and South Africa were the only participating countries not to introduce conscription during the First World War. Research how conscription into National Service was implemented in Australia before and during the years of the Vietnam War. What effect did it have on Australian society then?

## Examine the artwork and photograph on the front of the poster.



Norman Lindsay, *Fall in!* 1918. AWM ARTV00027

## For discussion:

1. How has artist Norman Lindsay portrayed the soldiers in the recruitment poster, and why? (Think about how Australians might have been feeling about the war in 1918 when the poster was designed.)
2. What was the purpose of this poster? Who was it meant to persuade? Investigate the notions of propaganda, persuasion, volunteering, and advertising.
3. Why do you think the poster is titled "Fall-in"?
4. Would this poster have been effective in making more Australians join up? Why or why not? Do you think such posters were likely to unite or divide society?
5. Design your own recruitment poster. Think about what message you want to portray, and the best way to get that message across.
6. The men in the photograph are queuing outside a recruitment office in Sydney, waiting to enlist. How are they dressed? How do you think they might have been feeling about volunteering?
7. Imagine that a soldier, perhaps one of these men, was coming to your classroom to talk about his experiences after the First World War. What questions would you ask him?
8. No Australian soldiers who served in the First World War are alive to talk with us now. What other ways can you find out about them and their service?

Visit [www.awm.gov.au/education/resources/](http://www.awm.gov.au/education/resources/) to find more stories and classroom activities related to the theme of ANZAC diversity in the AIF.

## Enrich your students' learning

Before you visit the Australian War Memorial, book a facilitated program for your school group. Aligned to the Australian Curriculum: History, these programs provide a deeper learning experience for visiting students.

Facilitated programs are designed to suit your classroom and curriculum needs. Trained educators draw on personal stories represented by the displays in the galleries and by real artefacts. Make the most of your visit by discovering amazing tales of Australian wartime history and the significance of commemoration.

**Bookings are essential for all school groups** visiting the Memorial whether you are choosing a facilitated program led by Memorial staff or a teacher-guided tour.

All school bookings are made at [www.awm.gov.au/education/bookings](http://www.awm.gov.au/education/bookings).

For further assistance, and for your school password to book online, please email the Memorial's Education booking officer at [school.bookings@awm.gov.au](mailto:school.bookings@awm.gov.au).

Memorial Boxes contain objects and images that students can handle. They are available for loan in each state and territory. Go to [www.awm.gov.au/education/resources/box](http://www.awm.gov.au/education/resources/box) for loan details.

## Trooper Albert “Tibby” Cotter

Born in Sydney in 1883, Albert “Tibby” Cotter developed his cricketing skills while at school. At 18 he was playing for New South Wales, and two years later he was selected as a fast bowler in the Australian team. In a nine-year international career he played in 21 test matches.

When Tibby joined the AIF in April 1915 he was 31 years old. The enlistment of a former sporting champion was seen as powerful publicity for the AIF recruiting campaign.

Despite having limited experience riding horses, Tibby was accepted into the 1st Australian Light Horse Regiment. Being tall and strong, he was assigned as a stretcher-bearer, riding just behind the front line of troopers and dismounting to assist wounded horsemen. He served briefly on Gallipoli before transferring to the 12th Light Horse Regiment in the Middle East. There he was commended for his “fine work under heavy fire” during the second battle of Gaza. The official history records state that “he behaved in action as a man without fear”.

On 31 October 1917 the 4th Light Horse Brigade, of which the 12th Regiment was part, captured Beersheba after a cavalry charge. Tibby was there as a stretcher-bearer. At the end of the charge, as troops dismounted to engage the enemy, Tibby was shot at close range by a Turkish soldier. He died shortly after.

Trooper Albert Cotter was buried in Beersheba War Cemetery. His headstone reads: “In memory of our dearly loved son and brother”. Tibby’s older brother John had been killed in France just three weeks earlier. Their names are listed on the Roll of Honour at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.



▲ This recruitment poster was issued c. 1915 by the Win the War League. The text reminds the target audience that while Australians can enjoy recreational activities, men are still serving in the trenches overseas.

AWM ARTV00141



▼ This 1917 recruitment poster was designed to target footballers. Other posters in the series featured the sports of tennis, golf, and rowing.

AWM ARTV06291

## The McGillivray family

Donald and Caroline McGillivray, of Brunswick, Victoria, sent six sons to war. Five served with the AIF and one with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force.

The brothers enlisted over the course of three years from 1914 to 1917. James, aged 22, was the first to leave. As a member of the 7th Battalion he was among those who landed on Gallipoli on 25 April 1915, but by the end of that day he was listed as missing in action. It took almost two more months before his family was officially notified that he had been killed in action.

Eldest son William, aged 24, enlisted just a few weeks after James. As part of the 8th Light Horse Regiment, he also served on Gallipoli before transferring to the 5th Field Bakery Company. John, aged 18, and Archibald, aged 19, joined up in 1915 and both ended up in the 5th Field Bakery Company with their older brother until the end of the war.

Andrew enlisted in the New Zealand Army and saw service on the Western Front where he was wounded. He returned home a week before Christmas in 1918 after being classed as medically unfit from his wounds and the effects of gas.

Youngest son Alfred joined up in 1917, shortly after his 18th birthday. After initially serving in the 4th Light Horse Regiment, he transferred to 3rd Divisional Artillery Column towards the end of the war.

Mrs McGillivray died of influenza in February 1919. She did not live to see her four surviving sons return home from war.

▲ Private John McGillivray was the second youngest of the six McGillivray boys to enlist. He served on Gallipoli with the 23rd Battalion and then the 8th Light Horse Regiment. After Gallipoli he transferred to 5th Field Bakery Company. He returned home to Victoria in 1919. AWM DA06869



## For discussion:

1. Military service by multiple family members was not uncommon during the war. What emotional, social, and economic effects would this have had on families and the wider community?
2. Investigate the service records of one or more of these five brothers. Write a short story about one, including: full name, service number, date of birth, occupation prior to enlistment, next of kin etc. (Go to [www.naa.gov.au](http://www.naa.gov.au); click on *Name Search* for service records.)
3. Why do you think three of the McGillivray brothers ended up in the 5th Field Bakery unit? Would this have been more or less dangerous work than that done by other units? How important was their job?
4. Create an imaginary diary that Mrs McGillivray might have kept while her sons were away. Perhaps include a series of letters that she may have received from the boys during their time overseas.

▲ This Female Relative's Badge belonged to Mrs Caroline McGillivray. These badges were issued to the wife, mother, or nearest female relative of soldiers and nurses who served in Australian units overseas during the First World War. Bars were suspended below the badge for each additional serving family member. AWM REL39591

## Teacher's excursion checklist

Log on to [www.awm.gov.au/education](http://www.awm.gov.au/education) and choose the curriculum-based program that best suits the needs of your students.

Book your visit online and record your booking reference number. (A risk assessment guide is available from the NCETP website, [www.ncetp.org.au](http://www.ncetp.org.au))

Ensure that there will be adequate supervision by teachers and other accompanying adults: one supervising adult is to accompany each group of 15 students. Students are to remain with supervisors at all times when in the Memorial.

Before your visit, talk to your group about appropriate behaviour for a special national place of remembrance and commemoration.

Link your classroom activities to your impending visit. (See [www.awm.gov.au/education](http://www.awm.gov.au/education) for some ideas and resources.)

Bring your PACER paperwork for validation and stamping. (Visit [www.busywork.com.au/page/community-services/](http://www.busywork.com.au/page/community-services/) for eligibility)

If your group numbers change, please email the variation to [school.bookings@awm.gov.au](mailto:school.bookings@awm.gov.au), quoting your booking reference number. Cancellations should be made **no less than five working days** before your scheduled visit.

On arrival at the Memorial, please enter via the schools' entrance, which can be found on the map on the Memorial's website. Bottled water and cameras are permitted in the galleries but please **remember to leave all school bags on the bus**.