

724 Trooper Herbert Sherlock Gooch, 7th Light Horse

DOW 21 June 1915

No photograph in collection

Herbert Gooch - better known as "Tim" - was born near Tamworth in New South Wales around 1875. As a child he and his sister, Bertha, were taken by their parents to live in Brisbane after they gave up their station in the Upper Hunter district. Tim had a normal schooling in Brisbane and went on to work variously as draughtsman and sketch artist. He also gained fame as a cartoonist and caricaturist for newspapers and other publications.

Gooch served in the Boer War, leaving Australia in March 1901 with the 5th Queensland Imperial Bushmen Contingent. After the war he returned to Toowong in Queensland. He enlisted again shortly after the outbreak of the First World War, changing his age from 39 down to 32 in order to be more likely to gain admission to the Australian Imperial Force.

He was accepted and was initially posted to the 3rd Field Company Engineers. However, after a short time in training he was considered unsuitable for the role, and was discharged as "unlikely to become an efficient sapper". Weeks later he enlisted again, but this time was posted to the Light Horse, which suited him better. He sailed for Egypt in October 1914 with reinforcements to the 7th Light Horse Regiment.

On 20 May 1915 Tim Gooch was reported to have deserted from the force in Cairo. In fact, he had made his way independently to the Gallipoli peninsula, apparently not getting there soon enough through official channels for his liking. He arrived on 31 May 1915 and reported for duty to the regiment's headquarters on 1 June 1915.

The 7th Light Horse, although at that time predominantly involved in defence of the line, were still operating under very dangerous conditions. In those early days men were killed by snipers, stray bullets, shell-fire, and even over-zealous sentries. Three weeks after he reported for duty with his regiment, Gooch was seriously wounded by a gunshot to the neck. He was evacuated to the hospital ship Gascon, but died of his wounds and was buried at sea three miles off Gaba Tepe. He was forty years old.