

ADDRESS BY
HIS HONOUR MR TOM PAULING AO QC
ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY
ON THE OCCASION OF
REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE
Cenotaph, Darwin
11 November 2008

Today we come together to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice in what came to be known as the Great War.

We do so in the month, on the day and at the hour that the Armistice was signed ending that great conflict ninety years ago. We do so at this cenotaph which from its Greek roots *cenos taphos* means an empty tomb erected in honour of a person whose body is elsewhere.

There are fifty-two names here and with the helpful assistance of the National Archives we know quite a bit about their lives, their deaths and for most their final resting places.

Here recorded is the name of 2nd Lieutenant Charles Frederick Yeadon who had been a Sergeant Major but died on the day of his commission as an officer leading his troops into a trench in the Somme.

He was posthumously awarded the Military Cross. A great honour. His remains are interred in Plot 38, Row K, Grave 14 near

Beaumont Havel in France; the site of the last great battle of the Somme so brilliantly engineered by our own Sir John Monash that King George V knighted him in the field; the first such investiture for 200 years. The battle was the template for further victories including the Battle for Amiens, which led to the signing of the Armistice.

Also recorded here is the son of a predecessor of mine in the office of Resident as the Administrator's office was then called. The Resident was Justice Charles Edward Herbert who was here from 1905 to 1910. His son Charles Lloyd Herbert enlisted in April 1916 but had his start at the front line delayed by illnesses, including mumps. He died in Belgium in 1917. The archives record the effects his parents, then living in Papua received. They were a valise which included: one Franc note, photo books, one pair breeches, two pairs puttees, one Sam Brown Belt and a trench coat.

One can but guess at the emotions felt on that day with the body of your son at rest far away.

Then we come to the third and last name I will recall today.

This was Private Albert Phillipotts, with two lls and two tts. Almost 22 when he enlisted on 10 August 1915. He had worked as a tinsmith and was only 5 foot 4 1/2 inches tall. He was probably called Lofty. He left Australia in December 1915 and disembarked in Alexandria. He was likely a bit of a lad as he forfeited three days' pay for going AWOL at Seapeum army camp in Egypt.

He joined the fighting force in France on 12 June 1916 and was killed in action less than eight weeks later. We do not know where he was killed or where his remains lie. His mother Julia wrote to the army and I quote *Dear Sir, I drop this short note to let you know that I received the medal in good order and about the grave ... I asked two or three times and they said they did not know where he was killed.*"

The response came: *Dear Madam, I regret to inform you that it must reluctantly be concluded that the Graves Services have not succeeded in locating the soldier's last resting place...It is the intention of the authorities to perpetuate the memory of these fallen by means of collective memorials.*"

This cenotaph, like those in thousands of towns across this vast and proud nation, is the collective memorial to those who served and fell. Perhaps Private Phillpotts fell at Fromelles in France and the mystery might be put to rest there with the recently discovered graves. Many of you will have seen on the television last night our new Governor-General moved to tears at the Cobbers Memorial at Fromelles.

Far from that fearful field of battle, we remember the fifty-two who enlisted here and did not return.

We honour them for their sacrifice.

We will not forget.