

Thomas was born in Waverley, NSW, in 1895, the son of Thomas Pater Cawley and Elizabeth Cawley, nee Connelly). Both Thomas (1904) and Elizabeth (1901) both died when Thomas was quite young.

He enlisted in the AN&MEF on 11th August 1914, stating that he was a labourer, single and gave Mrs E M Challis (believed to be his foster mother) of Moriarty Rd, Chatswood as his next of kin. Thomas returned from Rabaul and was discharged, term expired, on 18th Jan 1915.

On 11th March 1915 he enlisted in D Company, 19th Battalion, regimental number 1156 and left with the battalion aboard the CERAMIC, departing Sydney 25th June 1915. The 19th Battalion landed at Gallipoli on 19th August and Thomas was wounded on 1st September, returning to duty on 28th.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P05301.199

Studio Portrait of Thomas taken in 1915.

On 16th April 1916 he was transferred to the 5th Light Trench Mortar Battery and was promoted corporal on 21st April. On 28th July Thomas was killed at Pozieres. In a interview, Cpl E B Dickson of the same Battery stated; - "on July 28th 1916 at Pozieres Cpl T. W. Cawley was working a gun, with a gun crew, when a shell struck the gun, and he and the rest of the gun crew were killed. Many of them were blown to pieces. I was a runner at the time between this gun and the next, which was

being worked by Cpl. Bernard and a gun crew. We buried all the remains we could find of Cpl. Cawley and his gun crew in the hole which had been made by the shell which killed them.”

Thomas was obviously very popular, one member of his unit describing him as – “..a quiet first class fellow and a great favourite with all.” And another saying “I knew Cawley well. He was a great character. We called him Old Tom.”

Thomas has no known grave but is remembered at the Australian Memorial at Villers- Bretonneux and on Panel 19 at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.