

## Philip Lewis AITKEN

Philip Lewis Aitken matriculated from Cumloden, St Kilda in 1895. He passed his final examination qualifying as a barrister and solicitor in September 1900, and was admitted to practice in May 1901. Prior to the outbreak of war, he practiced as a partner in the law firm Whiting and Aitken, with his brother.

Aitken enlisted on 2 December 1915. He embarked for England on 3 June 1916, with the rank of second lieutenant in the 37<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Promoted to lieutenant after reaching France in November 1916, he was wounded in action in the field in June 1917 at Messines, with a gun shot wound to the shoulder. He was seriously ill and transferred to England to recover.

He rejoined the 37<sup>th</sup> Battalion in France in July 1918, where the Battalion was active in the German Spring Offensive campaigns.

The 37<sup>th</sup> Battalion disbanded in September 1918, and Aitken joined the 38<sup>th</sup> Battalion in October 1918, and saw action in the 100 Days Offensive. Aitken was awarded the Military Cross in January 1919 for his "*sang froid* under fire". Aitken applied for early return to Australia in order to attend to legal firm matters. He was repatriated from England on HMAT *Orca* in February 1919. Aitken continued in his busy law practice, managing large trust funds and paying out sizeable distributions throughout the 1930s, under the firm name Aitken, Walker and Strahan. Aitken passed away aged 65 at his home in Toorak on 14 April 1944.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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Group portrait of officers of the 37<sup>th</sup> Battalion before the Battalion left for France in November 1916. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Philip Lewis Aitken is last man in the Back Row (L-R)