

Percival Blake Ridley LYNCH

Percival Blake Ridley Lynch was 42 years old when he enlisted in South Melbourne in July of 1915.

He had been home schooled but received his LLB from the University of Melbourne, and was practicing as a solicitor in Horsham by 1899. Contemporary newspaper reports mention him quite often both as a solicitor and a stage manager, overseeing some performances of the Horsham Lyric Group. He also joined the 2nd Australian Commonwealth Horse Squadron. Around 1903 he moved his practice to Melbourne.

He enlisted in the AIF in July 1915, in the recruitment drive following the heavy casualties of the Gallipoli landing and campaign. Lynch knew the reality of his potential fate and was part of the 29th Infantry Battalion, which embarked in November 1915.

Shortly after his arrival in Egypt he was transferred to the 5th Pioneer Battalion (AIF Engineers Unit). Pioneer Battalions were largely construction and engineering corps who constructed and maintained roads, railways, military fortifications and camps. He was shipped to France in June of 1916 and became part of a cadre of pioneer training battalions.

In October 1917 he was sent to AIF Headquarters in London and became an extra regimental staff sergeant in the records office. He remained at AIF Headquarters in London until the end of 1919.

Upon his return to Australia he was, for some time, a legal officer in the Department of Repatriation. He lived for a time in Sydney in early 30's but then appears to reside around Balaclava and work as a solicitor until his death in 1950 aged 80.



An Australian Pioneer Battalion constructing fortifications at the Western Front

Photo courtesy of <http://guysboroughgreatwarveterans.blogspot.com.au/2013/03/pioneer-battalions.html>