



In Memory of
Private
BERNSHAW LOMAX BEAUMONT

3709, 49th Battalion, Australian Infantry
who died age 19
on 5 April 1917

Son of William and Emily A. Beaumont, of Nixon Avenue, Ashfield,
New South Wales

Remembered with honour
VILLERS-BRETONNEUX MEMORIAL, FRANCE



PRIVATE
BERNSHAW LOMAX BEAUMONT
AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY
SERVICE NUMBER: 3709



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P06590.005

Bernshaw Lomax Beaumont was born at Moree, NSW, in 1897. He was a station-hand in Queensland when he enlisted at the age of eighteen, in Toowoomba, on 13 November 1915. He attended Toowoomba Grammar School for part of his education from February 1914 to December 1914. His father, William Beaumont, was his NOK and was working at “Combarngo”, Youlba (modern day Yuleba), Queensland. Bernshaw’s mother, Emily Augusta Beaumont, lived in Sydney, in the suburb of Croydon, although post-war both his parents were living at Ashfield in Sydney. Bernshaw attended school in Brisbane as well as Toowoomba Grammar. He was nearly 5’8” tall and weighed 140 pounds, with a fair complexion, brown eyes and brown hair. He wrote Methodist as his religious denomination.

Bernshaw began his training at Enoggera and was allotted to the 12th Reinforcements of the 9th Battalion before embarkation at Brisbane for the Middle East on 30 December 1915. Once in Egypt he became part of the massive reorganisation of the Australian infantry whereby the Gallipoli veterans were combined with thousands of new recruits, such as Bernshaw Beaumont, from Australia, who had yet to experience combat. The result was the “doubling” of the AIF. Bernshaw was assigned to the new 49th Battalion of the 13th Brigade, 4th Division. He was officially taken on strength by the 49th on 29 February 1916 at Zeitoun, Egypt.

The new battalions continued training until they were ready for re-location to France and the cauldron of the trenches of the Western Front. The 49th sailed for France in the second week of June. Bernshaw was with the battalion in the battles at Mouquet Farm in August and September, and survived the terrible winter of 1916-17. In the spring of 1917 the 49th was involved in the pursuit of the Germans to the Hindenburg Line.

From 22 February 1917 the German army conducted a strategic withdrawal across a wide part of the Western Front facing the British Army. The German plan was to shorten the length of front they might have to defend and thus make more efficient use of their resources. The new and stronger position they took up was known as the Hindenburg Line. As the withdrawal took place the British Army followed, maintaining contact and fighting the German rear-guards in a series of small battles known as the “Outpost Villages”. One of these was the fight at Noreuil in France in April 1917. Here, the 49th Battalion was heavily involved.

The village of Noreuil was captured in attacks that began on 2 April. On 4 April the 49th had pushed to a position beyond the village; but at dawn on the morning of 5 April a group of men were enfiladed by German machine gun fire. They suffered 53 casualties within a few minutes; among those “killed in action” was Bernshaw Beaumont, still aged just 19. Two other Toowoomba men were killed in the same incident: Lieutenant Darcy Maunder and Private George Lovejoy. The incident is described in the *Official History*, Vol. IV, p 221, by CEW Bean. The taking of Noreuil was the last step in the preparation of the major attack to follow a week later known as First Bullecourt. The slaughter of the Somme of 1916 was to be repeated in 1917.

Bernshaw Beaumont has no known grave as the area was fought over fiercely again in 1918. His name is on the Australian Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux.

Toowoomba Grammar School Archive Records state that he started school on 3rd February 1914 and left on 10 December 1914 and was part of the 1915 year group. The May 1917 School Magazine states that, *'Bernshaw Lomax Beaumont, only son of W. Beaumont, of Combarngo, Yeulba, was here from 1913 to 1915. Left Brisbane December, 1915. Fell in action in France April 5th, 1917. Age, 19 years.'*

External Links:

[National Archives of Australia Military Records](#)

[CWGC](#)

[Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing](#)

[Australian War Memorial Honour Roll](#)

[AWM4 unit war diaries Item No 23/66/11 49TH BN April 1917](#)