Today I would like to pause and pay our respects to:

4/1081A & 4/541A 2nd Cpl Lionel William Baird **Hall.**

Lionel's early years were marked by academic pursuits at Victoria University, where he honed his intellect from 1909 to 1912. A man of both scholarly and resilient spirit, he would later channel his energies into a different realm, one of service and bravery.

Prior to enlisting in 1914, Lionel found himself amidst the rugged terrain of the King Country, contributing his skills to a Government Survey party. Little did he know, this would be the prelude to a remarkable odyssey that spanned continents.

From October 16, 1914, to December 3, 1914, Lionel embarked on a transformative journey with the Main Body Divisional Signalling Company, sailing across seas to reach the shores of Suez, Egypt.

In a letter home, he wrote from Zeitoun Camp, Egypt, on 6th January 1915*. “Oranges here are very cheap — we insist on getting four for half a piastre (1¼d). Vegetables and tomatoes are also very cheap, but as it is hardly safe to buy from the natives anything that you neither peel nor cook, I do not trouble the tomatoes much. Meals in town are on the whole, more expensive than in New Zealand, though special lines are cheaper. Butter is usually entirely lacking — is expensive and of poor quality. Our New Zealand supplies having run out, butter is no longer issued with our rations.*

*“Training work has been going on more satisfactorily and interestingly lately, partly owing to ever keen rivalry. We have been working the cultivated (irrigated) land to the west of the camp and are incidentally seeing rather more of the native life than the average tourist.”*

His mettle was tested early on, as he participated in the landing at Gallipoli and remained steadfast through subsequent operations.

The theatre of war expanded as Lionel crossed into France with his division. Tragically, on the 12th of June, 1917, amidst the thunderous echoes of the Battle of Messines, Lionel's journey was cut short by the cruel hands of war, passing away from wounds received in the battle.

Lionel's service encompassed the arid landscapes of Egypt, the perilous cliffs of Gallipoli, and the fields of France. His devotion to duty became a beacon, casting a light that resonated throughout the entire company. His quiet, cheery manner and selflessness endeared him to all who had the privilege of serving alongside him.

He has been laid to rest at Motor Car Corner Cemetery, Comines-Warneton, Hainaut, Belgium, A 13.

RIP Lionel

Thank you for your service

E kore warewaretia

Will never forget