

STUDENT RESOURCE and ACTIVITY PAGES



Introduction for Students



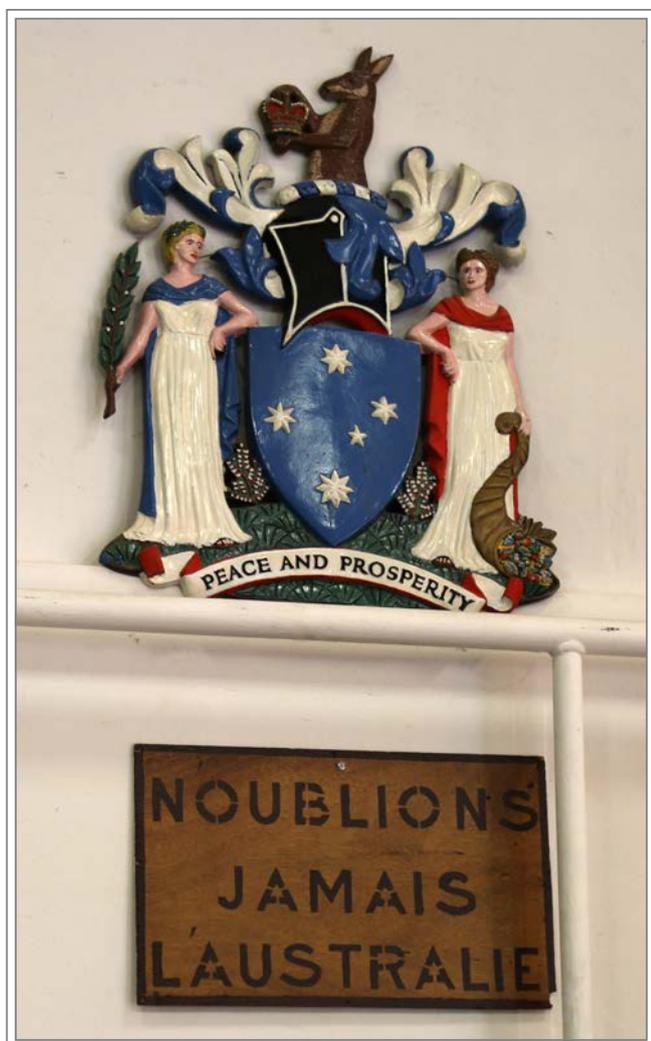
What does World War 1 have to do with you today?

Here are two signs, each in a different country.



A sign on a memorial in Australia

(© Ryebuck Media)



A sign on a schoolroom wall in Villers-Bretonneux France. The symbol is the coat of arms of the state of Victoria in Australia.

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Why would there be a sign in France, especially in a school hall, asking people to never forget Australia? And why would there be a sign in Australia with the name of a place most Australians have never heard of?

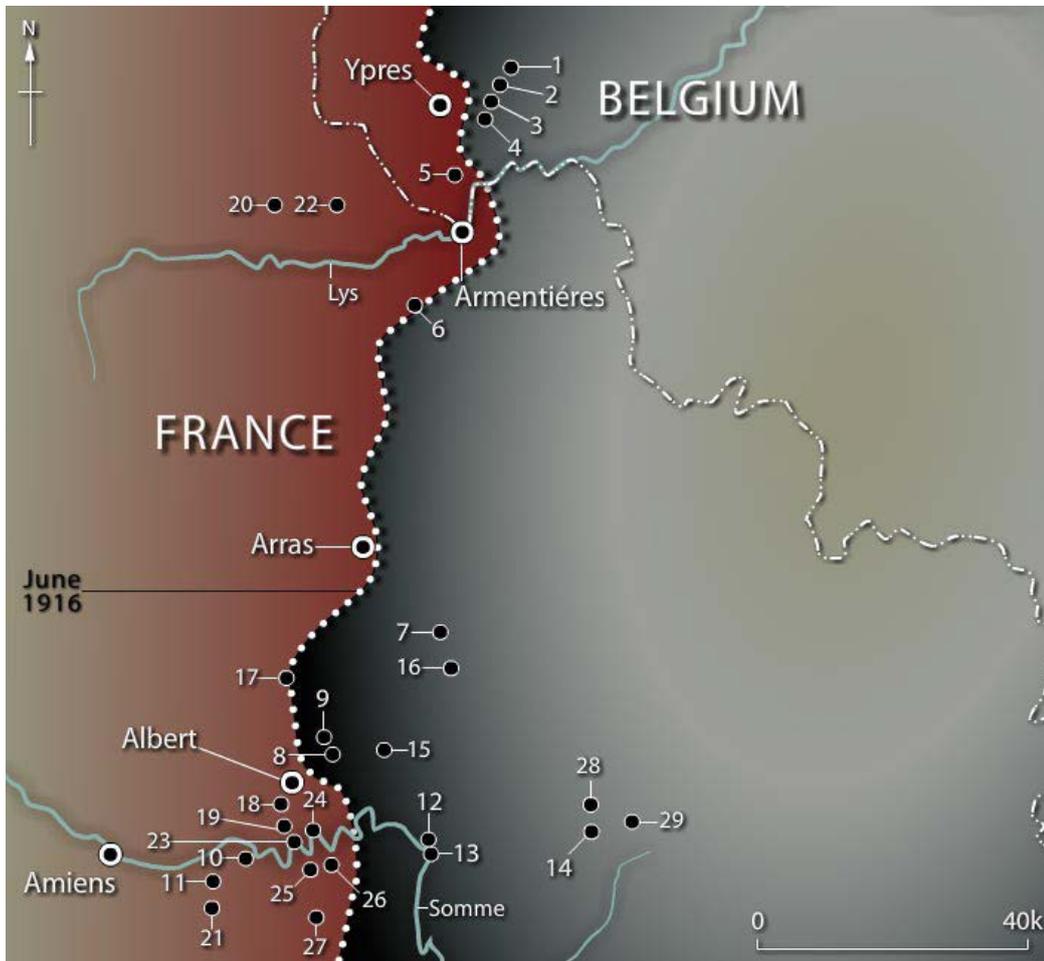
Between 1916 and 1918 nearly 300 000 Australian soldiers and about 3000 nurses served on the Western Front of France and Belgium.

This meant that many of them met and interacted with local families, were often billeted in farmhouses and barns, visited Paris as tourists, and walked or were driven through parts of the French and Belgian countryside that were within the British sector.

Some 46 000 of them died and more than 132 000 were wounded. The dead are still there – most of them in marked or unmarked graves in local war cemeteries, or in about 11 000 cases still buried beneath the soil in unknown places where they fell.

There is now an Australian Remembrance Trail along the Western Front, commemorating twelve sites in Belgium and France that featured in the Australian military experience of the war.





<http://www.westernfront.gov.au/australian-remembrance-trail/where-australians-fought.php>

NO.	BATTLE LOCATION
1.	Passchendaele
2.	Broodseinde
3.	Polygon Wood
4.	Menin Road
5.	Messines
6.	Fromelles
7.	Bullecourt
8.	Pozières
9.	Mouquet Farm
10.	Le Hamel
11.	Villers-Bretonneux
12.	Mont St Quentin
13.	Péronne
14.	Bellenglise
15.	Gueudecourt
16.	Lagnicourt
17.	Hébuterne
18.	Dernancourt
19.	Morlancourt
20.	Hazebrouck
21.	Hangard Wood
22.	Merris
23.	Etinehem
24.	Bray
25.	Proyart
26.	Chuignes
27.	Lihons
28.	Bellicourt
29.	Montbrehain

Where Australians fought on the Western Front.

The signs are evidence of the impact that the Australians had on France and Belgium, the Western Front, and that France and Belgium had on them and their families back in Australia. This connection, made nearly 100 years ago, creates a unique way for today's young people of Australia, France and Belgium to help each other find out about that shared experience from the past. You can find out about your soldiers and community, and share that with your partner school. In turn, you will learn about their soldiers and their community.

This knowledge and sharing of the past will also create living links today. Every community affected by the war 100 years ago still has some traces of the war visible – whether through memorials, cemeteries, place names, library collections, local history records, museums. So our communities can still speak to each other about the war and we can still listen to and share what they have to say.

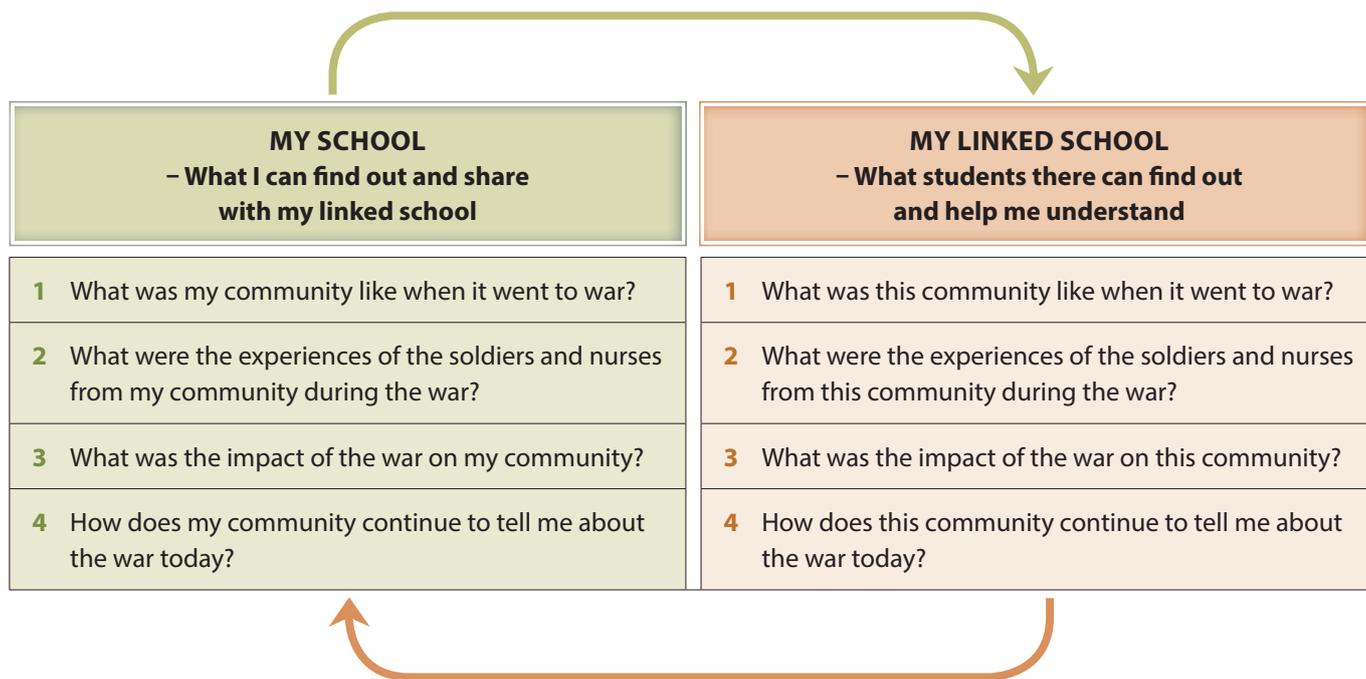
But the strongest link is people. By using that link, that connection, forged 100 years ago, to talk to each other now, to share our knowledge of who we are and how we live now, and how we remember the past, we can help create living connections that break down our national focus and help us to be good world citizens.



(AWM E00439)

Australian soldiers in a Western Front trench.

This linking can be effectively done by focusing on these four key enquiry questions:



That's your task: to find answers to those four questions by linking with another school in a common curriculum task. This Centenary Schools Link resource provides you with information, evidence and activities to enable you to explore these four enquiry questions, to learn about your own community, to share that knowledge with others, and in turn then to learn from that other community about the common and shared experience of the soldiers and civilians during the First World War.

