



In The Footsteps Of Private Lynch

Will Davies

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Retrace Australia's role in the First World War from the trenches of *Somme Mud* to the wider war on the Western Front.

Imagine this. You are a country boy and just eighteen. The war has been raging for two years and because of your age, you have not been eligible for enlistment. Your mates, older by a few months are joining up and disappearing to the great adventure across the world in Europe. And there is forever talk of the need for reinforcements, for men like you to join up and support the Empire, Australia and your mates in the line.

Such was the case for Edward Francis Lynch, a typical country boy from Perthville, near Bathurst. When war was declared in early August 1914, he was just sixteen and still at school, but like a generation of young males in Australia, there was something to prove and a need to be there. Will Davies, editor of the bestselling *Somme Mud*, meticulously tracked Lynch and his battalion's travels; their long route marches to flea ridden billets, into the frontline at such places as Messines, Dernancourt, Stormy Trench and Villers Bretonneux, to rest areas behind the lines and finally, on the great push to the final victory after August 1918.

In words and pictures Davies fills in the gaps in Private Lynch's story and through the movements of the other battalions of the AIF provides impact and context to their plight and achievements. Looking at these battlefields today, the pilgrims who visit and those who attend to the land we come to understand how the spirit of Australia developed and of our enduring role in world politics.



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