



Sergeant Percy Statton

Unit: 40th Battalion, 10th Brigade, 3rd Division
Date & Place of Action: 12th August 1918,
Proyart, France.

Percy Statton was born on 21st October 1890, in Beaconsfield, Tasmania. He attended Zeehan State School. When he enlisted on 1st March 1916, Statton was married and was working as a farmer at Tyenna.

Statton was posted to the 40th Battalion, joining them for training in Britain in July 1916. In November 1916 Statton's battalion was posted to France. In May 1916, Statton had been appointed as lance corporal, and in November was promoted to corporal. On 16th January 1917, Statton was made temporary sergeant, the rank being confirmed on 23rd April 1917.

In June 1917, Statton completed actions under heavy artillery and machine gun fire for which he was awarded the Military Medal. In October Statton was wounded, and in June 1918, Statton was gassed. On 12th August 1918, Statton earned the Victoria Cross for the following actions:

"At about 6pm the advance of the 37th Battalion, on the left flank, was held up by machine-gun fire. A party of thirteen men sent against the first enemy gun was virtually wiped out. Statton supported the 37th's attack with two Lewis guns. When he saw the attack fail he got three men to follow him and, working along the bank of the Chuignes road, got to within seventy-five metres of the strong point. Statton, revolver in hand, then led his men across the seventy-five metres of open ground into the German trench. The party disposed of two guns and their crews and, at the second gun, Statton shot the whole crew, except one, with his revolver. As he had expended all his ammunition he had to grab the remaining German's rifle and use it to bayonet him. The small party then dashed towards the next two guns. The enemy retired only to be killed by the two Lewis guns Statton had sited earlier. Another enemy gun opened fire killing one member of the party and wounding another. Statton and the third man crawled back to their own lines as the 37th moved forward. That night he went out and brought in the wounded man and the body of the other."

Statton was presented his Victoria Cross by King George V on 7th June 1919 at Buckingham Palace. Following his return to Tasmania after being discharged from service on 18th January 1920, Statton worked in the timber industry. In 1934, Statton performed notable rescue work during the Derwent Valley bushfires. In later life, Statton lived at Onse, where he was a local councillor. He died on 7th December, 1959 in Hobart and was accorded a full military funeral.