



CEW Bean Prize Citation – 2011

Leah Riches

'Remembering Fromelles: a century of private grief and public politics'

Leah Riches' Honours thesis, *'Remembering Fromelles: A Century of Private Grief and Public Politics'* examines the enduring legacy of Australia's first major engagement on the Western Front. Its scope, 1916 to today, is ambitious for an Honours thesis as is Ms Riches' painstaking search of official and private records, media reports and program of interviews. Her work highlights the role Army has played in recovering and commemorating the war dead, from the exhaustive search of War Graves Units in the immediate aftermath of the war, to the recent deliberations of the National Committee convened to investigate Pheasant Wood.

This thesis enlarges our understanding of a formative moment in the making of the First AIF. It alerts us to the human cost of Fromelles and illuminates the complex politics surrounding its commemoration. Beautifully written and masterfully argued, Riches' thesis demonstrates the skill, imagination and careful attention to detail at the heart of scholarly inquiry.

CEW Bean walked the killing fields of Fromelles on the very day the Armistice began. *'Remembering Fromelles'* is a worthy recipient of the prize bearing his name.