

Armitage
23.4.17

THE LATE CAPTAIN H. E. S. ARMITAGE.

South Australia has lost another promising young man by the death in action of Captain (Acting Major) Harold Edwin Salisbury* Armitage, the eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Armitage, schoolhouse, Millicent. The young man

was born at Norwood on November 11, 1894, and had a successful career at the Houghton Public School, School of Mines, and Adelaide High School, where he passed the junior, senior, and higher public examinations. He entered the University, and was completing his first year in the B.A. course when he answered the call to duty. In football he played for the Houghton, St. Bartholomew's, and A.H.S. teams, and belonged to A.H.S. and University crews. Beginning with the cadet system he soon showed his ability for military work, and before he was 20 years old had qualified for a commission in the 79th Regiment. At the outbreak of war he endeavored to resign his commission to enlist with the first contingents, but was refused permission. In December he entered a training school at Brighton, passed top in the examination, and was sent on to Oaklands to help train reinforcements. A regulation that no officer under 23 was to be taken was specially relaxed on account of his abilities, and on April 20, 1915, he left Adelaide for the front, and in five weeks' time he was in the firing-line at Gallipoli. From that time till the end came, with the exception of seven days' leave in England, he was in all the actions of Anzac, Gallipoli, and the Somme. He gained his first lieutenantcy at Anzac in August, 1915, and for the last three months there was acting captain. After a short stay at Lemnos the battalion returned to Egypt and took part in work in the Sinai Desert. When the 4th Division was formed many officers and men from the battalion were transferred to the 50th, and among them was "Rollo," who received his captaincy in March, 1916. After further training in Egypt the new division reached France in June, and at once moved up to take part in the great push of July. August saw it engaged in fierce fighting round Pozieres and Monquet Farm, where Captain Armitage distinguished himself by his courage and readiness of resource. Lately he had been acting major, and an appreciation of his abilities is conveyed in a letter of a Millicent soldier, Sergeant Gurr, to a resident, in which he states:—"Harold Armitage is doing splendid work. He is a major now, and the men of his company all love him and swear he is the best officer in the A.I.F." The end came at Bapaume, where, as Glib's and Captain Beau say, "the Australians were foremost," and foremost among them probably were the battalion and Captain Armitage. A sad circumstance is that his C.O. had just promised him leave in order to meet his younger brother, Midshipman G. W. T. Armitage, who expected to reach England about that time. He fell gloriously just as the dawn of victory was breaking on the Western front.