

**St. George's Churchyard,  
Fovant, Wiltshire  
War Graves**



*Lest We Forget*

**World War 1**



**3953 PRIVATE**

**A. F. GREIG**

**1ST AUSTRALIAN PIONEERS**

**22ND JULY, 1917 Age 22**

## Alexander Fiddes GREIG

Alexander Fiddes Greig was born on 3rd May, 1895 at Brewarrina, NSW to parents Peter Cormack Greig and Ada Methven Greig (nee Mackellar).

Ada Methven Greig, mother of Alexander Greig, died on 28th May, 1906 at Tangoa, New Hebrides.

Peter Cormack Greig, father of Alexander Greig, was murdered by natives on 7th October, 1908 at New Hebrides. His sisters Elizabeth Marion Greig & Ada Joyce Greig were also murdered on 7th October, 1908.

Newspaper articles on the incident:

### **NEW HEBRIDES MURDERS**

*Mr Peter Greig and his two daughters have been murdered by natives at the island of Santo, in the New Hebrides. The victims were Mr Peter C. Greig, aged 51; Miss Ada Joyce Greig, 17; and Miss Elizabeth Marion Greig, 16. A son, Alexander Greig, aged 14, succeeded in escaping to a place of safety. Mr Greig, who formerly resided at Dulwich Hill, was one of ten Australian settlers at the Annandale settlement at South Santo.*

(Lithgow Mercury, NSW – 28 October, 1908)

### **AN ISLAND MASSACRE**

*Sydney, Monday – Later reports to hand regarding the murder of Mr Peter Greig and his two daughters at their plantation on the island of Santo show that Mr Greig was attacked by bush natives while he was having tea. His skull was split open with a tomahawk. Miss Ada Greig was shot with her father's gun and her sister, Elizabeth, hacked to pieces with a tomahawk.*

*A punitive expedition landed at the scene of the massacre from H.M.S. Prometheus and a French cruiser.*

*Mr Greig formerly managed a station in the Collarenebri district, where his youngest daughter still resides.*

(Clarence and Richmond Examiner, Grafton, NSW – 3 November, 1908)

Alexander Fiddes Greig went to Scotland & was living with his grandmother at Sunnyside, Fyvie in 1911.

Alexander Fiddis Greig, aged 18 years, a Gardener from Sydney, Australia, enlisted with Gordon Highlanders, British Army on 7th November, 1913 at Aberdeen, Scotland. He was given a Service number of 1277 & his next-of kin were listed as Uncle – Charles Grey, Sunnyside Fyvie & Aunt – Elizabeth Grey. His younger brother in NSW, Australia was also listed but not named.

Private Alexander Greig was posted to Depot on 13th November, 1913. Pte Greig was admitted to Aberdeen Hospital on 24th January, 1914 with Bronchitis then from 21st February, 1914 with Pneumonia. He was discharged on 23rd March, 1914. Pte Greig was posted to 1st Gordon Highlanders on 22nd May, 1914. Private Greig was sent to Devonport Hospital on 19th July, 1914 to 1st August, 1914 with a wound to his thumb. Private Greig was transferred to 5th Gordon Highlanders on 8th August, 1914. Private Greig embarked from Southampton, England on 8th October, 1914 to join Expeditionary Force in France. He was admitted to Hospital at St. Omer on 16th November, 1914 & transferred by Ambulance Train on 17th November, 1914 with "Septic Exzema". Pte Greig was transferred to England on 26th November, 1914.

Private Alexander Greig was discharged on 26th May, 1915 as he was "no longer physically fit for War Service under para 392 XVI Kings Regulations". He had served for 1 year & 201 days.

Alexander Fiddes Greig was a 21 year old, single, Postal Assistant from Sydney, NSW when he enlisted on 13th January, 1917 with the 1st Pioneer Battalion, 10th Reinforcements of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3953 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Miss Majorie Francis Greig, of Beethoven, Lowena, NSW.

Private Alexander Greig was posted to Camp at Recruits Showground Camp, Sydney on 22nd January, 1917. He was transferred to 1st Battalion Pioneers on 23rd January, 1917.

Private Alexander Fiddis (Name as per Nominal/Embarkation Roll) Greig embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Anchises* (A68) on 24th January, 1917 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 27th March, 1917. Private Alexander Greig had been admitted to the Ship's Hospital while at Sea from 21st to 24th March, 1917.

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private Alexander Greig was marched in to Pioneer Training Battalion from Australia on 27th March, 1917.

Private Alexander Greig was sent sick to Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire on 5th April, 1917.

Private Alexander Fiddes Greig died at 2.55 am on 22nd July, 1917 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire, England from Tubercle of Lung.

A death for Alexander F. Greig, aged 22, was registered in the September quarter, 1917 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire, England.

Private Alexander Fiddes Greig was buried on 24th July, 1917 in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England, – Plot number II. B. 6. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Greig - *Coffin was good, Oak with brass mounts. A number of his comrades marched to the funeral, and a wreath was placed on the grave, which was subscribed for by his comrades.*

Private Alexander Fiddes Greig requested in his Will, dated 23rd January, 1917, that all his property be bequeathed to his Aunt – Isobel Alice Tripp of “Beethoven”, Rowena, NSW, wife of Thomas Tilley Fripp. He requested that his property be converted into money & the residue be divided between his sister Marjorie Frances Greig & his brother Robert Stevenson Greig.

The personal effects of the late Private Alexander Fiddes Greig were sent to Miss I. A. Fripp, as per his request in his Will.

Base Records contacted Miss M. F. Greig, “Beethoven”, Rowena, NSW, sister of the late Pte A. F. Greig, in May, 1921 & again on October, 1922 asking if the parents of the late Pte Greig were still alive & if not were there any nearer blood relatives than herself due to the “Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918” which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc. Miss Fripp (an aunt) replied in May, 1923 advising that the parents were deceased & a brother – Robert Stevenson Greig was alive & his address at Minnie Downs Station, Queensland was given. She also advised that Miss M. F. Greig – now Mrs A. Cameron had replied previously to the request but the letter must have miscarried. Mrs A. Cameron wrote to Base Records in May, 1923 stating she was the next-of-kin & she had already received 2 medals. After further communications Base Records were advised that the medals received had been on account of Pte Greig's previous service with the Gordon Highlanders

Base Records contacted Mr R. S. Greig, brother of the late Private A. F. Greig, asking if he had any objections to his sister – Mrs Cameron being awarded the War Mementoes. Mr R. S. Greig replied that he had no objections.

Private Alexander Fiddes Greig was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal – on account of his previous service with the Gordon Highlanders in the British Army. His medals were issued by the United Kingdom. Private Greig was entitled to the British War Medal only on account of his service with the Australian Imperial Force as he did not enter a theatre of war, however only one set of War Medals were issued to each soldier so the Dept. of Defence in Australia cancelled the issue of his medal as the medals had already been received by his sister – Mrs A. K. Cameron (previously Miss M. F. Greig). A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Greig's sister – Mrs A. K. Cameron. (Scroll & Plaque sent August, 1923).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Alexander Fiddes Greig – service number 3953, aged 22, of 1st Australian Pioneers. He was the son of Peter Cormack Greig and Ada Methven Greig.

Private A. F. Greig is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 171.

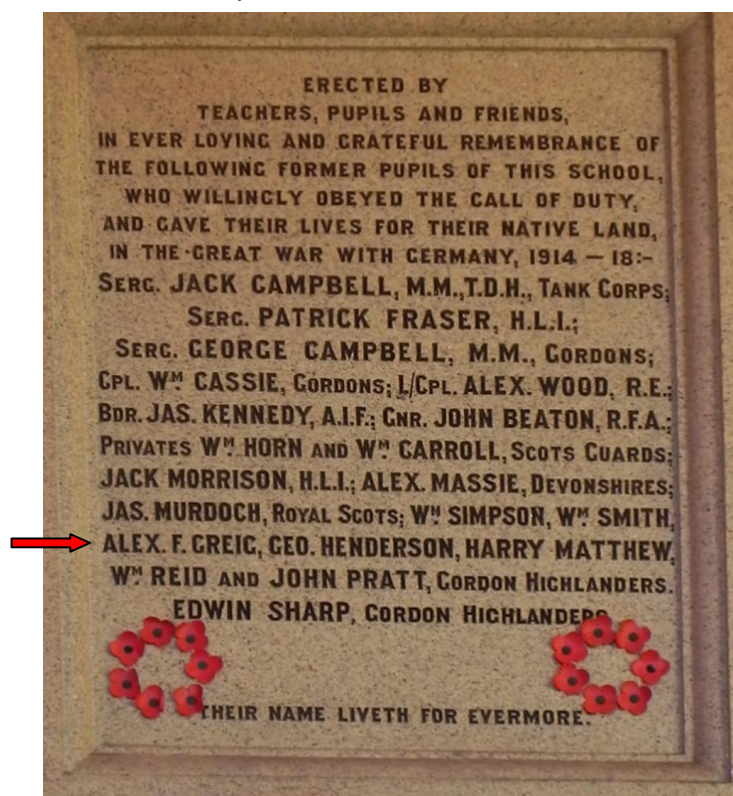


*(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)*



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

Alex. F. Greig is remembered on the Roll of Honour for former Pupils on Woodhead School, which is located in Woodhead Community Centre, Woodhead, Fyvie, Scotland.



**Roll of Honour for former Pupils on Woodhead School** *(Photo from War Memorials Online – Helen J. Taylor)*



Alex F. Greig is remembered on the Fyvie War Memorial, located at Beech Row, Fyvie, Scotland.



Fyvie War Memorial (Photos from War Memorials Online – Leslie)



(73 pages of Private Alexander Fiddes Greig's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

*Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives*



## **Newspaper Notices**

### **OFFICIAL CASUALTY LIST**

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF ILLNESS

Pte ALEX. FIDDES GREIG, Rowena, 22/7/17

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 20 August, 1917)*

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### **LEGAL NOTICES**

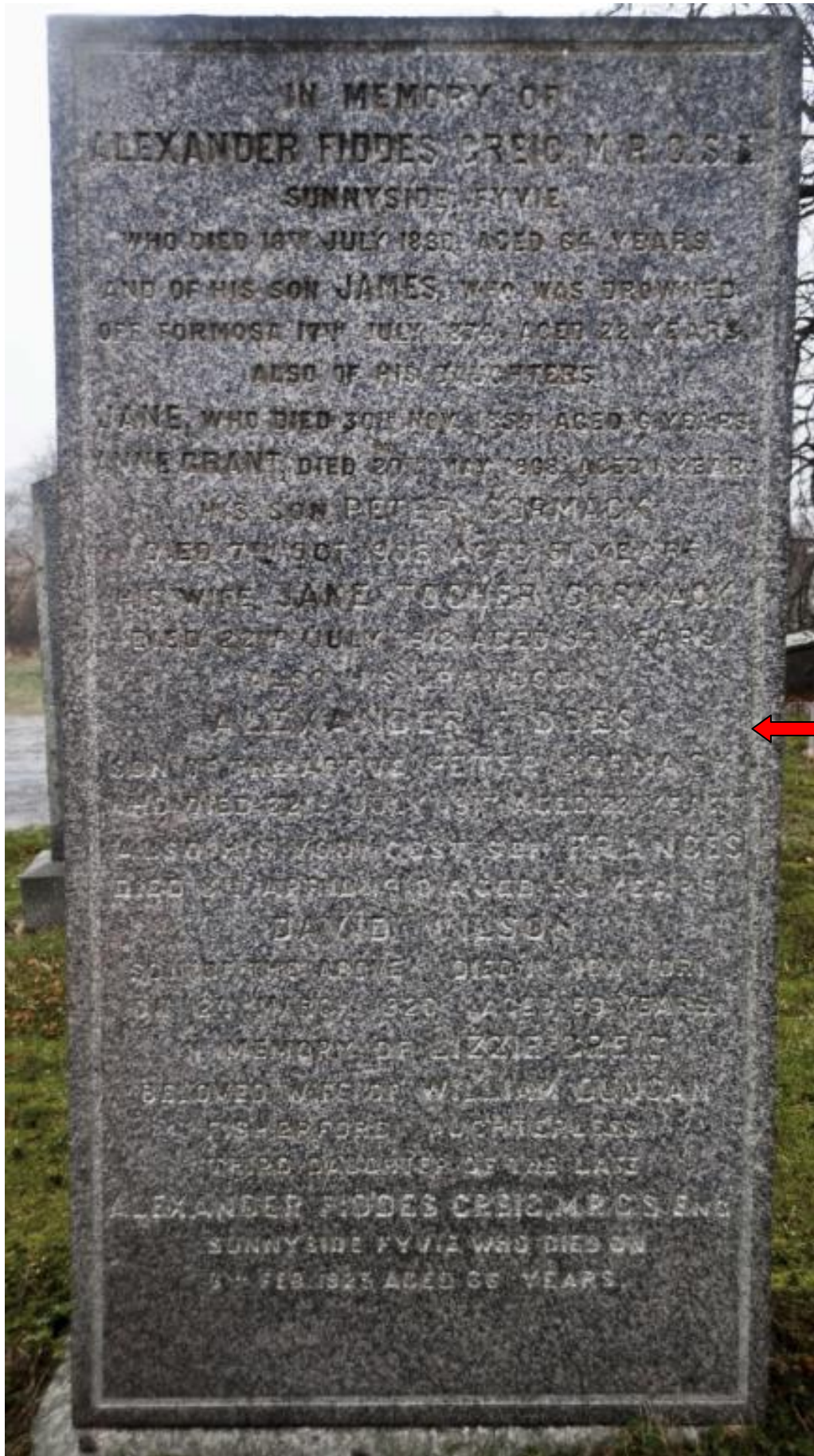
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF NEW SOUTH WALES -- Probate Jurisdiction. –In the Will of LAEXANDER FIDDES GREIG, late of Milton-terrace, Dawes Point, Sydney, in the State of New South Wales, and of the Australian Imperial Forces on Active Service, deceased. – Application will be made after fourteen days from the publication thereof that Probate of the last Will of the abovementioned deceased may be granted to ISABELLA ALICE FRIPP, the Sole Executrix named in the said Will; and all Notices may be served at the office of the undersigned; and all persons having any claim against the Estate of the deceased are requested to send particulars thereof to the undersigned within such fourteen days. Dated this third day of April, 1918. G. S. MACKELLAR, Proctor for the Executrix, 17 Castlereagh-street, Sydney.

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 4 April, 1918)*

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Alexander Fiddes Greig is remembered on the family headstone in St. Peters Parish Church Cemetery, Fyvie, Aberdeenshire, Scotland.



*In Memory Of*  
*Alexander Fiddes Greig M.R.C.S.E.*  
*Sunnyside, Fyvie*  
*Who Died 18 July 1880 Aged 64 Years*

*And Of His Son James Who Was Drowned*  
*Off Formosa 17th July 1874 Aged 22 Years*

*Also His Daughters*  
*Jane, Who Died 30th Nov. 1859 Aged 6 Years*  
*Anne Grant, Died 20th May 1868 Aged 1 Year*

*His Son Peter Cormack*  
*Died 7th Oct. 1908 Aged 51 Years*

*His Wife Jane Tocher Cormack*  
*Died 22nd July 1912 Aged 93 Years*

***Also His Grandson***  
***Alexander Fiddes***  
***Son Of The Above Peter Cormack***  
***Who Died 22 July 1917 Aged 22 Years***

*Also His Youngest Son Frances*  
*Died 8 April 1918 Aged 56 Years.*

*David Wilson*  
*Son Of The Above Died In New York*  
*On 12 March 1920 Aged 59 years.*

*In Memory Of Lizzie Greig*  
*Beloved Wife Of William Duncan,*  
*Fisherford, Auchterless.*  
*Third Daughter Of The Late*  
*Alexander Fiddes Greig M.R.C.S. Eng.*  
*Sunnyside, Fyvie Who Died On*  
*8th Feb. 1923 Aged 66 years.*



### Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

*(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)*

A letter from Base Records, dated 13th July, 1921, to Miss M. F. Greig, of "Beethoven", Rowena, NSW advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of her brother, the late Pte A. F. Greig, had not been answered & non-receipt of a reply within 21 days would have to be accepted as indicating that no further action was to be taken.

Private A. F. Greig does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

### **St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England**

There was a 600 bed hutted military hospital at Fovant during the First World War, and the concentration of Australian depots and training camps in the area is reflected in the 63 First World War burials in this churchyard. The war graves form two groups, one west of the church and the other at the east end. There is also one burial of the Second World War. There are 44 War Graves belonging to those who served with the Australian Imperial Force in World War 1.

*(Information from CWGC)*



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00299

*(Photo c 1919)*





**St George's Churchyard, Fovant – War Graves at front** *(Churchyard photos courtesy of Andrew Stacey)*



Photo of Private A. F. Greig's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St George's Churchyard, Fovant, Wiltshire, England.







**Cross of Sacrifice** (Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey)





**St George's Churchyard, Fovant – War Graves at rear**