

**Cambridge City Cemetery,
Cambridge, Cambridgeshire
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3162 PRIVATE

F. JOHNSON

36TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

20TH OCTOBER, 1917 Age 28

Frank JOHNSON

Frank Johnson was born at Spring Hill, Young, NSW in 1889 to parents Jesse & Alice Eva Johnson (nee Ferguson).

Frank Johnson attended Wambanumba School, NSW.

Frank Johnson was a 27 year old, single, Labourer from Young, NSW when he enlisted at Goulburn, NSW on 13th September, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3162 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr Jesse Johnson, P.O. Young, NSW. Frank Johnson stated on his Attestation Papers that he had previously been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service due to his eyesight & had tried to enlist on 16th August, 1916 at Young, NSW.

Private Frank Johnson was posted to C. Coy., of Depot Battalion on 13th September, 1916 for recruit training. He was transferred to D. Coy., 55th Battalion on 3rd October, 1916. Private Johnson was transferred 7th Reinforcements of 60th Battalion on 30th October, 1916 then transferred to A. Coy., 55th Battalion on 4th November, 1916.

Private Frank Johnson had been admitted to Hospital at Goulburn, NSW from 10th October to 15th October, 1916 suffering from Influenza.

Private Frank Johnson embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Suevic* (A29) on 11th November, 1916 with the 55th Infantry Battalion, 8th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 30th January, 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 Frank Johnson was marched in to 14th Training Battalion at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 1st February, 1917.

Private Frank Johnson was transferred to 63rd Battalion on 27th April, 1917. He was marched out to Windmill Hill Camp (Perham Downs, Wiltshire) from Hurdcott on 28th April, 1917 & was taken on strength of 63rd Battalion on 28th April, 1917 at Windmill Hill from 55th Battalion.

Private Frank Johnson proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 23rd August, 1917 from 63rd Battalion to reinforce 36th Battalion.

Private Frank Johnson was marched in to 3rd A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Rouelles, France from England on 24th August, 1917. He was marched out to his Unit from 3rd A.D.B.D. on 31st August, 1917 & was taken on strength of 36th Battalion on 1st September, 1917.

Private Frank Johnson was wounded in action in Belgium on 12th October, 1917. He was admitted to 11th Australian Field Ambulance then transferred to 44th Casualty Clearing Station on 13th October, 1917. Private Johnson was transferred to Ambulance Train on 13th October, 1917 & admitted to 83rd General Hospital in France the same day with gunshot wounds to face. He embarked for England on Hospital Ship *St. Denis* on 16th October, 1917 with gunshot wounds to face.

36th Battalion

The battalion had to wait until the emphasis of British and Dominion operations switched to the Ypres Sector of Belgium in mid-1917 to take part in its first major battle; this was the battle of Messines, launched on 7 June. With the 9th Brigade held in reserve during the battle for Broodseinde Ridge on 4 October, the 36th's next major battle was around Passchendaele on the 12th. Heavy rain, though, had deluged the battlefield, and thick mud tugged at the advancing troops and fouled their weapons. The 36th secured its objective but with open flanks and ineffective artillery support, was forced to withdraw.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Frank Johnson was admitted to 1st Eastern General Hospital, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England on 17th October, 1917 with gunshot wounds to face. He was reported as dangerously ill.

Private Frank Johnson died on morning of 20th October, 1917 at 1st Eastern General Hospital, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England.

A Post Mortem was held by Captain W. Malden, Pathologist on 21st October, 1917. *“Well nourished man, some ecchymosis over sternum; two G. S. Wounds on left side of jaw. Upper leads through fracture of ramus into buccal cavity. Operation to wound on left ant. margin of sternum mastoid to common carotid which had been tied opposite upper margin of excised cartilage. Much suppuration and sepsis in tissue of lower side of mouth extending to larynx. Much ecchymosis & swelling of ant epiglottic fold with some blood clot on left side just above vocal chords. Much oedema of glottis. No blood in trachea or bronchi. Thorax – Considerable ecchymosis behind sternum in middle & upper parts, no thymus visible. Lungs – very adherent all over; much oedema & bronchitis. No blood in bronchi. Heart in diastole rather greasy feeling with fatty infiltration. Other organs normal.”* Cause of death from wounds received in action – Gunshot wounds to Face, Shock, Sepsis & Haemorrhage.

A death for Frank Johnson, aged 28, was registered in the December quarter, 1917 in the district of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England.

Private Frank Johnson was buried at 3 pm on 23rd October, 1917 in Cambridge City Cemetery, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England – Plot number C. 3640 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Frank Johnson - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a full Military Funeral. The “Last Post” having been sounded at the graveside by buglers attached to the Staff of the 1st Eastern General Hospital, Cambridge. Chaplain Rev. Foster, attached to the 1st Eastern General Hospital, Cambridge officiated at the graveside. Miss Stephens the Australian Visitor at the Hospital attended the funeral and placed a wreath on the coffin. The funeral party was supplied by the R.A.M.C. of the Hospital Staff.*

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Frank Johnson contains a description by Informant Private P. J. Golden, “D” Coy., 36th Battalion on how Private Johnson was injured. *“Informant described Johnson as about 5 feet 10 inches high, slight build, dark hair, aged about 26. He came from Young District and left Australia with Informant per “Suevic” in 11.11.16.*

Informant states that they both belonged to “D” Company, and were members of the same Platoon. On 11.10.17 the Battalion was going into the line in preparation for the big stunt against Passchendaele, which took place the next day. On the march Johnson was behind Informant and said that he would change places with Informant. Johnson slipped behind him, and five or ten minutes afterwards a shell fell at the side of them. It was too dark to see, but Informant imagined that Johnson had been killed by that shell as he tried to find out further news of him, but unsuccessfully. Informant was wounded shortly afterwards by another shell. Informant added that Johnson was well liked by his mates.

SEARCHERS NOTE: - I pointed out to Informant that Johnson was reported as killed on 20th October. He did not attach much importance to this fact however, as he stated that, although wounded the same date as Johnson was killed, he was officially reported as wounded on 18th Oct.”

Private Frank Johnson was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Johnson's father – Mr Jesse Johnson, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1921 & Plaque sent September, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Frank Johnson – service number 3162, aged 28, of 36th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Mrs Johnson, of Spring Hills, Young, New South Wales.

Private F. Johnson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 127.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

F. Johnson is remembered on the Wambanumba World War 1 Honour Roll, located at Lambing Flat Museum, Wambanumba, NSW.



Wambanumba World War 1 Honour Roll

(Photo from Register of War Memorials in NSW – Ronald L. McIntosh)

F. Johnson is remembered on the Memorial Boards at the Young Soldiers Memorial Clock Tower, located at Young Shire Town Hall and Council Chambers, Boorowa Street, Young, NSW.



Soldiers Memorial Clock Tower at Young (Photo from Monument Australia)



Memorial Board, Young (Photo from Register of War Memorials in NSW)

F. Johnson is remembered on the St. John's Church World War 1 Stained Glass Memorial, located in St. John the Evangelist Church, Cloete Street, Young, NSW.



St. John's Church World War 1 Stained Glass Memorial, Young

(Photos from Monument Australia – Arthur Garland)

(54 pages of Pte Frank Johnson'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

NEWS OF OUR NEIGHBOURS

Young

Pte Frank Johnson, another of our fine young lads, has gone under in khaki.

(*Cootamundra Herald*, NSW – 2 November, 1917)

NEWS OF OUR NEIGHBOURS

Young

Rev. S. A. T. Champion received a cable conveying the sad news that Pte Frank Johnson had died on 20th October, 1917.

(*Cootamundra Herald*, NSW – 7 November, 1917)

IN MEMORIAM

A WAMBANUMBA HERO

Private Frank Johnson, whose death in France was reported to the parents (Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Johnson) some few weeks since, was one of the most popular boys in the Wambaumba locality (where he was born and reared) before the war drums sounded. He was a hard worker, upright and a general favorite with young and old. Next Sunday afternoon, the rector of St. John's will conduct an "In Memoriam" service at Mr. Harry Foster's residence, when an exceptionally large congregation is anticipated. Appropriate music will be rendered, and the rector will make special reference to the sacrifice of the deceased soldier.

(*Young Witness*, NSW – 13 November, 1917)

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

...A memorial service to the late Private Frank Johnson will be held on Sunday afternoon at Mr H. Foster's (Wambanumba).

(*Young Witness*, NSW – 16 November, 1917)

CURRENT NEWS

A Memorial service was held at Wambanumba last Sunday afternoon to the memory of Private Frank Johnson, killed in action. The attendance was very large – A tribute to the respect in which the deceased soldier was held. The service was conducted by the rector of St. John's.

(*Young Witness*, NSW – 20 November, 1917)

BIG CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES MEN OUT OF ACTION

DIED OF WOUNDS

Pte F. JOHNSON (Spring Hill) 20/10/17

(*Sunday Times*, Sydney, NSW – 25 November, 1917)

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)

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

Cambridge City Cemetery, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England

Cambridge City Cemetery, Cambridge (known locally as Newmarket Road Cemetery) contains 1,019 Commonwealth War Graves – 186 from World War 1 & 833 from World War 2.

The 1st Eastern General Hospital, with 1,173 beds, was posted to Cambridge during the First World War, initially at the Leys School and Trinity College, later in huts. The First World War burials in Cambridge City Cemetery are mostly in two plots, one in the southern part of the burial ground, known as the Dominion Plot, and the other on the northern boundary. The Cross of Sacrifice stands on the western border of the Dominion Plot, while in the centre of the other is a memorial cross of Portland stone which was erected by private subscription. The Second World War graves are also mainly in two War Graves Plots with a few others scattered throughout the cemetery. The general Service plot was established in 1940, and the Air Force plot in 1942 for the burial of casualties from the Air Force stations set up in the eastern counties during the war. These included Bomber Command bases in Lincolnshire and fighter stations in Norfolk and Suffolk. The Stone of Remembrance, which was unveiled by Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Tedder in July 1951, stands near the centre of the Air Force plot. Cambridge City Cemetery contains 181 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and 829, (inclusive 3 unidentified), from the Second World War. The cemetery also contains four non-war service burials and ten war graves of other nationalities.

(Information & photos from CWGC)





Photo of Private F. Johnson's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Cambridge City Cemetery, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England.



(Photo by Julia&keld – Find a Grave)



Cross of Sacrifice (Photo from CWGC)



Entrance to Cambridge City Cemetery & Map (below) (Photos by Julia&keld – Find a Grave)

Cambridge City CEMETERY

