

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



Lest We Forget

World War 1



278 PRIVATE

W. F. M. JOHNSON

29TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

22ND AUGUST, 1916

William Frank Mayne JOHNSON

William Frank Mayne Johnson was born on 30th May, 1882 at Mount Gambier, South Australia to parents John & Mary Isabella Johnson (nee Mayne).

William Frank Mayne Johnson attended St. Peter's College, Adelaide, South Australia from 1898 to 1901.

The 1914 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Ballarat, subdivision of Sebastopol, Victoria listed William Frank Mayne Johnson, Miner of Yarrowee Street, Sebastopol. Another Electoral Roll for the division of Ballarat, subdivision of Ballarat West, Victoria listed William Frank Mayne Johnson, Miner of 113 Lyons Street South, Ballarat.

The 1915 & 1916 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Ballarat, subdivision of Ballarat West, listed William Frank Mayne Johnson, Miner of 113 Lyons Street South, Ballarat.

William Frank Mayne Johnson was a 33 year old, single, Miner & Assayer from Mt. Gambier, South Australia when he enlisted at Ballarat, Victoria on 20th July, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 278 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father - Dr. Johnson, of Hospital, Mt. Gambier, South Australia.

Private William Frank Mayne Johnson was posted to Depot Battalion on 17th July, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to "A" Company, 29th Battalion on 15th October, 1915 (Statement of Service form has date as 16th September, 1915).

Private Mayne William Frank (as listed on Embarkation Roll) Johnson embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Ascanius (A11)* on 10th November, 1915 with the 8th Infantry Brigade, 29th Infantry Battalion, "A" Company & disembarked at Suez on 7th December, 1915.

Private William Frank Mayne Johnson embarked from Alexandria on *Tunisian* on 16th June, 1916 to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 23rd June, 1916.

Private William Frank Mayne Johnson was wounded in action on 19/20th July, 1916 in France. He was admitted to 1st Canadian Casualty Clearing Station on 20th July, 1916 with gunshot wound to face & back (severe) then transferred the same day to No. 7 Ambulance Train. Private Johnson was admitted to 13th Stationary Hospital at Boulogne, France on 21st July, 1916 with shrapnel wounds to left shoulder. Private Johnson embarked for England on Hospital Ship *Jan Breydel* on 13th August, 1916.

29th Battalion

The 29th Battalion was raised as part of the 8th Brigade at Broadmeadows Camp in Victoria on 10 August 1915. Having enlisted as part of the recruitment drive that followed the landing at Gallipoli, and having seen the casualty lists, these were men who had offered themselves in full knowledge of their potential fate.

The 8th Brigade joined the newly raised 5th Australian Division in Egypt and proceeded to France, destined for the Western Front, in June 1916. The 29th Battalion fought its first major battle at Fromelles on 19 July 1916. The nature of this battle was summed up by one 29th soldier: "the novelty of being a soldier wore off in about five seconds, it was like a bloody butcher's shop". Although it still spent periods in the front line, the 29th played no major offensive role for the rest of the year.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 29th Battalion:

19th July, 1916:

8 pm– Moved to position at Croix Blanch. 2 Coy's being detailed to carry bombs & stores to front trenches (D & A Coys). Received order to send 1 Coy "D" to front trench & 1 "C" to support line.

10 pm – At 10 pm Lt. Col Clark 30th asked for assistance.

11pm – “C” Coy moved to front line.

B & C Coys were at this time carrying supplies of ammunition & bombs along Cellar Farm Avenue.

Parties of D & C doing same over NO MANS LAND

A large number of hand grenades carried were not fused.

Night of 19/20 – At 2 o'clock the Enemy were counter attacking & our line retiring, by this time D & A Coys were drawn into the fight and C & D who had manned the front line of our trenches were covering their retirement. At this stage the whole battalion was engaged. After a struggle in NO MANS LAND the enemy were content to stop at their own trenches. The 29th Bn remained in the front line during the remainder of the fight.

20th July, 1916

As soon as bombardment ceased the companies were re-organised & told off to hold the front line – about 500 ____.
Large number of wounded brought both day & night.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Dr J. Johnson, father of Private William Frank Mayne Johnson, was advised on 16th August, 1918 that Private William F. M. Johnson had been admitted to 13th Stationary Hospital with a gunshot wound to shoulder (severe). Dr Johnson sent a Telegram on 17th August, 1916 requesting the address for Private W. F. M. Johnson. Base Records replied with the address details.

Private William Frank Mayne Johnson was admitted to 1st Eastern General Hospital, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England on 13th August, 1916 with gunshot wounds to thorax (serious).

Private William Frank Mayne Johnson died on 22nd August, 1916 at 1st Eastern General Hospital, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England. A Post Mortem was held on 23rd August, 1916 by Captain W. Malden, Pathologist. “*Well nourished man – healed wound on back on vertitral (?) border rt scapula. Thorax – nothing abnormal. Abdomen – kidneys intensely congested acute cystitis nothing else abnormal at back of pharynx opposite epiglottis in middle line no bullet wound penetrating 7th cervical upper dorsal & cervical spine removed 7th cervical vestilra (?) fracture abscess cavity in spinal canal involving cord from 7th cervical ___ rt doral – meninges much thickened, cord considerably disorganised.*” The cause of death was from wounds received in action in France – gunshot wound to spine - spinal abscess.

A death for William Johnson, aged 34, was registered in the September quarter, 1916 in the district of Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England.

Private William Frank Mayne Johnson was buried in Cambridge City Cemetery, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, England – Grave site “D” 2488.

In April, 1920, Dr. J. Johnson, Public Hospital, Mt. Gambier, South Australia, father of the late Private W. F. M. Johnson, was advised by Base Records that the remains of his late son had been exhumed from former site & re-interred in Grave No. 3640 Section “B”, Cambridge Cemetery, Cambridge, England. “*This work is carried out with every measure of care and reverence in the presence of a Chaplain.*”

Private William Frank Mayne Johnson has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Base Records contacted Dr. J. Johnson, Public Hospital, Mt. Gambier, South Australia in October, 1921 asking if he could furnish the names & address of the parents of the late Private William Frank Mayne Johnson or if they were deceased the names and addresses of the late soldier’s eldest brother & eldest sister so that the War Medals could be disposed of. No reply was received so Base Records contacted the 3rd Military District & they advised that the deceased soldier’s father was Dr. J. Johnson, Public Hospital, Mt. Gambier, South Australia.

Private William Frank Mayne Johnson was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Johnson's father – Dr. John Johnson, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent November, 1921 & Plaque sent July, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private W. F. M. Johnson – service number 278, of 29th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

W. F. M. Johnson is remembered on the World War 1 Honour Roll in the Memorial Hall at St. Peter's College, Adelaide, South Australia.



St. Peter's College WW1 Honour Roll (Photos courtesy of Ms Andrea McKinnon-Matthews, School Archivist)



An "F. M. Johnson" is remembered on the Mount Gambier War Memorial, located in Vansittart Park, Commercial Street West & Wehl Street North, Mount Gambier, South Australia.



Mount Gambier War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia)



A "W. Johnson" is remembered on the National Soldiers Memorial in Adelaide. The Adelaide National War Memorial commemorates those from South Australia that served in the First World War. The names of those that died are listed inside the Memorial, which is located on the corner of North Terrace & Kintore Avenue, Adelaide.



National War Memorial – Adelaide (Photos by Bilby)

Private W. F. M. 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 115.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(41 pages of Pte William Frank Mayne 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) & National Archives



Newspaper Notices

201st CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

WOUNDED

Pte W. F. M. JOHNSON, Mount Gambier

(The Register, Adelaide, South Australia – 29 August, 1916)

FOR KING AND COUNTRY

JOHNSON – Died in Cambridge Hospital (England), on the 22nd August, from wounds received in action in France, about July 20, William Frank Mayne Johnson, eldest son of Mrs and Dr Johnson, the Hospital, Mount Gambier, South Aus.

(The Journal, Adelaide, South Australia – 13 September, 1916) & (The Register, Adelaide, South Australia – 14 September, 1916) & (Observer, Adelaide, South Australia – 16 September, 1916) & (The Australasian, Melbourne, Victoria – 23 September, 1916)

212th CASUALTY LIST

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

DIED OF WOUNDS

Pte W. F. M. JOHNSON, Mount Gambier (August 22), serving with Victoria

(Observer, Adelaide, South Australia – 23 September, 1916)

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 15th July, 1921, to Dr. J. Johnson, Public Hospital, Mt. Gambier, South Australia, advised that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription on the headstone of his son, the late Pte W. F. M. Johnson, 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 W. F. M. 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 W. F. M. 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

