

**Brookwood Military Cemetery,
Brookwood, Surrey, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



LIEUTENANT

F. J. SMEDLEY MC

7TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

20TH AUGUST, 1918 Age 42

*In God's Keeping
My Husband Dear
Till We Meet Again*

Francis John (Frank) SMEDLEY

Francis John Smedley was born on 25th March, 1876 at Carlton, Victoria to parents Samuel & Janet Smedley (nee McGregor).

Francis John Smedley attended Scotch College, Melbourne, from 1890 to 1891.

The 1903 Australian Electoral Roll for the division of Kooyong, subdivision of Malvern, Victoria recorded Francis John Smedley, Newsagent, of 139 Glenferrie Rd, Malvern. Also listed at the same address was Janet Smedley, Newsagent & John Smedley, Orchardist.

Francis John Smedley was a 39 year old, married, Accountant from "Templestowe" Harold Street, Upper Hawthorn, Victoria when he enlisted on 5th March, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Church of England & his next of kin was listed as his wife – Mrs F. M. Smedley, "Templestowe" Harold Street, Upper Hawthorn, Victoria. (According to Embarkation Roll Francis John Smedley was married & his next of kin was listed as his wife, however, according to one of his Attestation Papers completed on 5th March, 1915 - he was single & his next of kin was listed as his brother – Albert George Smedley, Leichardt, Brisbane, Queensland. His religion was listed as Church of Christ on his Attestation Papers. Another lot of Attestation Papers has his wife listed as his next of kin.)

Francis John Smedley was posted to Depot on 16th March, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to "N" Company, 4th Depot Battalion as School Sergeant from 1st September, 1915 then transferred to 15th Reinforcements of 7th Battalion from 14th December, 1915.

Francis John Smedley had applied for a Commission in the Australian Imperial Force – Infantry on 26th July, 1915. He stated he had matriculated from Scotch College & had "*3 years with School Cadets. (Sergeant) 7th Officers' School of Instruction Broadmeadows. Finished 20/7/15.*" His next of kin was listed as Albert George Smedley, 15 Leichardt St, Spring Hill, Brisbane, Queensland. His postal address was listed as "Templestowe" Harold Street, Hawthorn, Victoria.

Francis John Smedley had applied for a Commission in the Australian Imperial Force – Infantry on 17th December, 1915. He stated his Military Qualifications as "*3 years School Cadets. 1st & 4th Officers' Training Schools (1915/16) Sergeant (June 1915).*" His next of kin was listed as his brother - Albert George Smedley, 15 Leichardt St, Spring Hill, Brisbane, Queensland. His postal address was listed as care W. Hunter, "Templestowe" Harold Street, Upper Hawthorn, Victoria.

Francis John Smedley married Florence Margaret Pritchard on 10th February, 1916 in Church of Christ, Hawthorn, Victoria.

Francis John Smedley had applied for a Commission in the Australian Imperial Force – Infantry on 21st February, 1916. He stated his Military Qualifications as "*3 years Cadets (School). 1st & 4th Officers' Schools 1915/16. 2nd Lieut.*" His next of kin was listed as his wife – Florence Margaret Smedley, "Templestowe" Harold Street, Upper Hawthorn, Victoria. His postal address was listed as 15th Reinforcements 7th Battalion, Military Camp, Broadmeadows.

Second Lieutenant Francis John Smedley, embarked from Melbourne, Victoria on HMAT *Wiltshire (A 18)* on 7th March, 1916 with the 7th Infantry Battalion, 15th Reinforcements.

Second Lieutenant Francis John Smedley embarked from Alexandria on 9th May, 1916 on *Caledonia* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 17th May, 1916. Second Lieutenant Smedley was marched in to 1st Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France on 20th May, 1916. He was marched out to his Unit on 22nd June, 1916 & reported for duty with 7th Battalion in France on 23rd June, 1916 & was taken on strength of 7th Battalion on the same day. He was posted to "B" Company pending absorption. (Note: Service And Casualty Form Part II recorded he reported for duty in France on 23/6/16 & T.O.S. (Taken on Strength) 23/6/16 in Belgium).

Second Lieutenant Francis John Smedley was wounded in action in France on 29th June, 1916. He was admitted to 7th Field Ambulance on 29th June, 1916 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Right Thigh. Second Lieutenant Smedley

was transferred to 2nd Casualty Clearing on 29th June, 1916 then transferred & admitted to 7th Stationary Hospital at Boulogne, France on 30th June, 1916. He was discharged to duty on 8th July, 1916 & was marched in to Reinforcements Camp at Rouen on 17th July, 1916. Second Lieutenant Smedley was posted to 1st Divisional Base Depot at Etaples, France on 16th August, 1916. He rejoined 7th Battalion in Belgium on 3rd September, 1916.

7th Battalion

The 7th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 5th, 6th and 8th Battalions, it was recruited from Victoria and, together with these battalions, formed the 2nd Brigade.....

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli in December 1915, the battalion returned to Egypt. In March 1916, it sailed for France and the Western Front and entered the front line trenches for the first time on 3 May. The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley where it fought between 23-27 July and 15-21 August. After Pozieres the battalion manned trenches in the Ypres salient in Belgium, before returning to the Somme valley. It saw out the horrendous winter of 1916-1917 rotating between training, working parties and duty in the trenches.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 7th Battalion

29th June, 1916 – Ploegstreet Sectors 128 to 132:

22.00 – Our action. Six listening patrols went out in front of the Bn. All reported back safely. Orders received that Gas would be let off. Operation Mem No. 10 re Gas was issued.... Gas was not discharged, owing to an unfavourable wind (Our artillery very active) Also M. Guns.

Enemy action. Artillery heavily shelled Sectors 130-131-132. Causing a good number of casualties. The following commenced 7th course Div. Bomb. School. No 2660 Pte H. V. Goodier and No 2196 Pte Trinder. Ammunition Flares, expended to 0300. S.A.A. (3477) rounds, Parachutes, (14) Flares, small (62) large, (22).

Strength – (33) OFF. (969) OR's. Casualties – No. 2110 Cpl Robin A No 2622 Pte G. P. Didier. Killed.

2nd Lieuts J. T. Smedley and A. R. Bayton. (7) OR's. wounded. (1) or. accidentally. wounded.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Mrs F. M. Smedley, "Templestowe" Harold Street, Upper Hawthorn, Victoria was advised by Base Records on 10th July, 1916 that 2nd Lieutenant F. J. Smedley, 7th Battalion, had been reported wounded.

Second Lieutenant Francis John Smedley was to be Lieutenant from 27th February, 1917 while posted in France.

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley was detached for duty with Instructional Staff at Etaples, France on 3rd April, 1917. He was marched in to 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples on 5th April, 1917. Lieutenant Smedley was attached as "Instructor and in Camp" from 28th April, 1917.

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley was transferred to Havre on 22nd May, 1917 & was to return to his Unit on 7th June, 1917. He rejoined his Unit from detachment on 8th June, 1917.

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley was notified on 18th July, 1917 that he would be returning to England to join 2nd Training Battalion & joined Supernumerary List. He returned to England on Duty from Boulogne on 19th July, 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.

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 3rd February, 1918. He ceased his secondment with 2nd Training Battalion in England & resumed regular duty. Lieutenant Smedley was marched in to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) at Havre, France on 5th February, 1918 & proceeded to his

Unit the same day. Lieutenant Smedley rejoined his Unit (7th Battalion) in the Field on 8th February, 1918 from secondment with 2nd Training Battalion in England.

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley proceeded to 2nd Brigade School on 14th March, 1918 & rejoined his Unit on 28th March, 1918.

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley was recommended for Military Cross on 13th June, 1918 & 22nd June, 1918 by Lieutenant Colonel E. E. Herrod, D.S.O., Commanding 7th Australian Battalion:

“Near STRAZEELE Railway Station East of HAZEROUCK on night of 12/13 June 1918 during progress of the successful attack on enemy positions Lieut SMEDLEY was in charge of a platoon which had been moved forward from the support Company to hold the line during the attack. The platoon commander of the attacking platoon in front of Lieut. SMEDLEY’s position was dangerously wounded early in the fight just when his objective had been reached, and a number of men of his platoon were wounded. Lieut SMEDLEY immediately pushed out with a number of men and took charge of the attacking platoon. The attack of this platoon and consolidation of the objective were being held up by determined enemy resistance backed by a Machine Gun. Lieut SMEDLEY at once disposed his platoon for attack and successfully despatched the enemy. The Machine Gun was captured, 6 of the enemy killed and 15 prisoners captured. Lieut SMEDLEY then successfully consolidated the position and held it against an immediate counter attack of the enemy, which he successfully repulsed with his platoon Lewis Gun. His courage, skill and initiative were of the utmost value in the enterprise, the success of which would have been seriously endangered had the enemy held the position captured by Lieut SMEDLEY and his platoon.”

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley was awarded the Military Cross (AIF List No. 389) (*London Gazette* – 24 September, 1918 & *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* – 12 February, 1919)

Military Cross

The Military Cross (MC) is the third-level (second-level pre-1993) military decoration awarded to officers and (since 1993) other ranks of the British Armed Forces, and formerly awarded to officers of other Commonwealth countries.

The MC is granted in recognition of "an act or acts of exemplary gallantry during active operations against the enemy on land" to all members of the British Armed Forces of any rank. In 1979, the Queen approved a proposal that a number of awards, including the Military Cross, could be recommended posthumously.



Military Cross (M.C.)

Lt. Francis John Smedley, Infy.

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. When the platoon in front of him, during an attack, had lost its commander, who was severely wounded, and had suffered heavily in other casualties, he immediately pushed forward with some of his own men, and, taking command of the platoon thus reinforced, proceeded to drive off the enemy, with very heavy casualties of killed and prisoners, as they attempted to prevent the consolidation of the position he had captured, and which he then disposed for defence and held against counter-attacks. His courage, initiative, and skill were largely responsible for the success of the enterprise.

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley was wounded in action (2nd occasion) on 9th August, 1918. He was admitted to 8th Australian Field Ambulance on 10th August, 1918 with G.S.W to Back (fractured Spine?) then transferred to 20th Casualty Clearing Station the same day. Lieutenant Smedley was transferred to Ambulance Train 9 on 11th August, 1918 & admitted to 14th General Hospital at Wimereux on 12th August, 1918. He was transferred to England on Hospital Ship St. Denis on 15th August, 1918.

7th Battalion

...The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley where it fought between 23-27 July and 15-21 August. After Pozieres the battalion manned trenches in the Ypres salient in Belgium, before returning to the Somme valley. It saw out the horrendous winter of 1916-1917 rotating between training, working parties and duty in the trenches.

In early 1917, the Germans withdrew to the Hindenburg Line and the 7th Battalion participated in the brief advance that followed and then came to a grinding halt before Bullecourt. The battalion was withdrawn from the front line for training on 9 May 1917 and did not return to action until the Ypres offensive of September and October. It fought major battles at Menin Road on 20 September and Broodseinde on 4 October, and then spent much of ensuing winter in the Ypres mud.

In March and April 1918 the 7th helped stop the German spring offensive in northern France and later participated in the Allies' own great offensive of 1918, that began with the battle of Amiens on 8 August. The advance by British and empire troops on 8 August was the greatest success in a single day on the Western Front, one that German General Erich Ludendorff described as, "the black day of the German Army in this war".....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 7th Battalion

Front Line - 9th August, 1918:

6.25 am Battalion warned to be ready to move at short notice. Advance parties went forward.

8.10 am Battalion fell in ready to move. Moved at 8.30 am

Vide narrative of operations which brings events up to 9 am on Aug. 10th

Casualties – Officers killed – Lieuts J. H. HAMBLETT, W. POOLE, R. B. PURBRICK, J. CADDY, D.C.M., M.M., T. V. HARRIS, T. J. ROSS. Officer missing – Lieut W.E SCOTT

Officer's wounded – Capts A. F. PHILLIPS, F. G. KITCHEN and T. P. O'CONNOR, Lieuts J. FOWLER, F. J. SMEDLEY "M.C.", G.. B. RUSSELL, C. P. WHALEY and N. G. TAVERNER.

Other ranks – 52 killed 169 wounded 2 missing.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley was admitted to Empire Hospital, Vincent Square on 16th August, 1918 with G.S.W. to Back – severe.

Mrs F. M. Smedley, "Templestowe" Harold Street, Upper Hawthorn, Victoria was advised by Base Records on 19th August, 1918 that Lieutenant F. J. Smedley had been wounded – 2nd occasion.

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley died at 11.30 am on 20th August, 1918 at Empire Hospital, Vincent Square, London, England from wounds received in action – Shell wound – Cervical Spine Quadriplegia & Ascendency Myelitis.

A death for Francis J. Smedley, aged 42, was registered in the September quarter, 1918 in the district of St. George Hanover Square, London, England.

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley was buried at 1.30 pm on 22nd August, 1918 in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England – Australian Military Burial Ground - Plot number 181.412 Australian Military Burial Ground.

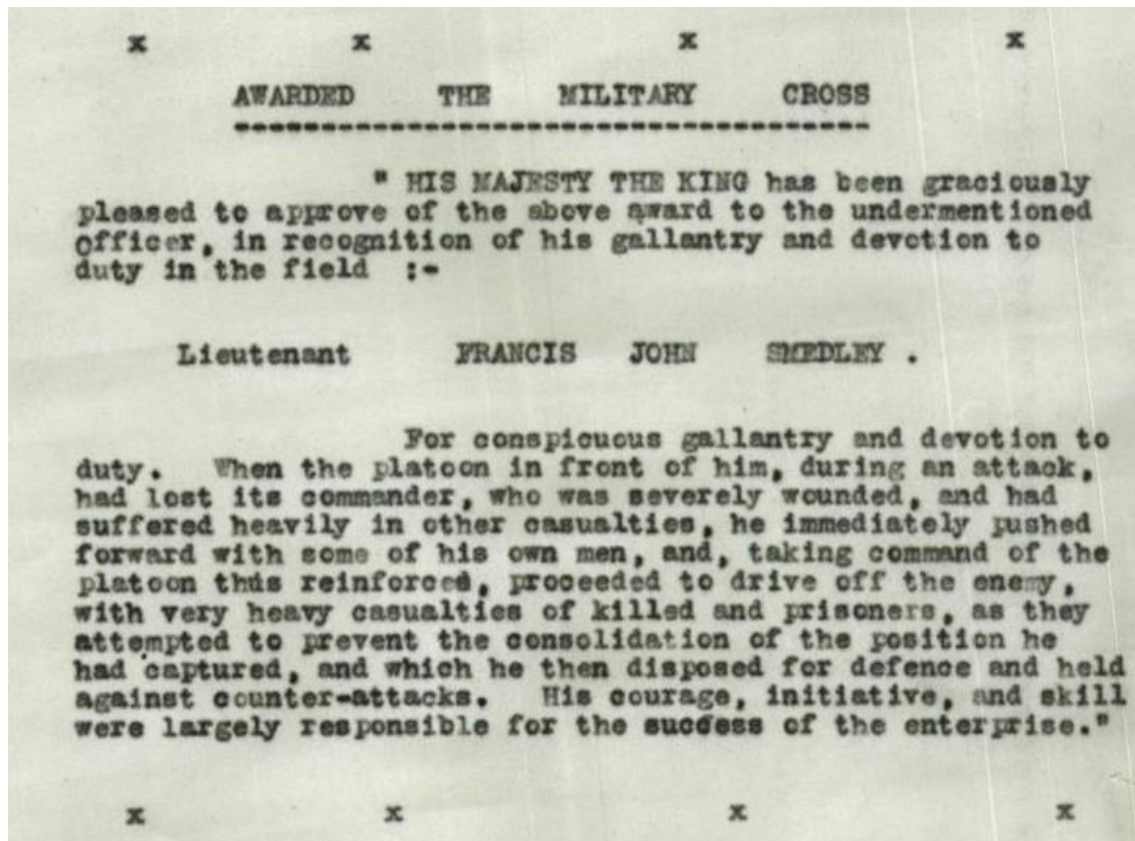
From the burial report of Lieutenant Francis John Smedley - *Coffin was good. Polished Elm. The deceased Officer was accorded a full Military funeral, Firing Party, Band and 2 Buglers were in attendance. Six Officers of the London Reserve Regiment acted as Pallbearers. Chaplain the Rev. Miles, A.I.F. London conducted the service and the "Last Post" was sounded at the graveside by 2 Buglers. Lieut Whalley, 7th Bn, A.I.F., Patient in Hospital attended the funeral. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral.*

Base Records wrote to Mrs F. M. Smedley, 10 Peverill Street, Canterbury, Victoria on 17th April, 1923 stating that the site of Lieutenant F. J. Smedley, MC's grave in Brookwood Military Cemetery had been officially registered as Plot 4 Row B Grave 8. "*While the actual place of burial remains unchanged the previous registration allotted thereto has been altered to conform with the uniform layout of this Cemetery.*"

This is now recorded by CWGC as Memorial reference - IV. B. 8. Lieutenant Francis John Smedley now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley requested in his Will, dated 8th July, 1917, that all his real estate & personal estate be bequeathed to his wife Florence Margaret Smedley, "Templestowe" Harold Street, Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia. He stated on 13th July, 1917 that his Will had been posted to his wife.

Base Records wrote to Mrs F. M. Smedley, "Templestowe" Harold Street, Upper Hawthorn, Victoria, on 3rd March, 1919 with the following letter: "*I have much pleasure in forwarding hereunder copy of extract from Fourth Supplement No. 30915 to the London Gazette, dated 24th September, 1918, relating to the conspicuous services rendered by your husband the late Lieutenant F. J. Smedley, 7th Battalion*



The above has been promulgated in Commonwealth of Australia Gazette, No. 23, dated 12th February, 1919.

Lieutenant Francis John Smedley was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Lieutenant Smedley's widow – Mrs F. M. Smedley, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent November, 1921 & Plaque sent December, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Lieutenant Francis John Smedley, of 7th Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of Samuel & Janet Smedley; husband of Florence M. Smedley, of 40 Harold ST., Hawthorn, Victoria, Australia.

Lieutenant F. J. Smedley is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 51.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

F. J. Smedley is remembered on the Scotch College Honour Board for World War 1, located in the Memorial Hall, 1 Morrison Street, Hawthorn, Melbourne, Victoria.



Memorial Hall at Scotch College, Melbourne (Photo by Seqlder 2010)

(92 pages of Lieutenant Francis John Smedley'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





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P03318.016

Group portrait of officers of the 7th Battalion. 1918

*Identified from left to right, back row: Lieutenant (Lt) Arthur William Mallet; **Lt Francis John Smedley MC, who later died of wounds on 20 August 1918**; Lt William Henry Gordon Smith MC, who later died of disease on 30 October 1918.*

Second row: Captain John Fowler MC; Major Robert Irvine Hillard MC; Lt Frederick Bryce Gaulton; Lt Albert Edward Wisewould.

Front row: Lt James Caddy MM DCM; Lt John Hamilton Hamblett, who was later killed in action on 9 August 1918.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

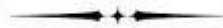
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Group portrait of officers of the 7th Battalion. (20 February, 1918)

Left to right, back row: Second Lieutenant (2nd Lt) John Hamilton Hamblett (killed in action 9 August 1918); Lieutenant (Lt) Roy Anderson; Lt Maurice Victor Crowe; Lt Kenneth George Banks (died of disease 3 March 1919); Lt (later Captain) Hewlett James Wright; Lt (later Captain) Thomas Patrick O'Connor; Lt George Benson Russell; 2nd Lt Keith Mervyn Purbrick; Lt (later Captain) Harold Henry Young; Lt Douglas George Phillips MC; Lt Herbert Nixon.

*Middle row; Lt Vincent Robert Dickinson; 2nd Lt Rupert Benjamin Purbrick (killed in action 9 August 1918); Lt M G Gauthier (French interpreter); Lt Ernest George Robb; 2nd Lt Walter Edward Lane; Lt George Leopold Trotman (died of wounds 17 April 1918); Lt Albert Edmund Beech; **Lt Francis John Smedley (died of wounds 20 August 1918)**; Lt Frederick Bryce Gaulton; Lt Robin William Swallow; Lt Thomas John Ross (killed in action 9 August 1918); Lt Thomas Arthur Jardine; Lt Kenneth Richard Jarvie.*

Front row: Captain (Capt) Douglas Lewis Barlow MC (Medical Officer); Lt Eric Woodruff Hill; Lt Oliver John Harris MC (Adjutant); Lieutenant Colonel Ernest Edward Herrod CMG DSO (Commanding Officer); Major (Maj) Claude Hibbert Swift; Capt James Frederick Bowtell-Harris MC; Maj Hector Ernest Bastin MC.



Newspaper Notices

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

186th LIST

Wounded

2nd-Lieut. F. J. Smedley, Hawthorn

(*The Bendigo Independent*, Victoria – 21 July, 1916)

DIED ON SERVICE

SMEDLEY – Officially reported died of gunshot wound, at Empire Hospital, England, on the 20th August, Lieut. Francis John (Frank), M.C., 7th Battalion, after 2 ½ years' active service, the beloved nephew of Mr and Mrs W. Hunter, "Montcath," Harold street, Hawthorn.

And with the morn those angel faces smile

Which we have loved long since and lost awhile.

SMEDLEY - Officially reported died of gunshot wound, at Empire Hospital, England, on the 20th August, after 2 ½ years' active service, Lieut. Francis John (Frank), M.C., 7th Battalion, beloved husband of Florence and eldest son of the late Samuel and Janet Smedley, of Malvern; brother of Harold (on active service) and Albert (Brisbane).

Until the day break and the shadows flee away.

Good-night, my beloved.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 28 August, 1918)

DIED ON SERVICE

SMEDLEY - Officially reported died of gunshot wound, at Empire Hospital, England, on the 20th August, after 2 ½ years' active service, Lieut. Francis John (Frank), M.C., 7th Battalion, beloved husband of Florence and eldest son of the late Samuel and Janet Smedley, of Malvern; brother of Harold (on active service) and Albert (Brisbane).

Until the day break and the shadows flee away.

Good-night, my beloved.

-(Inserted by his loving wife, "Montcath," Harold street, Hawthorn).

SMEDLEY – Died of wounds at Empire Hospital, England on the 20th August, Lieut. Francis John (Frank), M.C., 7th Battalion, after 2 ½ years' active service, the beloved brother-in-law of Mr and Mrs Campbell Edwards, 14 Waterloo street, Camberwell; much loved uncle of Campbell, Lue, Gwen, Jean, and Keith.

Loved by all.

SMEDLEY – Officially reported died of gunshot wound, at Empire Hospital, England, on the 20th August, Lieut. Francis John (Frank), M.C., 7th Battalion, after 2 ½ years' active service, the beloved nephew of Mr and Mrs W. Hunter, "Montcath," Harold street, Hawthorn.

And with the morn those angel faces smile

Which we have loved long since and lost awhile.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 31 August, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOR

VICTORIAN LIST

DIED OF WOUNDS

Lieut. F. J. SMEDLEY, Upper Hawthorn, 20/8/18

(*Weekly Times*, Melbourne, Victoria – 28 September, 1918)

GALLANTRY IN THE FIELD

Awards to Australians

In the "London Gazette" of September 24, 1918, the following accounts were given of the deeds for which military honours had been awarded to members of the A.I.F.:-

MILITARY CROSS

....

Lieut FRANCIS JOHN SMEDLEY, Infy.

When the platoon in front of him, during an attack, had lost its commander, who was severely wounded, and had suffered heavily in other casualties, he immediately pushed forward with some of his own men, and taking command of the platoon thus reinforced, proceeded to drive off the enemy, with very heavy casualties of killed and prisoners, as they attempted to prevent the consolidation of the position he had captured, and which he then disposed for defence and held against counter-attacks. His courage, initiative, and skill were largely responsible for the success of the enterprise.

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 3 January, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SMEDLEY – In loving memory of Lieut F. J. Smedley (Frank), M.C., 7th Battalion A.I.F., died of wounds on the 20th of August, 1918, at Empire Hospital, England.

Loved so much.

-(Inserted by his widow and loved ones, "Moncath," Harold street, Hawthorn).

SMEDLEY – In loving memory of my dear cousin, Lieut. F. J. Smedley (Frank), M.C., 7th Battalion A.I.F., died of wounds on the 20th of August, 1918. (Inserted by Teresa Smedley, Templestowe).

(*The Argus*, Melbourne, Victoria – 23 August, 1919) & (*The Age*, Melbourne, Victoria – 23 August, 1919)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SMEDLEY – In loving memory of Lieut F. J. Smedley (Frank), M.C., 7th Battalion, A.I.F., died of wounds 20th August, 1918, at Empire Hospital, England. (Inserted by his widow and loved ones)

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 23 August, 1920)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SMEDLEY – In loving memory of Lieut F. J. Smedley (Frank), M.C., 7th Battalion, A.I.F., died of wounds 20th August, 1918, at Empire Hospital, England.

(The Age, Melbourne, Victoria – 23 August, 1920)

IN MEMORIAM

On Active Service

SMEDLEY – In loving memory of my husband, Francis John (Frank), Lieut., 7th Battalion, M.C., died of wounds, August 20, 1918.

(The Argus, Melbourne, Victoria – 20 August, 1921)

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)

Lieutenant F. J. Smedley M.C. does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In God's Keeping

My Husband Dear

Till We Meet Again

Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England

Located 30 miles from London in Surrey, Brookwood Military Cemetery is the largest CWGC cemetery in the United Kingdom. The cemetery contains the graves of more than 1,600 servicemen of the British Empire in the First World War and over 3,470 from the Second World War.

Brookwood Military Cemetery lies adjacent to Brookwood Cemetery (The London Necropolis), a vast space which covers 500 acres. In 1917, an area to the north of the cemetery was set aside as Brookwood Military Cemetery for men and women of Commonwealth forces who died, many of battle wounds, in the London district. This site was further extended to accommodate Commonwealth casualties of the Second World War. *(Information from CWGC)*

There are 446 Australian War Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery – 351 from World War 1 & 95 from World War 2.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

D00185

A large crowd attends an A.I.F. military funeral at Brookwood Cemetery. In the foreground wooden crosses mark rows of graves. (Photo c1919)

*Identified: Front row, left to right: Second Lieutenant Douglas Abbott Ferguson, Australian Flying Corps, died of accidental injuries 18 August 1918; **Lieutenant (Lt) Francis John Smedley MC, 7th Battalion, died of wounds 20 August 1918.***

Second row: 6860 Private (Pte) James Alexander McKeown, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 20 June 1918; 3622 Pte S T Wilson, 2nd Australian Pioneers, died of wounds 4 July 1918; 2390 Sergeant Frederick Charles Stronell, 21st Battalion, died of wounds 9 July 1918; Lt Arthur Melville Lilburne MC, 6th Brigade Australian Field Artillery, died of disease 11 July 1918.



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photo from CWGC)



Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)



Australian Graves in Brookwood Military Cemetery (Photos by Magicfingers)





(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



Australian War Graves *(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright 2020)*

Photo of Lieutenant F. J. Smedley's, M.C. Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brookwood Military Cemetery, Surrey, England.



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher)



(Photo courtesy of Ian Fletcher – Jan 2021)

