

**Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery,
East Sussex, England
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



5135 PRIVATE

F. K. WHITE

33RD BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

17TH MAY, 1918 Age 18

In Our Hearts

We Will Always Miss You

At Home

Bellingen, N.S.Wales

Frederick Keith WHITE

Frederick Keith White was born at Bowraville, NSW on 3rd August, 1899 to parents James Sturges White and Alice Ada White (nee Bailey).

Frederick Keith White attended school at Bellingen, NSW.

Frederick Keith White was an 18 year old, single, Motor car driver from Bellingen, NSW when he enlisted on 15th March, 1917 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 5135 & his religion was Methodist. His next of kin was listed as his father – Mr James S. White, Bellingen, NSW. As Frederick Keith White was under the age of 21 years, his parents were required to sign their consent for their son to enlist in the Australian Imperial Force for active service abroad. James S. White, J.P. signed his consent.

Private Frederick Keith White was posted to Recruits at R.A.S.G. (Royal Agricultural Show Grounds), Sydney on 21st March, 1917 for recruit training. He was posted to "G" Company of 1st Depot Battalion on 22nd March, 1917. Private White was transferred to 14th Reinforcements of 30th Battalion on 8th May, 1917.

Private Frederick Keith White embarked from Sydney, NSW on HMAT *Marathon* (A74) on 10th May, 1917 with the 30th Infantry Battalion, 14th Reinforcements & disembarked at Devonport, England on 20th 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.

Private Frederick Keith White was marched in to 8th Training Battalion at Hurdcott, Wiltshire from Australia on 20th July, 1917.

Private Frederick Keith White was sent sick to Fovant Hospital, Wiltshire on 30th August, 1917 from 8th Training Battalion at Hurdcott. He was admitted on 31st August, 1917 with Hypertrophy of Tonsils. The Hospital Admissions form recorded: "*Two hypertrophied tonsils removed after acute symptoms had subsided. Healed.*" He was discharged on 17th September, 1917 to 8th Training Battalion at Hurdcott.

Private Frederick Keith White was transferred to 14th Training Battalion at Codford, Wiltshire on 5th November, 1917 from 8th Training Battalion at Hurdcott.

Private Frederick Keith White proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 5th February, 1918 from 14th Training Battalion at Codford to reinforce 33rd Battalion.

Private Frederick Keith White was marched in to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) at Rouelles, France on 6th February, 1918. He was marched out to the Front on 7th February, 1918 & was taken on strength of 33rd Battalion on 12th February, 1918 in the Field.

Private Frederick Keith White was wounded in action on 4th April, 1918. He was admitted to 43rd Field Ambulance on 5th April, 1918 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to head then transferred & admitted the same day to "5th or 46th" Casualty Clearing Station (as listed on Casualty Form - Active Service). Private White was transferred & admitted to 3rd Australian General Hospital at Abbeville, France on 5th April, 1918. He was invalided to England on 18th April, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Cambria*.

33rd Battalion

The 33rd Battalion was formed in January 1916 at a camp established at the Armidale showground in New South Wales. The bulk of the battalion's recruits were drawn from the New England region and thus it was dubbed "New England's Own". The Battalion's first, and only, commanding officer was Lieutenant Colonel Leslie Morshead, who would become famous as the commander of the 9th Australian Division during the Second World War.

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For the next five months the 33rd alternated between periods of rest, training, labouring, and service in the line. When the German Army launched its last great offensive in the spring of 1918, the Battalion was part of the force deployed to defend the approaches to Amiens around Villers-Bretonneux. It took part in a counter-attack at Hangard Wood on 30 March, and helped to defeat a major drive on Villers-Bretonneux on 4 April.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 33rd Battalion

Villers Bretonneux – 4th April, 1918

Dull day – Bosche bombardment commenced at 5.30 am and Battalion sent up to reinforce 35th Battalion during the morning. See C.O's report.

33rd Battalion Operations

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THE BATTLE – AT 5.30 am the enemy opened a very heavy bombardment on our front and on VILLERS-BRETONNUEX; the Battalion stood to arms shortly afterwards. The enemy launched his attack at about 6 am but no word was sent to Battalion Headquarters. Rain was falling, the visibility was consequently very bad.

At 7 am I was ordered to send two companies forward to take up a support position North of the railway. "D" Company had been employed all the previous night in digging support trench, I sent "A" and "D" Companies forward; both were in position at 7.45 am, "A" Company being on the right.

The 35th Battalion was then heavily engaged. The 8th Battalion Rifle Brigade, 14th Division were on our left; they retired leaving the 35th Battalion's left flank in the air.....

CASUALTIES : our casualties were comparatively light and were mostly caused by rifle and machine gun fire. The numbers are as follows:

	Officers	Other ranks
<i>Killed in action</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Wounded</i>	<i><u>3</u></i>	<i><u>75</u></i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>82</i>

Some Messages from War Diary:

8.50 am (from A H) :The Rifle Brigade on left of 35th Bn had to give way.

Front line was subject to a very severe bombardment followed by Masses of Bosche.

35th left flank was in the air and enemy was coming in behind. It appears that 38th have withdrawn to line from Aerodrome to Railway. The Bosche are still advancing Have thickened my line with stragglers.

Could do with some ammunition. No Vickers Guns here.

9.50am (from SP 73): I am sending word to 34th & 36th Bns to send me four cyclists each. AAA

Will you please confirm this AAA.

My scouts reported meeting a British Officer retiring from our left: he said that he was the last to leave the line AAA This has endangered our left flank and I have sent a company to protect AAA I have still a company in hand AAA The 35th Bn. has withdrawn to its support line: my companies on this line report OK AAA

11.10 am (from LWY 1): Holding 3 (Third) Line. Enemy still holding 2 (Second) Line. At 10.30 many BOCHE Regiments came to 2 (Second) Line, but have since retired. Many casualties have been observed. NO RIFLE fire from ENEMY.

1 – 3 pm (from A H) : Situation unchanged. Lieut Crowley wounded walking case.

My right is now in touch with English Regiment on my right. Enemy snipers active.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Mr J. White, of Bellingen, NSW, father of Private Frederick Keith White, was advised by Base Records on 18th April, 1918 that Private Frederick White had been dangerously wounded. Another advice was sent the same day stating that Private Frederick White had been admitted to Third Australian General Hospital Brighton, England on 6th April with "gun shot wound to head dangerous." (Note: The 3rd Australian General Hospital was not at Brighton but in France).

Private Frederick Keith White was admitted to Kitchener Military Hospital, Brighton, Sussex, England on 19th April, 1918 dangerously ill with G.S.W. to head.



Mr J. S. White, J.P., of Bellingen, NSW, father of Private Frederick Keith White, was advised by Base Records on 30th April, 1918 that Pte F. K. White had been transferred to Kitchener Military Hospital, England on 19th April, 1918. Mr White was again advised by Base Records on 10th May, 1918 that Private Frederick White's condition was stationary.

Private Frederick Keith White died at 9.25 am on 17th May, 1918 at Kitchener Military Hospital, Brighton, Sussex, England from wounds received in action - Bullet wound(s) to Head, Cerebral Abscess & Septicaemia.

A death for Frederick K. White, aged 18, was registered in the June quarter, 1918 in the district of Brighton, Sussex, England.

Private Frederick Keith White was buried at 2 pm on 21st May, 1918 in Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery, East Sussex, England – Plot number ZHO. 109. and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone. From the burial report of Private Frederick Keith White - *Coffin was good polished Elm. The deceased soldier was accorded a Military funeral, Firing Party, Bugler and Pallbearers were in attendance. A service was conducted at the graveside by Chaplain Rev. J. B. Grimshaw. The "Last Post" was sounded by two buglers of the R.F.A. Administrative Headquarters, A.I.F. London were represented at the funeral. An oak cross will be erected.*

The Red Cross Wounded & Missing file for Private Frederick Keith White contains several updates in regards to his condition.

- From Gertrude G. Black, 25 Grand Parade, Brighton – dated 5th May, 1918 – *"I saw the patient yesterday and I went up again today. He is suffering from a wound in the back of the head which has paralysed his right arm. He had no pain and was quite able to chat. He told me he had sent a cable at week-end rates to his people a few days ago. The danger lies in the event of an abscess forming on the brain and this is the reason for his being on the danger list. An operation is to be performed tomorrow morning and I will find out the result in the afternoon and write or wire you then, when a better opinion can be given. His present condition is satisfactory and at his request I am writing to his Mother."*
- From Gertrude G. Black, Red X Visitor – dated 6th May, 1918 – *"His condition, after the operation to-day is satisfactory."*

- From Gertrude G. Black, Red X Visitor – dated 11th May, 1918 – *“I am sorry to say that his condition is critical. This afternoon when I saw him his temperature was high and he had been delirious for some hours. The sister tells me there is not much hope of his recovering and if he does, the brain would be affected and he would be paralysed on one side. I wrote his parents a few days ago that he was badly wounded but was in a satisfactory state then. The great distance dividing these boys from their homes makes it so hard for them both, in these terrible times. Whatever happens I will write to his people again later.”*
- From Gertrude G. Black, – dated 18th May, 1918 – *“You will no doubt know by this time that this patient in Kitchener Hospital has passed away. I have seen him every couple of days & for the past week he has been practically unconscious. On Thursday afternoon I last saw him & he died the next morning. I shall find out all I can as to his last moments & then write to his people. I also hope to visit the grave & to send a photograph to his home.”*

Private Frederick Keith White requested in his Will dated 31st March, 1917 that all his personal effects and all moneys due to him be given to his mother – Alice Ada White, of Bellingen, NSW. He appointed his father – James Sturges White as Executor of his Will. A later will dated 2nd January, 1918 still bequeathed all his personal estate to his mother - Alice Ada White, of Oak Street, Bellingen, NSW.

Private Frederick Keith White was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private White’s father - Mr J. S. White. Esq., J.P., as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent December, 1922 & Plaque sent November, 1922).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Frederick Keith White – service number 5135, aged 18, of 33rd Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of James S. and Alice Ada White, of Bellingen, New South Wales.

Private F. K. White is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 123.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

F. K. White is remembered on the former Bellingen Methodist Church Memorial Gates, located at 8 Church Street, Bellingen, NSW.



Former Bellingen Methodist Church Memorial Gates (Photos from Monument Australia – John Huth)



F. K. White is remembered on the Bellingen War Memorial, located at Oak & Hyde Streets, Bellingen, NSW.



Bellingen War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia – John Huth)

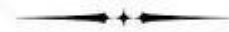


(60 pages of Private Frederick Keith White's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

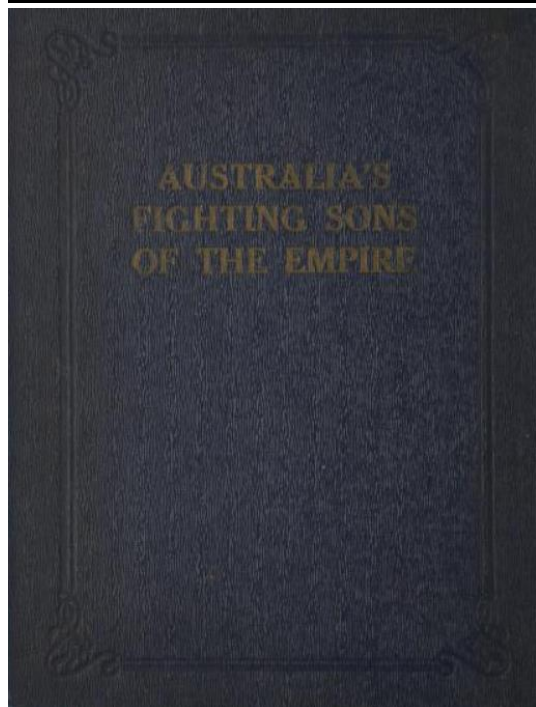
Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives



Private Frederick Keith White *(Photo courtesy of Lyndy Cracknell)*



Australia's Fighting Son's of the Empire (page 181):



Private FREDERICK KEITH WHITE

Private Frederick Keith White (5135), 33rd Battalion, A.I.F., is 18 years of age, and is a son of James S. and Alice A. White, of Bellingen. He was born at Bowraville, and educated at Bellingen, where he enlisted in March, 1917. He sailed for England on 10th May, 1917, and was sent to Sailisbury Plains on his arrival there. He went into action on the Somme in February, 1918, and took part in the German offensive until 4th April, 1918, when he was wounded in the head by a sniper. He was sent to the Kitchener Hospital, England, where he died on 17th May, 1918.

Newspaper Notices

RECRUITING

The following men enlisted in the A.I.F. at Grafton during the week:F. K. White (Bellingen)...

(Daily Examiner, Grafton, NSW – 17 March, 1917)

TWO CASUALTY LISTS

THE RIVERS MEN

Casualty Lists Nos. 395 and 396 were released to-day....

Wounded: ... Pte Frederick Keith White (Bellingen)...

(Daily Examiner, Grafton, NSW – 6 May, 1918)

RETURN THANKS

Mr and Mrs JAMES WHITE and FAMILY, of Bellingen, desire to Thank their numerous friends for the many telegrams, cards, and letters of condolence and sympathy in the great loss of their soldier son, Keith White, 33rd Battalion, who died of wounds received on the Western Front Battlefield, May 17th, 1918; aged 18 years and 9 months. Our only consolation is in the fact he died a soldier, fighting in defence of our home and Empire.

(The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, NSW – 8 June, 1918)

MEN WHO FELL

KILLED

F.K. WHITE – Mr James S. White, of Bellingen, has been informed that his son, Frederick Keith White, died in Brighton Hospital, England, from a gunshot wound in the head. Deceased enlisted about 15 months ago, when he attained his 18th birthday. He received his injuries in the German push on May 2.

(The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, NSW – 4 June, 1918)

TELEGRAMS

408th CASUALTY LIST

Died of wounds: Private F. White (Bellingen)...

(Daily Examiner, Grafton, NSW – 13 June, 1918)

408th CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF WOUNDS

Pte Fredk KEITH WHITE, Bellingen

(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – 13 June, 1918)

ROLL OF HONOR

WHITE – In proud memory of my darling brother, Keith, 33rd Batt., who died May 17, 1918, at Kitchener Hospital, Brighton, of wounds received at Villers-Bretonneux on April 4, 1918; age 18 years and 9 months.

A hero he lived, for a hero we mourn

As the boys come back we long for him more.

So sadly missed by his fond, only sister, Elvie, at Bellingen.

WHITE – A fond tribute to our eldest boy, Keith, 33rd Batt., aged 18 years and 9 months, who, though a boy, played a man's part, and died of wounds received at Villers-Bretonneux on April 4.

The memory of his laughing eyes

And the smile upon his face

Are the constant visions memory brings:

For none can fill his place.

The saddest day has yet to come

When the boys come marching home.

Oh God, have pity on the watching ones

Whose loved ones will never come home.

Inserted by his loving parents, Mr and Mrs James S. White, and family, Bellingen.

(The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, NSW – 17 May, 1919)

Pte F. Keith White is remembered on a grave monument located in Bellingen General Cemetery, Bellingen, NSW.



In Memoriam

No.5135

Pte F. KEITH WHITE

Died 17TH May 1918 Of Wounds

Received In France 4TH April 1918

In His 19TH Year

A life nobly given



[Top – Memorial to Pte F. Keith White; bottom – Memorial to Alice Ada White (his mother)]

(Photo courtesy of Kevin Cameron)

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. K. White does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

In Our Hearts We Will Always Miss You At Home

Bellingen, N.S.Wales

Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery, East Sussex, England

The cemetery is on the Lewes road. It was opened in 1857, and now covers 44 acres. It climbs the hill Eastward, crossing a public road. A War Cross stands in the cemetery.

There are 275 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-1918 war and a further 102 of the 1939-1945 war commemorated in this site. The 1939-45 commemorations include 3 unidentified Merchant seamen and 1 unidentified British soldier. There are also 40 Foreign National war burials here and 4 non-war service burials.

(Information from CWGC)



(Photos by julia&keld – Find a Grave)



(Photo from CWGC)

Photo of Private F. K. White's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Brighton City (Bear Road) Cemetery, East Sussex, England.



(Photo by Terry Denham)



(Photo from CWGC)