

Commemoration for the Lives of the Braidwood and District ANZACS

"We will remember them well"

A CALL FROM THE DARDANELLES



ROLL OF HONOUR

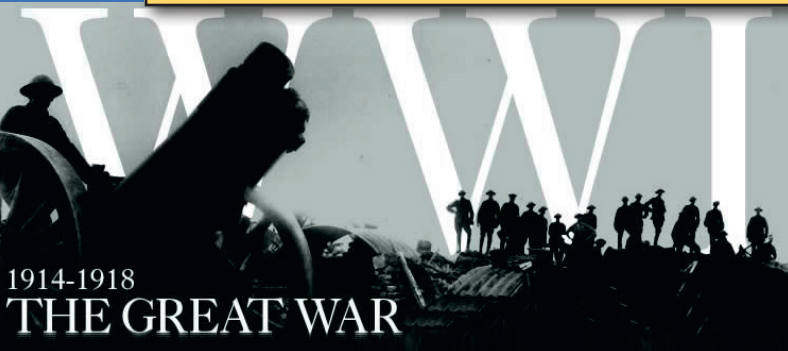
KEYTE, Robert

Service Number: 3163

Rank: Private

*"Coo-ee-
Wont YOU
come?"*

From 1914 - 1918, 465 volunteers from Braidwood and the District
joined the Australian Imperial Force in World War I.
88 lost their lives, never to return home. This is their story.



1914-1918
THE GREAT WAR

100
YEARS OF
ANZAC

THE SPIRIT
LIVES
2014 - 2018

Introduction

This year, 2015, marks the centenary of the start of the Gallipoli campaign and Australia's involvement as a nation in the greatest and most terrible conflict ever seen to that time. Australians joined their Armed Forces in large numbers. Their motives were as varied as their upbringings, from a need to save the Empire, of which Australia was an integral part, to the desire to have a great adventure.

Braidwood and district were no exception. Over the four years from 1914 to 1918, from a population of about 5000, 465 men and women from what is now the 2622 postcode area – including Braidwood, Majors Creek, Araluen, Mongarlowe, Nerriga, Ballalaba and Jembaicumbene joined the Navy or Army. Of these 377 returned to Australia. Sadly, 88 lost their lives.

A varying amount of their history is recorded in the Australian War Memorial. Some of their names, but not all, are recorded on local memorials. More is recorded in limited local histories and newspapers, not readily available to the general public; and the people who lived with and knew these distant relatives are also passing on.

The Braidwood RSL Sub Branch has collected all the information available from the Australian War Memorial and local sources, including the Braidwood Museum. Families, still resident in the district, have added their family knowledge and their precious memorabilia.

This booklet is the available story of **Robert Keyte**, one of the 88 Braidwood volunteers who did not return from World War I. It contains his details as recorded in the World War I Roll of Honour, his Enlistment Papers, Field Service records, any Casualty notification, correspondence relating to his death, details of decorations won, any available photos, and, in some instances, family correspondence or recollections.

Robert Keyte died for his country, for you and for me. Please pause a moment to remember him.

Lest We Forget.

WORLD WAR I

World War I lasted four years, from 4 August 1914 until 11 November 1918. It began after the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne. The axis powers were Germany and Austria. Russia and France were the initial allies. When Germany invaded Belgium, Britain entered the war on the side of Russia and France.

The war was in Europe, the Western Front was in France and Belgium. The Eastern Front was Russia and Austria-Hungary. Africa was another front because of colonial possessions on that continent, and after Turkey entered the war on 1 November 1914, the Middle East became another theatre of war.

Australians generally thought of themselves as an integral part of the British Empire and the Australian Army and Navy were part of the Imperial Forces. In 1914, Australia's Prime Minister, Andrew Fisher, immediately promised Australian support for Britain 'to the last man and the last shilling.' The Australian population was less than five million. 324,000 Australians served overseas. 61,720 lost their lives. 155,000 were wounded. 4,044 became prisoners of war (397 died while captive).

The first Australian troops were sent to Egypt in 1915. The ANZACS – Australian and New Zealand Army Corps – were engaged in battle on the Gallipoli Peninsula against the Turks to control the Dardanelles' and open the way to Eastern Europe with their fateful landing on 25 April 1915.

The ANZACS were evacuated on 19-20 December 1915. The Gallipoli campaign resulted in the deaths of 7,600 Australians and the wounding of 19,000. Despite the defeat, the legend attached to the heroism, comradeship and valour of the soldiers remain a source of Australian pride and national identity.



ROLL OF HONOUR

ROBERT KEYTE

Service Number: 3163

Rank: Private

Unit: 55th Australian Infantry Battalion

Service: Australian Army

Conflict: First World War, 1914-1918

Date of death: 17 March 1918

Place of death: Belgium

Cause of death: Died of wounds

Age at death: 25

Place of association: Majors Creek, Australia

Cemetery or memorial details: Irish House Cemetery,
Flanders, Belgium

Source: AWM145 Roll of Honour cards, 1914-1918 War,
Army

Location on the Roll of Honour: Robert Keyte's
name is located at **panel 161** in the Commemorative Area
at the Australian War Memorial

55th Australian Infantry Battalion

The 55th Battalion was raised in Egypt on 12 February 1916 as part of the "doubling" of the AIF. Half of its recruits were Gallipoli veterans from the 3rd Battalion, and the other half, fresh reinforcements from Australia. Reflecting the composition of the 3rd, the 55th was predominantly composed of men from New South Wales. The battalion became part of the 14th Brigade of the 5th Australian Division.

Arriving in France on 30 June 1916, the battalion entered the frontline trenches for the first time on 12 July and fought its first major battle at Fromelles a week later. The battle was a disaster, resulting in heavy casualties across the division. Although in reserve, the 55th was quickly committed to the attack and eventually played a critical role, forming the rearguard for the 14th Brigade's withdrawal. Despite its grievous losses the 5th Division continued to man the front in the Fromelles sector for a further two months.

After a freezing winter manning trenches in the Somme Valley, in early 1917 the 55th Battalion participated in the advance that followed the German retreat to the Hindenburg Line. It was spared the assault but did, however, defend gains made during the second battle of Bullecourt. Later in the year, the AIF's focus of

operations switched to the Ypres sector in Belgium. The 55th's major battle here was at Polygon Wood on 26 September.

With the collapse of Russia in October 1917, a major German offensive on the Western Front was expected in early 1918. This came in late March and the 5th Division moved to defend the sector around Corbie. The 14th Brigade took up positions to the north of Villers-Bretonneux and held these even when the village fell, threatening their flanks.

Once the German offensive had been defeated, the Allies launched their own offensive in August 1918. The 14th Brigade did not play a major role in these operations until late in the month, but its actions were critical to the capture of Peronne, which fell on 2 September. The 54th fought its last major battle of the war, St Quentin Canal, between 29 September and 2 October 1918. For his valour during this action Private John Ryan was awarded the Victoria Cross.

The battalion was resting out of the line when the Armistice was declared on 11 November. The progressive return of troops to Australia for discharge resulted in the 55th merging with the 53rd Battalion on 10 March 1919. The combined 53/55th Battalion, in turn, disbanded on 11 April.

55th A.I.F.

Keyte Pte. R. 3163,

(D/W March 17th 1918. Dets. D/B.)

"L/Cpl. Young of the 55th Battn. was with Keyte when he died and he has written home full particulars. We were in reserves on the Messines front when Keyte was hit just about 300 yards from the dressing station. Young was with him and fetched stretcher bearers who carried him to the dressing station. The doctor told Young to stay with him as it was only a question of time and he lived for about an hour. He was quite sensible and cheerful up to the end. He is buried at Irish House near Kemmel."

Eye witness No. L/Cpl. Young 55th Battn.

Description:

Informant: Cpl. G.R.A. Long 2486, 55th A.I.F.,
Duston War Hospital, Northampton.

6.6.18.
G. MacKinnell.

written Young 22/6/18

"Die: of Wounds 17-3-18"

The above named was with on a fatigue job in the support lines at Messines on the morning of the 17-3-18. He was wounded severely in the stomach about 6 a.m. with a piece of H.E. shell. Within five minutes on receiving his wounds, he was carried into safety.

The Advance Dressing Station was only 20 yards away from where he got wounded. Here he received every attention - I remained by special request as it were to spend the last few minutes as we thought with him. Well he was carried from the Advance Dressing Station about a mile and a half from _____. There again, everything was done for him that could have been done. He was moved from there again to Kemmel Dressing Station where he died just before reaching.

He was buried in a soldiers' cemetery at Irish House Near Kemmel. Yes, his grave would be registered. The C.O. of my battalion would probably be able to furnish you with full details concerning the numbers of the Grave. With reference to his personal appearance - he was about 5ft 6ins in height, fresh complexion, well made, about 13 stone in weight.

Letter from:- 2706. Cpl. H. Young.
B. Coy 55th Battrn.
A.I.F.

London.
17-7-18

S.

ROLL OF HONOR.

Another name has to be added to the Braidwood district roll of honor by the death from wounds of Private R. Keyte ("Clocky"), son of Mr. and Mrs. William Keyte, of Major's Creek. The deceased soldier enlisted in Braidwood about 18 months ago, 12 of which he spent in France fighting the Hun. He was 34 years of age. "Clocky" was a general favorite with all who knew him. He was one of the district's best footballers, and did fine work for the Major's Creek team. The deepest sympathy is everywhere felt for the family of the deceased in their sad bereavement, whose only consolation for their loss is that their son died in defence of his King and country and for all the traditions which Britishers prize so dearly because they cost so much to win both in blood and treasure.

1918: The Braidwood Dispatch reporting the death of Robert Keyte.

D 41468

...RALIAN



MILITARY FORCES.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. *3152*
N 41477

Name *KEYTE ROBERT*
Unit *3rd Regt 1st Div 1st Bde*
Joined on *8. 10. 1916*

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

1. What is your Name? *Robert Keyte*
2. In the Parish of *...* in or near the Town of *Braidwood* in the County of *Wentworth*
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) *Natural Born*
4. What is your age? *33—3 months*
5. What is your trade or calling? *Labourer*
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period. *No*
7. Are you married? *No*
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) *W. KEYTE MAJOR (RETIRED) BRAIDWOOD*
9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? *No*
10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Incapable and Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been dismissed with Disgrace from the Navy? *No*
11. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge. *No*
12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? *No*
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? *No*
14. Do you understand that no Separation Allowance will be issued in respect of your service beyond an amount which, together with Pay, would reach eight shillings per day? *No*
15. Are you prepared to undergo inoculation against small-pox and other fever? *No*

Robert Keyte do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

*And I further agree to allot not less than two-fifths of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife *three-fifths*

Date *8/10/16* wife and children

Robert Keyte
Signature of person enlisted.

*This clause to be amended where necessary and should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 16 years of age.

Transferred to

DEFENCE
B.R.

D 42876

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

No. 3163

Rank

Plt

Name

KEYTE R.

Unit

55th Bn.

Casualty

Died 17.2.18 G.S.W. Alderson at 15th Fa. Contingent

611-2274 1098 plate London Pa. Received G.S.W. 24.12.18

MEMO
SERIAL

*To
Family
W. W. Keyte
841416*

*P.R.V. City
Desp 12.1.22*

"WHERE THE AUSTRALIANS FIGHT"

Personal sent to *Vol. W. Keyte* on *2.5.20*

DATE

A.F. B. 103 Receipt

A.F. B. 2090A Receipt

REF. NO.

MAR 26 1918

M.O. ADVISED. OBT OF W. W. W.

7/3/18

27 5-18

COPY MADE FOR WAR PENSIONS

WAR HISTORY INDEX

CONFIRMATION RECEIVED OF

Cable No. *6223 Keyte Alderson 24/3/18 25/3/18*

Effects ex "Barunga" lost at sea 11/30/18

Circular R.R.M. 40 1918

5.1.20

6.9.20

RECEIVED BY UNCLE

no duplicate

51/203 (3MS)

13/5/18

BRITISH MEDAL to Comdt

2nd

M.D.B.R.M. 53/109



FIELD SERVICE

DL/1468
Army Form B. 2090A.

REPORT of Death of a Soldier to be forwarded to the War Office with the least possible delay after receipt of notification of death on Army Form B. 213 or Army Form A. 36, or from other official documentary sources.

REGIMENT: 55th BATTALION A.I.F. Squadron, Troop, }
OR CORPS } Battery or Company }

Regimental No. 3163 Rank Private

Surname KEYTE Christian Name Robert

Date 19th March 1918 Place 10th Australian Field Ambulance, in the
Died Field, F. G. F.
Cause of Death died of wounds received in action.

Nature and Date of Report Hospital Report dated 15.3.18.

By whom made U.S. 10th Australian Field Ambulance

* Especially when killed in action, or died from wounds received in action, or from disease due to field operations or to fatigue, privation or exposure while on military duty, or from injury while on military duty.

State whether he leaves a Will or not (a) In Pay Book (Army Book 54) (b) In Small Book (if at Base) (c) as a separate document.

All private documents and effects received from the front or hospital, as well as the Pay Book, should be examined, and if any will is found it should be at once forwarded to the War Office.

Any information received as to verbal expressions by a deceased soldier of his wishes as to the disposal of his estate should be reported to the War Office as soon as possible.

A duplicate of this Report is to be sent to the Field Centre Paymaster at Home, or to the R.F.A.G. Indian Expeditionary Force, or Field Distributing Office, as the case may require, together with the Deceased's Pay Book (after withdrawal of any will from the latter). If the deceased's Small Book is at the front, it should be forwarded to the War Office with this Report.

AUSTRALIAN SECTION, 3RD ECHELON, F. G. F.
Dated and Place British Expeditionary Force, France
10th April 1918. *W. J. Keane* Lieut.
FOR U. I. & RECORDS.

W.O. FORM B. 2090-A. 11. 5. 17. (REVISED) 3-10-17.

Australian Imperial Force.



A.I.F. KIT STORE,
110, GREYHOUND ROAD,
HAMMERSMITH,
LONDON, W. 6.

E.R.M.

Inventory of Effects of - No. 3163. Keyte R. 55th Btn. A.I.F.

Forwarded to - FATHER,
Mr W. Keyte,
Majors Creek,
Braidwood,
New South Wales.

EFFECTS.

Ex. 3rd Echelon France. (13676) 13.4.18.

Disc, Pipe, Belt, Matchbox cover, 2 Water proof covers, Religious Book, Writing pad, Mirror.

Per "Barunga" 21.6.18.
In Case No. 1135.

No. of Package

D/S. 32860.

Checked by

Major's Quett

28th October 1918.

Australian Imperial Force

Base Records Office

Victoria Barracks

Melbourne

W. Morgan
2/1/16

Dear Sir

Will you please forward
me at your very earliest
convenience, a certificate of report
of death of my late son, (No 3163)
Private Robert Keyte 55th Battalion
who died of wounds in France on the
17th March 1918.

I want this certificate very particular
as my late son who was a member of an
oddfellows society.

OCT 31 1918
Sincerely Yours W Keyte

RECEIVED
JAN 2 1920
616747

Major Creek
31/1/20.

To,
The Secretary
Department of Defence
Melbourne.

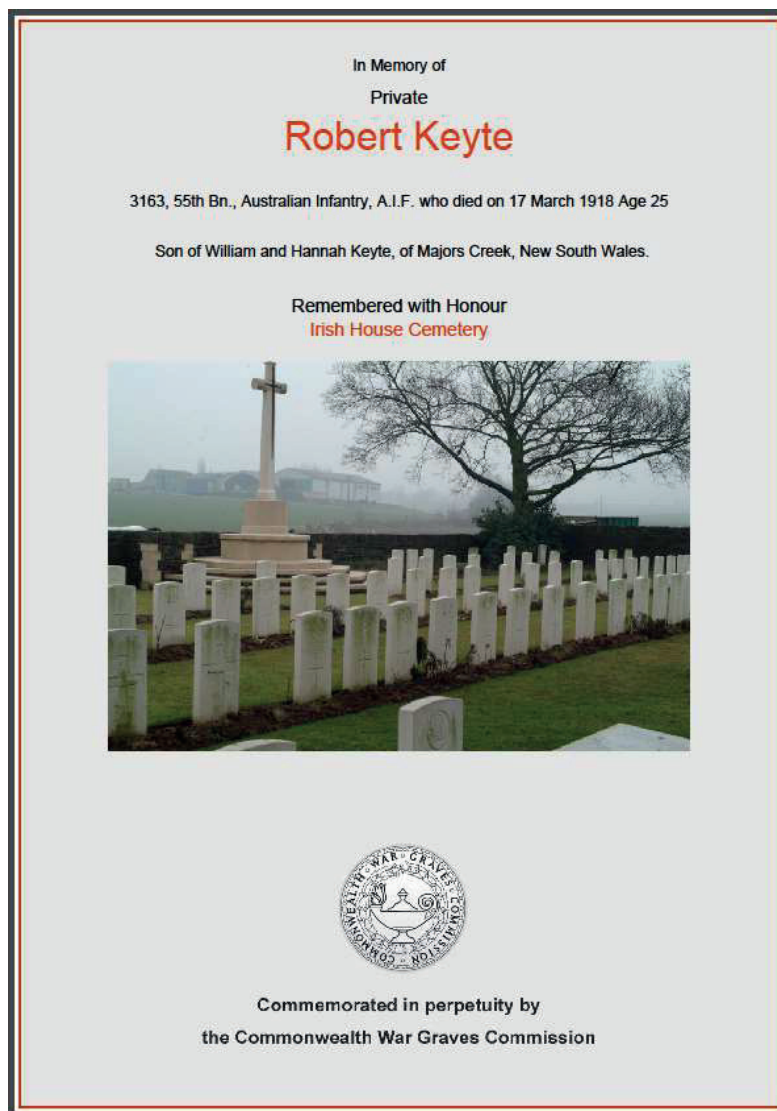
Sir.

I have
enclosed form, for inscriptions on war
Graves.

I would like if possible to procure,
6 photographs of the grave taken separately
for which I am prepared to pay the cost.

I am
Yours Respectfully,
- W Keyte
Major Creek
Via Braidswood

3/6/20
Keyte - R
55 P.H.
/



Acknowledgements

Everybody responded enthusiastically to the idea of capturing the information about Braidwood's 88 World War I veterans who lost their lives. The Braidwood RSL Sub Branch is most grateful for the support they received in carrying out this task and would like to acknowledge those of whom we are aware: Karen, Chris and Renee Nelson, Roslyn Maddrell, Karen Shea, Jill Clarke, Rod McClure, Ben and Meaghan Frohling, Diane McGrath, Us On Mondays Quilting Group, Len Mutton & Co and local shopkeepers for their World War I window displays.

Thank you to the students and teachers of Braidwood Central School and St. Bedes School who have embraced these soldiers and have honoured their memories on Anzac Day 2015.

The Braidwood RSL Sub Branch raised a good proportion of the funds for the cost of producing these booklets. The efforts of the members of the sub branch involved are very much appreciated. This money was augmented by welcome funding from the Federal Government through the ANZAC Centenary Local Grants Program and the Braidwood Community Bank.

To all those who helped in any way, many thanks. Your efforts have ensured we remember these Braidwood and District Veterans well.

Back Cover: Peace Day, 11th November 1918, Wallace Street, Braidwood.

"Wild day in Braidwood: When Braidwood woke up on Tuesday morning to find the 'glad tidings of great joy' awaiting it that Germany had signed the armistice and the frightful carnage of the past four years or so had come to an end it simply went mad with delight. No other words could adequately describe the excitement that followed." "Braidwood Letters from the Front" by Roslyn Maddrell.

ROLL OF HONOUR

Alley, Clair Underwood
Archer, Fred
Backhouse, Victor John
Barnett, Frederick George
Barry, Charles Louis
Beatty, Walter Cusack
Bell, John Henry Edward
Black, George Scott
Bruce, Thomas Fraser
Byrne, Cecil John
Callan, William Henry
Catlin, Robert Henry
Clarke, Lester Thomas
Cook, Thomas John
Crandell, Christopher George
Cregan, Clarence Theodore Augustus
Cullen, Henry Thomas
Davis, John Henry
Davis, Oscar Raymond Stanley
Dawson, Edric Athol
Dayball, Arthur Joseph
Dempsey, Charles Frederick
Dempsey, Charles
Dowell, Frederick Robert
Feeney, William
Fisher, Osborne
Flack, John Foster
Garnett, Henry James
Geelan, Robert Michael
Gosling, Fred
Gough, James
Green, Francis Henry
Healy, Myrtle James
Howard, John Alexander
Huggett, William
Hunt, Frederick William
Hunt, John
Hush, Percy Alfred
Hush, Thomas
Hush, Austin Septimus
Innes, Henry George
Kelly, Herbert Albert
Kemp, Leslie Smith
Keyte, Robert
Knight, Charles Oliver
Lee, Thomas James
Lennon, James
Lupton, Spencer
Lynch, James Joseph
Matthews, Francis
McCool, Francis Leslie Neil
McDonald, Alexander Joseph
McLean, Donald
McRae, Finley Arnold
Meade, Arthur Stuart
Merton, Thomas David
Montgomery, Stanley
Moore, William
Newberry, Alwyn (Alwin) Horace James
O'Brien, Thomas Daniel
O'Reilly, John
Pooley, Edward
Rex, Horace Joseph
Riley, Frank
Roberts, Frederick Bede
Robinson, William James
Rodgers, Albert
Seidel, Alfred George
Seidel, Henry Edward
Sharpe, George Lyle
Sharpe, Reginald
Sherman, Edgar Robert
Sherman, Percy Frederick
Simmons, George
Smith (Greenwood), George
Spicer, William Henry
Steele, Alexander Norman
Stein, Daniel Godfrey
Stewart, David Walter
Styles, Reginald Lucian
Torpy, Patrick Edward
Torpy, Thomas Patrick
Walker, William Albert
Watt, James
Watt, Oscar Harold McClure
White, Alister
Whitelaw, Thomas Philip
Wilson, Samuel Charles

Lest We Forget