

# Baverstock War Graves



*Lest we Forget*

## World War I



803 PRIVATE

**F. D. J. KENNEDY**

2ND BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

23rd SEPTEMBER, 1918    Age 21

*In Loving Memory Of Don*

*From Sisters*

*May, Ivy, Myrtle, Laurel*

## Frederick Donald James KENNEDY

Frederick Donald James Kennedy was born at Bundarra, near Inverell, New South Wales in 1897 to parents Frederick F. & Annie E. Kennedy. He was an 18 year old, single, Labourer from Narrabri West, New South Wales when he enlisted on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1916 with the 33<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Battalion "C" Company of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 803 & his religion was Presbyterian. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Mrs M. Watling, Vivian Street, Inverell, NSW. As he was under the age of 21, Betsey McDonald signed as Guardian, consenting to the enlistment of Frederick Donald James Kennedy for Active Service Abroad.

Pte Frederick Donald James Kennedy embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Marathon (A74)* on 4<sup>th</sup> May, 1916 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1916.

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.

Pte Kennedy proceeded overseas to France to join 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1916. He was taken on strength at Etaples, France on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1916 & joined the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion in the Field at Belgium on 29<sup>th</sup> September, 1916.

Pte Frederick Donald James Kennedy was Wounded in Action on 31<sup>st</sup> October, 1916. He was admitted to No. 36 Clearing Station with a gunshot wound to left thigh. He was then transferred to 23<sup>rd</sup> General Hospital at Etaples on 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 1916 & then embarked for England on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1916 from Calais, France. Pte Kennedy was admitted to 1<sup>st</sup> London General Hospital on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1916. Hospital Admissions form states "Gunshot wound to left thigh – slight".

On 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1917 Pte Kennedy was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire from Perham Downs.

On 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1917 Pte Kennedy was classified as B1A 2– which was a classification as to his fitness for duty. Category A was for men who were fit for Active Service; Category B - men fit for certain kinds of service; Category C – men fit for service in England; Category D – temporarily unfit but likely to become fit after treatment & Category E – those who should be discharged. B1A2 was fit for overseas training camp in three to four weeks.

On 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1917 Pte Kennedy was classified as B1A - fit for light duty only – 4 weeks.

On 14<sup>th</sup> April, 1917 Pte Kennedy was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth. From there he was marched out to Drafting Depot at Perham Downs on 26<sup>th</sup> May, 1917.

On 20<sup>th</sup> June, 1917 Pte Kennedy proceeded overseas to France, from Southampton, to Overseas Training Depot & marched in to Havre on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 1917. He was admitted sick to Hospital on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 1917 at Harfleur.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 1917 Pte Kennedy was transferred to No. 4 Convalescent Depot at Havre with Bronchitis & marched in from Hospital on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1917. Pte Kennedy was transferred to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion from 33<sup>rd</sup> Battalion from 16<sup>th</sup> September, 1917.

Pte Frederick Donald James Kennedy was Wounded in Action for the second time on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 1917. He was taken to No. 6 Field Ambulance & his file marked "NYDN (Buried by Shell)". (Not Yet Diagnosed - Nervous – apparently the term Shell-shock was no longer allowed). Over the next few days Pte Kennedy was transferred to No. 10 C.C. Station & then to N.Z Stat. Hospital at Wisques. His file was still marked "NYDN admitted" at Calais on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 1917. The O.C. at N.Z. Stat. Hospital marked Pte Kennedy as "Casualty classified – Shell Shock Wound".

On 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1917 Pte Kennedy was admitted to No. 7 Convalescent Depot at Boulogne & on 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1917 he was marched in from Hospital at Havre.

Pte Kennedy rejoined his Battalion, in the field in France, from being wounded on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 1917.

Pte Frederick Donald James Kennedy was Wounded in Action for the third time on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 1918. He was admitted to Hospital with sharpen wounds to left Thigh, arm & back. He was transferred to Boulogne on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 1918 & invalided to England on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 1918. Pte Kennedy was transferred from Shorncliffe on 12<sup>th</sup> August, 1918 & then transferred to 1<sup>st</sup> Aux. Harefield on 16<sup>th</sup> August, 1918. The Hospital Admissions form states "shell wounds of head, chest, left arm, & left thigh".

Pte Kennedy was granted Furlo from 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1918 & then to report to No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 14<sup>th</sup> September, 1918.

On 14<sup>th</sup> September, 1918, Pte Kennedy was written up for an Offence at London – Absent without Leave from 11 a.m. to noon on 14<sup>th</sup> September, 1918. His punishment was admonished by Major C. H. Howard the same day. Pte Kennedy was later that day, marched in to Hurdcott from Admin. Headquarters from Furlo.

Pte Kennedy was sent sick to Fovant Military Hospital from No. 4 Command Depot, Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 1918 & later same day admitted with Gunshot wound to head (old wound), left side, seriously ill. He was also found to have acute broncho pneumonia.

Private Frederick Donald James Kennedy died at 9.45 a.m. on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 1918 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire. Cause of death was marked as "Died of Wounds – G.S.W. Head (old wound)." Pte Kennedy's death was also described as "Died of Wounds received in Action".

A death for Frederick D. J. Kennedy, aged 20, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Wilton, Wiltshire.

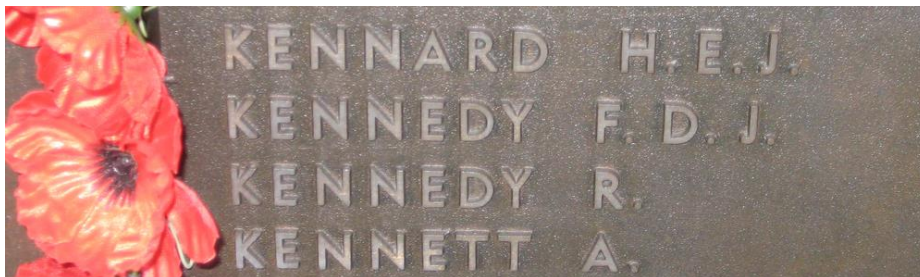
Private Frederick Donald James Kennedy was buried on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1918 in the churchyard of St. Edith's at Baverstock, Wiltshire and has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone.

From the burial report of Pte F. D. J. Kennedy – *"he died at Military Hospital, Fovant, England, on 23.9.18 of gunshot wound head (old wound sustained in action in France on 22.6.18). The deceased soldier was accorded a military funeral, the coffin of good polished elm with brass mounts being conveyed on a Gun-carriage, preceded by a Firing Party and the Band of No. 4 Australian Command Depot. Six of deceased's Unit comrades acted as Pallbearers. Chaplain R. M. Legate conducted the burial service.*

*Four Officers, and about one hundred N.C.O.'s and men of No. 4 Command Depot attended the funeral, and a beautiful wreath from them was placed on the grave after the "Last Post" had been sounded. Headquarters A. I. F. Depots in United Kingdom were represented at the funeral.*

*The late Private Kennedy was most popular with both officers and men, and always proved himself a keen soldier and a good comrade....."*

Private F. D. J. Kennedy is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 33.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

Pte F. D. Kennedy is also remembered on the Inverell War Memorial located at corner of Lawrence & Evans Streets, opposite the Inverell Returned Servicemen's Memorial Club, Inverell, NSW.



*(Photo from Register of War Memorials in NSW – Douglas N. James)*

Pte F. D. J. Kennedy was entitled to Victory Medal & British War Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Kennedy's eldest sister – Mabel Watling (Both August, 1923). Letters were sent in April, 1923 to Mr F. F. Kennedy, of Howell, NSW – father of late Pte Kennedy, from Base Records to ascertain if the address was the correct one for the Medals of the late Pte Kennedy to be sent to. No reply was received.

In a letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> May, 1923 to Base Records Mrs Mabel Watling states that their *“mother is deceased & there are no brothers & I am the eldest sister. My father is still alive although he left us years through drink. He put in his claim for the Gratuity bond & his claim was granted which in my opinion he was not entitled to. However I wrote several letters about it to Headquarters & could get no satisfaction & naturally expected the same result in this case.”*

A statutory declaration was signed by Mrs Mabel Watling on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 1923 stating that she would return the medals to the Dept. of Defence at any time upon receipt of its demand in writing, should a closer relative emerge.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Frederick Donald James Kennedy – service number 803, as being 21 years old & served with 2nd Battalion Australian Infantry. He was the son of Frederick and Annie Kennedy. Born at Inverell, New South Wales.

(87 pages of Pte Frederick Donald James Kennedy's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

*Information obtained from the Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives*

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## Newspaper Reports

### AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES – 245<sup>th</sup> LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES - WOUNDED

Private F. D. Kennedy, Inverell

*(The Maitland Weekly Mercury, NSW – Saturday 9 December, 1916)*

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### CASUALTY LIST – 369<sup>th</sup> LIST

MANY WOUNDED

NEW SOUTH WALES – WOUNDED

Pte Fredk. Donald Jas. Kennedy, Inverell (2<sup>nd</sup> occ.). shell shock (p. r. ill)

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Friday 14 December, 1917)*

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### 417<sup>th</sup> CASUALTY LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

WOUNDED

Pte Fredk. Donald James Kennedy, Inverell

*(The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Tuesday 16 July, 1918)*

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### 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 at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock. 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 28<sup>th</sup> June, 1921, to Mrs M. Watling advises that a letter from the Defence Dept. concerning an inscription for the headstone of the late Pte F. D. J. Kennedy 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.

Pte F. D. J. Kennedy does have a personal inscription on his headstone.

*In Loving Memory of Don From Sisters May, Ivy, Myrtle, Laurel*

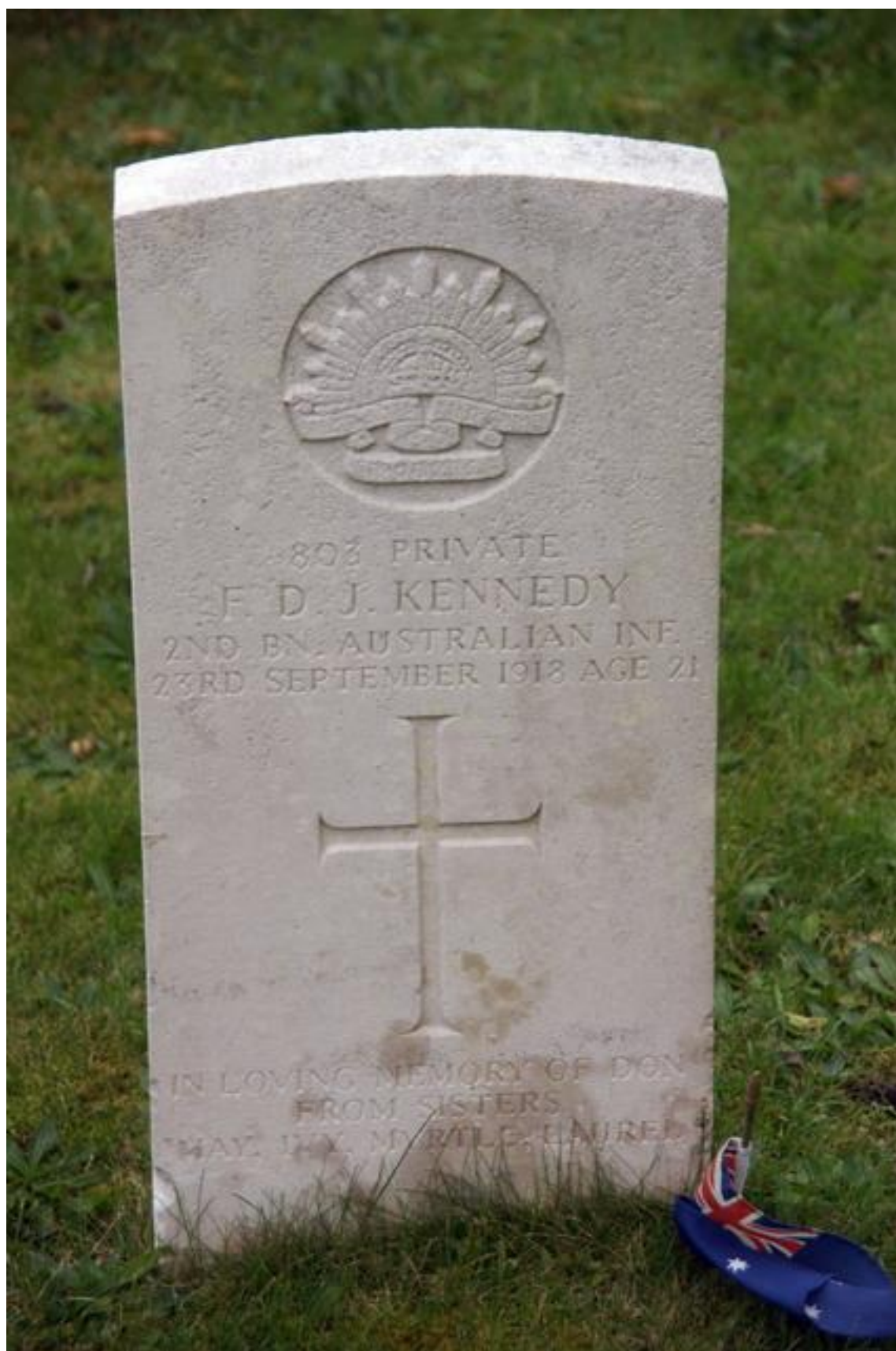


**St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire.**

*(Photo from CWGC)*



Photo of Pte F. D. J. Kennedy's CWGC Headstone at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire.



*(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey 2012)*