

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

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



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 (Don) KENNEDY

Frederick Donald James Kennedy was born at Bundarra, near Inverell, New South Wales in 1897 to parents Frederick Francis & Annie Eliza Kennedy (nee Wood).

Annie Eliza Kennedy, mother of Frederick Donald James Kennedy, died in 1902 at Tingha, NSW.

Frederick Donald James Kennedy was an 18 year old, single, Labourer from Narrabri West, New South Wales when he enlisted on 12th January, 1916 with the Australian Imperial Force (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 with the Australian Imperial Force of Frederick Donald James Kennedy for Active Service Abroad.

Private Frederick Donald James Kennedy was posted to “C” Company, 33rd Battalion on 14th February, 1916 for recruit training.

Private Frederick Donald James Kennedy embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Marathon (A74)* on 4th May, 1916 with the 33rd Infantry Battalion “C” Company & disembarked at Devonport, England on 9th 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.

Private Kennedy proceeded overseas to France from 1st Training Battalion on 16th September, 1916. He was taken on strength of 1st A.D.B.D. (Australian Divisional Base Depot) at Etaples, France on 17th September, 1916. He was transferred to 2nd Battalion & joined the 2nd Battalion in the Field in Belgium on 29th September, 1916.

Private Frederick Donald James Kennedy was wounded in action on 31st October, 1916. He was admitted to No. 36 Casualty Clearing Station with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to left thigh. He was then transferred to No. 16 Ambulance Train on 2nd November, 1916 & admitted to 23rd General Hospital at Etaples, France the same day. Private Kennedy was transferred & embarked from Calais, France for England on 12th November, 1916 on Hospital Ship *Stad Antwerpen*.

2nd Battalion

The 2nd Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 1st, 3rd and 4th Battalions it was recruited from New South Wales and, together with these battalions, formed the 1st Brigade.

.....

In March 1916, it sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918 the battalion took part in operations against the German Army, principally in the Somme Valley in France and around Ypres in Belgium. The battalion's first major action in France was at Pozieres in the Somme valley in July 1916. Later the battalion fought at Ypres, in Flanders, before returning to the Somme for winter.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 2nd Battalion

31st October, 1916:

Weather still showery. Enemy shelled support Coys at 0800 causing 2 O.R. killed, 1 Off (Lt. N. Cuthbert seriously wounded) 12 O.R. wounded.

Effective strength 24 Off 751 OR.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Kennedy was admitted to 1st London General Hospital, England on 12th November, 1916. Hospital Admissions form states “*Gunshot wound to left thigh – slight*”. Private Kennedy was on furlough from 22nd February, 1917 to 9th March, 1917.

Private Kennedy was marched in to No. 3 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire on 23rd March, 1917 from No. 1 Command Depot at Perham Downs, Wiltshire.

On 25th March, 1917 Private 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.

Private Kennedy was classified on 10th April, 1917 as B1A - fit for light duty only – 4 weeks.

Private Kennedy was marched in to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth on 14th April, 1917. From there he was marched out to Drafting Depot at Perham Downs on 26th May, 1917.

Private Kennedy proceeded overseas to France, from Southampton, on 20th June, 1917 to Overseas Training Depot. He was marched in to 1st Australian Divisional Base Depot at Havre, France on 21st June, 1917.

Private Kennedy was admitted sick to Hospital on 24th June, 1917 then admitted to No. 40 Stationary Hospital at Harfleur on 25th June, 1917 with P.U.O. (Pyrexia (fever) of unknown origin. He was transferred to No. 4 Convalescent Depot on 3rd July, 1917 at Havre with Bronchitis. Private Kennedy was marched back in to 1st A.D.B.D. on 10th July, 1917 from Hospital.

Private Kennedy rejoined the 2nd Battalion in France on 30th July, 1917.

Private Frederick Donald James Kennedy was wounded in action (2nd occasion) on 22nd 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). Private Kennedy was transferred to No. 10 Casualty Clearing Station on 23rd September, 1917. He was admitted to New Zealand Stationary Hospital at Wisques on 29th September, 1917 & classed as “*Casualty classified – Shell Shock Wound*” on 2nd October, 1917. Private Kennedy was transferred on 2nd October, 1917 to Ambulance Train & then admitted to No. 35 General Hospital at Calais, France on 2nd October, 1917. On 20th October, 1917 Private Kennedy was admitted to No. 7 Convalescent Depot at Boulogne, France.

2nd Battalion

In early 1917 the German Army withdrew to the formidable defences of the Hindenburg Line. As the 2nd Battalion advanced towards these defences in April 1917, Private T. J. Kenny attacked several enemy machine gun positions with grenades, earning the 2nd Battalion's only Victoria Cross. The battalion spent much of the rest of 1917 fighting in increasingly horrendous conditions around Ypres.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 2nd Battalion

Front Line 22nd September, 1917:

The Bn got orders that it would be relieved by Bns of the 14th Bde and that it would proceed to ZILLEBEKE BUND (Appendix 11)

All cos were settled in ZILLEBEKE BUND by 0400

Strength 22 Officers 581 OR

Weather clear and fine, misty in early morning

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Kennedy was marched in to 1st Australian Divisional Base Depot on 25th October, 1917. He rejoined his Battalion, in the field in France, from being wounded on 4th November, 1917.

Private Frederick Donald James Kennedy was wounded in action (3rd occasion) on 22nd June, 1918. He was admitted to 3rd Australian Field Ambulance on 22nd June, 1918 with shrapnel wounds to left thigh, arm & back. Private Kennedy was transferred to No.1 Australian Casualty Clearing Station on 23rd June, 1918 then transferred & admitted to No. 83 General Hospital at Boulogne, France on 24th June, 1918. He was invalided to England on 2nd July, 1918 on Hospital Ship *St. Denis*.

2nd Battalion

In 1918 the battalion returned to the Somme valley and helped to stop the German spring offensive in March and April. The battalion subsequently participated in the Allies' own offensive, launched to the east of Amiens on 8 August 1918.

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 2nd Battalion

W18.B.1.6 – 22nd June, 1918:

Dull. Prisoner captured b “A” Co. belonging to 5th Bavarian Regt. carrying spare parts bag complete for MGun, this has been sent to War Museum fuller details in intelligence report Appendix “B “ also Casualties etc.

Work done Appendix 22. Capt Millar “M.C.” returned from L.G. School.

Appendix B:

.....

Intelligence Summary from 6 am 21/6/18 to 6 am 22/6/18

Casualties – 1 OR wounded

.....

Intelligence Summary 6am 22/6/18 to 6 am 23/6/18

Casualties – 3 OR wounded

.....

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Kennedy was admitted to Military Hospital at Shorncliffe, England on 2nd July, 1918. He was transferred from Shorncliffe on 12th August, 1918 to 3rd Auxiliary Hospital then on 16th August, 1918 transferred to 1st Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield. The Hospital Admissions form states “*shell wounds of head, chest, left arm, & left thigh*”.

Private Kennedy was granted Furlo from 31st August, 1918 to 14th September, 1918 & was then to report to No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire.

Private Kennedy was written up for an Offence at London on 14th September, 1918 – Absent without Leave from 11 a.m. to noon on 14th September, 1918. This was admonished by Major C. H. Howard the same day. Private Kennedy was later that day, marched in to No. 4 Command Depot at Hurdcott, Wiltshire from Admin. Headquarters & from Furlo.

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

Private Frederick Donald James Kennedy died at 9.45 a.m. on 23rd September, 1918 at Military Hospital, Fovant, Wiltshire. Cause of death was marked as “*Died of Wounds – G.S.W. Head (old wound)*.” Private 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 27th September, 1918 in the churchyard of St. Edith's at Baverstock, Wiltshire and has a Commonwealth War Graves Headstone.

From the burial report of Private F. D. J. Kennedy – Coffin was good, polished Elm with brass mounts. *“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.....”

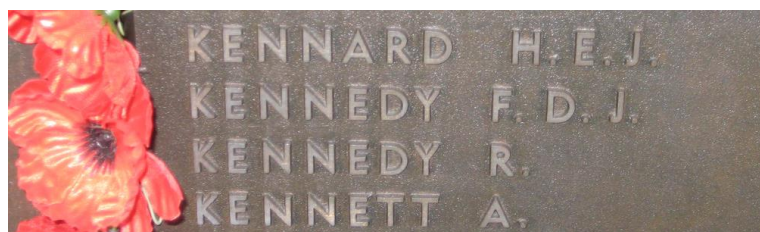
Private F. D. J. Kennedy was entitled to Victory Medal & British War Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Kennedy's eldest sister – Mabel Watling (Both August, 1923). Letters were sent in April, 1923 to Mr F. F. Kennedy, of Howell, NSW – father of late Pte Kennedy, from Base 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 31st 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 25th 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.

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

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



Inverell War Memorial (Photos from Monument Australia)

The Inverell Roll of Honour, located at the Inverell RSL Museum, Inverell Pioneer Village, Tingha Road, Inverell, NSW commemorates those who served in World War 1.



Inverell Roll of Honour (Photo from Monument Australia – John Huth)

F. D. J. Kennedy was remembered with a tree (No. 79) planted at The George Cartwright VC Reserve, Gwydir Highway, Inverell, NSW.

The monument commemorates the men of Inverell and Districts known as "The Kurrajongs" who were the largest single contingent of men to leave a country town to enlist.

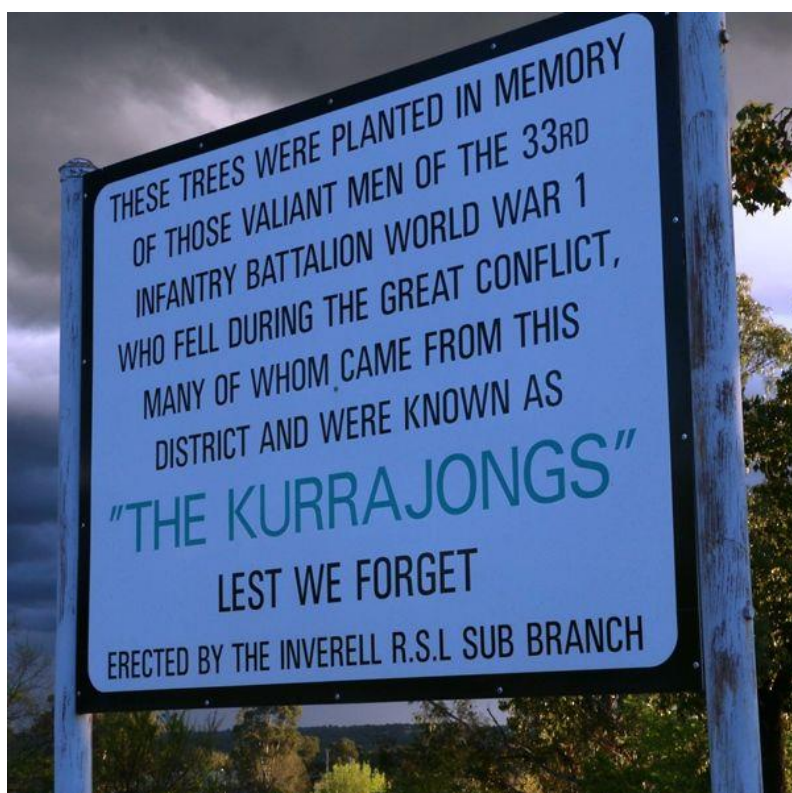
In January 1916 a group of 114 men left Inverell to fight in World War One. The group was named 'The Kurrajongs', taking the name of the hardy evergreen Australian tree.

The Kurrajongs march was one of a number of 'snowball' recruitment marches fashioned on the famous Coo-ee recruiting march of 1915. The aim of these marches was to attract volunteers, starting with a nucleus of men and growing as the group travelled through the towns along their route.

Travelling by train and visiting the neighbouring towns of Warialda and Moree, their numbers swelled to 150 by the time they reached the Narrabri Army Depot Camp. Most of the men subsequently enlisted in the 33rd Battalion AIF being raised at Armidale at the time.
(Information from Monument Australia)



Kurrajong Memorial – Inverell (Photos from Monument Australia)



Newspaper report – The Inverell Times, NSW – 9 September, 1919:

THE TOLL OF WAR

INVERELL'S SACRIFICE

PLANTING OF KURRAJONG PARADE

Inverell and district's sacrifice on the altar of duty amounted to nearly 200 of the cream of her manhood, who are lying in soldiers' graves in foreign lands. To perpetuate the memory of those gallant men the Municipal Council decided, some time ago, to plant an avenue of kurrajongs from the Tingha Crossing to The Knoll. The proposal was to plant a tree for each fallen soldier. The ceremony took place on Saturday afternoon last in the presence of a large gathering.

Prior to the planting an address was delivered by the Mayor (Ald. G. B. Ring). He remarked that it was the mothers who had felt the loss of their dear boys the most, but nevertheless they felt pride in the knowledge that they had died in such a glorious cause. Referring to the avenue about to be planted, the Mayor said it was proposed to provide a tablet for every tree, such tablet to be inscribed with the name of the soldier and the unit to which he belonged, and also the locality of his death. It was decided by the Council that the tablets should be of uniform design— (applause)— and there would be no distinction whatever between the tablet for the rich man's son or the poor widow's boy— all would be alike. The council was not in a position to pay for the cost of the tablets, as the amount would run into over £200.

Ald. McIlveen, who was then called upon by the Mayor, said that to many, if not all it all of the relatives of their brave dead it would be an impossible task to visit the soldiers graves in the far off lands. It seemed therefore to the Council that there should be something established locally which would keep green the memory of those who had fallen. What, therefore, could be more appropriate than an avenue of kurrajong trees. This beautiful and evergreen Australian tree was as casual as many of the Australian soldiers. It could be lopped and hacked about, but nothing could stop its inclination to grow. The trees they were about to plant that day would grow none the less vigorously because many of them would be watered by the tears of the bereaved. It would take a few years before the trees developed into great size, but it was only 11 years since the first kurrajongs had been planted in the streets, and some of them now had barrels more than a foot thick. On the higher land, where they were planting them to-day, they should grow still more quickly, and in a short space be a source of pride to the town, as well as to the relatives who had planted them. The Council would undertake to see that they were watered, and all the friends were asked to do— and he knew that they would take pride in doing it— was to see that weeds were kept down. At that moment they had over 170 names of soldiers who had paid the penalty of war, and it was probable that the list was not yet full. It seemed a great number for a small community. A number of families had lost two sons.....

The following is a list of the memorial tree numbers:-79 F. D. J. Kennedy.....



(87 pages of Private 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



Private Frederick Donald James Kennedy *(Photo from VWMA)*



Newspaper Reports

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES – 245th LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES - WOUNDED

Private F. D. Kennedy, Inverell

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

CASUALTY LIST – 369th LIST

MANY WOUNDED

NEW SOUTH WALES – WOUNDED

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

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

FOR AUSTRALIA

CASUALTY LIST No. 417

WOUNDED

F. D. J. KENNEDY, Inverell (3rd occ.)

(The Sun, NSW – 15 July, 1918)

On Active Service

KENNEDY – A tribute of love to the memory of our dear brother, Don, who died of wounds, September 23, 1918.

He was just an Australian hero,
One of God's bravest and best.

Inserted by his sorrowing sisters, Myrtle, Mabel, Laurel, and Ivy.

The Sydney Morning Herald, NSW – Friday 23 September, 1920)

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).

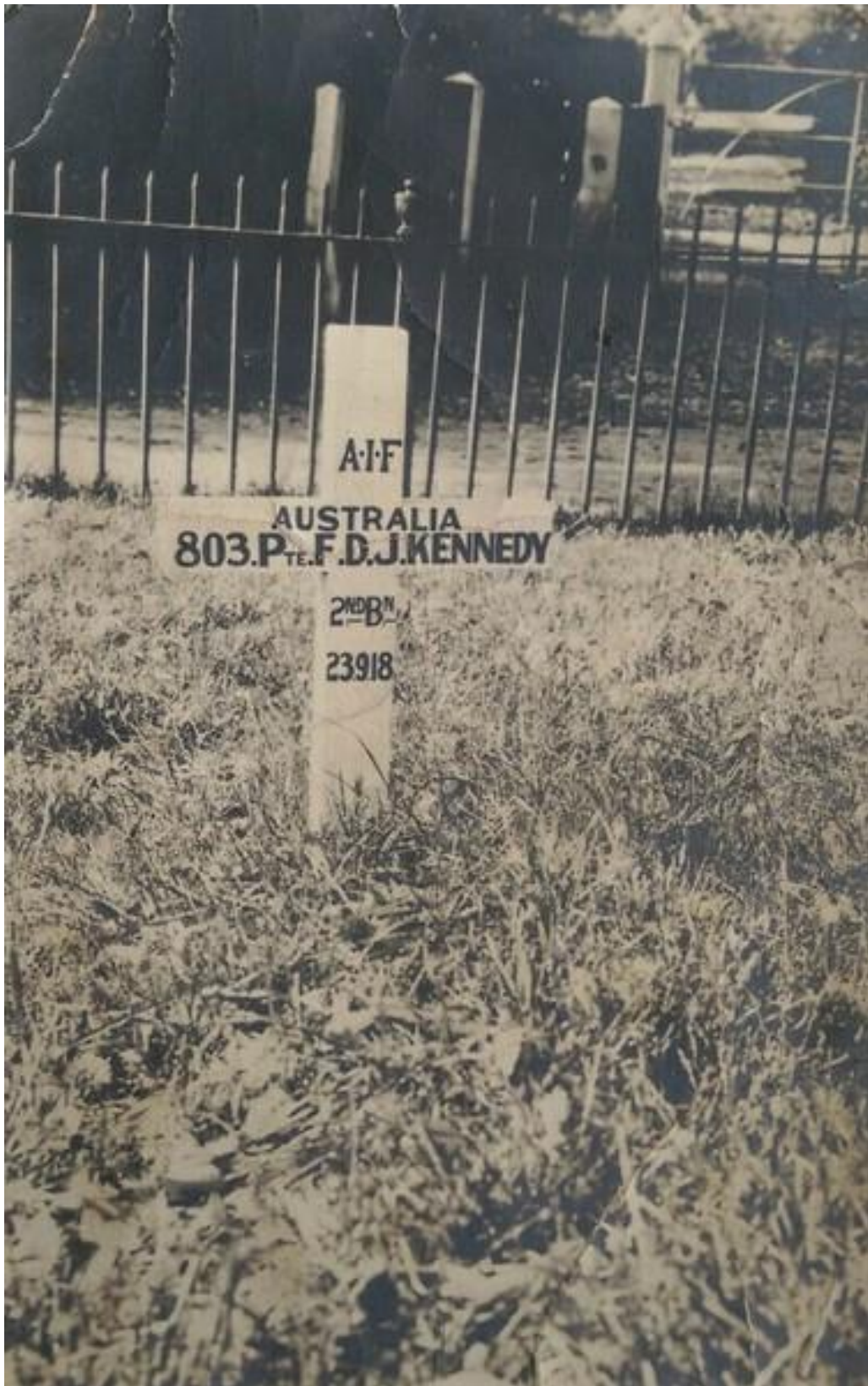
The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)

A letter from Base Records, dated 28th June, 1921, to Mrs M. Watling advised 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.

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

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



Original Cross Marker for Private F. D. J. Kennedy

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

St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock contains 32 World War 1 War Graves – 3 London Regiment Graves in the south-west corner & 29 Australian War Graves.



(Photo from Find a Grave – Julia&keld)



St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock *(Photo courtesy of Helen Roberts)*



St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock (Photos courtesy of Helen Roberts)



Photo of Private F. D. J. Kennedy's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone at St. Edith's Churchyard, Baverstock, Wiltshire, England.



(Photo courtesy of Andrew Stacey 2012)