



Kenneth Cooper (Standing) c1917

Kenneth Cooper enlisted into G Company. At the time of enlistment, he stated he was 20 years, 6 months of age, (dob 22nd February 1894) born in Randwick and listed his employment as an electrician. In fact he was born on 22nd February 1895 and was 19 years of age at initial enlistment. His next of kin was his mother, Mrs Maud Amy Cooper of 13 Boyle St, Mosman. He served with the Expeditionary force for 206 days, from 11th August 1914 till 4th March 1915.

On 17 March 1915, Kenneth was Commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the 2nd Battalion as part of the 13th Reinforcements. His older brother Basil Hubert and younger brother Cecil Jocelyn also enlisted, the former was Commissioned as a Captain in the Provost Corps, and the Cecil into the 5th Brigade, 11th Reinforcements as a driver.

Kenneth left Sydney on 20th December 1915 aboard the Aeneas and on 18th December 1916 whilst in France, was promoted to Lieutenant.

In early April 1917, the 2nd Battalion, under the command of Lt Col Stanley Milligan, was at Haplincourt, France. On the evening of the 8th, they moved up for an attack on the village of Hermies, one of the outpost villages of the Hindenburg Line. In his official War Diary, Milligan's notation for the 9th April was as follows:

"Clear. Wind strong from SW. Occasional snow showers.

The advance to the assault position was commenced at 0330. The assault on Hermies was delivered at 0415 approx. Numerous enemy strong posts were encountered, while machine guns and automatic rifles gave serious opposition. After much hard fighting our troops broke through the

enemy's defence and at 650 finally established their line as laid down in BN Order No 7. The position was an excellent one, and we were soon prepared to deal with counter attacks, but none developed. A copy of "Report on Operation" is attached. Casualties. Killed Lieut V W Robins. 2/Lt. M Patterson. Effective strength Officers 22 O Ranks 794. Wounded Lts. K J Cooper, B T Barnes. 2/Lts. S B Watson C G White T B Smith S R Paviour."

Kenneth Cooper sustained shrapnel wounds to the abdomen, dying later the same day at the 3rd Australian Casualty Clearing Station.

Kenneth had a 'ex-nuptial' son, Thomas Kingsley John, who was born to Ellen Dickson on 15th July 1917, after Kenneth's death. Thomas was adopted by Thomas and Mary Swann and went on to serve in the British Army in World War 2, was in the evacuation of Dunkirk, eventually immigrating to Australia in 1952.

Kenneth is remembered on the Australian War Memorial's Roll of Honour, Panel 32, on the Mosman War Memorial (Western Face), on St Peter's Anglican Church WW1 Honour Roll and is buried at the Bapaume Australian Cemetery, France, at site A15.