

John was born in Wagga Wagga, the son of George and Jane (nee Keith) Bruce. John had four brothers and three sisters. At the time of his enlistment, one of his brothers, Claude, had died and of the four remaining male siblings, three enlisted in the AIF; John and his two younger brothers Allen Roland William and Charles James Gordon. Only Allen returned from the war, albeit seriously wounded.

Charles served with the 3rd battalion and was killed at Ypres, Belgium on 21st September 1917, whilst Allen served with the 17th Battalion, was wounded, having his right leg amputated and returned to Australia and was discharged in early 1918.

John enlisted in the AN&MEF on 11th August 1914 and stated that he was a carpenter by trade, single and gave his mother, at Morgan St Wagga Wagga, as his next of kin. He returned from Rabaul and was discharged, term expired, on 18th Jan 1915 having completed 161 days service.

On 19th February 1915 he enlisted in the 19th Battalion, regimental number 1011, and was subsequently transferred to the 24th before sailing for the Middle East aboard the EURIPIDES, leaving Sydney on 10th May 1915. On 30th August he joined his unit on Gallipoli, returning to Alexandria on 10th Jan 1916, following the evacuation from Gallipoli.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H05683

Studio Portrait of John.

In France, John was appointed Lance Corporal on 2nd September 1917 and then made temporary corporal on 26th October. On 25th Feb 1917 at Bapaume, just north of Poziers, John was killed. He was initially buried in an isolated grave just north of Warlencourt-Eaucourt, 3 miles west north set of Bapaume. His grave was never found, so his body was never recovered.

He is remembered on the wall at Villers Bretonneau and on Panel 101 at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.