

Alfred was born at St Peters, NSW, in 1894, the son of Alfred Richard Bowden and Mary Kathleen Bowden, nee Lenno. His birth registration shows him as Alfred W Bowden.

On 11th August 1914, Alfred enlisted in C Company, AN&MEF, stating that he was a labourer, single and he gave his sister, Mary Thomas, 67 Buckland St, Sydney, as his next of kin. He also put his mother – address unknown. It would appear he was living in some kind of Foster home of a Mrs Selina Berth Champion who in an interview stated that he –“.. had resided with her for several years prior to his enlistment.” And “was as a son to me”. Mrs Champion also stated that she believed he had one brother and three sisters. Birth records confirm the brother as George, born 1896 and the sisters as Mary born 1892, Georgina born 1898 and Bertha born 1900.

Alfred returned from Rabaul and was discharged, time expired, on 4th March 1915 having completed 206 days service.

On 12th May 1915, Alfred joined D Coy, 18th battalion, regimental number 409, and sailed with the battalion from Sydney on 25th June 1915 aboard the CERAMIC.

Arthur was killed landing on Gallipoli on 22nd August 1915. In his diary, Lt Col George Francis Murphy of the 20th battalion, describes the landing

“20th August. 18th and 19th battalions moved away at sundown. On Osmaniah (Egyptian mail boat our transport from Lemnos to ANZAC.) We go tomorrow – very dirty ship, flies and filth everywhere. 7 stowaways on board.”

“21st August. Boat alongside 1 p.m. Left Lemnos about 5.45. Ran at 5 knots in darkness. Gun flashes and roar of cannon at 9.15 p.m. Big battle on. Saw war boats in action.”

“22nd August. Landed at daylight. No casualties but one of crew wounded in stomach. Took up position in Reserve Gully just near Watson’s pier.”

The no casualties’ reference would relate to the 20th battalion. On the 23rd August the 18th battalion was committed to the last operation of the August Offensive – the attack on Hill 60 – which lasted until 29th August and it cost 50% casualties.

Alfred is remembered at the Lone Pine Memorial, Gallipoli and on Panel 84, at the Australian War memorial, Canberra.