

Frederick John Thorpe

Private (Pte) 171 Frederick John Thorpe enlisted in the 1st Light Horse (LH) Brigade Train at Enoggera, Queensland on 18 November 1914. He embarked overseas on 12 February 1915 and disembarked in Egypt in early March.

The 1st LH Brigade Train was responsible for the acquisition, storage and distribution of all manner of supplies for the three regiments that belonged to it, being the 1st, 2nd and 3rd LH Regiments. Being an educated man, it is highly likely that Pte Thorpe performed an administrative role within the unit.

As a result of the high number of battle and illness casualties at Gallipoli, from late May 1915 onwards, the light horse units were sent there as infantry reinforcements, and their horses remained in Egypt. The brigade trains retained men in both places to manage the overall supply requirements, and Pte Thorpe was with the group that initially remained in Egypt.

He embarked for Gallipoli on 2 October, where he was transferred and taken on strength of the 9th Infantry Battalion in the 3rd Infantry Brigade of the 1st Australian Division, on 8 October 1915. This was a battalion that had originally been raised in Queensland in 1914.

Pte Thorpe remained on Gallipoli until the evacuation in late December, after which he spent several weeks at Mudros, on the island of Lemnos. He returned to Egypt on 10 January 1916, where he spent a week at the 2nd Australian General Hospital in Cairo with an undisclosed illness between 14 – 20 January.

On 1 February 1916, he was detached for temporary duty at AIF Headquarters in Cairo as a payroll officer. He then sailed to England on 10 May and was attached to the Australian Army Pay Corps in London between 10 August – 23 November 1916.

He departed England on 24 November and landed in France the next day, where he was taken on strength of the 1st Anzac Entrenching Battalion at Albert, on 18 December. The entrenching battalion started life in mid-1916 as an advanced infantry training establishment, but by late 1916 it was mainly used to absorb temporarily unallocated reinforcements.

Pte Thorpe was subsequently transferred and taken on strength of the 28th Australian Army Service Company (AASC) in the 5th Australian Divisional Train at Bazentin, on 25 April 1917.

He was treated at the 8th Field Ambulance for myopia between 1 – 6 June, then granted leave in England from 26 August – 7 September 1917. On his return from leave, he was admitted to the 39th General Hospital at le Havre and treated for orchitis between 7 September – 19 October, then rejoined the 28th AASC on 14 November.

On 17 May 1918, Pte Thorpe was transferred to the Australian Army Ordnance Corps, which was primarily concerned with the supply and administration, and the subsequent disposal of, explosives and weapons. In addition, they also oversaw the salvaging of battle-damaged equipment.

Pte Thorpe was granted leave in France between 10 – 20 July, then additional leave to England between 26 September – 13 October 1918.

Following the end of the war, he enjoyed further leave in England between 9 – 23 February 1919, which was subsequently extended to enable him to attend the National Union of Teachers Conference in London on 27 February 1919.

On his return to France, he was promoted to temporary EDP Corporal (extra duties & pay), which would almost certainly have been a clerical role within the unit.

He continued in this role until 25 June, when he was evacuated sick and admitted to the 39th General Hospital at le Havre with venereal disease from 2 – 10 July.

He was transferred to England and admitted to the 1st Australian Dermatological Hospital at Bulford between 12 July – 26 September 1919, then embarked for Australia on 15 November.

Private 171 Frederick John Thorpe disembarked in Brisbane on 9 January, where he was discharged from the AIF on 11 March 1920.



Pte Frederick Thorpe's WWI service medals

Name: Thorpe, Frederick John	
Service Number	171
Date enlisted	18 November 1914
Place enlisted	Enoggera, Queensland
Rank on enlistment	Private
Initial Unit	1 st Light Horse Brigade Train
Previous military service	Aldeburgh Rifle Club – 2 years Kingaroy Rifle Club (current member)
Date and ship embarked for overseas	12 February 1915 HMAT A54 <i>Runic</i>
Stated age/DOB (if known)	30 years (12/10/1884)
Place of birth	Aldeburgh, Suffolk, England
Marital status	Single
Occupation	School teacher
Religion	Church of England
Next of kin and address	Thorpe, Mrs G, mother, Lee Road, Aldeburgh, Suffolk, England
Permanent address	Nanango, Queensland
Appearance	Brown hair, grey eyes, height – 5 feet 9 ¼ inches, weight – 8 stone, 12 lbs, chest measurement – 31/33 inches
Final Rank	Private
Final Unit	Australian Army Ordnance Corps
Theatres of war served in	Egypt, Gallipoli, France, Belgium
Fate	Returned to Australia
Date and ship embarked for Australia	15 November 1919 HT <i>Ypiranga</i>
Date discharged	11 March 1920
Nature of discharge	Termination of Period of Enlistment
Honours/medals	1914-15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal
Notes	Married to Gladys 12 April 1920. Home Service WW2 (SN Q201615), 2 nd Volunteer Defence Corps, Qld. Died 29 September 1966.