



Sgt. Fred Gaskell



Played with



Adelaide University

Football Club: 1914 B Grade

Student: Faculty of Science (1914)

Background

Coinciding with the Centenary of Anzacs our incentive behind the series of biographical publications is the Adelaide University Football and Cricket Club's desire to honour our players who served in the Great War (1914 - 1918). These brave men put on hold their academic, professional and sporting careers for King and Country in the name of peace and freedom. The AUFC/AUCC WW1 Memorial Committee is endeavouring to identify every one of our players who served and prepare life stories on all. This is to ensure their sacrifices and further contributions to society will be recognised by future generations.

On Anzac Day 2015, the Centenary of the Gallipoli landing, a memorial plaque was unveiled on the Adelaide University Oval Pavilion and this was followed by the erection of a picket fence between the pavilion and the scoreboard with each picket bearing a plaque with the name of an AUFC/AUCC player who served.

The following documentation relates to the life of Fred Gaskell. It is compilation of information and photographs collected from a variety of historical sources.

The AIF Project

<https://www.aif.adfa.edu.au/showPerson?pid=108190>




Frederick GASKELL

Regimental number	315
Place of birth	Stirling East South Australia
Religion	Methodist
Occupation	University student
Address	Stirling East, South Australia
Marital status	Single
Age at embarkation	19
Next of kin	Father, H Gaskell, Stirling East, South Australia
Enlistment date	10 February 1915
Date of enlistment from Nominal Roll	14 February 1915
Rank on enlistment	Sergeant
Unit name	27th Battalion, B Company
AWM Embarkation Roll number	23/44/1
Embarkation details	Unit embarked from Adelaide, South Australia, on board HMAT A2 <i>Geelong</i> on 31 May 1915
Rank from Nominal Roll	Private
Unit from Nominal Roll	27th Battalion
Fate	Returned to Australia 22 July 1917
Date of death	1 October 1969
Place of burial	Centennial Park Cemetery

Service Record :-

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=4028346>

A 31817 *Copy* **ALIAN**  **MILITARY FORCES.** *Genl. Col. 2nd Aust. Div.*

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

ATTESTATION PAPER OF PERSONS ENLISTED FOR SERVICE ABROAD.

No. 315 *75* Name GASKELL Fred
Unit F. Coy. Base Infy
Joined on 10. 2. 15

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

1. What is your Name? ... Fred Gaskell
2. In the Parish of ... in or near the Town of Stirling East in the County of 5th Australia
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) ... N.B.
4. What is your age? ... 18 1/2 Years
5. What is your trade or calling? ... University Student
6. Are you, or have you been an Apprentice? If so, where, to whom, and for what period? ... No
7. Are you married? ... No
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) ... Mother, Mrs. Caroline Gaskell, Stirling East, South Australia
9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? ... No
10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces with Ignominy, or as Incurable and Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been dismissed with Disgrace from the Navy? ... No
11. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge ... Imperial forces 7th Div. 1st Bn. 76th
12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? ... Yes
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what grounds? ... No
14. (For married men and widowers with children)—Do you understand that no Separation Allowance will be issued to you either before or after embarkation during your term of service? ... Yes

I, Fred Gaskell do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

And I further agree to allot not less than two-fifths of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children.

Date Feb 10 1915 F. Gaskell
Signature of person enlisted.

* This clause should be struck out in the case of unmarried men or widowers without children under 18 years of age.

Australian War Memorial

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P10427.023/>



Sgt. Fred Gaskell (front row 2nd on left)

D number P10427.023

Collection type [Photograph](#)

Object type Colour - Toned black & white print

Maker Unknown

Place made Egypt: North Egypt, Zeitoun

Date made 1915

Description *Informal outdoors portrait members of B Company, 27th Battalion taken during training. Identified are, probably left to right, back row: 385 Sergeant (Sgt) William Crowe McMillan; 282 Sgt Harrison McDouall Campbell; 290 Sgt David Wallis Caldwell; 270 Sgt Ernest William Bates. Front row: 255 Sgt Frank Brown; 315 Sgt Fred Gaskell; 311; Sgt William Herbert Fisher; 469 Sgt Horace John Townley; 483 Sgt Albert Frederick Wood. All men embarked from Adelaide on HMAT Geelong on 31 May 1915. Sgt McMillan, a native of Beath, Scotland, was a bricklayer from Rosewater, SA prior to enlistment and became ill whilst serving on the Western Front and was returned to Australia. Following his recovery, he returned overseas and, after serving in France, returned to Australia on 20 June 1919. Sgt Campbell, a native of Cromwell, NZ, was formerly a detective in the WA Police Force. He was promoted to Lieutenant whilst serving in France and awarded the Military Cross. Later wounded in action, he died as a result of his wounds on 23 November 1916 and was buried in the Heilly Station Cemetery, Mericourt-L'Abbe, France. Sgt Caldwell was a carpenter from Semaphore, SA prior to enlistment and was promoted to Lieutenant whilst serving in France. On 2 March 1917 he was killed in action and was buried in the Warlencourt British Cemetery, France. Sgt Bates was a letterpress machinist from Adelaide prior to enlistment. Whilst serving in France he was wounded in action and, on 7 August 1916, he died as a result of his wounds and was buried in the Puchevillers British Cemetery, France. Sgt Gaskell, a university student from Stirling East, SA prior to enlistment was wounded in action in France and returned to Australia for home service on 22 July 1917. Sgt Fisher, a bricklayer from Hackney, SA prior to enlistment, later transferred to the 2nd Pioneer Battalion where he was wounded in action. Subsequently promoted to Second Lieutenant, he was wounded in action for the second time and returned to Australia with the rank of Lieutenant on 8 April 1919. Sgt Townley, a collar maker from Norwood, SA prior to enlistment, was later promoted to Warrant Officer Class 2 and on 14 October 1916, aged 22, was killed in action at Ypres and was buried in the Railway Dugouts Burial Ground, Belgium. Two brothers, 1103 Private Alfred George Townley and Lieutenant Roy Townley also served with the 27th Battalion. Sgt Wood, a clerk from Parkside, SA, was the Company Quartermaster Sergeant before being promoted to Lieutenant. On 11 June 1918, he died of wounds received in action and was buried in the Franvillers Communal Cemetery Extension, France.*

Biography

Early Life

Fred Gaskell was born on 16 Mar 1896. He was the youngest son of Henry Gaskell and Caroline Elizabeth (nee Knight) of Stirling East, SA. Fred attended the Ashton Memorial Methodist Church with his parents and siblings.

Education

Fred attended Adelaide High School (AHS) and won a government bursary in December 1913. ⁱ He was a member of the 1st XVIII Football team and a Prefect. In 1914 Fred commenced studying Engineering at the Adelaide University, with an Education Department Scholarship ⁱⁱ and passed a number of subjects in the exams in November 1914. ⁱⁱⁱ (Pure & Applied Mathematics, Physics I, Drawing I (Solid & Perspective), Solid Geometry, Fitting and Turning I, Mechanical Engineering I and Woodwork. During his WWI service Fred wrote letters back to the staff and students at AHS.

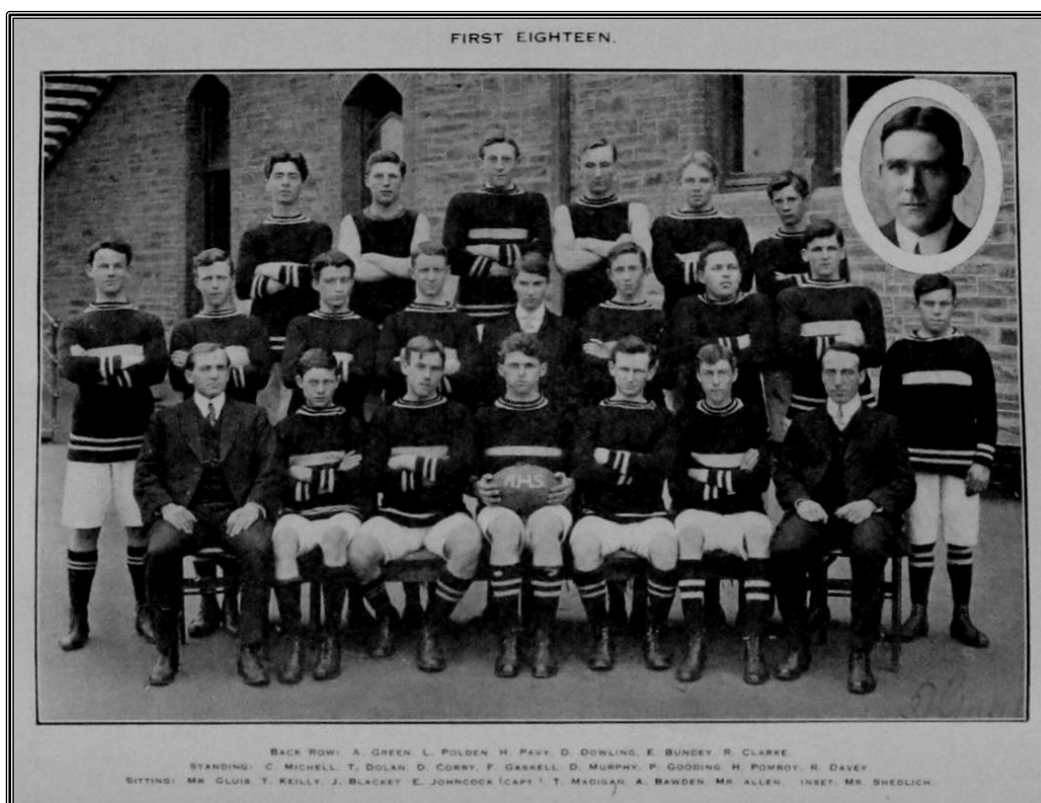


AHS Prefect Fred Gaskell(c1913)



Fred Gaskell - standing 1st on left

Adelaide High School Football Team (c1913)



Fred Gaskell - middle row 4th from left
All AHS Photos from 1913 School Magazine (State Library of SA)

Adelaide University Football Club

Fred played at least one game for the Adelaide University B Grade^{iv} Football team in the 1914 season. Fred was not in the team Photo of the 1914 B Grade Football team.

World War I

Fred enlisted on 10th February 1915, aged 18 years and 11 months, joining the 27th Battalion, B Company with Regimental Number 315. Fred was 5' 7.5" with a fair complexion, grey eyes and sandy hair.

Fred was promoted to Lance Corporal on 1st May 1915 and to Sergeant on 16th May 1915. His unit embarked from Adelaide, South Australia, on board HMAT A2 *Geelong* on 31 May 1915 and served at Gallipoli from August to October 1915. He contracted dysentery and was sent to Malta to recover. Fred rejoined his unit in Egypt in December 1915. In late March 1916 Fred transferred from Alexandrina, Egypt to Marseilles, France. On the 31st May 1916 he received a General Shrapnel Wound in the left eye. By 14 June Fred was in hospital in England, he was transferred to various hospitals in the UK but sadly lost his left eye. Fred returned to Australia on the *Nestor* on 21 September 1917 and discharged as medically unfit on 22 October 1917.

Fred's WWI record is a little hard to interpret as some of his later records refer to him as a Corporal, however Fred signed for his WWI medals – 1914/15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal as a Sergeant and is referred to in the AHS Magazines as a Sergeant.

Fred was one of four brothers who served in WWI. Wilfred Samuel enlisted aged 21 in August 1914, Harry Knight enlisted aged 28 in August 1915 and Roy enlisted aged 33 in February 1916. Tragically Fred's brother Harry was killed in action on 15th April 1916.

Family

Fred married Amy Frances Elliott the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. Elliott, Middleton Stoney, Oxon, England on the 19th December, 1918, at Ashton Memorial Church, Stirling East, ^v and their only son Henry Elliott Gaskell was born at Nowra, NSW on 19th October 1919.^{vi}

Career

In 1918 Fred was an Assistant Teacher at Adelaide High School. In late 1918 Fred registered a 7.9 Excelsior Motor Cycle^{vii}

In the early 1920's Fred and Amy moved to Hallett in the mid north of South Australia where Fred became the District Clerk of the Hallett Council. Fred and Amy lived in Hallett until 1953^{viii} During their time in Hallett Fred played tennis, was a hard worker in the setting up of the Hallett Golf Club^{ix}, and was involved in the RSL and the Masonic Lodge.

World War II

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/DetailsReports/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=6345705&isAv=N>

GASKELL FRED : Service Number - S73397 : Date of birth - 16 Mar 1896 : Place of birth - STIRLING EAST SA : Place of enlistment - HALLETT SA : Next of Kin - GASKELL AMY

Per RSL Virtual Memorial - Fred was a Lieutenant in the 10th (Lower & Mid North) Battalion Volunteer Defence Corps^x, Australian Military Forces (AMF). His WWII record has not yet been digitised.

Fred and Amy's only son Henry Elliott "Harry" was a pilot in WWII.

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/NameSearch/Interface/ItemDetail.aspx?Barcode=5541160>

Death

Fred died on 1 October 1969 and is buried at the Centennial Park Cemetery, Adelaide, SA.

Profile Compiled by: Beth Filmer AUFC/AUCC WW1 Memorial Committee

ⁱ "GOVERNMENT BURSARIES" *The Express and Telegraph* (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922) 18 December 1913: 6 (4 O'CLOCK. SPORTS NUMBER). <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article210122829>

ⁱⁱ World War One from AHS Magazines.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ "UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE." *The Advertiser* (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931) 26 November 1914: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article5430686>

^{iv} ADELAIDE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION. (1914, May 12). *The Register* (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), p. 4., <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article59410225>

^v "Family Notices" *Chronicle* (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954) 1 February 1919: 27. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article89137650>

^{vi} "Family Notices" *Chronicle* (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954) 1 February 1919: 27. Web. 16 Mar 2017 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article89137650>

^{vii} "MOTOR NOTES." *The Register* (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929) 18 December 1918: 7. <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article60532547>

^{viii} "Mr & Mrs Fred Gaskell Leave Dist." *Burra Record* (SA : 1878 - 1954) 20 January 1953: 1. Web. 15 Mar 2017 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article36039880>

^{ix} <http://hallettgolfclub.weebly.com/history.html>

^x The **Volunteer Defence Corps** (VDC) was an Australian part-time volunteer military force of World War II modelled on the British Home Guard. The VDC was established in July 1940 by the Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL) and was initially composed of ex-servicemen who had served in World War I. The government took over control of the VDC in May 1941, and gave the organisation the role of training for guerrilla warfare, collecting local intelligence and providing static defence of each unit's home area. Dennis, Peter; et al. (2008). "Volunteer Defence Corps". *The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History* (Second ed.). Melbourne: Oxford University Press Australia & New Zealand. pp. 558–559. [ISBN 978-0-19-551784-2](https://doi.org/10.1017/9780195517842).