

Australian Red Cross Society Wounded and Missing  
Enquiry Bureau files, 1914-18 War  
1DRL/0428

**Lieutenant  
William Vivian Keats**

**52nd Battalion**



1480408P

52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion.  
A. I. F.

KEATS.  
2/Lieut, W.

"DIED OF WOUNDS" 10.<sup>6</sup> 17"

Lieut Keats was wounded up at Lagnicourt by a shell and died in the shell hole. I saw his dead body lying there, he is buried close to where he fell and cross erected, I have seen the grave with cross.

Informant;- O'Neill, R, 2720.

52nd Battn.

A. Coy. 17th Hnt.  
Westham.

Note;- We regret the delay in typing the abovereport, but we have been obliged to hold it up on account of pressure of work and shortage of machines.,

London.  
14.3.18.

Note;-<sup>9</sup> Lagnicourt written in error for Messines.

W.A.Rand.,

H

A.I.F. 52.

D/W. 10.6.17.

KEATS 2 Lt.W.

Lt. Keats (who was promoted to Lt. 28.8.16) was in the push at Messines 7th. June, came through the 1st. attack and went over again on 9th. June. It was early in the morning that he got hit. He was not sent out of the line and lived some hours. I did not see him. He was buried on the battlefield. I saw the cross which had been made for his grave, with his name, regiment etc. on it.

PJ.

Reference: Lt.E.K. Birks.  
I.G. School.

Staples.  
13.12.17.

H

Havre.

29th December 1917.

52nd A.I.Z.

KEATS 2nd Lieut. W.

D/W 10th June 1917. Det D/B

I saw a cross prepared by our Pioneers ready to be sent up and placed on his grave at Messines. The Mattn H. . will be able to give location of the grave.

Inf:- Pto P.J. Barry No. 2612.  
52nd Mattn C. Co. H.Q.  
Australian Camp.  
Rouelles.

RDE.

H

Havre

3rd Jan. 1918.

52nd AUSTRALIANS

KEATS, 2nd Lt. W.

D/W. 10.6.17. Det. D/B.

He was in B Co. He had been in C Co. and came back to B Co. We were attacking at Messines on the 10th June. During the attack I saw Lt. Keats hit by shrapnel. He was hit all over and badly knocked about. I was about 50 yards from him at the time. I saw him later on, when the attack quietened down. He was dead. When I was at Plugstreet about a month after, I saw a cross going up with Lt. Keats's name on it. I was told he was buried where he fell. There was a tree there, and his initials were cut on it.

Inf:- Pte. J. Donahoo, 861  
52nd Australians, B Co., 6th Pltn.,  
L.G.S.,  
Havre Hospital.

H

HPG

52nd. Battn.  
A.I.F.

KEATS  
Lieut. W.

Died of Wounds 10.6.17.  
-----

I saw his cross at De Seule Camp at Bailleul.

Ref: A.T. Hermonde, 2295,  
52nd. Battalion.

S.P.J.  
London.  
5.1.18.

H.

Havre.

11th January 1918.

52nd A.I.F.

Keats 2nd Lieut. W.

D/S 10th June 1917. Det D/B.

He was B. Company. He lived at Hobart Tasmania. He was at Gallipoli as a Sergeant. He was killed at Messines in June and I helped to take up the cross for his grave. It was a painted white one with his name on it. I went as far as Kemmel with it, but did not see it erected - I don't know where the grave is but all information can be got from the Battn. There is no doubt about it at all.

Inf:- Pte C. Standage No. 3178.  
52nd A.I.F. B. Co. VII Pltn.  
Australian Camp.  
Rouelles.

GLT.

H.

52nd Batt; A.I.F.

Keats, W. Lieut.

C. Coy.

D/W. June 10th 1917. Det. D.B.

I saw him killed by a shell on June 11th during the hop over at Messines. I could not if he was buried. I knew him in the coy, I could not say where he came from.

Description. Age. 30. Height. 5-7. Complexion. Dark. Medium Built.

Witness. Cpl. Greig. NO. 1761. D. Coy. 52nd Batt.

Taken at  
NO. 4. C.D. Hurdcott.  
15-1-18.  
F.G.H.

S. Whithes.  
NO. 4. Command Depot  
Hurdcott.



52nd Battn  
AIF

KEATS  
2nd Lieut. W.

"Died of wounds June 10th 1917"

S/B Jack Daley 52nd Battn now in England with Trench Fever and another bearer Hatchman since killed told me that Keats was killed at Messines. Daley could give fuller information.

Witness:- W. Rennie  
2492  
52nd Battn B.Coy.,  
5 Hut 18 Westham

W.A. Rand  
London.  
21.1.18

Note written Daley 15.1.18

*Letter to Daley returned  
no record of him  
14.9.18.*

H

52nd Battn.

KEATS  
KEATS Lt. W.

Died of Wounds 10.6.17 Det.

I saw his grave on Messines, there was a small wooden cross up at the time, with his name in pencil after we came in. I know there was a cross made and taken up to be erected but I did not see it up.

Informant:- Squire 2200  
W. 29 Harefield.

D.P. Dickson,  
20.1.18

H.

Hayre

30th January 1918.

52nd A.I.F.

Keats 2nd Lieut. W.

D/S 10th June 1917. Det D/S.

I was with Lieut. Keats, then 1st Lt., on the Peninsula. He was tall, thickset, dark, and about 27. He was a Tasmanian.

On the 10th June, on Messines Ridge, we went into action at night. Our objective was to connect two trenches and we carried it through successfully. I was a runner, and at H.Q. I heard Lieut. Keats had been killed. About 4 o'clock a.m. I went up and saw the body of Lieut. Keats which lay about a quarter of a mile from H.Q. Then I went on with my duty.

I cannot speak of burial. We held the ground for a week, anyway, when we came out, and I haven't been there since.

Inf:- 2nd Lt. L.A. Jarman No. 1850.  
52nd A.I.F. H.Q.  
Australian Camp.  
Houellien.

P.R.

52nd Battn.  
A.I.F.

KEATS. Lieut., 2nd.  
W.

"DIED OF WOUNDS" 10.6.17"

The death of 2nd Lieut Keats who I may state was 1st Lieut at the time of being wounded, well all I can say is, that I was with him, up till the time of his being wounded, but I have learnt from reliable sources that he died, and was buried in the Field. His descriptions were as follows. Medium build, dark, complexion, sharp featured, with dark hair, and moustache,

Letter from:- Pte. C. W. Gaffney. 2911  
52nd Battn.  
A.I.F.  
France.

Note:- We regret the delay in typing the above report, but we have been obliged to hold it up on account of pressure of work and shortage of machines.

London.  
28.1.18.

H.

52 Battn. D. Coy.  
A.I.F.

Keats.  
2nd Lt. W.

"Died of Wounds 10.6.17"

Refer to Pte. C. Gaffney, D. Coy, 52 Battn. Transport Section, who is now in France, he saw him killed at Messines and can give full details of casualty.

Informant:- Cunningham, Pte. T. 2872.  
52nd Battn.  
D. Coy. 16 Pltn.  
3.A.A. Hospital,  
Dartford.

W. Oman.  
16.1.18

London.  
31.1.18

H.

Note: Written Pte. Gaffney.



# AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY

(WOUNDED AND MISSING INQUIRY BUREAU).

~~34, VICTORIA STREET,~~

38, GROSVENOR PLACE, LONDON, S.W. 1.

Telephones:

VICTORIA 8576  
8577  
8578

Telegraphic Address:  
"QUESTMAN, LONDON."

15.1.18.

*Plt Jack Dalry 2730*

*52 A.I.F.*

*Co. 3 Command Depot*

*Hurdcott.*

Dear Sir,

We are making enquiries for <sup>Officer</sup> *2nd Lieut W. Keato 52 A.I.F. reported dead*  
*Wounds 10.6.17.*

and have been told that you may be able to help us by supplying some information.

We should be most grateful for any details you can send us concerning *2nd Lieut W. Keato* but our enquirers wish especially to know whether he was buried, if so, whether it was on the field or in a soldier's cemetery where the grave would be registered. We should also be glad if you could add a short description of his personal appearance or any points that might help to prove his identity.

Yours faithfully,

(Miss) *Vera Dean.*

SECRETARY

NOTE In your reply kindly quote name, initials and number of casualty enquired for, as without these particulars delay and confusion is caused in identifying the soldier about whom you are writing.

Adm. by P.C. 1st/2/18  
6.2.18

2911  
Pte E. W. Gallwey  
52nd Duff

2/11 W. KEATS

52 TSt

87W 10-6-17 H  
3

(C5)

France

Dear Miss

I now take the first opportunity  
of answering your letter, which I received  
yesterday, inquiring for information into  
the death of Pte E. W. Keats, who I may  
state was 1st Lt at the time of being  
wounded. All all I can is, that I was  
with him, up to the time of his being  
wounded, but I have learned from  
reliable sources that he ~~was~~ died & was  
buried in the field. His description  
was as follows, Medium build, dark  
complexion, sharp featured, with dark  
hair, & mustache, no regard to his Reg'tal  
number, I'm sorry I cannot tell you,  
but if it is essential that you should  
have it, it could be forwarded from  
the Duff. I was also hoping this  
will be of some value to you,

I remain  
Yours faithfully  
2911 Pte E. W. Gallwey

Gallwey  
52nd Duff