Another “Fallen Saint” To Be Added

Earlston Warwick Korff

Service number: 598

Rank: Private

Unit: 17th Battalion

Date of death: 30 July 1916

Commemorated Villers-Bretonneux Memorial

Image kindly provided to Tony Cable and is held by Korff’s last remaining nephew.

The first page of the following list is copied into the Mervyn Day file. He is also a new find. These two, previously unlisted men bring the total list of Fallen up to 36.
Note in the above Bathurstian, the roll of those served is printed with a Korff listed, but his death, (as also with Gregson) not indicated with an*, so indicating he was killed, as was otherwise the case with Holl*.

There was little to go on to prove that he should be included? At first, one doubted that this was indeed so, particularly as a family historian; who was very helpful, could not account for why this Sydney boy should have gone to Bathurst? Therefore, it was a long research
task to find facts to substantiate the claim. Some pieces of the following, are set out to evidence the need for his inclusion. The final one of these findings would seem to settle the question.

The School History (p.202) lists a “Pte. Albert Korff” (?) as having served. He attended A.S.C. in 1910. But the A.W.M. does not list this name. Note in the actual Attestation Paper copied below, question 11 discloses he had been in the “Senior Cadets, Bathurst”. Ah! This gave the Editor the first clue that he might be on to an A.S.C. man.
The Senior Cadets

Above, extract from Chamberlain, “The Bathurst Contingents.”

**ARRIVALS.**—Maeefarlane, Mackinnon, Korff, Thompson II., Jillham, Tinning II., Houlston, Denny (the son of one of our former students), and Woolcott.

**DEPARTURES**—Campbell, Wade, Watts, Williams, Dowell, Tom, Mackinnon, Heavener.

Extract from Bathurstian 1906 P.352

“This under “Christmas.” in the picture below. E.A.Korff.

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**THE PRIZE LIST.**

Bishop Camidge then presented the prizes as follows:—


CRICKET: A. R. Blacket, for his recent achievements against Coorowull Academy in bowling seven wickets, and catching two.

The Bathurstian. June, 1911 P.669

Note, there also, A.C.Hall who was to win the V.C. in France. Blacket, another one of our Fallen, gets mentions for his academic and sporting achievements.
Particulars Required for the Roll of Honour of Australia in the Memorial War Must
1. Name (in full) of Fallen Soldier
2. Unit and Number (if known)
3. With what Town or District in Australia was he chiefly connected (under which his name ought to come on the roll)

Town (if any) Ashfield
District Ashfield
State N.S.W.

4. What was his Birthplace
5. Date of Death
6. Place where Killed or Wounded
7. What was his Calling
8. What was his School
9. What was his other Training
10. If born in Britain or Abroad, at what age did he come to Australia
11. Had he ever served in any Military or Naval Force before Enlisting in the A.I.F. (Please state particulars)
12. Any other biographical details likely to be of interest to the Historian of the A.I.F., or of his Regiment

13. Was he connected with any other Member of the A.I.F. who died or who distinguished himself. (Please state Relationship)

14. Name and Address of the Parent or other person giving this information

15. Names and Addresses of any other persons to whom refer

Also old boy, Newington.
Old Boys Killed, Battle of Pozieres:

McPhillamy 24 July

Middleton 25 “

Street 29 “

Korff 30 “

From Vidacourt Exhibition.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-15</td>
<td>C.O. 17th Bn</td>
<td>Trans to Hospital, Gallipoli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-15</td>
<td>1st C.C.S.</td>
<td>Hernia Admis Trans hos.ship Anzac</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grampian</td>
<td>Embarked for England, Mudros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.2 South.G.H.</td>
<td>Admitted, Bristol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-16</td>
<td>3rd Inf Base Abbey Wood</td>
<td>Taken on strength, England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-16</td>
<td>17th Batt</td>
<td>Rejoined Battalion, France</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note above, his service at Anzac.

A group of soldiers from the 17th Battalion, all Gallipoli survivors, October–November 1918

These men are all wearing the brass "A" denoting their service on Gallipoli. The end of the war meant the battalion would be dispersed. The battalion's commander, Captain Keith MacKenzie MC and Bar, wrote:

The Final Halt has been signaled, and the story of the Seventeenth has ended. It is a plain story of plain men drawn from many walks of life and banded together in a fellowship born of mutual hardship and danger—hardship and danger which often tested them to the limits, both of their mental and physical endurance.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-3-16</td>
<td>Shortage of kit lldd</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>11-3-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-5-16</td>
<td>To hospital</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>19-5-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-5-16</td>
<td>Scabies Adm.</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>19-5-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-5-16</td>
<td>To A.C.C.S.</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>19-5-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-6-16</td>
<td>Adm. &amp; trans Hazebrouck</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>19-5-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6-16</td>
<td>50th C.C.S. Admitted</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>19-5-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6-16</td>
<td>9 S.H. N.Y.D. Admitted</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>16-6-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-6-16</td>
<td>Disc. to duty</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>24-6-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-7-16</td>
<td>2nd A.D.B.D. Awarded 3 days C.C. for absence from Church parade</td>
<td>Etaples</td>
<td>25-7-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-8-16</td>
<td>Rejoined Battalion</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>28-7-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9-16</td>
<td>Wounded in action</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>30-7-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9-16</td>
<td>No further report available</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>7-9-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-11-17</td>
<td>Previously reported Wounded and Court of Enquiry</td>
<td>Missing now reported KILLED IN ACTION</td>
<td>30-7-16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How distressing is this letter below, dated 6/10/17? Killed 30/7/16, yet the authorities advise his case “not reported to be serious!”
PRIVATE E. W. KORFF, son of Mrs. E Korff, of Spencer Leigh, Queen Street, Ashfield, was reported wounded in September, has been officially reported wounded and missing, since July 30. Private Korff was 17 years old at the time of enlisting, and has been nearly two years with the forces.

SMH 30/12/16 P.12

MISSING.

Casualties 261 List

127 Dead, 186 Missing

Pte. E.W. KORFF, Ashfield (wounded).
KORFF. Killed in action in France, July, 1916, previously reported wounded and missing. Private Earlston Warwick Korff, aged 19 years, youngest son of the late John Korff, and of Mrs. Korff Spencer Leigh Queen St Ashfield.

Brother still holding out hopes in Jan, 1919

18689 Dvr. J.C. Korff
10th Field Coy Engineers,
A.I.F. 26 Ward.
Dartford.

Dear Bir.

In reply to your enquiry for your brother 598 Pte. F.W. KORFF 17th Battalion. A.I.F. we regret to inform you that we have no report of him as a Prisoner of War - the only information we have is that he is officially reported killed in Action on 30.7.16. We have placed his name on a new list we are making for circulation amongst the returned prisoners and in all the camps and hospitals in England and should we succeed in obtaining any news of him we would advise you and should be glad if you would notify us of any change in your address.

With good wishes for your recovery.
Feb. 7th, 1919.

18th Field Co. Engrs.
B 26 Ward. 3rd A.A.H.
Dartford.

Dear Sir,

In answer to your letter of 16.1.19 we wish to say that we have investigated the case of your brother 598 Pvt. G. Jorff, 17th Battalion A.I.F. and regret exceedingly that we can discover no trace of his having been admitted to hospital since he was officially reported killed in action 30.7.16.

We have looked for his name both on our own hospital lists and at Headquarters but without success and cannot explain the reports which have reached you. Regretting the sad nature of this letter and assuring you of our sympathy.

Yours faithfully,

(Miss)

Secretary.
Mr. John T. G. Korff, of Spencer Leigh, Queen Street, Ashfield, and for many years a resident of the Glebe and Forest Lodge, died on Friday night last, at the age of 53. The deceased gentleman was a son of the late John Conrad Korff, of Church Hill, who in company with the late Captain Fred Korff and Mr. Gordon Korff, discovered Korff's Harbour, now spelt Coff's Harbour. Mr. John Korff was well known in business circles. He
was one of the oldest members of the Royal Agricultural Society, a member of the N.S.W. Trotting Club, and president of the N.S.W. Trotting Association. Mr. Korff left a widow and seven children, two sons and five daughters. The funeral took place at Waverley Cemetery on Saturday, and was largely attended.

KORFF - In loving memory of my dear brother Pte Earlston W. Korff 17th Batt. Killed at Pozieres July 30 1916 Inserted by his brother ex Driver John C. Korff. A. I. F.

Unidentified members of No 5 Company of the Australian War Graves Detachment at work digging graves at the Villers-Bretonneux cemetery where Korff is commemorated.

A.I.F. 17th Bn.

KORFF
Earlston Warwick
598

K/A 30/7/18

No trace in Germany
Cort. by Capt. Hills 10/10/19
Two more Fallen to be added to A.S.C. Honour Roll:

+ Mervyn Dove Day
+ Earlston Warwick Korff

(Acknowledging the assistance of David Roberts, Archivist, Newington College in checking their records of former student, Korff. Unfortunately nothing found)

Details of service in war: It his WW1 dossier it states he served with a Natal based irregular South African unit for 13 months prior to 1902, presumably including service in the Free State and Cape Colony. With Doyle's Australian Scouts in 1902 he served in east and west Transvaal. (It should be noted that his Boer War service cannot be validated.)

Service and life after the Boer War: John Conrad Korff was a 37 year old married estate agent. He lived at 16 Renwick Street Drummoyne with his wife Mrs. Nellie Estelle Catherine Korff and four surviving children. John signed up to join the AIF on 27 January 1917 and his daily pay rate before and immediately after embarkation was 6s. He served with the Engineers (10 Field Company) as a Sapper (Driver) No 18689 in France. He received a head injury in the field on 25 October 1918; thereafter he spent most of his time in hospital. While recuperating in England he was determined to learn what happened to his young brother Earlston Warwick Korff, who was finally determined to have died at Pozieres, and this had a profound effect on him Ref: Red Cross records. He returned to Australia and was discharged on 19 January 1920. He drank too much, and was said to have not been the same man that left in 1917. His marriage collapsed, and he died in 1923.