

Head and shoulders portrait photograph of Lieutenant Vincent Burns, 1916

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Description

This is a photograph of Lieutenant Vincent Alexander Burns.

Burns served with the 36th Battalion AIF during the First World War. He died on 11 June 1917 after sustaining severe injuries at the Battle of Messines.

Physical description

A head and shoulders black and white portrait photograph of a man dressed in military uniform [Lieutenant Vincent Burns], which is mounted on cream coloured card. Evidence on the back shows the front tissue overlay that was adhered at the top of the back of the card is torn off and missing.

Statement of significance

This collection comprises objects related to the First World War service of Lieutenant Vincent Burns and his death at the Battle of Messines in June 1917. The collection includes a next-of-kin plaque, medals, an identity disc, a female relative badge, items related to the 36th Battalion, and photographs and documents related to Burns. Burns enlisted in the Australia Imperial Force in July 1915. He joined the 36th Battalion when it was raised in February 1916 and departed Sydney on 31 May 1916. The 36th Battalion's first major battle was at Messines in June 1917. On 9 June Burns sustained severe shrapnel injuries to his arm and abdomen. He died two days later as a result of his wounds.

Through its official and unofficial mementoes and memorials relating to Burns, this collection represents a personal connection to the way families dealt with the loss of loved ones. During the First World War around 420,000 Australians enlisted for service. Of that number around 60,000 service personnel died and 155,000 were wounded in action. The Australian population at that time numbered approximately 4.9 million, so the impact on society was immense. Battalion loyalties could be very strong and became, in many instances, a soldier's surrogate family. Recognising this, bereaved relatives often made contact with relatives of men from the same battalion or with returned men from the same unit. These friendships and connections often helped people through their grieving.

Object information

What

Type	Photographs
Collection	Vincent Burns collection
Dimensions	W 172mm x H 267mm x D 1mm
Material	Card , Paper , Photographic emulsion , Ink

When

Date photographed	Associated period
1916	1915-1917 Lieutenant Vincent Burns was a serving member of the 36th Battalion until his death in 1917

Who

Photographer	Subject
Freeman & Co	Lieutenant Vincent A. Burns

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