

Stories from the Honour Boards

Stories of those who served and are remembered on the Honour Boards in the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel at Saint Andrew's Uniting Church

Booklet Number 83

JOSHUA CUSHMAN BIGELOW

1889 - 1962



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Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

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Corner Ann and Creek Streets
Brisbane QLD 4000
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Lieutenant Joshua Cushman Bigelow

Lieutenant J C Bigelow's name is on the first Honour Board unveiled at Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church on Sunday 10 October 1915. He had already been wounded at Gallipoli, hence the letter "W" before his name.

At the end of 1912 Joshua Bigelow was a communicant member at Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church. He was living at Marathon in Merthyr Road, New Farm and was a bank clerk at the Union Bank of Australia Limited.

Joshua Cushman Bigelow was born on 23 August 1889 at Beechworth¹ in Victoria, the first of three sons of Joshua Cushman Bigelow (senior) and Sarah Annie née Howell. Joshua's younger brothers James Amesy Bigelow and Raymond Thompson Bigelow were also born at Beechworth. While Joshua Cushman Bigelow chose banking as a career his father and two younger brothers were farmers. They too moved to Queensland and settled at Barambah, a farming property near Murgon. Joshua's two younger brothers also enlisted for overseas service in the Great War.

Joshua Cushman Bigelow was transferred to the Ayr Branch of the bank where he enlisted on 14 February 1915 to join the Australian Imperial Force and to serve abroad in the Great War. Aged 25 and a single man, he nominated his father, Joshua Cushman Bigelow of Murgon as next-of-kin.

1. Beechworth is an historical town located in the north-east of Victoria, famous for its major growth during the gold rush days of the mid-1850s. At the 2011 census, Beechworth had a population of 2,789.

Joshua Bigelow's war service record reveals a courageous soldier. Though he suffered wounding and other ailments, his several promotions show he was trusted with responsibility.

Based at Enoggera Camp for a short period, he was allotted the early regimental number 19 and attached to 26th Infantry Battalion. His unit embarked on HMAT¹ *Ascanius* on 24 May 1915 bound for Egypt. J C Bigelow was promoted to Company Quartermaster Sergeant in June 1915. After training in Egypt the 26th Battalion landed on 12 September at Gallipoli where the 26th played a purely defensive role and at various times was responsible for the defence of Courtney's and Steele's Posts, and Russell's Top. The battalion withdrew from the peninsula on 12 December but Sergeant Bigelow somehow came into contact with meningitis perhaps at Mudros. Fortunately he did not contract the disease but had to spend periods of time in isolation at Tel-el-Kebir and Ismailia before returning to duty.

Sergeant Bigelow was transferred to 2nd Pioneers in March 1916 and joined the British Expeditionary Force in France via Marseilles. He was treated in hospital from mid-December 1916 to mid-January 1917 for dental trouble. Promoted to 2nd Lieutenant in May 1917 he attended an officers' course at the Divisional Bomb School in August. As the result of shrapnel wounds to his right thigh in October he was treated in hospital at Dannes-Camiers. He was promoted to Lieutenant on 14 October 1917 and took leave in England from 31 December 1917 to 14 January 1918. He was treated for wounds in the New Zealand Stationary Hospital at Wisques in March and rejoined his unit soon afterwards.

1. His Majesty's Australian Transport

On 17 July following gassing on two occasions he was admitted to a Field Ambulance Hospital at Abbeville, France and later the 3rd General Hospital in London.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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Hospital, Abbeville

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Due to the severity of the gassing, he was placed on a list for early return to Australia. Convalescence however lasted longer than anticipated, delaying his departure from London till 9 December 1918. Still suffering the effects of gas poisoning, he sailed on the ship *Leicestershire*. His appointment was terminated in Brisbane on 16 November 1919.

Joshua Bigelow resumed his banking career, not in Queensland where it began before the war, but in Victoria. With his spouse, Adelaide Rosemary Bigelow he lived in the Melbourne suburbs of South Yarra and later, Brighton. Another Joshua Cushman Bigelow (probably their son) is recorded as living with them at their St Kilda address in 1943, having reached adulthood; and on the electoral roll for 1949 the name of their daughter, Betty Margaret, a nurse was listed with her parents' names.

After Joshua's retirement in 1954, Mr and Mrs Bigelow moved from their home at Mordialloc, Victoria to Southport, Queensland. Joshua's death occurred on 22 August 1962 at the age of 73 and Adelaide Rosemary Bigelow died in 1983.

References

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Australian Electoral Rolls, 1912 – 1954

Queensland Register of Births, Deaths, Marriages

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The Argus, Melbourne, 30 October 1928, page 1; 24 March 1945, page 15

Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church Annual Reports 1901 – 1925, Saint Andrew's Uniting Church Archives, Brisbane

Women Vote: They Picked up the Patter with Amazing Fluency, an exhibition in connection with A Centenary of Women's Suffrage Project by Beechworth Arts Council, Burke Memorial Museum, Beechworth Neighbourhood Centre, Beechworth Professional Women, Beechworth Red Cross, Beechworth Secondary College, researched by Cath O'Connor, 2008

Compiled by Noel E Adsett, Brisbane, January 2016



Lest we forget