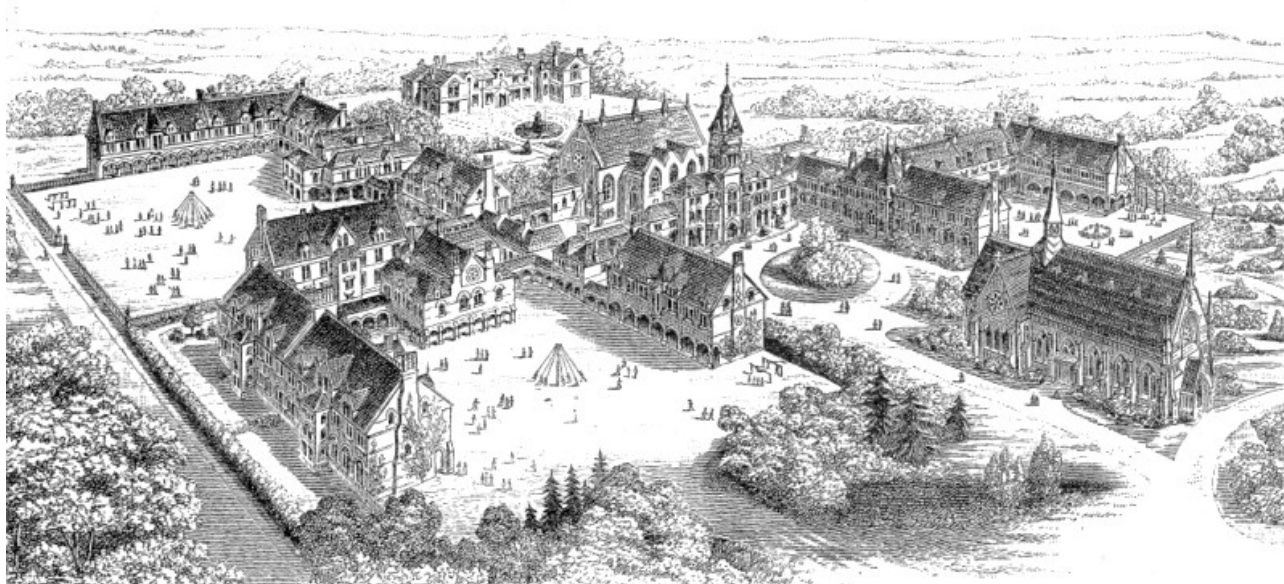


# Stories from the Honour Boards

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 152

# **FREDERICK CECIL HENK 1889 - 1979**



*London Orphan Asylum, near Watford Junction, London*

This booklet remains the property of Saint Andrew's Uniting Church.  
Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

Cover Illustration: *Frederick Henk's father died when Frederick was one. Frederick lived and was educated at the London Orphan Asylum at Watford at least until he was 12.*

©Saint Andrew's Uniting Church  
Corner Ann and Creek Streets  
Brisbane QLD 4000  
2017

## Sergeant Frederick Cecil Henk

Frederick Cecil Henk was born in February 1889 at Stoke-upon-Trent in Staffordshire, the youngest son of Francis (Franz) Bartholomew Henk (1849 – 1890) and Elizabeth Jane née Brown (1849 -1946). Francis Henk was born in Germany but spent most of his life in London and Stoke-on-Trent where he worked as a commercial traveller and clerk. He died in 1890, the year after Frederick was born. The census on 31 March 1891 records his mother as head of household, a widow 'living on own means' with daughters Ada (18 years old), Bessie (a scholar aged 14), Percy (son aged 4) and her youngest son Frederick then two years. By the time of the next census in England, 31 March 1901, Frederick was a twelve year old school boy at the London Orphan Asylum<sup>1</sup> near Watford Junction in London.

In May 1908 Fred Henk joined the Territorial Force, a volunteer reserve component of the British Army known in England today as the Army Reserve. He was a member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Norwich Royal Artillery Heavy Battery till he left for Australia two years later.

Frederick Henk emigrated on the ship *Afric* from Liverpool in England to Sydney, arriving on 26 May 1910. His occupation was shown on the passenger list as engineer. He showed much resourcefulness while he adapted to a new land. He moved to Queensland where he obtained employment as a station hand at Yanna Station near Charleville and a bank clerk while living at Jackson Street, Eagle Junction.

---

1. Founded in 1813 by Rev (later Sir) Andrew Reed, a Congregational Minister, this excellent boarding school was originally designed to maintain, clothe and educate respectable fatherless children of either sex, who were without means adequate to their support, wherever resident. Children seven to eleven years old were eligible and were usually retained till they completed their fifteenth year. The institution continues today as Reed's School located in Cobham, Surrey, an independent day and boarding school for boys.

On 9 March 1915 when he enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force to serve in the Great War he was living in Middle Ridge, Toowoomba, working as a manufacturer's representative. In response to the question on his attestation paper, "Are you married?" he wrote, "No (soon to be)".

The marriage took place just ten days later. Frederick Cecil Henk married Edith Alice Edwards, youngest daughter of Samuel Johnson and Martha Edwards formerly of Swansea, South Wales and then living in Toowoomba. The marriage was conducted by Rev D Morgan Jones at St Colomb's Anglican Church, Clayfield.

Soon afterwards Frederick Henk's war service began. His bride's name and address (Mrs FC Henk, Acacia Vale, Middle Ridge, Toowoomba) replaced his mother's (Mrs E Henk, 25 Sheppard Street, Stoke-on-Trent) as next-of-kin. His religious denomination was recorded as Church of England. At Enoggera Camp he was appointed to the 4<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Field Ambulance with the rank of Corporal Clerk. Then 26 years old, he left Australian shores on 14 June 1915 for field ambulance work in Egypt. He joined the British Expeditionary Force in France in 1916 and was transferred to the 15<sup>th</sup> Field Ambulance unit with rank of sergeant from 6 May. The duties of Field Ambulance soldiers were difficult and dangerous. The Field Ambulance was a mobile front line medical unit with responsibility for the care of casualties. Another responsibility was establishing and operating a number of points along the casualty evacuation chain from bearer relay posts which were 600 meters behind regimental aid posts in the front line, taking casualties rearwards through an advanced dressing station to a main dressing station. It also provided a walking wounded collecting station as well as various rest areas and sick rooms.

While on active service in the winter of 1916/17 Sergeant Henk required hospital treatment himself because of sickness. Fifteenth Field Ambulance duties continued in France after the Armistice. His unit crossed to Devonport in January 1919 for return to Australia. Sergeant Henk was part of the nursing staff on board the steam ship *Kildonian Castle* embarking from Devonport on 21 March 1919. He was discharged from the AIF on 14 July 1919 and was awarded the 1914/15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.

Back in civilian life, Fred and Edith Henk took up farming in the fruit growing district of Cooroy where they also became involved in community activities such as the Cooroy Sports Club, the North Coast Fruitgrowers' Association, the annual Cooroy Show and the local branch of the RSSAILA<sup>1</sup>. Mr F C Henk accepted office in these organisations and often initiated courses of action in the interests of fruit farmers, particularly banana growers. Fred and Edith Henk's two daughters were born during this period, Margaret at Pymont Private Hospital, Wickham Terrace on 30 April 1922 and Marian at Palmwoods on 3 September 1923.

Mrs Edith Henk was an accomplished writer and musician. She had spent some years in France before coming to Australia and was noted for her descriptions of life in a small village, of peasants and their ways. She described their Cooroy house in a piece entitled *Simple Life on Our Banana Patch*, "The four roomed cottage stands on a cleared rise with the grey rocky face of old Tinbeerwah Mountain behind it, gum trees and the bush pressing it closely on all sides.

---

1. Returned Sailors' Soldiers' Airmen's Imperial League of Australia

“It is like thousands of other Queensland houses, a square unpainted wooden box built on round wooden stumps like stilts, with a door in the middle of the front wall and a push-up window on each side ... Nowhere can there be so sweet a family intimacy as in such a house as this, and outside the beauty and peace of the bush fall like a blessing upon all the common things of life and glorifies them.”<sup>1</sup>

In March 1923 at the annual meeting of shareholders of the Palmwoods Montville Buderim Amalgamated Fruit Growers' Society held at Palmwoods Memorial Hall, Mr F C Henk was appointed secretary of the organisation.



*Palmwoods Memorial Hall*

The Henk family moved to Palmwoods and there began a period of considerable progress in the town and district in which Frederick Henk was closely involved. At the end of six years they were thanked and praised at a public farewell as esteemed friends and worthy citizens. A chiming clock was presented to Mr Henk who was described as a tower of strength to the fruit growers' association.

---

1. Extract from *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 August, 1946. P6.



Appreciation was expressed for Mr Henk's handling of the financial affairs of the hall committee, his organisation in connection with transport during a railway strike and his splendid work in the show society. One of the speakers at the farewell function was Mr Frank Nicklin MLA, a local farmer and fruit grower who later became Premier of Queensland<sup>1</sup>. A silver tea service and silver tray and dolls for the two girls were also presented to the guests of honour.

Frederick Henk and family moved to Cleveland where he took up a new appointment as secretary of Southern Queensland Fruit growers Ltd. When the main offices of this society were transferred to Brisbane in 1933 the Henk family resided in Ernest Street, Manly and later at Weycross, 76 Laurel Street Chelmer.

Telegraph (Brisbane, Qld. : 1872 - 1947), Friday 23 June 1939, page 5

## FRUIT GROWERS' ANNUAL MEETING



*Annual meeting of the Queensland Fruit Growers' Society, held to-day. In the back row, from the left, are Messrs. H. J. M. Moore, W. Benjer, G. R. F. Nicklin, M.L.A., L. G. Swain, and N. Wilson. Seated in the front are Messrs. R. Dunning, F. C. Henk, J. A. Grassick, M. R. Fox, and C. Robins.*

National Library of Australia

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article184396593>

1. Sir George Francis Reuben Nicklin, KCMG, MM (6 August 1895 – 29 January 1978) was Premier of Queensland from 1957 to 1968.

Mrs Edith Henk became well known in various social activities, speaking at meetings of the Lyceum Club, working for a benevolent fund in the Women's Section of the Queensland Social Service League, providing hospitality in her home and playing the piano.



*Frederick Henk. 1940*

As previously noted Frederick Henk gave his religious denomination as Church of England when he joined the AIF and married in St Colomb's Anglican Church in Clayfield. When their daughters married in Brisbane during World War 2 the weddings took place in Anglican Churches. The reason for his name on a Saint Andrew's Honour Roll is not clear. Miss Margaret Henk married Lieutenant C R Lawley Cayzer (AIF) at St Augustine's Church, Hamilton on 12 June 1942. Rev RB Bates officiated at the wedding of Miss Marian Henk of the Women's Land Army and Leading Aircraft man CR Houghton in All Saints Church, Wickham Terrace on 7 September 1944.

Mrs Edith Henk died in 1971 at Cooroy. Mr Henk moved to Sandgate in the closing years of his life.



Frederick Cecil Henk died in 1979 at the age of 90 years. He achieved successfully as company manager and secretary and contributed generously to the communities where he lived. A plaque at the Mt Thompson Memorial Gardens records his war service in Egypt and France.



## Select Bibliography

Ancestry on line

Australian Electoral Rolls 1913 – 1977

Australian War Memorial, First World War Embarkation Rolls

England and Wales Civil Registration Birth Index 1837 – 1915, 1889 Q1

National Archives of Australia, military records, World War 1

Queensland Register of Births Deaths and Marriages

*Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser*, 23 July 1920, page 5

*Daily Mail*, 8 December 1920, page 6

*Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser*, 25 February 1921, page 3

*The Brisbane Courier*, 3 May 1922, page 4

*Chronicle and North Coast Advertiser*, 8 Sept 1922, page 5

*Brisbane Courier*, 28 March 1923, page 8

*Brisbane Courier*, 7 September 1923, page 6

*Nambour Chronicle and North-Coast Advertiser*, 18 January 1929, page 5

*Brisbane Courier*, 25 February 1933, page 6

*Telegraph*, 21 October, 1936, page 18

*Telegraph*, 24 May 1939, page 18

*Telegraph*, 23 June 1939, page 5

*Courier-Mail*, 4 July 1939, page 1

*Telegraph*, 28 June 1940, page 9

*Courier-Mail*, 14 October 1940, page 10

*Courier-Mail*, 12 June 1942, page 6

*Courier-Mail*, 7 September 1944, page 4

*Queensland Times*, 24 June 1947, page 1

Compiled by Noel E Adsett

Brisbane

January 2017





*Lest we forget*