

GALLIPOLI'S QUIET HERO

Biographical Sources
Leonard Maurice Keysor



City of Westminster
ARCHIVES



Section 2

Source 18— Military History

Statement of Service of No. 958a Name Keggs

Rank in which entered Private

Regiment 1st Battalion, A.I.F.

Service Number 1117

Date of birth 11-03-1885

Date of enlistment 28-08-1914

Date of embarkation 18-10-1914

Date of promotion 20-06-1915

Date of honour or award of V.C. 08-08-1915

Date promoted 12-1915

Date promoted 13-1-1917

Date promoted 28-07-1917-07

Other units 11-1917

Date wounded 27-3-1918

Date wounded 26-5-1918

Date of discharge 12-12-1918

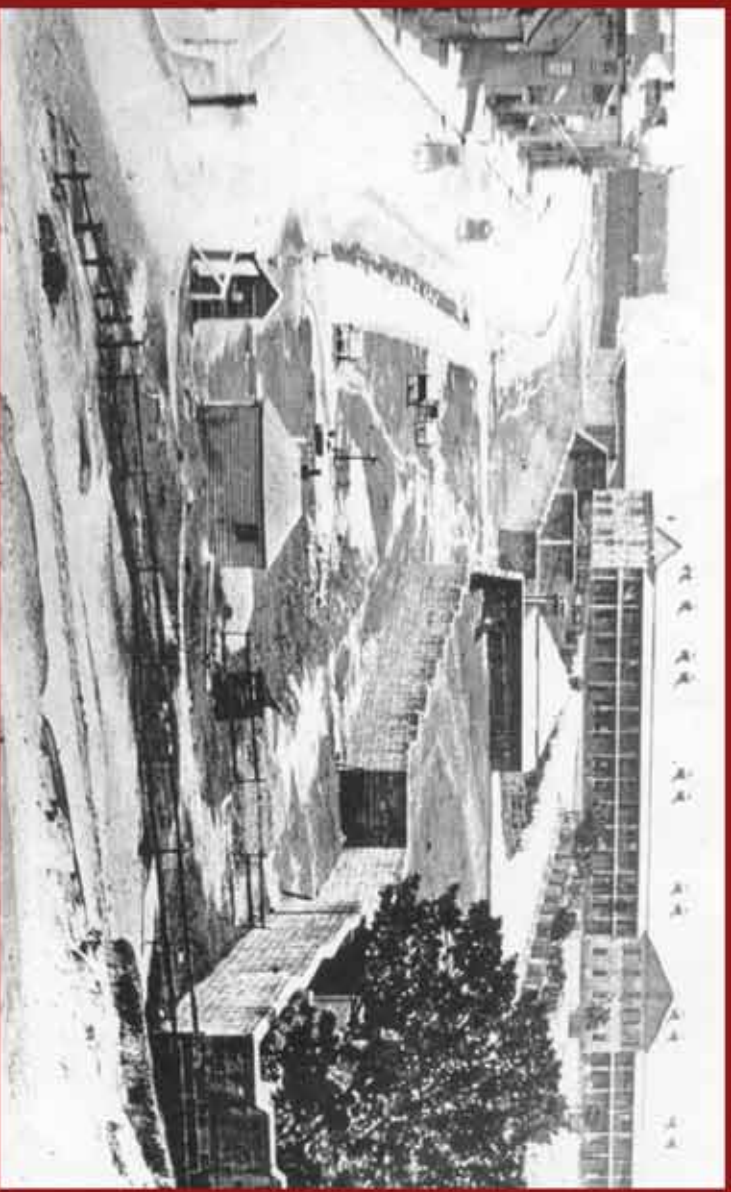
Date of death 10-12-1951

Place of death London, England.

Date of birth	11-03-1885	Maida Vale, London, England.
Date and unit at enlistment (ORs)	28-08-1914	1 Battalion, A.I.F.
Date of embarkation	18-10-1914	
Date promoted	20-06-1915	Appointed Lance Corporal.
Date of honour or award of V.C.	08-08-1915	Awarded Victoria Cross for action at Lone Pine, Gallipoli, Turkey whilst serving with 1 Battalion, 1 Brigade, 1 Division as a Lance Corporal
Date promoted	12-1915	Appointed Sergeant.
Date promoted	13-1-1917	Appointed 2nd Lieutenant.
Date promoted	28-07-1917-07	Appointed Lieutenant.
Other units	11-1917	Platoon Commander of 42 Battalion.
Date wounded	27-3-1918	
Date wounded	26-5-1918	
Date of discharge	12-12-1918	Discharged on medical grounds.
Date of death	10-12-1951	London, England.

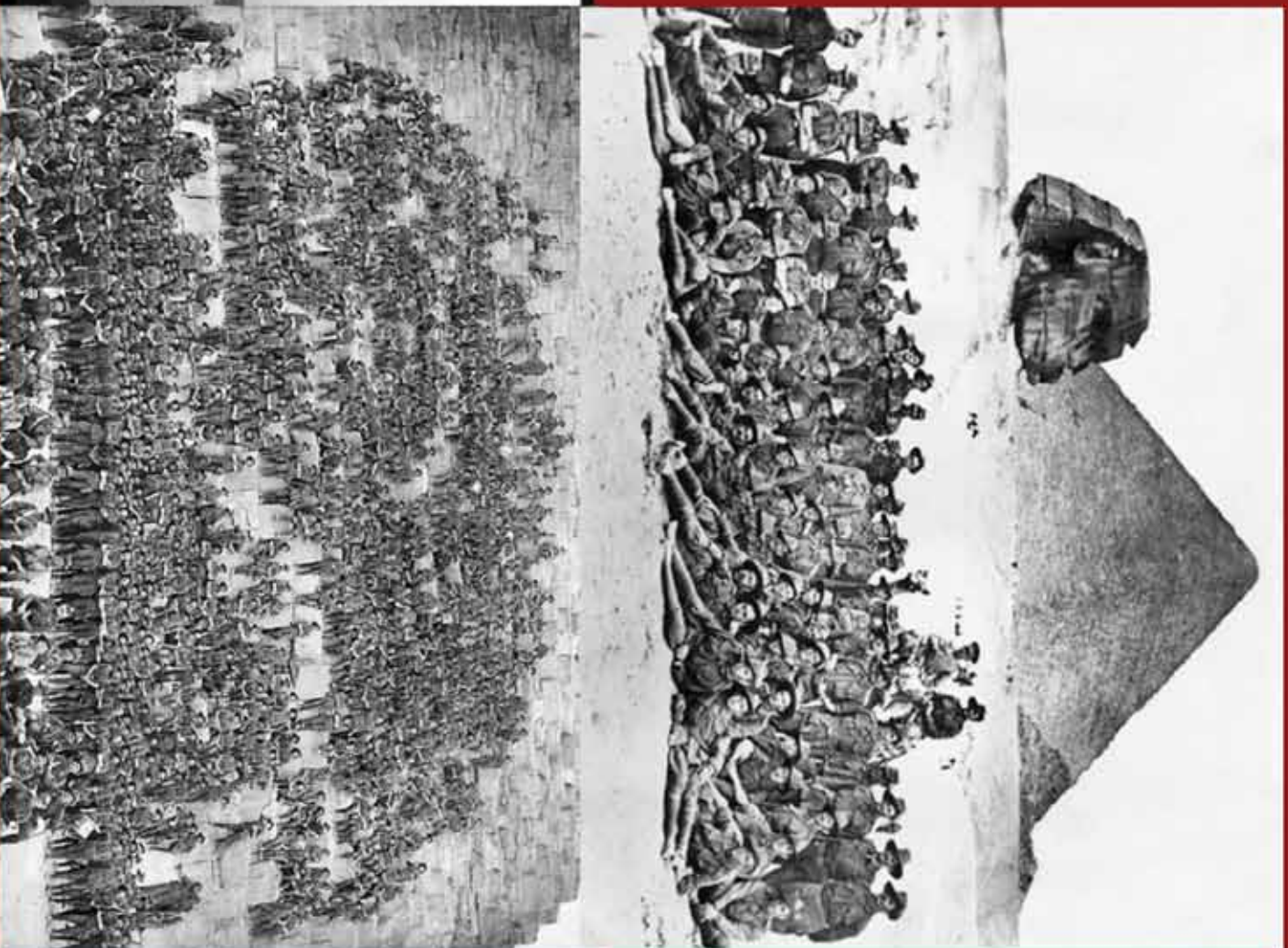
Source 19—Training to be a Soldier

After joining the AIF, Leonard was sent to the Victoria Barracks in Paddington, New South Wales.



Source 20—Training in Egypt

Leonard was attached to H Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, of the 1st Division. They boarded the *AT9 HMAT "Afric"* which took the troops to Alexandria, Egypt, landing on December 5, 1914. They trained in Mena, 2.4kms outside of Cairo, under the pyramids. During this time, Leonard Battalion was under the command of William Bridges, who reported to General William Birdwood. The codename for the Battalion was ANZAC.

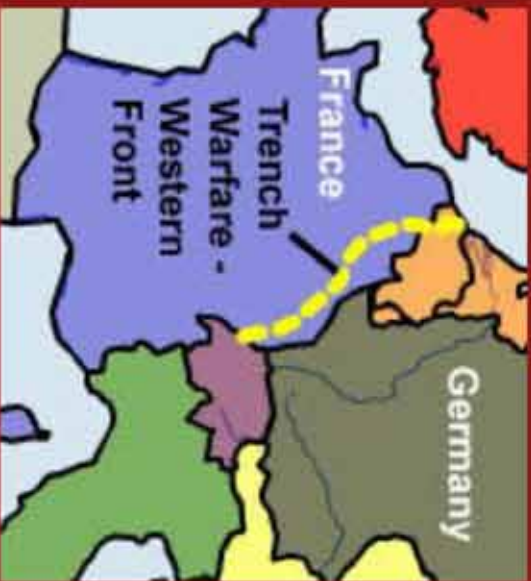


Source 21—Disaster at Gallipoli



"Are there not other alternatives than sending our armies to chew barbed wire in Flanders?"

Winston Churchill



The attack at Gallipoli

The war in France was going badly and the British war leaders were getting desperate. First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill, had a new idea: to attack Germany from the rear.

Early 1915



BRITISH WAR COUNCIL

GENTLEMEN, WE CANNOT WIN THIS WAR IN FRANCE.

WE MUST OPEN UP A NEW FIGHTING FRONT...



... HERE AT GALLIPOLI. THE TURKS ARE WEAK. WHEN OUR GUNSHIPS FIRE ON THE DARDANELLES, THE TURKS WILL RUN AWAY!

BUT MR CHURCHILL, THAT AREA IS DEFENDED BY FORTS AND GERMAN GUNS.

DAMN THE DARDANELLES! THEY WILL BE OUR GRAVE!



Churchill persuaded Lord Kitchener, commander-in-chief of the troops, to attack Gallipoli.

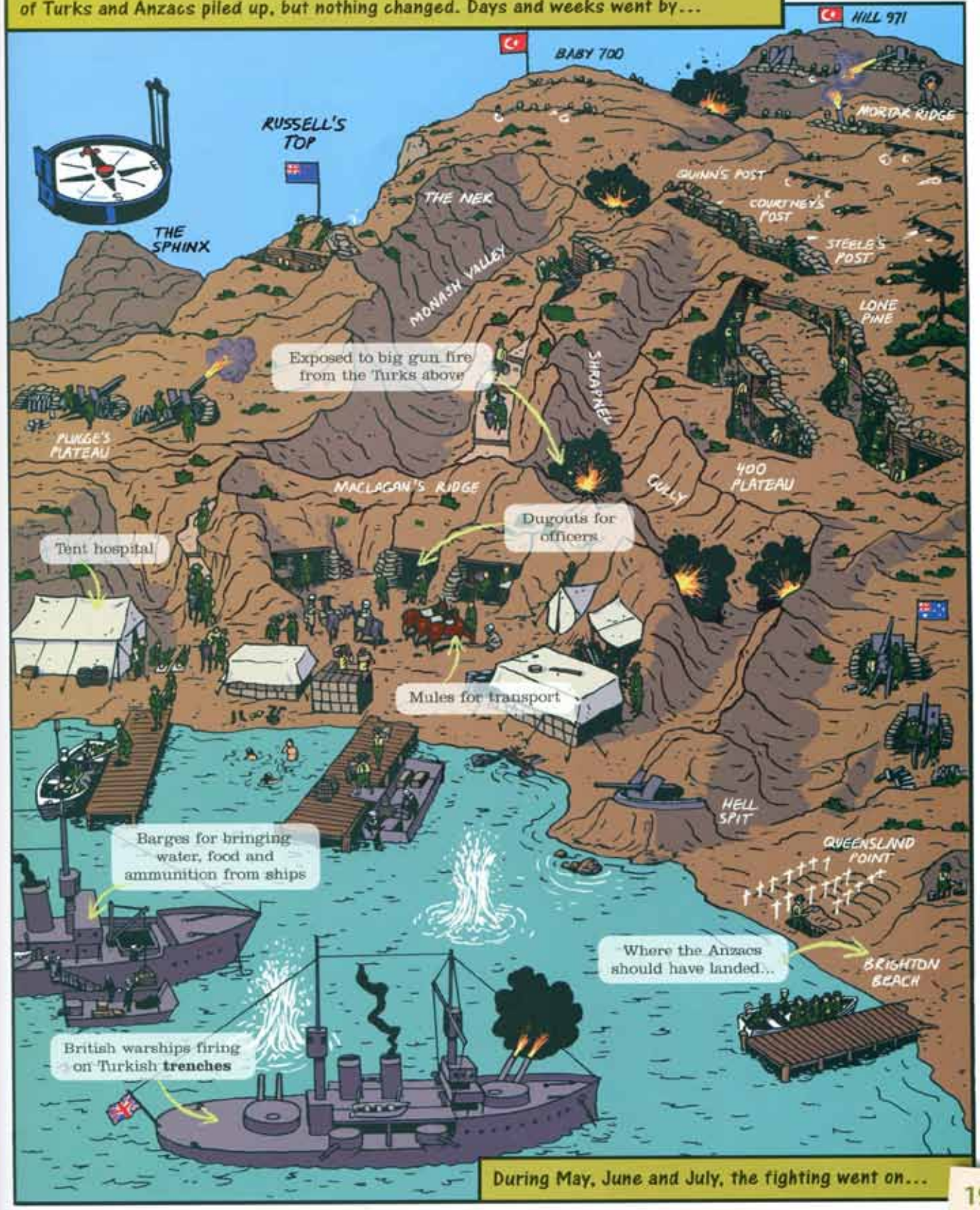
PLAN OF ATTACK

- Aim:** To defeat the Turks, open up shipping lanes through the Dardanelles and attack Germany from the rear.
- Method:**
- Navy gunships will destroy defences at the Dardanelles.
 - A 75 000-strong army, the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force (MEF), will invade Gallipoli Peninsula and defeat Turkey.
 - The MEF will include British, French, Australian and New Zealand (Anzac) troops.





At Anzac Cove, there was constant fighting but neither side could gain ground. Bodies of Turks and Anzacs piled up, but nothing changed. Days and weeks went by...



During May, June and July, the fighting went on...

Source 22—Battle at Lone Pine

Leonard caught the Turks grenades and threw them back!



After the Gallipoli landing, the Australians had been pinned for months due to elaborate trenches. In August, 1915, an attack on the Turks occurred to occupy their attention and keep their troops away from a planned British troop landing at Suvla Bay in the North. This battle is known as the Battle of Lone Pine. Leonard is pictured below left with a periscope in his hand during the fighting at Lone Pine.

It was at the Battle of Lone Pine where Leonard became known as a Bomb Thrower. Due to his cricket skills he was able to catch the bombs mid-air and throw them back at the Turks.



Source 23—Leonard's Citation for Bravery



Private Leonard Keyzor was awarded the Victoria Cross for "most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty at Lone Pine Trenches".

Copy of extract from Supplement No. 29328 to

ANNEXED TO THE VICTORIA CROSS

"THE HONOURABLE THE KING has been pleased to award the Victoria Cross to the undersigned—"

No. 958 Private Leonard KEYZOR, 1st Battalion.

For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty at Lone Pine Trenches, in the Gallipoli Peninsula.

On 7th August, 1915, he was in a trench which was being heavily bombed by the enemy. He picked up two live bombs and threw them back at the enemy as spent rifle to his own left, and continued throwing bombs, although himself wounded, thereby saving a portion of the trench which it was most important to hold.

On 8th August, at the same place, Private Keyzor successfully bore the enemy out of a position, from which a temporary sally over his own trench had been ordered, and was again wounded. Although ordered for hospital, he declined to leave, and volunteered to throw bombs for another company which had lost its bomb throwers. He continued to hold the enemy till the situation was relieved.

* * * * *

The above has been gazetted in the Australian Military Orders No. 95 of 1915.

The Victoria Cross (VC) is the highest military decoration awarded for valour "in the face of the enemy". It takes precedence over all other orders, decorations and medals. It may be awarded to a person of any rank in any service and civilians under military command, and is presented to the recipient by the British monarch at Buckingham Palace. It is the joint highest award for bravery in the United Kingdom with the George Cross, which is the equivalent honour for valour not in the face of the enemy.

After Gallipoli, Keyzor began suffering from Enteric Fever and was sent back to England to recover. Because he was in England, he was able to go to Buckingham Palace on 15 January, 1916, and receive, along with 10 others, his Victoria Cross.

Source 24—Back to Blighty: Leonard back in Westminster



Leonard was at the ANZAC Buffet at 130 Horseferry Road on 20 November 1915 (see picture right) at an event for the 6 Australian and New Zealand Victoria Cross recipients.

"Only those of us (and our numbers are many) could quite realise how much this little spot meant. Thousands of miles of heaving ocean separating us from the Homeland. It seems aeons since we left the sunny coasts of Australia. There has been hard training in Egypt followed by the stress, privations and brutality of the battlefield, and now we find ourselves dumped into the murk and gloom of war ridden London. But the doors of the Buffet open and so after a long period we are enabled to once more get in touch with matters Australian."

— *Ellis Silas letters on the ANAC Buffet*



Source 24—Back to Blighty: Leonard back in Westminster



On 29th April 1916 Leonard met Billy Hughes, the Australian Prime Minister, who like Leonard, had been born in London at Pimlico and had attended Burdett Courts School (then St Stephen's) as both teacher and pupil before emigrating. He returned to the school (left) in 1916 with his wife.



CONFIDENTIAL.

Army Form A. 43.

PROCEEDINGS OF A MEDICAL BOARD

assembled at Bushy Park Barracks, Tipperary on 4th October 1917
by order of D. M. S. A.I.F.

for the purpose of examining and reporting upon the present state of health of
(Rank and Name) Lt Kayser L. V.C. (Corps) 42nd Bn A.I.F.
Age 31 Service 37/12 Disability fracture right humerus
Date of commencement of leave granted for present disability _____
Date on which placed on half-pay for present disability _____

The Board having assembled pursuant to order, and having read the instructions on the back of the form, proceed to examine the above-named officer and find that
he is unable to raise the arm above the level of the shoulder. He still suffers

“He is unable to raise the arm above the level of the shoulder.”

The opinion of the Board upon the questions herein is as follows:—

- (1.) a. Is the officer fit for “General Service”? No
b. If not so fit, how long is he likely to be unfit? 12 weeks
- (2.) a. If unfit for General Service, is he fit for service at home? Yes
b. If not so fit, how long is he likely to be unfit for service at home? _____
c. If unfit for General Service at home, is he fit for light duty at home? _____
d. If not so fit, how long is he likely to be unfit for light duty at home? _____
- (3.) Was the disability contracted in the service? Yes
- (4.) Was it contracted under circumstances over which he had no control? Yes
- (5.) Was it caused by military service? Yes
- (6.) If caused by military service, to what specific conditions is it attributed? accident on duty
- (7.) If the disability was not caused by military service, was it contracted in the service? _____

Source 25— Proceedings of a Medical Board

CONFIDENTIAL.

Army Form A. 45.

MEDICAL BOARD REPORT ON A DISABLED OFFICER.
(ALSO TO BE USED FOR DISABLED NURSES.)

Station L. Keyson Date 2 APR 1918
1. Rank and Name M. J. Keyson. V.C.
2. Unit 42nd Battalion
3. Age 32. 4. Total Service 43. War Service { (a) at home _____
(b) abroad _____
5. Address _____

STATEMENT OF CASE.

NOTE.—In answering the following questions the Board will carefully discriminate between the officer's statements and evidence recorded in his medical documents. When possible, a statement by his medical attendant should be attached.

6. Disability GSW of left arm.
7. Date of origin of disability March 28th.
8. Place of origin of disability In the Somme.
9. Give concisely the essential facts bearing on the history of the disability (personal and family history, etc.):—

NOTE.—Boards subsequent to the first should record here the progress of the case since the officer's last appearance.
He received a perforating GSW of the inner surface of the upper third of the left arm not injuring bone vessels.

He received a perforating GSW (gun shot wound) of the inner surface of the upper third of the left-arm.



Army Form A, 45.

CONFIDENTIAL.

MEDICAL BOARD REPORT ON A DISABLED OFFICER.
(ALSO TO BE USED FOR DISABLED NURSES.)

L. M. Keyser Station _____ Date _____

1. Rank and Name Lt. L. M. Keyser. VC.

2. Unit 42nd Battalion

3. Age 32. 4. Total Service 47/12. War Service { (a) at home _____
(b) abroad _____

5. Address _____

STATEMENT OF CASE

11. In answering the following questions, the officer should refer to the evidence recorded in his medical documents. When possible, a statement by his medical officer should be included.

Disability Gas poisoning.

7. Date of origin of disability 28.8.18

8. Place of origin of disability in the Somme.

GAS POISONING 28.8.18
ON THE SOMME





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

NO. 298.001

**LIEUT. KEYSER, V.C.
ARRIVES IN SYDNEY.
NEED FOR REINFORCEMENTS.**

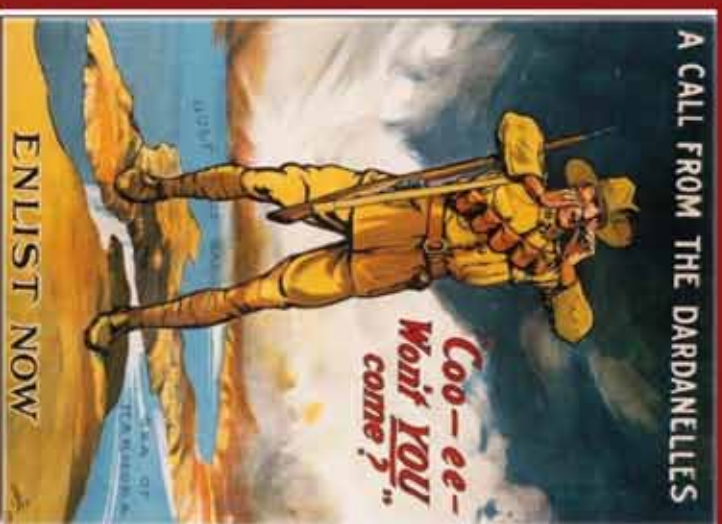
Lieutenant Leonard Keyser, one of the first three New South Wales soldiers to be awarded the Victoria Cross, returned to Sydney yesterday on six months' furlough. He is one of 24 Australian V.C. holders who are to be sent in a transport for recruits.

"I know absolutely nothing about the war-crushing arrangements for us," he said yesterday. "But I do know that we want reinforcements sent there—and want them sent there this year strong, great things, and that the service is very of health. There's not really enough being sent to them."

Source 28—Leonard heads back to Sydney



Leonard was too valuable to the Australian army to send him back to France after he was gassed. Instead he responded to an appeal from Prime minister Billy Hughes to return to Australia to recruit more soldiers. Hughes had failed to introduce compulsory service in the armt-conscription— and hoped that Keyser's V.C. would help to attract recruits.



d. Mr. Reynolds
42nd Batt



V. R. Kelloggall. V.C.M.M.
4th Batt
A.I.F.

Capt. W. Butler V.C.
3rd Batt
A.I.F.



Capt. R. R. Gowerd V.C.
107th Batt
A.I.F.

Mr. J. Barnoll. V.C.
83rd Batt
A.I.F.



Mr. D. J. P. ...
4th Batt
A.I.F.

Mr. ...
2nd Batt
A.I.F.

Sgt. J. ...
12th Batt

Mr. J. B. ...
40th Batt
A.I.F.

Mr. ...
22nd Batt
A.I.F.

Butt R.A.S. Sgt. ...
Capt. ...
Sgt. ...
Mr. ...
Sgt. ...
Mr. ...
Sgt. ...
Mr. ...
Sgt. ...

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF MARRIAGE



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number 6174360/2

1920. Marriage solemnized at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, Hill Street in the District of St. Margateham in the County of London

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
152 Eighth July 1920	Leonard Meyer Gladys Benjamin	34 years 24 years	Bachelor Spinster	Q. E. i Emmanuel Haworth (St. Onny)	20 Carlton Vale Saddington 146 Lauderdale Mansions Lauderdale Road Paddington	Ben Meyer Ben Benjamin	Clock Importer General Merchant

Married in the Liberal Jewish Synagogue according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Jews by Isaac by me,
 This Marriage was solemnized between us, Leonard Meyer in the presence of us, Mrs Meyer Sydney M Hyam Israel J Mathuck
Gladys Benjamin M A Benjamin Hugh Stokes Deputy Registrar

1920. Marriage solemnized at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, Hill Street in the District of St. Margateham in the County of London

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence of the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
CERT GIVEN 152	Eighth July 1920	Leonard Meyer Gladys Benjamin	34 Years 24 Years	Bachelor Spinster	U.G. Commercial Invisible (for Army)	20 Carlton Vale Paddington 4b Lauderdale Mansions Lauderdale Road, Paddington	Ben Meyer Fred Benjamin	Clock Importer General Merchant

Married in the Liberal Jewish Synagogue according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Jews by Certificate by me,
 This marriage was solemnized between us Leonard Meyer in the presence of us Ben Meyer Sydney M Hyam Israel J Mathuck
Gladys Benjamin M. A Benjamin Hugh Stokes, Deputy Registrar

Source 30—After Marriage



Leonard and Gladys's first residence as it currently stands at 20 Carlton Vale, Paddington. While they were living there, however, they were robbed and Leonard's Victoria Cross was taken. However, the thieves returned the VC with a note apologizing.

The "Daily Mirror" reports that Mr. Leonard Keyzor's flat, at Maida Vale, was entered by burglars on Saturday, and a Victoria Cross stolen. This was returned by (what) Monday with a letter printed in capitals to conceal the author's ordinary handwriting.



Source 30—After Marriage



Above: Leonard and Gladys in 1937 dressed up for the Coronation of King George VI and his wife Queen Elizabeth



Leonard with the Duke of Kent in 1938



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

118292

Leonard and Field Marshall Lord William Riddell Birdwood as well as 2 other Victoria Cross Recipients at the Victory Day Celebration Reception at the Dorchest Hotel.

Source 31—Filming of the Movie For Valour

V.C. INJURED.

Actor in War Film.

CLAIM FOR DAMAGES.

STOP PRESS.

WAR FILM

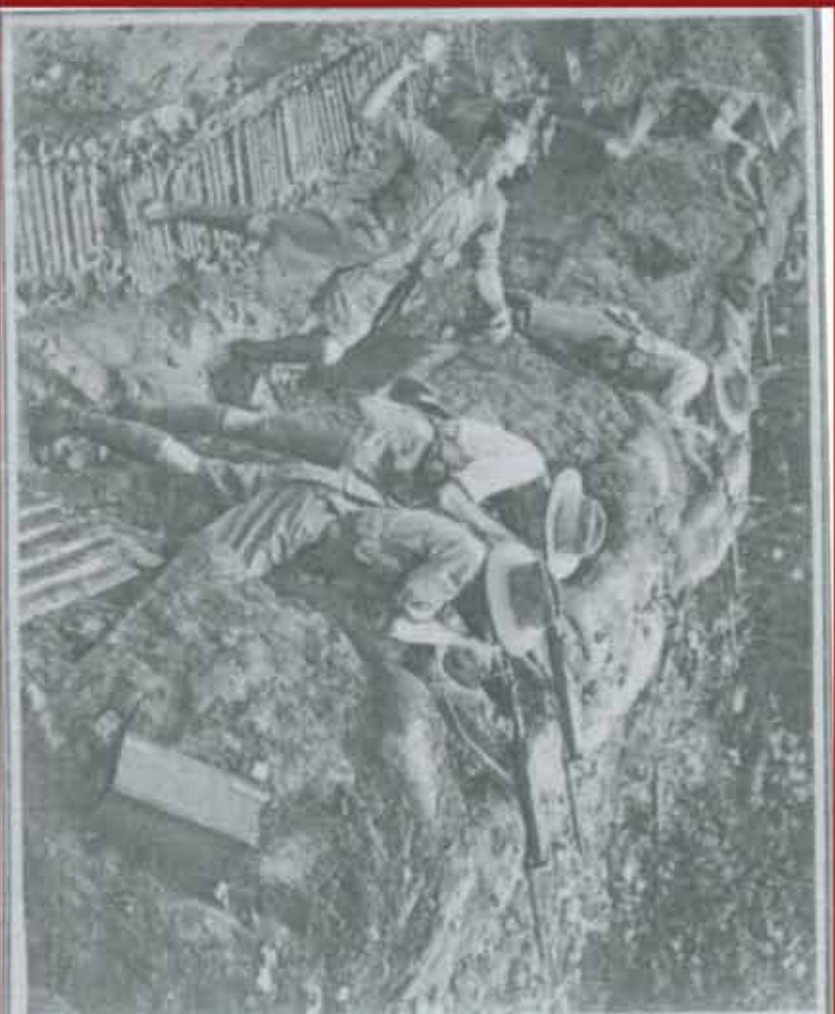
V.C.'S CLAIM.

LONDON, Nov. 13.

In the King's Bench Division an Australian V.C., Leonard Keyser, sued a film producer, O. B. Samuelson, for damages for injuries received in filming a re-enactment of the Gallipoli bombing episode, for which he was decorated. Plaintiff's case was that for a consideration of £75 a week he went to a studio at Islington, where smoke-bombs and gunpowder were used for reproduction of a trench scene. Keyser alleged that the bombs were carelessly thrown, and that the electrical discharges of gunpowder was faulty, with the result that a bomb and also gunpowder exploded in his face, fractured his jaw, and caused a hundred lacerated wounds in his left forearm, and 60 wounds in a knee. He was confined to bed for five and a half weeks, and his jaw, despite operations, was permanently disfigured. Mr. J. D. Cassella, K.C., revealed an earlier appearance of Keyser's stealing Keyser's Victoria Cross, and returning it with an apology. Keyser asked with defendant's agreement that the finding would be perfectly safe.

"In the King's Bench Division an Australian V.C., Leonard Keyser, sued a film producer, O. B. Samuelson, for damage for injuries received in filming a reenactment of the Gallipoli bombing episode, for which he was decorated."

Below is a picture from the set with Keyser demonstrating how to throw the 'bombs'.



CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number 6174360-3

REGISTRATION DISTRICT **ST. MARYLEBONE**
 in the Metropolitan Borough of St. Marylebone

Column—	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
No.	When and where died	Name and surname	Sex	Age	Occupation	Cause of death	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar

131	Twelfth October 1951 83 Penney Court	Leonard Maurice Kensor	Male	65 years	V.C. Director of Companies	1 st carcinoma of lung & liver certified by G.O. Morgan M.R.C.S.	Doris Penney sister 62 Penney Court W9	Thirteenth October 1951	M. White Registrar
-----	---	------------------------	------	----------	----------------------------	--	---	-------------------------	--------------------

132	Twelfth October 1951 83 Rodney Court	Leonard Maurice Kensor	Male	65 Years	V.C. Director of Companies	Carcinoma of lung and liver Certified by G.O. Morgan M.R.C.S.	Doris Penney Sister 62 Rodney Court W9	Thirteenth October 1951	
-----	---	------------------------	------	----------	----------------------------	--	---	-------------------------	--

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the

21st

day of January

2015

DYD 801108

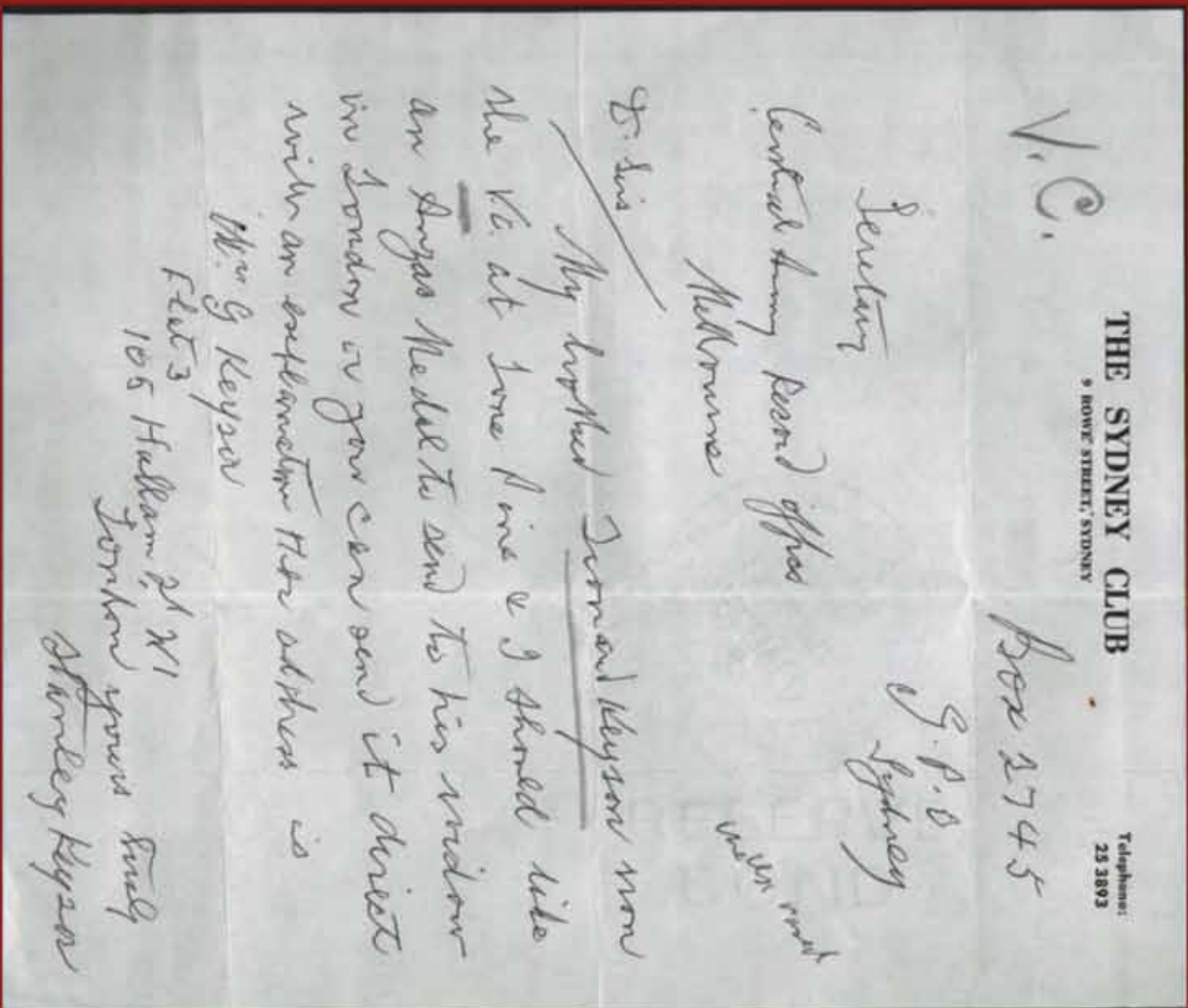
See note overleaf

CAUTION: THERE ARE OFFENCES RELATING TO FALSIFYING OR ALTERING A CERTIFICATE AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE ©CROWN COPYRIGHT
 WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.

DAN



Source 33—Letter of Request from Brother Stanley



Secretary

Central Army Record Office
Melbourne

My brother Leonard Keyser won the V.C.
at Lone Pine and I should like an Anzac
medal to send to his widow in London or
you can send it direct with an explana-
tion. Her address is

G. Keyser
Flat 3
105 Hallam St., W1
London

Yours Truly,
Stanley Keyser



Source 34—Medals



Victoria Cross

1914 Star:
Missing

British War Medal
1914-20

Victory Medal

George VI
Coronation Medal

Lieutenant Leonard Keyser's medals are now held in the Australian War Memorial (Museum) in Canberra.

REL/032

Activity

Investigation: Leonard Keyzor's Story

Use the sources provided for you to fill in Leonard's biographical details in the table below.

SOURCE 1 LEONARD'S GREAT GRANDFATHER LOUIS KYEZOR

What happened to Leonard's grandfather Louis?

SOURCE 2 LOUIS KYEZOR THE KING OF WHITTON

How did Louis make the family fortune?

What year did Louis become a Rifle Volunteer?

SOURCE 3 LEONARD'S MOTHER JULIA 1881 CENSUS 55 MARYLAND ROAD MAIDA VALE

How do we know that Julia Benjamin came from a wealthy family?

SOURCE 4 LEONARD KEYSOR'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE

When was he born?

Where was he born?

SOURCE 5 1891 CENSUS 19 SUTHERLAND AVENUE

How many brothers and sisters does Leonard have?

What is his father's job?

SOURCE 6 CHARLES BOOTH'S POVERTY MAP OF LONDON

What social class did Charles Booth place the Keyzor household in?

SOURCE 7 KEYZOR FAMILY TREE

Where did the Keyzor family originally come from?

SOURCE 8 LEONARD'S SCHOOL YEARS

What type of schools did Leonard attend?

What did Leonard show a talent for at school?

SOURCE 9 1901 CENSUS 63 SUTHERLAND AVENUE

What was Leonard's father's job?

SOURCE 10 MOVING TO CANADA

Name two benefits to moving to Canada according to the posters

SOURCE 11 EMIGRATION TO CANADA PASSENGER LOG BOOK

What was the name of Leonard's ship

Where did he depart from?

SOURCE 12 1911 CANADIAN CENSUS SHELLMOUTH MANITOBA CANADA

How do we know Leonard didn't own his first home in Shellmouth, Manitoba?

SOURCE 13 1911 CENSUS OF MAIDA VALE

Where were Leonard's parents living when he was in Canada?

SOURCE 14 WARRINGTON CRESCENT IN WORLD WAR ONE

What happened to Warrington Crescent in 1918?

SOURCE 15 JOURNEY TO AUSTRALIA

What ship did Leonard travel on?

Which city in Australia was he heading to?

SOURCE 16 AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE ATTESTATION PAPERS

How old was Leonard when he enlisted?

What was his occupation/trade?

SOURCE 17 CERTIFICATE OF ATTESTING OFFICER

What is the date that he joined the AIF on Leonard's attestation?

SOURCE 18 MILITARY HISTORY

What was Leonard's unit when he enlisted?

SOURCE 19 TRAINING TO BE A SOLDIER

Where did Leonard begin his training after enlisting?

SOURCE 20 TRAINING IN EGYPT

What ship did Leonard take to Egypt?

SOURCE 21 DISASTER AT GALLIPOLI

Who decided to attack Gallipoli?

What was the date of the first day of the disastrous Gallipoli landings that Leonard took part in?

SOURCE 22 BATTLE OF LONE PINE

What act of heroism did Leonard do at the Battle of Lone Pine?

SOURCE 23 LEONARD'S CITATION FOR BRAVERY

What was the name of the gallantry medal that Leonard was awarded?

SOURCE 24 BACK TO BLIGHTY; LEONARD RETURNS TO WESTMINSTER

Where was the ANZAC Buffet located?

When did Leonard visit the ANZAC Buffet?

SOURCE 25 PROCEEDINGS OF MEDICAL BOARD

What was Leonard's injury on 4 October 1917?

SOURCE 26 MEDICAL BOARD REPORT OF DISABLED OFFICER

Where was Leonard injured, the second time?

What was his injury?

SOURCE 27 SECOND MEDICAL BOARD REPORT OF DISABLED OFFICER

What was Leonard's injury, the third time?

SOURCE 28 LEONARD HEADS BACK TO SYDNEY

Who asked Leonard go back to Sydney after he was gassed and why?

What ship does he travel on?

SOURCE 29 MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

When does Leonard get married?

Who does he marry?

SOURCE 30 AFTER MARRIAGE

Where do they live once they're married?

How did he nearly lose his Victoria Cross?

SOURCE 31 FILMING OF MOVIE FOR VALOUR

What happened on the set of the movie?

SOURCE 32 DEATH CERTIFICATE

When did Leonard die?

What was his cause of death?

SOURCE 33 LETTER OF REQUEST FROM BROTHER STANLEY

Which medal did Leonard's brother Stanley request should be sent to his wife in London?

SOURCE 34 MEDALS

Where are Leonard's medals held today?