## **CADDY, James Pascoe**

**Reference: Beecroft Church of England Roll of Honour, Beecroft Roll of Honour, Tony Cunneen book**

**Resident of Thornleigh Road, Beecroft, NSW**

[Born 1882, Waverley district, son of James and Catherine Caddy]

**AIF Project details:**

Regimental Number: None

Enlistment Date: 15 Apr 1915

Date of birth: 25 Aug 1882

Age: 32 years

Educational qualifications: B. E. (Mining) University of Sydney

Occupation: Mining Engineer

Address: Thornleigh Road, Beecroft, NSW

Marital Status: Single

Age at embarkation: 33

Height: ?

Weight: ?

Chest Measurement: ?

Complexion: ?

Eyes: ?

Hair: ?

Religious Denomination: Church of England

Next of Kin: Father, James Caddy, Thornleigh Road, Beecroft, NSW

Previous military service: Served for 2 years in the St George’s Rifles, Citizen Military Forces

Rank on enlistment: Lieutenant

Unit Name: 17th Battalion, 3rd Reinforcement

AWM embarkation Roll number: 23/34/2

Embarkation details: Unit embarked from Sydney, NSW, on board HMAT A54 *Runic* on 9 Aug 1915

Roll title: 17 Infantry Battalion – 1 to 13 Reinforcements (May 1915 – Jun 1916)

Rank from Nominal Roll: Major

Unit from Nominal Roll: 15th Field Company Engineers

Promotions: Lieutenant, Promotion date: 5 Mar 1916

Captain, Promotion date: 6 May 1917

Major, Promotion date: 9 Feb 1918

Recommendations (Medals and Awards): Mention in Despatches

Awarded and promulgated ‘London Gazette’ No. 30706, 28 May 1918; ‘Commonwealth Gazette’ No. 165, 24 Oct 1918

Fate: Returned to Australia 10 Jul 1919

Medals: Military Cross

Source: ‘Commonwealth Gazette’ No. 109 date: 15 Sep 1919

Other details: War service: Egypt, Gallipoli, Western Front

Proceeded to Gallipoli, 4 Oct 1915; taken on strength, 17th Bn, 12 Oct 1915

Medals: Military Cross, 1914-15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal

**Further references:**

“Beecroft and Cheltenham in WW1” by Tony Cunneen (pages 18, 27, 80)

The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 22 May 1915 (Beecroft honour board)

The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Sat 9 Nov 1918 (mentioned in despatches)

**James Caddy at Gallipoli**

**The Last Shot on Anzac**

By Major J. P. Caddy, MC

James Pascoe Caddy was a 33-year-old mining engineer from Beecroft in Sydney who had served for two years in the St George’s Rifles, Citizen Military Forces, when he embarked as a lieutenant with the 17th Infantry Battalion, 3rd Reinforcement, in August 1915. He was promoted to Captain in March 1916 and to Major with the 5th Division Engineers in February 1918, and returned in July 1919, having been awarded the Military Cross.

*[From “The RSL Book of World War I”, edited by John Gatfield with Richard Landels, HarperCollins Publishers, first published in Australia in 2015]*

*Pages 121-123*

On Thursday 16 December, most of the 5th Field Company embarked, leaving me with Sergeant Conran and Corporal Penny in charge of engineering operations on Russell’s Top, which was to be the last spot evacuated. The 17th and 18th were spent in completing arrangements for firing the mines, finishing the defence system, setting traps for the Turks, and a mine was laid under the road to the beach near the 20th Battalion headquarters.

About 1 a.m. on 19 December the supply dump on North Beach caught fire. As this dump contained a number of drums of oil, it made a big blaze, and it then seemed that the Evacuation must be discovered, and that those of us in the rear party had a very poor chance. The enemy artillery opened fire, but nothing else happened, and the fire was soon extinguished.

Right up to the last, men were left in the faces of the tunnels tapping with picks so that the enemy would think that mining operations were being continued. The morning of Sunday the 19th was quiet, and although our planes were in the air all day, when an enemy plane came over it appeared that the rear party would have no chance of getting away, although as the day wore on and nothing happened we were more hopeful. The day was spent waiting for the end and testing the connections with the mines to ensure that they would explode when required.

The Evacuation proceeded smoothly and by 7 p.m. there were only 140 men left on Russell’s Top. About 11.30 p.m. we again thought it was all up when Sergeant Vince of the 20th Battalion, who was on watch up Malone Gully, reported that 100 Turks had come down the gully towards the beach. It was afterwards ascertained that this was only an ordinary working party.

The evening was occupied in telling yarns while the last parties checked off. Major Fitzgerald was quite calm and collected during the whole of the night and kept us cheerful throughout the rather trying time of the final stages.

At 1 a.m. the four officers left at the Rear Party HQ – Major Fitzgerald, Captain Hutchinson (the medical officer), Lieutenant Broadbent and myself – decided to have supper. During the last few days plenty of good food, the likes of which we had never had before on the Peninsula, was available, and the meal consisted of sardines, biscuits, pineapple and mock cream, and soup! After we had finished the table was left laid for the Turks, with a note written by Major Fitzgerald, which read: ‘Good-bye Jackie, will see you later. You are a good fighter, but we don’t like the company you keep.’

It was still doubtful whether the mines would be fired or not, so we fixed up an arrangement which, if necessary, would fire the mines some hours after we had left. This consisted of a sandbag suspended by a string and a candle, which, after staying alight for about two hours, would burn the string, causing the sandbag to fall on the exploders and fire the mines.

At 3 a.m. Russell’s Top was the only frontline post held, and the last party withdrew from there at 3.15 a.m. At 3.25 a.m. the machine-gunners of ‘P’ Post, the last party on the inner line of defence, got away and there was still no sign of the enemy, who was keeping up the normal rifle-fire that went on every night. Everyone was now clear of the trenches and Major Fitzgerald, having received permission from Colonel Paton by telephone to fire the mines, instructed me to do so.

At 3.30 a.m. Sergeant Conran pushed down the exploder connected with the mines in L.8 and L.11, and immediately afterwards I fired the mine in Arnall’s tunnel. The ground vibrated, there was dull roar, and two large craters were formed, seventy Turks being killed by the explosions. Immediately heavy rifle-fire opened up along the whole of the enemy line.

After slabs of guncotton to destroy the exploders had been set off, and Corporal Penny had lit the fuse of the mine on the track leading down to the beach, we made as quickly as possible down the hill and embarked on the last lighter, which at 4 a.m. conveyed us to the transport standing by a short distance from the shore.

As we streamed away about 5 a.m. and had our last look at Gallipoli there was still no sign of anything unusual except the dumps burning near Suvla Beach. Our feelings of surprise and relief at the successful accomplishments of this operation without the loss of life were mingled with a feeling of ‘going back’ on the many good pals lying in the graves on the narrow strip of land which was now left to the Turks.

Reveille, December 1932