

**City of London & Tower Hamlets
Cemetery, London, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3679 PRIVATE

HERBERT JAMES ABEL

1ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

21ST NOVEMBER, 1916 Age 39

Until We Meet In The Morning

To Part No More

Through Christ Jesus

Herbert James ABEL

Herbert James Abel was born at Bow, London, England on 26th March, 1876 to parents John William & Esther Abel (nee Casey). He was baptised on 30th April, 1876 at St. Stephen's Church, Tredegar Road, Bow, Middlesex, England. From the Baptism Register the family lived at 57 Antill Road & John William Abel was an Umbrella Maker.

Herbert James Abel was listed an Admissions for Atley Road School for Infants, Tower Hamlets, London, England. He was admitted on 13th October, 1879 with the family living at 27 Atley Road. Herbert James Abel transferred in May, 1881.

The 1881 England Census recorded Herbert Abel as a 5 year old, living with his family at 27 Atley Road, Bow, London, England. His parents were listed as John Abel (Warehouseman, aged 42, born Bethnal Green, Middlesex) & Catherine Abel (aged 33, born Bow, Middlesex). Herbert was one of three children listed on this Census (all born Bow, Middlesex) – John Abel (aged 6), then Herbert & Mary Abel (aged 1).

Herbert James Abel attended London County Council School, England (according to information provided for the Roll of Honour).

The 1891 England Census recorded Herbert J. Abel as an Errand Boy (Post), aged 15, living with his family at 27 Atley Road, Bow, London, England. His parents were listed as John William Abel (Umbrella Worker, aged 50) & Esther Abel (aged 40). Herbert was one of eight children listed on this Census (all born Bow, London) – John W. Abel (Errand Boy (Post), aged 16) then Herbert, Mary A. Abel Scholar, aged 11), Violet Abel (Scholar, aged 9), Lilly Abel (Scholar, aged 9), Daisy Abel (Scholar, aged 6), Esther C. Abel (aged 4) & Maud A. Abel (aged 6 months).

Esther Abel, mother of Herbert James Abel, died in December quarter, 1903 in the district of Poplar, Middlesex, England, aged 55.

The 1909, 1910 & 1911 Electoral Registers for the Parliamentary Borough of Tower Hamlets, Bow & Bromley Division, recorded Herbert James Abel, living on "*one room, ground floor, furnished*" at 27 Atley Road. John William Abel, same address, was listed as Landlord or person to whom rent was paid.

The 1911 England Census recorded Herbert James Abel as a 35 year old, single General Labourer living with his widower father & family at 27 Atley Road, Bow East, London, England. His father was listed as John William Abel (Umbrella Maker, aged 72). His father had listed he had been married for 39 years & they had a total of 8 children – with only 7 children now living. Herbert was the eldest of 4 children listed on this Census – Herbert then Violet Abel (Machinist (Clothing Factory), aged 28), Esther Caroline Abel (Machinist (Clothing Factory), aged 25) & Maud Alice Abel (Machinist (Clothing Factory), aged 20). Also listed was Frederick James Abel - Grandson of John William Abel (at School, aged 6, born Essex, England).

According to information provided by his sister for the Roll of Honour – Herbert James Abel came to Australia when he was 34 years of age.

Herbert James Abel was a 39 year old, single, Labourer from Gaylong (as listed on Embarkation Roll – should be Galong), NSW when he enlisted on 17th July, 1915 at Cootamundra, New South Wales with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His religion was Wesleyan & his next of kin was listed as his father – Mr J. W. Abel, 27 Atley Road, Bow East, London, England.

Private Herbert James Abel was posted to 12th Reinforcements of 1st Battalion.

Private Herbert James Abel, Service number 3679, embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on RMS *Mooltan* on 11th December, 1915 with the 1st Infantry Battalion, 12th Reinforcements.

Private Herbert James Abel was taken on strength of 1st Battalion at Tel-el-Kebir on 14th February, 1916 from Reinforcements.

Private Herbert James Abel proceeded from Alexandria on 22nd March, 1916 on H.M.T. *Ivernia* to join B.E.F. (British Expeditionary Force). He disembarked at Marseilles, France on 28th March, 1916.

Private Herbert James Abel was wounded in action in France between 22/25th July, 1916 (dates as per Casualty Form – Active Service). He was admitted to No. 1 Field Ambulance on 24th July, 1916 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to right Leg then transferred the same day to 6th M AC. Private Abel was transferred & admitted to No. 3 Casualty Clearing Station on 24th July, 1916 then transferred to No. 21 Ambulance Train on 25th July, 1916. He was admitted to No. 8 Stationary Hospital at Wimereux on 27th July, 1916 with a fractured left Leg - severe (as per Casualty Form – Active Service). Private Abel embarked for England on 28th July, 1916 from Boulogne on Hospital Ship *St David* with compound fracture of Leg.

1st Battalion

The 1st Battalion was the first infantry unit recruited for the AIF in New South Wales during the First World War.

..... In March 1916, it sailed for France and the Western Front. From then until 1918 the battalion took part in operations against the German Army, principally in the Somme Valley in France and around Ypres in Belgium.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 1st Battalion

22nd July, 1916 – CONTALMAISON

Arrangements made for attack. Operation order attached.

Extra stores of bombs, ammunition, water & stores were brought to the firing line. Officers sent back, Major Lindeman, Lieuts Macgregor, McShane and Beavis.

17.30 – While the attack took place B n Headquarters moved at 17.30 to position in the firing line, A & B Coys left trench. At 23.45 C & D followed suit when ground was clear.

23rd July, 1916 – CONTALMAISON

Artillery barrage for 2 minutes started at 0028 and at 0045 message received from Lt Burstall that German trenches on the right were taken at 0109. A message then received that German 2nd line trenches were taken but no particulars were forthcoming. 60 prisoners were brought into the old firing line and sent back to the A.P.M.

0130 – At Albert at 0130 satisfactory information was not forthcoming to Lt Col J. Heane D.S.O. with Bombers, H.Q. Staff and Signallers went to German first line leaving Lt Col O. G. Howell-Price in charge of old Bn Headqrs dugout. A message was then sent to the Brigadier that the line was taken. Col Heane met Lt Burstall in German 1st line, and sent him immediately for information about 2nd and 3rd lines. Word received that 3rd line was taken about 0145. Work at consolidating the 1st line commenced. Signallers obtained communication with 3rd Bn. Wires were sent to D. Coy in the 2nd line. Lt Col Heane inspected the 2nd & 3rd German lines and found them missing. Our right was found to have progressed too far to the right as the 3rd Bde has not come sufficiently close to us. The 3rd line ran in & out, close to the BAPAUME Road. A communication trench was then dug between the 1st & 2nd lines under heavy shell fire. Captain A. C. Mackenzie and Lts Collier, Atkins and Blackmore were killed and A'Beckett wounded during the attack.

The German 2nd & 3rd line were much damaged & had to be reconstructed. The first line was little better. The dugouts were not good – scooped out shelters only. Consolidation of position continued during the day.

1730 - 23rd July, 1916 - POZIERES

Instructions were received from Brigade to details patrols to occupy certain positions. Lt. Col Heane instructed Captain Harris 3rd Bn personally to send them out at 1730. At this time we were rather mixed. 2 Coys of the 3rd Bn in 1st line, the next two lines (1st & 2nd German lines) occupied by 1st Bn and the German 3rd line by 2 Coys of the 3rd Bn. Lt. Col Heane asked Bde. to allot the first two lines to one Bn and the next two to another. Instructions were received later for the 1st Bn to take the two front lines and for the 3rd Bn to take the rear two lines, and for the whole to be known as the Brigade right sub sector, under the command of Lt. Colonel J. Heane, D.S.O. This was carried out during the evening. Later GO's went over a scheme with the Brigadier for a further advance, which was to be made by the 8th Bn, who would be supported by the 3rd Bn, if necessary, and the 1st Bn would occupy the trenches left by the 3rd Bn. Our losses to 12 noon on the 24th July were 5 Officers and 67 other ranks killed, 6 Officers and 197 other ranks wounded, 47 other ranks missing and 2 Officers Died of wounds.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Herbert James Abel was admitted to Stoke-Upon-Trent War Hospital, Newcastle, Staffordshire, England on 29th July, 1916 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to right Leg – compound fracture to right Leg. He was later reported to be progressing favourably (no date recorded). (Note: The Purport Card recorded “*Seriously ill. Amputated Thigh*” – no date recorded)

Private Herbert James Abel died at 3.40 am on 21st November, 1916 at Stoke-Upon-Trent War Hospital, Newcastle, Staffordshire, England from wounds received in action in France - G.S.W Leg, Amputated Thigh, recurrent Haemorrhage & Exhaustion.

A death for Herbert J. Abel, aged 40, was registered in the December quarter, 1916 in the district of Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire, England.

Private Herbert James Abel was buried in City of London Cemetery, Ilford, Essex – Church Ground – Grave No. 57413 (Family) Square 193.

This is now recorded by CWGC as City of London and Tower Hamlets Cemetery, London, England - Plot number 193.57413 and he now has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private Herbert James Abel requested in his Will, extracted from his Pay Book, that in the event of his death all his personal effects & money to go to his sister – Esther Caroline Abel, 27 Atley Rd, Bow East, London, England.

In response to a request from The Public Trustee, Sydney, NSW, Base Records forwarded on 13th December, 1917, a certificate of report of death, in duplicate, of the late No. 3679 Private H. J. Abel, 1st Battalion.

Private Herbert James Abel was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque would have also been sent to Private Abel’s father – Mr J. W. Abel, as the closest next-of-kin. (Note: There is no recorded of when the Scroll or Plaque was sent).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Herbert James Abel – service number 3679, aged 39, of 1st Battalion, Australian Infantry. He was the son of John William & Esther Abel.

Private H. J. Abel is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 28.

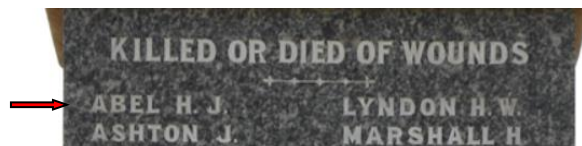


Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

H. J. Abel is remembered on the Harden War Memorial, located at Newson Park, Albury Street & Station Street, Harden, NSW.



Harden War Memorial (Photos from AWM Places of Pride)



H. J. Abel is remembered on the Murrumburrah Mechanics Institute Hall World War 1 Roll of Honour, located in Mechanic Institute Hall, 306 Albury Street, Harden, NSW.



Murrumburrah Mechanics Institute Hall World War 1 Roll of Honour (Photo from War Memorials Register of NSW)

(34 pages of Private Herbert James Abel's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

Information obtained from the CWGC, Australian War Memorial (Roll of Honour, First World War Embarkation Roll) & National Archives Australia



Newspaper Items

Official List No. 205

New South Wales

Seriously Ill

Pte H. J. ABEL (England)

(Australian Town and Country Journal, Sydney, NSW – 6 September, 1916)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

LISTS Nos. 226 and 227

New South Wales

Wounded

Pte H. J. ABEL (England), severely

(Australian Town and Country Journal, Sydney, NSW – 4 October, 1916)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

LISTS Nos. 231 and 232

New South Wales

Progress Reports

Pte H. J. ABEL (England), improving

(Australian Town and Country Journal, Sydney, NSW – 18 October, 1916)

AUSTRALIAN CASUALTIES

List No. 240

Progress Reports

Pte H. J. ABEL (England), convalescent

(Australian Town and Country Journal, Sydney, NSW – 18 October, 1916)

246th LIST

NEW SOUTH WALES

DIED OF ILLNESS

Pte H. J. ABEL, England

(The Land, Sydney, NSW – 8 December, 1916)

Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstones

The Defence Department, in 1920/21, contacted the next of kin of the deceased World War 1 soldiers to see if they wanted to include a personal inscription on the permanent headstone. Space was reserved for 66 letters only (with the space between any two words to be counted as an additional letter) & the rate per letter was around 3 ½ d (subject to fluctuation).

The expense in connection for the erection of permanent headstones over the graves of fallen soldiers was borne by the Australian Government.

(Information obtained from letters sent to next of kin in 1921)

Private Herbert James Abel has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone with the following inscription:

Until We Meet In The Morning To Part No More

Through Christ Jesus

City of London & Tower Hamlets Cemetery, London, England

Many of the soldiers buried here died in Bethnal Green Military Hospital. The Screen Wall at the back of the War Graves Plot commemorates by name those buried in the plot or in graves elsewhere in the cemetery which could not be marked by headstones and those who were cremated in the City of London Crematorium.

There are 732 Commonwealth War Graves located in this Cemetery – 332 relating to World War 1 & 400 from World War 2.

(Information from CWGC)



(Photo by Acabashi)



(Photo from Find a Grave – Julia&keld)



Cross of Sacrifice *(Photo from CWGC)*



(Photo from CWGC)



(Photo by Acabashi)

Herbert James Abel is named on the Private Headstone located behind his Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone.



(Photo by Geoffrey Gillon)

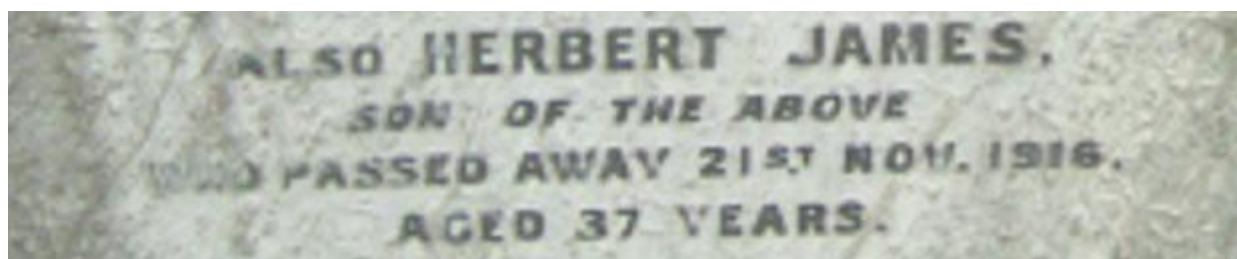


Photo of Private Herbert James Abel's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in City of London & Tower Hamlets Cemetery, London, England.



(Photo from *The Essex Commemoration Project*)