

**St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard,
Harefield, Middlesex, England**

War Graves



Lest We Forget

World War 1



3440 PRIVATE

A. A. ANDERSON

41ST BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

5TH OCTOBER, 1918

Alfred Alexander ANDERSON

Alfred Alexander Anderson was born at Thursday Island, Queensland on 5th May, 1896 to parents Rasmus & Sena Anderson (nee Hansen).

Alfred Alexander Anderson was a 20 year old, single, Carpenter from Townsville, Queensland when he enlisted on 1st February, 1917 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 3416 & his religion was Church of England. His next of kin was listed as his father – Rasmus Anderson, Warburton Street, North Ward, Townsville, Queensland. Alfred Anderson stated on his Attestation Papers that he had served for 6 months with Citizen Forces in Townsville & had been previously rejected as medically unfit for His Majesty's Service.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson was posted to 11th Depot Battalion on 23rd February, 1917 for recruit training. He was transferred to 10th Reinforcements of 49th Battalion on 9th March, 1917 & had Home Leave from 6th April, 1917 to 17th April, 1917. Private Anderson was transferred on 1st May, 1917 to 25th Reinforcements of 9th Battalion. Private Anderson was transferred to Field Artillery on 17th May, 1917 as Gunner.

Gunner Alfred Alexander Anderson volunteered for a transfer from Artillery to Infantry Reinforcements as a result of an appeal made by Defence Department owing to the shortage of Infantry recruits. He was transferred to 14th Reinforcements of 31st Battalion on 8th June, 1917 with the rank of Private. Private Anderson was transferred to 8th Reinforcements of 41st Battalion on 12th June, 1917.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Hororata* (A20) on 14th June, 1917 with the 41st Infantry Battalion, 8th Reinforcements & disembarked at Liverpool, England on 26th August, 1917.

[Note: One copy of the Attestation Papers has the Service number of 3440, another copy has Service number of 3416, some forms have both numbers listed but the majority of the forms show the Service number as 3440.]

Reinforcements were only given basic training in Australia. Training was completed in training units in England. Some of these were located in the Salisbury Plain & surrounding areas in the county of Wiltshire.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson was marched in to 11th Training Battalion at Larkhill, Wiltshire, England on 27th August, 1917 from Australia.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson was marched into 9th Training Battalion at Fovant, Wiltshire on 5th November, 1917 from 11th Training Battalion.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson proceeded overseas to France via Southampton on 1st January, 1918 from 9th Training Battalion. He was marched in to A.I.B.D. (Australian Infantry Base Depot) at Rouelles, France on 2nd January, 1918. Private Anderson was marched out from A.I.B.D. on 4th January, 1918 & was taken on strength of 41st Battalion in the Field on 8th January, 1918.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson was still with his Unit on 8th July, 1918. (This was usually noted on the Casualty Form – Active Service when no activity had been recorded for a while.)

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson reported sick on 22nd July, 1918. He was admitted to 10th Casualty Clearing Station on 22nd July, 1918 then transferred & admitted to 20th Casualty Clearing Station on 1st August, 1918 with Influenza. Private Anderson was transferred & admitted to 10th Australian Stationary Hospital (no date recorded) with Influenza. He was discharged to duty on 9th August, 1918 & rejoined 41st Battalion in the Field on 10th August, 1918.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson was wounded in action on 1st September, 1918. He was admitted to 9th Australian Field Ambulance on 1st September, 1918 with shrapnel wound/s to Abdomen then transferred & admitted to 53rd Casualty Clearing Station the same day. Private Anderson was admitted to 12th General Hospital at Rouen, France on 7th September, 1918. He was invalided to England on 9th September, 1918 on Hospital Ship *Grantully Castle*.

41st Battalion

The 41st Battalion was raised at Bell's Paddock Camp in Brisbane in February 1916 with recruits from Brisbane, northern Queensland and the northern rivers district of New South Wales. It formed part of the 11th Brigade of the 3rd Australian Division.....

When the German Army launched its last great offensive in March 1918, the battalion was rushed south to France and played a role in blunting the drive towards the vital railway junction of Amiens.

The Allies launched their own offensive on 8 August 1918, and the 41st played an active role both in the initial attack and the long advance that followed throughout August and into September....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

War Diary – 41st Battalion *(War Diary information from the Australian War Memorial)*

1st September, 1918 – Haut Allaines

MAP REFERENCE 62 c.

Midnight 31st August / 1st September found the Battalion assembled for an assault in the morning in the valley running through C.26. Central, running parallel to the Bapaume-Peronne Road. The dispositions of the Companies were from right to left "A" Coy, "D" Coy, with "B" Coy, and "C" Coy, in support respectively. The frontage for the Battalion was 1000 yards. On our left was the 42nd Battalion, and the 43rd on our right. At 5.30 a.m. the barrage fell 300 yards east of the road and remained there for five minutes, after which it moved at the rate of one hundred yards every five minutes until it rested 600 yards east of the objective, where it remained for 15 minutes.

SCHEME - The Scheme broadly was that the 41st Battalion with the two Battalions already mentioned were under cover of a barrage to capture and consolidate line C.15.c.9.6. to I.4.b.8.0. the 41st's share being C.21.d.2.5. to C.28.a.4.0. On the covering barrage ceasing the support Coys. were to pass through and exploit the success. The success limit was fixed as grid-line through C.16., 17., and 18. Central. Throughout the operation our movements were to conform with our Second Division who was setting the pace south of the Canal.

THE BATTLE - On the barrage ceasing the Battalion moved forward in order to hang to it. The hour was at least 30 minutes too late and would have been better perhaps 60 minutes earlier. Soon after the commencement touch was lost with the 43rd and the Battalion was drawn towards the South seeking troops on its flank. Capt. French immediately pushed his Coy. into the gap between "D" Coy. and the 43rd. Very heavy fighting took place between trench systems C.27.a. and 6. where a number of Machine guns were captured. All ranks complained of the progress of our barrage which did not effectively silence hostile machine guns. The valley between this trench system already mentioned and YASSA and KASSA trenches was crossed under a hail of machine gun bullets. In YASSA and KASSA trench systems themselves bitter hand to hand fighting occurred which is borne out by the number of dead and wounded which remained when the attack had swept by. On the left up to the time the objective was reached, and it was practically obtained on the right but the right flank being in the air and terrific machine gun fire coming from the South where the Second Division was not up to us, caused "A" Coy. to take up position in KASSA trench. The line then ran C.21. d.5.5. to C.27. b.8.9. then along Kassa Trench to about 27.b.6.0. where our right flank was guarded by a Coy. of the 43rd. "C" Coy. now passed through "D" Coy. and attacked gaining under heavy machine gun fire and shelling from Field Batteries firing through open sights from C.23.d.7. the high ground in C.22.d. "B" Coy. attempted to advance but having nobody on the flank and being heavily engaged by machine guns from the South especially from HAUT - ALLAINES and SCUTARI Trench were unable to do so and established.

(Continued on Page 2)

D. D. & L., London, E.C.

e 1) (BATTLE - Continued) (Capt. W. Uren)

11th Inf. Bde.

themselves in KASSA Trench. At this stage the O.C. "B" Coy. was killed. "C" Coy. on the high ground in an untenable position with both flanks in the air, extricated themselves with the utmost difficulty and fell back with their wounded including Capt. French to Trenches occupied by "D" Coy. All through the fight the Machine gun fire, especially enfilade, was the greatest we have experienced. As it was impossible to advance further until our right flank came forward the Battalion was re-organised. The dispositions ~~was~~ Right to Left then were "B" Coy. "A" Coy. "D" Coy. with "C" Coy in support in C.27.a. 7.7. This re-organisation was carried out under hostile fire from high ground in C.22., Copses in C.22. b. and d. and SCUTARI Trench, also from HAUT ALLAINES which caused us many casualties. This fire also prevented us from removing some of our casualties from the front line as the Boche fired on stretcher bearers killing and wounding a whole team. We took a large number of prisoners, some two hundred and fifty, together with five Field Guns the teams of which "D" Coy. Lewis Gunners shot on reaching their objective, while the enemy was trying to withdraw them. We also got two Trench Mortars and about 45 Machine Guns. Our casualties were 120 of which five were Officers. This large number bears out the expensiveness of taking positions heavily held by machine guns with inadequate artillery preparation or tanks. The strength of the Battalion for this operation was under 400 fighting men. It is interesting to compare the frontage allotted to the Eleventh Brigade (nearly 3000 yards) and the frontage of 1200 yards given to the British DIVISION on our Left. At 11 p.m. we were relieved by two Coys. of Somersets and moved back to bivouacs near MEM. No. 6 platoon was not relieved with the Battalion but remained in the line (Lt. C.M. Butler M.C. in command) attached to the 43rd Battalion. During the night it participated in the attack on SCUTARI Trench and although the platoon was only 14 strong it took nearly 100 p-prisoners and a number of M.Gs. without sustaining casualties.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson was admitted to The Head Quarters War Hospital, Exeter, England on 10th September, 1918 with Bomb wound to abdomen – severe. The Hospital Admissions form recorded “*Gastric fistula – rapidly healing.*” He was transferred to 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield on 20th September, 1918 with G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) abdomen - penetrating.

A Medical Board finding on 1st October, 1918 found that Private Alfred Alexander Anderson was unfit for General Service & unfit for Home Service for 6 months. He was to be transferred to No. 2 Command Depot at Weymouth.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson died at 3.20 pm on 5th October, 1918 at 1st Australian Auxiliary Hospital, Harefield Park, Harefield, Middlesex, England from (primary) Diabetes; (secondary) Coma & G.S.W. (gunshot wound/s) to Abdomen - Penetrating.

A death for Alfred A. Anderson, aged 21, was registered in the December quarter, 1918 in the district of Uxbridge, Middlesex, England.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson was buried on 9th October, 1918 in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England – Grave no. 69.

From the burial report of Private Alfred Alexander Anderson - *Coffin was good, polished Elm. Deceased was accorded a Military funeral. Wreath was given by Mr Billyard Leake of Harefield. Firing Party, and Bugler from Headquarters A.I.F. London were in attendance. Captain J. _ S. Murray (MC) was in charge. A small number of the Hospital Staff attended the funeral.*

Names of relatives or friends present at the Funeral – No. 15497 Dvr Evans, W. F., A.A.S.C. and another A.I.F. soldier attended from Depots in England.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson's place of burial is now listed by Commonwealth War Graves Commission as Plot number - Aust. 70 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

Private Alfred Alexander Anderson requested in his Will date 7th September, 1917 that all his real estate & personal estate be bequeathed to his mother – Mrs Sena Anderson, Warbunton St, North Ward, Townsville, Queensland.

Mrs M. Anderson, Glasgow Street, Goggs Estate, Toowoomba, Queensland, wrote to Base Records in November, 1922 with the following: “*I would deem it a great favour if you would send me full particulars of 3440 A. A. Anderson 41st Battalion as it is the same name as my husband and I have not heard from him since he enlisted.*”

Base Records replied to Mrs M. Anderson on 5th December, 1922 advising the “*....soldier referred to is the late No. 3440 Private Alfred Alexander ANDERSEN, 41st Battalion, who, on enlistment, stated his birthplace to be - Thursday Island, occupation – Carpenter, aged – 20 years and 9 months, religious denomination – Church of England. Nominated next-of-kin is father, Mr Rasmus Andersen, for whose address the advertisement in the press was inserted.*”

Mrs Sena Anderson, Wills Street, Townsville, wrote to Base Records on 15th November, 1923 with the following details: “*Am now enclosing my proper address. The last address at the Herbert Hostel I was only there boarding for one week, but I am now settled to this address.*”

Mrs S. Anderson, Wills Street, Townsville, wrote to Base Records on 5th November, 1923 with the following: “*We shall be pleased to inform you that the father of the late No. 3440 Private A. A. Anderson, 41st Battalion, is residing at the above address, and should be pleased if you would kindly forward Victory Medal.*”

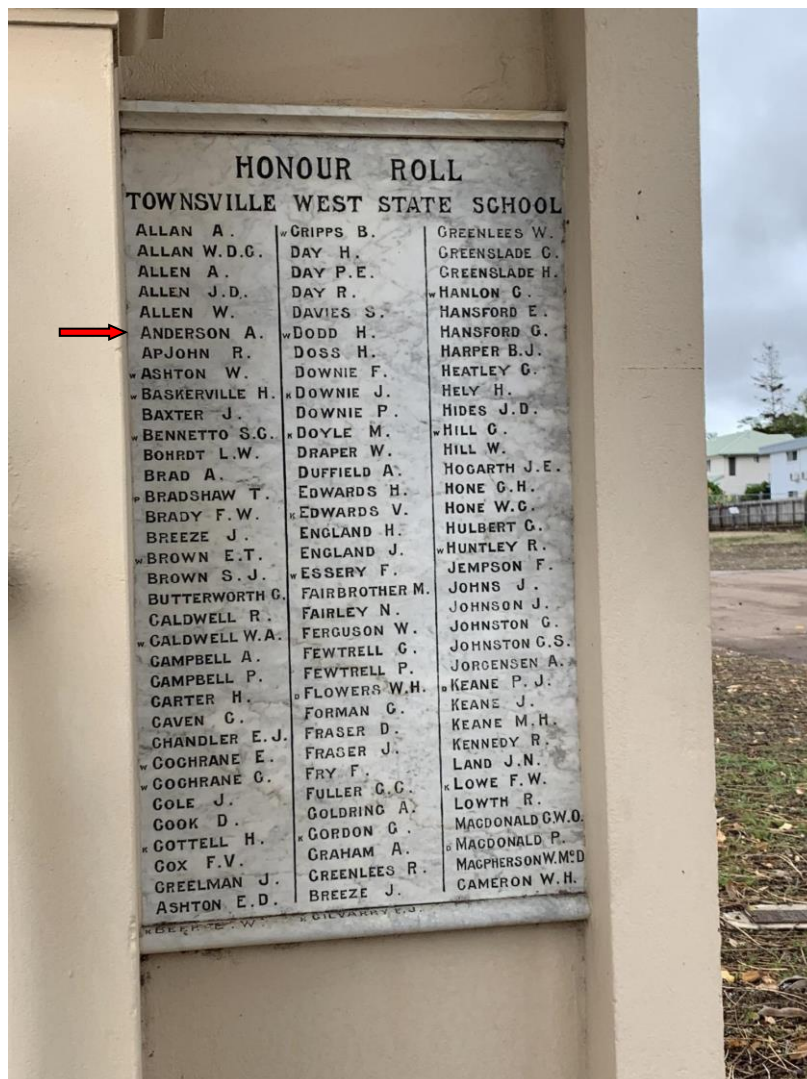
Private Alfred Alexander Anderson was entitled to British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Anderson's father - Mr R. Anderson, as the closest next-of-kin. (Scroll sent September, 1923 & redespached in March, 1924. The Plaque sent June, 1922 & readdressed January, 1924).

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Alfred Alexander Anderson – service number 3440, of 41st Battalion Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

A. Anderson is remembered on the Townsville West State School Honour Roll, located at the former TAFE College (& former Townsville West State School), 29 Ingham Road, Townsville, Queensland.



Townsville West State School Honour Roll (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Marjorie Earl)



A. A. Anderson is remembered on the Townsville Railway Station Honour Roll, located at old Townsville Railway Station, Flinders & Blackwood Streets, Townsville, Queensland.



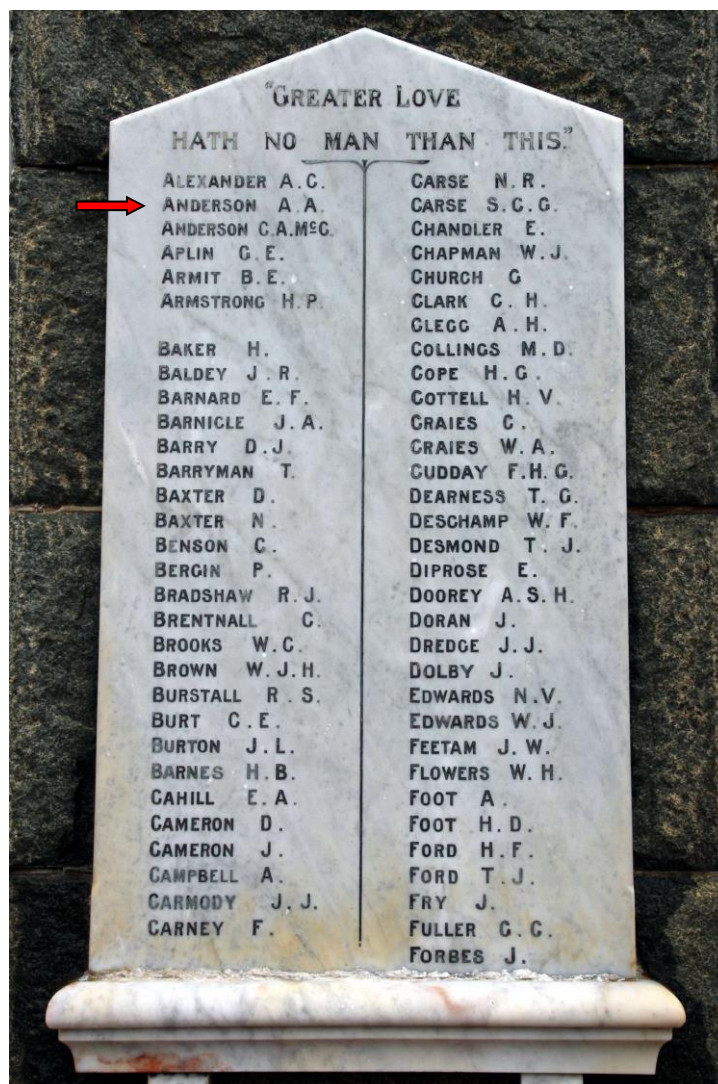
Townsville Railway Station Honour Roll (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Marjorie Earl)



A. A. Anderson is remembered on the Townsville Cenotaph, located in ANZAC Memorial Park, The Strand, Townsville, Queensland.



Townsville Cenotaph (Photos from AWM Places of Pride – Brian Rowe)



Private A. A. Anderson is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 133.



Roll of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

A. A. Anderson is remembered on the Australian Soldiers' Memorial in St. Mary the Virgin Church, Church Hill, Harefield, Middlesex, England.

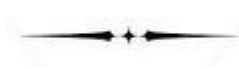




Australian Soldiers' Memorial, Harefield (Photo from War Memorials Online – B. Wood)

(54 pages of Private Alfred Alexander Anderson'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, Red Cross Wounded & Missing) & National Archives



Newspaper Notices

CASUALTIES

LIST NO. 437

WOUNDED

A. A. Anderson, Townsville

(*Daily Standard*, Brisbane, Queensland – 28 October, 1918)

Roll of Honour

Queensland Casualties

Casualty list No. 443 was issued on 21st November....

DIED, OTHER CAUSES

A. A. Anderson, Townsville, 5/10/18, illness, p.r.w.

(*The Week*, Brisbane, Queensland – 29 November, 1918)

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 A. A. Anderson does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England

St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield contains 126 Commonwealth War Graves.

During the two world wars, the United Kingdom became an island fortress used for training troops and launching land, sea and air operations around the globe. There are more than 170,000 Commonwealth war graves in the United Kingdom, many being those of servicemen and women killed on active service, or who later succumbed to wounds. Others died in training accidents, or because of sickness or disease. The graves, many of them privately owned and marked by private memorials, will be found in more than 12,000 cemeteries and churchyards.

Harefield (St. Mary) Churchyard contains war graves from both world wars. There are 120 First World War graves, mostly those of Australians who died in No. 1 Australian Auxiliary Hospital at Harefield Park. Uniquely, their graves are marked by scroll shaped headstones, chosen by the staff and patients at the hospital. In the centre of the Australian plot stands a memorial obelisk which was erected by Sir Francis Newdegate, late Governor of Tasmania and of Western Australia, and Mr. C.A.M. Billyard-Leake, of Harefield Park. The churchyard also contains six graves of the Second World War.

(Information & photos from CWGC)





St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield



Photo of Private A. A. Anderson's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield, Middlesex, England.



(Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



St Mary the Virgin Church, Harefield (Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield (Photo courtesy of Peter Bennett)



St. Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Harefield (Photos courtesy of Peter Bennett)





THE ANZAC CEMETERY, HAREFIELD, LAWRENCE, PHOTO