

# Durrington War Graves

## World War 1



*Lest We Forget*



**6947 PRIVATE**

**K. W. AYLIFFE**

**2ND BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.**

**19TH FEBRUARY, 1917 Age 26**

*Commonwealth War Graves Headstone for Pte K. W. Ayliffe is located in Plot # 206  
of Durrington War Graves Cemetery*

## Kenneth William AYLIFFE

Kenneth William Ayliffe was born in Camden Town, London, England to parents William & Charlotte Ayliffe (nee Dexter). His birth was registered in December quarter 1890 in the district of Pancras, London & he was baptised on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1890 at Haverstock Hill Holy Trinity Church in the borough of Camden, London. His father was listed as a Labourer & the family were living at 20 Hawley Road at the time of the baptism. Kenneth Ayliffe was probably born on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 1890 – this date was recorded in baptism register.

The 1891 England Census recorded Kenneth W. Ayliffe as a 6 month old living with his family at 29 Healy St, Kentish Town in a 2 roomed dwelling. His parents were recorded as William Ayliffe (Carman, aged 43) & Charlotte Ayliffe (aged 28). Also listed was Rosannah Ayliffe – William Ayliffe's sister (aged 24).

The 1901 England Census recorded Kenneth W. Ayliffe as a 10 year old living with his widowed mother & sister – Charlotte Ayliffe (Confectioner Baker, aged 37) & Grace M. Ayliffe (aged 8). The family were recorded as living at Walton Road, Woking which was a Bakery (Shop).

The 1911 Census recorded Kenneth Ayliffe as a 21 year old single Baker living on his own in a 1 roomed dwelling at 5 North Road, Woking. Kenneth's mother – Charlotte Ayliffe was recorded as a 47 year old widow Manageress in the Baking & Confectionary industry living on her own at 47 Church Street, Staines, Middlesex. Kenneth's sister – Grace Mary Ayliffe was recorded as an 18 year old Housemaid living at 104 Gleneldon Road, Streatham, Wandsworth with the Nalder family in an 11 roomed dwelling.

Kenneth W. Ayliffe was recorded as an outward passenger from London bound for Sydney, Australia on the *Orsova* which departed London on 12<sup>th</sup> April, 1912. He was listed as a 21 year old Baker & his intended future permanent residence was listed as Australia.

Kenneth William Ayliffe was aged 26 years & 1 month, single & a Baker from Macquarie Street, Cowra when he enlisted at Bathurst on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 1916 with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Battalion, 23<sup>rd</sup> Reinforcements of the Australian Army (A.I.F.). His service number was 6947 & his religion was Roman Catholic. His next of kin was listed as his mother – Mrs Charlotte Ayliffe of 15 Camplin Street, New Cross, London, England. Kenneth had travelled to Australia when he was 20 years old & had previously been rejected from serving on the grounds of his teeth.

Pte Kenneth William Ayliffe embarked from Sydney on HMAT *Benalla* (A24) on 9<sup>th</sup> November, 1916 & disembarked at Devonport, England on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 1917.

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.

Pte Kenneth Ayliffe was admitted to Fargo Hospital, Wiltshire on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 with Influenza from 1<sup>st</sup> Training Battalion, Durrington. On 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 Pte Ayliffe was reported seriously ill with pneumonia.

Pte Kenneth William Ayliffe died at 12.15 p.m. on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 at Fargo Military Hospital of Bronchitis & pneumonia. He was the third Australian soldier to die in the space of 24 hours of Pneumonia at Fargo Hospital – Pte Andrew McMurtrie died at 1.45 p.m. on 18<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 & Pte Charles Alfred Wilson died at 1.15 a.m. on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 1917.

A death for Kenneth W. Ayliffe, aged 26, was registered in the March quarter, 1917 in the district of Amesbury, Wiltshire.

Pte Kenneth William Ayliffe was buried on 21<sup>st</sup> February, 1917 at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire – Grave number 206.

Private K. W. Ayliffe is commemorated in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 31.



(Photos by Cathy Sedgwick)



*Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia*

Pte Kenneth William Ayliffe was entitled to British War Medal only. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Pte Ayliffe's mother – Mrs Charlotte Ayliffe in England (November, 1921)

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private Kenneth William Ayliffe – service number 6947 as the son of William and Charlotte Ayliffe of 8 Ivydale Road, Nunhead, London, England & served with 2nd Battalion Australian Infantry.

A War Pension was awarded to Charlotte Ayliffe, mother of Late Pte Kenneth William Ayliffe in the sum of 40/- per fortnight commencing 19<sup>th</sup> April, 1917.

(40 pages of Pte Kenneth William Ayliffe's Service records are available for On Line viewing at National Archives of Australia website).

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



\*\* Private Augustus Charles Brander (6951) 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion also embarked on HMAT Benalla on 9<sup>th</sup> November, 1916 with Pte Kenneth William Ayliffe. Pte Brander died of pneumonia on 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 & was buried in Plot 199 at Durrington Cemetery. Pte Ayliffe died of Bronchitis & Pneumonia on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 1917 & was buried in Plot 206 of Durrington Cemetery.



## **Newspaper Reports**

### **“THE BENALLA” SUN**

The above is the title of a highly creditable little literary production published on board one of the troopships, edited by a Cowraite (Pte Ken Ayliffe), from whom our copy comes. The articles contained therein are well written, some of them referring in scathing terms to certain occurrences on board. The caricaturist is an artist of no mean order, the various topical subjects being most amusingly dealt with. From a mass of well-written matter we cull the following verses by Pte Malcolm Melvin, of the 37<sup>th</sup> Battalion:-

#### **MOURNFUL MUSINGS**

Oh, for all we have left behind  
    And everything that we miss;  
The old man's growl. The old girl's nag  
    And the taste of a donah's kiss.

The crush and din of dusty streets,  
    The peace of the farm on the range,  
The soothing feel of downy sheets  
    And a fiver's worth of change.  
Oh, for a night out with the "bhoys,"  
    Or a cuddle by Manly's waves;  
A Randwick flutter wouldn't be bad,  
    Or a stroll through Rookwood's graves!

[Note – Just been to the canteen and feel better, so here goes.]

But here we are, so let us laugh,  
    Swear, sleep, and do O'Grady drill,  
And don't forget, good cobbers all-  
    There's a \_\_\_\_ called "Kaiser Bill."

(*Cowra Free Press*, NSW, Saturday 3 February, 1917)

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### **CASUALTIES – 276<sup>th</sup> LIST**

#### **DIED OF ILLNESS**

Pte A. C. BRANDER, Ryde (prev. rep. ser. III)

Pte K. W. AYLIFFE, England

(*The Sydney Morning Herald*, NSW, Saturday 3 March, 1917)

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## **The Late Pte Ken. Ayliffe**

The above young townsman could only barely have reached the front, when his death occurred from illness. Prior to enlisting he was in the employ of Mr Bonser of Kendall-street. In musical matters he was a great enthusiast and was a valued member of St. Peter's Presbyterian Church Choir and the old Philharmonic Society. He was a native of England and had no relatives in this country.

*(Cowra Free Press, NSW, Saturday 10 March, 1917)*

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## **KILLED IN ACTION**

Three Cowra men who joined the colors have made the supreme sacrifice in the defence of the Empire. Pte George Copson who was previously reported missing is now definitely reported killed. Private Ken Ayliffe and Pte Herb Day are the other two victims. The former died from illness immediately after reaching the front.

*(Young Witness, NSW Tuesday 13 March, 1917)*

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## 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 at Durrington War Graves Cemetery. 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)*

Pte K. W. Ayliffe does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Pte K. W. Ayliffe is also remembered on the Red Granite Obelisk Memorial to Men of 1<sup>st</sup> Training Battalion A.I.F. which is located in Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire.



*(Photo by Dave Healing 2013)*





**Memorial to 1<sup>st</sup> Training Battalion A.I.F. at Durrington Cemetery**

*(Photos by Ian King 2010)*





Photo of Pte K. W. Ayliffe's Headstone at Durrington Cemetery, Wiltshire.



*(Photo © Ian King - with permission)*