

**Greenwich Cemetery,
London, England
War Graves**



Lest We Forget

World War 1



2254 PRIVATE

O. R. BAKER

5TH BN. AUSTRALIAN INF.

3RD APRIL, 1916

Oswald Robert BAKER

Oswald Robert Baker was born at Eye, Peterborough, Northamptonshire, England to parents Robert & Maria Baker (nee Richmond). He was baptised on 27th January, 1889 at the Parish Church, Eye, Northamptonshire, England.

[Note: Oswald Robert Baker's date of birth was listed on the Report of Death of a Soldier – Army Form B. 2090 as 15th December, 1890.]

The 1891 England Census recorded Oswald Baker as a 2 year old, living with his family at Shipdham Road, East Dereham, Norfolk, England. His parents were listed as Robert Baker (Traction Engine Driver, aged 47, born Whitwell, Norfolk) & Maria Baker (aged 49, born Mattishall, Norfolk). Oswald was the youngest of five children listed on this Census – Celia Baker (Dressmaker, aged 22, born Mattishall, Norfolk), Elvina Baker (aged 16, born Lyng, Norfolk), Odessa Baker (male, Farm Servant, aged 13, born Lyng, Norfolk), May M. Butler (Scholar, aged 9, born Lynn, Norfolk) then Oswald.

Robert Colsey Baker, father of Oswald Robert Baker, died in 1898 at Mitford Road, Norfolk.

Maria Baker, mother of Oswald Robert Baker, died in 1899 at Norfolk, England.

The 1901 England Census recorded Oswald Baker as a 12 year old, living with his brother & brother's wife at Loftwood Stone Rd, East Dereham, Norfolk. Oswald's brother was listed as Odessa Baker (Traction Engine Driver, age 23) & his wife as Sarah Baker (aged 23).

The 1911 England Census recorded Oswald Baker as a 22 year old Horseman on Grass Farm, living by himself in a four roomed dwelling at Main Rd, North Tuddenham, Norfolk, England.

An "Oswald Baker", Farmer, aged 24, was a passenger on the Irishman which had departed from the port of Liverpool, England on 20th March, 1913 bound for Australia.

The 1914, 1915 & 1916 Australian Electoral Rolls for the division of Henty, subdivision of Bentleigh, Victoria recorded Oswald Robert Baker, Labourer from Centre Rd, Bentleigh.

Oswald Robert Baker was a 25 year old, single, Gardener from 4 St. Mark Street, Peterborough, Victoria when he enlisted on 15th March, 1915 with the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). His service number was 2110 later renumbered as 2254 & his religion was Protestant. His next of kin was listed as his sister – Mrs W. Wilson, 4 St. Mark Street, Peterborough, Victoria (as listed on Embarkation Roll – however the address should be Peterborough, England). Mrs Wilson stated, in information provided for the Roll of Honour, that Oswald Robert Baker was a "*Farmer here, Gardener at Melbourne.*" Alice Edith Wilson also stated her relationship to the deceased soldier was "*sister – no parents from 12 years of age.*"

Private Oswald Robert Baker was posted to Depot on 15th March, 1915 for recruit training. He was transferred to 6th Reinforcements of 5th Battalion on 20th April, 1915.

Private Oswald Robert Baker embarked from Sydney, New South Wales on HMAT *Ceramic (A40)* on 25th June, 1915 with the 5th Infantry Battalion, 6th Reinforcements & disembarked at Alexandria on 23rd July, 1915.

[Note: Purport form in Service Record file recorded "*Emb at Sydney per H.M.A.T. A40 Ceramic 25/6/15*" the next line reads – "*Crossed off Roll from 5th Btn 6/R (No. 2110) SICK (Included later).*"]

Private Oswald Robert Baker was taken on strength of 5th Battalion at Gallipoli Peninsula / Anzac on 5th August, 1915.

Private Oswald Robert Baker was reported Missing at Anzac on 12th August, 1915 by Command Officer of 5th Battalion. He returned from "Missing" on 12th August, 1915.

War Diary – 5th Battalion

Lone Pine Trenches - 11th August, 1915:

Relieved by 3rd Bn and proceeded for spell to WHITE CALLEY.

12th August, 1915:

IN reserve A & B Coys & Hrqs.

C & D Coys still in trenches in Southern No. 2 Section.

(Extract of War Diary from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Oswald Robert Baker was admitted to Field Ambulance at Lemnos on 14th September, 1915 then transferred to 2nd Field Ambulance at Mudros the same day with Diarrhoea. He was transferred & admitted to No. 2 Australian General Stationary Hospital at Mudros W. on 14th September, 1915. Private Baker was transferred to Hospital Ship *Aquitania* on 16th September, 1915 & embarked for England on 18th September, 1915.

5th Battalion

The 5th Battalion was among the first infantry units raised for the AIF during the First World War. Like the 6th, 7th and 8th Battalions it was recruited from Victoria and, together with these battalions, formed the 2nd Brigade.....

The Victorian battalions forming the 2nd Brigade returned to ANZAC to help defend the beachhead, and in August the 2nd Brigade fought at the battle of Lone Pine. The battalion served at ANZAC until the evacuation in December.....

(Extract of Battalion information from the Australian War Memorial)

Private Oswald Robert Baker was admitted to Military Hospital, Fulham, England on 26th September, 1915 with Diarrhoea & Pleurisy (slight).

Private Oswald Robert Baker was admitted to Military Hospital, Fulham, England on 5th October, 1915.

Private Oswald Robert Baker was Absent without Leave from 21st January, 1916 to 25th January, 1916 while posted at Australian & New Zealand Base, London, England. He forfeited 5 days pay & was awarded 72 hours detention.

Private Oswald Robert Baker died at 10.15 pm on 3rd April, 1916 at Royal Herbert Hospital, Woolwich, London, England from Tuberculosis of Lung.

[Note: A letter from Australian Military Office, London to Base Records, Melbourne, Victoria dated 24th May, 1916 contained the following details "In confirmation of my cablegram LR 710, I have to report that No. 2254 Private Oswald Baker, of the 5th Battalion, died at the Royal Herbert Hospital, Woolwich, London, S.E., at 10.15 pm on the 2nd April 1916, from Tuberculosis of the Lungs...." The Report of Death of a Soldier – Army Form B. 2090 also recorded the date of death as 2nd April, 1916, however all other forms in the Service Record file for Private Oswald Robert Baker record that he died on 3rd April, 1916.]

A death for Oswald Baker, aged 27, was registered in the June quarter, 1916 in the district of Woolwich, London, England.

Private Oswald Robert Baker was buried on 6th April, 1916 in Shooters Hill Cemetery, London, England – Grave No. "A" 185.

This is now listed by Commonwealth War Graves Commission as Greenwich Cemetery, London, England - Plot number 3 "C". Z. 61 and has a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

H. C. Smart, Officer in Charge of Military Records, wrote to The Adjutant, Australian Intermediate Depot, Hostall Heath Camp, Abbey Wood, Kent on 28th April, 1916 regarding the late No. 2254 Private O. Baker, 5th Battalion, A.I.F. "... what became of the Will made at Fulham Military Hospital, mentioned on Army Form B. 2090."

Lieutenant D. Gemyas, Adjutant, replied on 30th April, 1916 to Officer in Charge Records, Westminster, England with the following "Deceased soldier's sister, Mrs W. Wilson of Peterborough has been written to this day, in respect

to the Will stated by her to have been made in her favour at Fulham Military Hospital. On receipt of same, will forward immediately."

Lieutenant D. Gemyas, Adjutant, wrote to Mrs W. Wilson, 4 St. Mar Street, Peterborough, on 30th April, 1916: "*With further reference to attached information supplied by you in reply to our letter of 13th instant re your late brother No. 2254 Private O. R. Baker, 5th Battalion, A.I.F. I would inform you that it is necessary for the Military Head Quarters in London to be in possession of any will left by deceased soldier. Kindly therefor forward to this office the will stated to me made in your favour at Fulham Military Hospital as per your remarks to question No. 5 on attached sheet."*

H. C. Smart, Officer in Charge of Military Records wrote to Mrs Sendall, 16 Ipswich Road, Lowestoft, on 12th May, 1916 with the following: "*I am informed that you took possession of private papers that belonged to the late No. 2254 Private O. R. Baker, 5th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force. Amongst these was his Will, which is Military Property, and which you are requested to forward to this Office without further delay."*

Sergeant O. Baker, Covehithe Detachment, 61st Prov. Batt. T.F. replied to The Officer in Charge of Military Records, Westminster on 19th May, 1916 with the following: "*On behalf of my sister Mrs Sendall of 16 Ipswich Road, Lowestoft, and in view of the fact that I am brother to and next of kin to 2254 Private O. R. Baker, 5th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, I beg leave to inform you that the private papers sent to Mrs Sendal did not include a Will of the late 2254 Private Baker. Those papers were handed to me by Mrs Sendal and are without exception papers relating to his Regiment Pay and private correspondence. I have no knowledge of the fact that he ever made a Will."*

Private Oswald Robert Baker was entitled to 1914/15 Star, British War Medal & the Victory Medal. A Memorial Scroll & Memorial Plaque were also sent to Private Baker's sister – Mrs W. Wilson (Scroll & Plaque issued in England in December, 1921).

[Note: According to the "Deceased Soldiers Estates Act 1918" which stated that the War Medals & Mementoes of a deceased soldier were to be handed in the following order of relationship – Widow, eldest surviving son, eldest surviving daughter, father, mother, eldest surviving brother, eldest surviving sister etc. – it is surprising that Private Baker's sister – Mrs W. Wilson was awarded the War Medals, Memorial Scroll & Plaque. Private Baker's brother – Sergeant O. Baker, author of the letter mentioned above, should have been awarded the mementoes.]

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission lists Private O. R. Baker – service number 2254, of 5th Battalion, Australian Infantry. No family details are listed.

Private O. R. Baker is commemorated on the Roll of Honour, located in the Hall of Memory Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, Australia on Panel 42.



Roll Of Honour WW1 Australian War Memorial Canberra, Australia

(47 pages of Private Oswald Robert Baker'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



Newspaper Notices

THE EIGHTIETH CASUALTY LIST

MISSING

VICTORIA

Private O. R. Baker, England

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 22 September, 1915)

60 KILLED IN GALLIPOLI

Issued by the Defence Department, the ninety-ninth and hundredth lists of Australian casualties in Gallipoli....

ILLNESS

Pte O. R. Baker, England

(Geelong Advertiser, Victoria – 29 October, 1915)

THE 163rd CASUALTY LIST

The Victorian names are:-

DIED OF ILLNESS

Private O. R. Baker, England

(The Mildura Cultivator, Victoria – 19 April, 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 O. R. Baker does not have a personal inscription on his headstone.

Greenwich Cemetery, London, England

Greenwich Cemetery contains 561 First World War burials. More than half of these graves are scattered throughout the cemetery, but 263 form a large war graves plot known as 'Heroes' Corner'. Here, two curved screen walls bear the names of casualties buried both in the plot and in unmarked graves in the cemetery.

The Second World War plot adjoins and contains 75 graves. An additional screen wall commemorates casualties buried in this plot and ten others buried in unmarked graves elsewhere in the cemetery. In all, the cemetery contains 124 Second World War burials, 3 of which are unidentified British soldiers.

Section E contains a plot of 30 Norwegian service graves from the Second World War.

There are 11 Australian WW1 War Graves in Greenwich Cemetery.

(Information from CWGC)



Cross of Sacrifice & Screen Walls *(Photo by Mike Ganly – Find a Grave)*

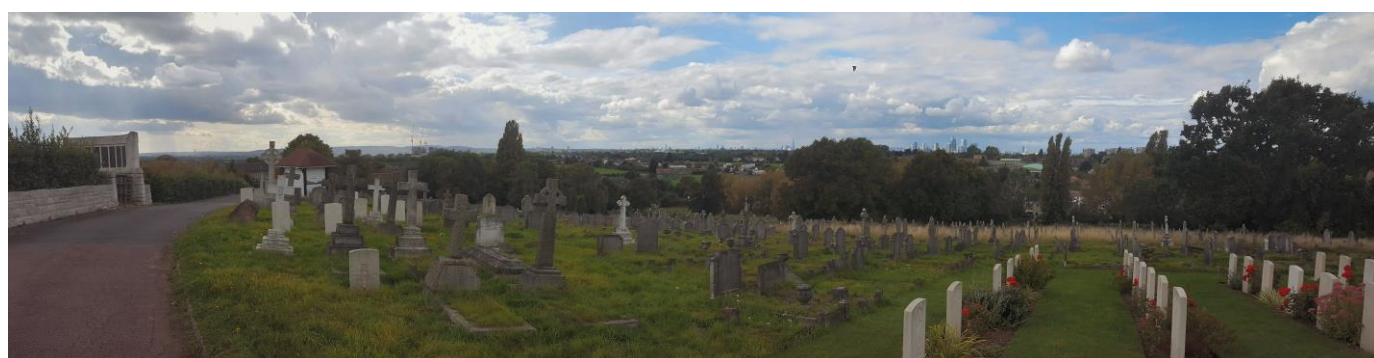


War Graves in Greenwich Cemetery *(Photos by Marathon)*





War Graves in Greenwich Cemetery *(Photo by Marathon)*



Greenwich Cemetery *(Photo by Steve Johnson – Find a Grave)*

Photo of Private O. R. Baker's Commonwealth War Graves Commission Headstone in Greenwich Cemetery, London, England.



(Photo courtesy of Neil Bright)